

## CITY COUNCIL STUDY SESSION

Review of Recommended Environmental Stewardship Plan.

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## DIRECTION NEEDED FROM COUNCIL

### DIRECTION

Tonight's Study Session will provide Council with a presentation on the recommended Environmental Stewardship Plan, which addresses direction from the Council to date and public input. Staff requests direction regarding adoption of the recommended Environmental Stewardship Plan, to occur at a future meeting.

## RECOMMENDATION

Move to direct staff regarding adoption of the recommended Environmental Stewardship Plan, to occur at a future meeting.

## BACKGROUND & ANALYSIS

Staff will present the recommended Environmental Stewardship Plan (Attachment A) for review by Council. This meeting marks the culmination of nearly two years of work to review progress to date, update the City's environmental goals, analyze additional strategies to achieve the goals, perform public outreach and engagement, release a draft plan for public comment, and finalize a recommended plan for Council consideration.

### Background and Approach

Council's 2018-2020 Vision Priorities include Priority No. 11 specific to the Environmental Stewardship Initiative (ESI). It states: "Review progress of the Environmental Stewardship Initiative and analyze additional steps that the City may wish to take to achieve its environmental goals (e.g., tree canopy)." The Environmental Stewardship Initiative formally began in 2007 and has been guided by the 2013-2018 ESI Strategic Plan.

On November 13, 2018, and in response to the direction from Council's 2018-2020 Vision Priorities, staff presented to Council the scope and approach for updating the 2013-2018 ESI Strategic Plan. The following steps outline the City's approach to the update:

#### Phase 1: (complete)

- Review progress with the ESI Strategic Plan Progress report (February 19, 2019 Council study session).
- Review the City's environmental goals and update as appropriate (May 20, 2019 Council study session).

- Develop recommended targets for each goal (November 12, 2019 Council study session).

#### Phase 2: (complete)

- Analyze best practices and additional actions for the updated plan, looking at the costs, benefits, and impact of various actions.
- Engage with City Boards and Commissions for input on possible strategies and actions related to their purview, summarized in Attachment B, Phase 3 Outreach Summary.
- Engage with residents, businesses, and key stakeholders on potential actions for the plan.
- Review progress and updated goals and targets with Council (September 14, 2020 Council study session).

#### Phase 3:

- Develop a draft Environmental Stewardship Plan for public comment (complete).
- Incorporate updates from public comment into the final Recommended Environmental Stewardship Plan (Attachment A).
- Review Recommended Environmental Stewardship Plan with Council (November 16 Council study session).
- Council adoption of Environmental Stewardship Plan.

The plan sets out long-term and short-term goals and targets for both the community and City operations as well as a suite of actions to improve the environment in five focus areas: climate change, energy, mobility and land use, natural systems, and materials management and waste. The suite of seventy-seven (77) actions are designed to help achieve the City's environmental goals to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, energy use, and vehicle miles travelled per person and to increase recycling, tree canopy, walkable access to parks, renewable energy, and electric vehicle use. The municipal operations section of the plan defines how the City will continue to lead by example, in areas such as buying renewable energy, increasing energy efficiency at City facilities, and greening the City's fleet. The plan will help to preserve and enhance the natural environment, encourage transit-oriented development and increase overall livability in Bellevue.

#### **Council Direction**

On November 12, 2019, Council considered recommendations for goals and targets for the Environmental Stewardship Plan which aligned with the "bold" level of ambition. Council provided direction to identify opportunities for strengthening some of the goals from "bold" to "leading edge", as feasible, and to evaluate the costs and benefits of potential actions.

Staff were scheduled to present to Council in April, but due to limitations on public meetings associated with the Washington State Stay Home, Stay Healthy Order, that presentation was postponed. Thereafter, on September 14, Staff provided an update to Council on the progress toward updating the plan, outreach results, and the King County Cities Climate Collaboration (K4C) Joint Commitments relating to climate change actions in King County. Staff highlighted the three Environmental Stewardship Plan goals and targets which were updated in response to Council's direction to be more leading edge, and presented the 2030 targets (interim to longer-term 2040 and 2050 targets) that were added as a result of Council direction.

At the September 14 study session, Council supported the updated targets, discussed the value of having achievable or aspirational goals and targets, asked if the budget would include funding to help implement the plan, and reiterated its interest in Bellevue being a leader. The plan now includes 77 best practice actions, which build on the City's progress to date and positions Bellevue to be on a path toward the "leading edge" consistent with Council's direction and the City's role as a leader in the region. As noted below, the 2021-2022 Preliminary City Budget includes funding for the ESI Implementation proposal (CD-46), along with funding for projects from Transportation, Parks & Community Services, Finance and Asset Management, and Utilities.

### **Process for Developing the Recommended Plan**

The recommended Environmental Stewardship Plan includes 77 actions across the five focus areas of climate change, energy, mobility and land use, waste, natural systems, for both the entire community and municipal operations. Staff and the consultant team performed a thorough analysis of the relative costs, benefits, and impacts related to potential actions achieving the greenhouse gas emissions reduction, zero waste, per capita vehicle miles travelled, and tree canopy targets. The interdepartmental team reviewed progress to date of existing actions in the 2013-2018 plan along with relevant best practices, to develop the suite of 77 actions to be implemented over the next five years, along with recommendations for long-term actions. The goals, targets, and actions in the plan have all been developed in collaboration and fully vetted by implementing departments.

To gather input from the public, staff held three rounds of public outreach and engagement throughout the plan update process and have heard from nearly 1,000 Bellevue residents and stakeholders. Throughout the outreach process, residents and key stakeholders have voiced strong support for advancing the City's environmental stewardship efforts. The public outreach and engagement process involved in-person and online town halls, in-person pop up events, sustainability leader's focus groups and business engagement, online surveys, and stakeholder presentations.

The COVID-19 pandemic occurred during the outreach process and has resulted in significant health and economic impacts globally, regionally, and within Bellevue. The plan seeks to respond to the pandemic and economic recovery by phasing the timing of actions impacting businesses and including actions to support cost savings for residents and businesses through energy efficiency retrofits, technical assistance for large buildings to comply with the Washington State Clean Buildings Act, and an increased focus on using an equity lens in implementation.

### **Comments on the Draft Plan**

The City released the Draft Environmental Stewardship Plan for public comment on September 24. As of October 22, 108 people responded to the draft plan survey and submitted comments on the draft plan, in addition to comments from Puget Sound Energy, Cedar Grove, and Climate Solutions. Some of the key messages from this phase of outreach (summarized in Attachment B) include:

1. Strengthen the energy section, in particular for existing buildings
2. Review and update the plan annually
3. Create a citizen advisory commission
4. Add more specific timelines and next steps for actions
5. Less studies, more action

## 6. More leading-edge actions

From other stakeholders, Climate Solutions encouraged a fast transition to all electric buildings and considerations around equity and affordable housing; Puget Sound Energy highlighted their energy efficiency, renewable energy, and grid reliability efforts and encouraged the City to ensure any building electrification efforts do not have unintended consequences and shift emissions from one source to another. Cedar Grove encouraged the City to account for the cost of composting and recycling in its rates, and to use locally sourced compost in City projects.

Staff also presented to boards and commissions, which were generally supportive of the plan, appreciative of the overarching message and narrative of the plan tying together various aspects of sustainability, and provided some specific comments related to their purview. Further details on these presentations are included in Attachment B, Phase 3 Outreach Summary.

The recommended Environmental Stewardship Plan responds to this input by: recommending a study of additional existing building energy efficiency actions; expanding the home energy retrofit and green affordable housing actions to include building electrification; reviewing progress on the plan annually along with annual work planning (as already outlined in the plan); engaging with residents on progress and action implementation regularly; and adding an action to the plan for electrifying City facilities when possible, as part of long-term capital improvement planning.

In response to the feedback that the plan needs to be more on the leading edge, the plan furthers the implementation of best practice strategies implemented by leading cities throughout the country. Many “leading edge” cities have implemented the actions outlined in the plan as a first step, and then pioneered new actions after exhausting proven strategies for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and enhancing sustainability. The plan sought to include leading edge goals and actions as feasible, and future updates to the plan can also contemplate more ambitious strategies. The plan also aims to balance environmental stewardship efforts with economic recovery and the City’s economic development policies.

Staff will monitor implementation progress with an annual progress report and the new Environmental Performance Dashboard and will plan for periodic check-ins with Council for updates on implementation progress.

## **POLICY & FISCAL IMPACTS**

### **Policy Impact**

#### City Council Vision Priorities (2018-2020)

- Priority No. 11: Review progress of the Environmental Stewardship Initiative and analyze additional steps that the City may take to achieve environmental goals (e.g., tree canopy).

#### Bellevue Comprehensive Plan Climate Change Policies (2015)

- EN-6. Establish an achievable Citywide target and take corrective actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions such as reducing energy consumption and vehicle emissions and enhancing land use patterns to reduce vehicle dependency.

- EN-7. Develop and implement climate change adaptation strategies that create a more resilient community by addressing the impacts of climate change to public health and safety, the economy, public and private infrastructure, water resources, and habitat.
- EN-8. Provide regional leadership on environmental issues that extend beyond Bellevue's boundaries and require regional cooperation.
- TR-140. Support means to reduce transportation-source greenhouse gas emissions.

#### King County Cities Climate Collaboration (Res. 8789, 2014)

- The City joined K4C on August 4, 2014 by signing an Interlocal Agreement (Resolution 8798). K4C is a partnership among cities across King County working to achieve greenhouse gas emission reductions consistent with Countywide Planning Policies.

#### K4C Joint Commitments (February 17, 2015 and September 14, 2020)

- Council voted to sign the original K4C Joint Commitments on February 17, 2015; and to sign the updated K4C Joint Commitments on September 14, 2020, to reaffirm Bellevue's participation in K4C and support the regional countywide greenhouse gas emissions reduction goals.

#### King County Countywide Planning Policies, Environmental Element (2016 Amendments)

- EN-17. Establish a countywide greenhouse gas reduction target that meets or exceeds the statewide reduction requirement that is stated as the 2050 goal of a 50 percent reduction below 1990 levels.
- EN-18. Reduce countywide sources of greenhouse gas emissions, compared to a 2007 baseline, by 25 percent by 2020, 50 percent by 2030, and 80 percent by 2050. Assuming 1 percent annual population growth, these targets translate to per capita emissions of approximately 8.5 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent (MTCO<sub>2e</sub>) by 2020, 5 MTCO<sub>2e</sub> by 2030, and 1.5 MTCO<sub>2e</sub> by 2050.

#### Mayors' Climate Protection Agreement (Res. 7517, 2007)

- Council signed the Mayors' Climate Protection Agreement in 2007 establishing a goal to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to 7 percent below 1990 levels by 2012.

### **Fiscal Impact**

The 2021-2022 Preliminary City Budget (October 19) includes a number of projects to support the implementation of the Environmental Stewardship Plan, including the ESI Implementation proposal (CD-46), and supporting budget proposals within Transportation, Parks & Community Services, Finance and Asset Management, and Utilities. Funds for the ESI Implementation proposal have been included in the proposed 2021-2022 budget.

### **OPTIONS**

1. Direct staff regarding adoption of the recommended Environmental Stewardship Plan to occur at a future meeting.
2. Provide alternative direction to staff.

### **ATTACHMENTS & AVAILABLE DOCUMENTS**

- A. Recommended Environmental Stewardship Plan

B. Environmental Stewardship Plan, Phase 3 Outreach Summary

**AVAILABLE IN COUNCIL LIBRARY**

Environmental Stewardship Plan, Phase 1 Outreach Summary

Environmental Stewardship Plan, Phase 2 Outreach Summary