

**CITY COUNCIL STUDY SESSION**

Environmental Stewardship Plan Quarterly Update

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**DIRECTION NEEDED FROM COUNCIL****INFORMATION  
ONLY**

Tonight's Study Session will provide Council with an update on progress towards implementing the Sustainable Bellevue Environmental Stewardship Plan.

**RECOMMENDATION**

N/A

**BACKGROUND & ANALYSIS**

Following Council direction on December 14, 2020, this presentation is the third of the quarterly Council progress updates on the implementation of the Sustainable Bellevue Environmental Stewardship Plan. Staff last presented to Council on July 19, with the annual review of the Environmental Stewardship Performance results, including Bellevue's 2020 Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions inventory and other environmental performance metrics. This presentation will focus on an update on progress towards implementing the plan, highlighting actions from the various focus areas of the plan.

**Background**

The 2021-2023 Council Vision & Priorities includes Priority #8: Implement the Environmental Stewardship Plan, which identifies actions in five focus areas:

- Climate change
- Energy
- Materials management and waste
- Mobility and land use
- Natural systems.

The 2021-2025 Environmental Stewardship Plan includes environmental goals and targets for 2030 and 2050, for both the community and City operations. The plan consists of a suite of actions aimed to improve the environment in five focus areas: climate change, energy, mobility and land use, natural systems, and materials management and waste. The 77 actions in the plan are designed to help achieve the City's environmental goals to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, energy use, and vehicle miles travelled per person and increase recycling, tree canopy, walkable access to parks, renewable energy, and electric vehicle use. The municipal operations section of the plan maps out 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**

During the review of the final draft of the plan on November 16, 2020, and at the plan adoption on December 14, 2020, Council directed staff to return for quarterly updates on progress and to monitor performance. Council directed staff to pursue and build partnerships to support the plan implementation, leverage the expertise of stakeholders and residents, seek innovative solutions and quick wins, lead by example, and move forward with urgency into plan implementation. In the adopted 2021-2022 City budget, Council included funding for enhanced engagement with stakeholders and residents to support the plan implementation, along with supplemental funding for “quick wins” for the plan implementation. Staff will provide updates annually on the environmental performance metrics, and the other ESI quarterly updates will focus on progress towards implementing actions.

**Progress Report**

Of the 77 actions in the Environmental Stewardship Plan, work has been initiated on 30 of the actions. Work has been incorporated into ongoing operations for 15 of the actions, 31 actions have not started yet, and one action is complete, as shown in Table 1 and Attachment A: Sustainable Bellevue Plan Implementation Progress October 2021.

**Table 1: Summary of Environmental Stewardship Plan Implementation Progress**

Status	# of Actions	Description	%
Started	30	Work has started / implementation is partially complete	39%
Ongoing	15	Work has been incorporated into ongoing operations	19%
Not started	31	Work has not begun	40%
Complete	1	Work has been completed	1%
Barrier	0	Need to re-strategize approach. There is a barrier to implementing the action.	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>77</b>		

**Accomplishments**

The key accomplishments from the last quarter are organized by the focus area of the plan and include:

Mobility and Land use:

- Mobility Implementation Plan: Policy recommendations for multi-modal concurrency planning and infrastructure have been recommended by the Transportation Commission and Planning Commission for review by Council in October and November. This is an important step in establishing further policies to promote multi-modal transportation throughout Bellevue.

#### Natural systems:

- Watershed Management Plan: The Bellevue Utilities Department has completed the first phase of outreach for the Watershed Management Plan, developed a toolbox of strategies, and will complete the watershed health assessments in the fall.
- Tree Giveaway: For the City's inaugural tree giveaway, the Environmental Stewardship Initiative gave out over 600 trees to Bellevue residents and organizations on October 9 and 10 and provided support for tree planting at several King County Housing Authority properties in Bellevue and other community-based organizations. The program included guidance on how to plant and care for trees and targeted outreach in neighborhoods with lower tree canopy. The program received nearly 900 applications.

#### Energy:

- Clean Buildings Act Technical Support program: The City selected a contractor for this program and kicked-off the internal planning and program design for the program in September. This program aims to support 10-15 Bellevue buildings over 50,000 square feet in applying for the WA State Clean Buildings Act Early Adopter Incentives for energy efficiency measures, and 75 buildings in Bellevue with early compliance.

#### Waste:

- The WA State Plastic Bag Ban goes into effect on October 1. The WA State Plastics Law will begin to go into effect in 2021 and will restrict the use of different types of polystyrene (e.g., Styrofoam) products starting in 2023. Bellevue Utilities will provide technical support for businesses to comply with these laws.

#### Enhanced Engagement:

- To support the implementation of the plan, staff held the first working group meeting of the Sustainability Leaders Stakeholder group, focused on urban forestry.
- The Environmental Stewardship team held a Tree Talk event at the Bellevue Botanical Garden as part of Welcoming Week, to foster cross-cultural communication around trees and the environment.
- Staff and outreach consultants promoted the tree giveaway program to diverse communities and shared opportunities for engagement on the projects mentioned in the memo, through ESI newsletters and EngagingBellevue.com.

#### **What's Next**

Staff have several projects in the pipeline to advance during the next quarter, including:

- Launching the Clean Buildings Act Technical Support program and engaging with commercial buildings in Bellevue to provide energy efficiency services.
- Enhanced Engagement:
  - Hosting the Bi-annual Environmental Stewardship Community townhall in January 2022.
  - Facilitating the Sustainability Leaders Group meeting and working group meetings on urban forestry and commercial buildings.
- Launching the air quality and land use planning guidelines project, to review best practices for development near freeways and develop recommendations for Bellevue.

- Initiating the Curbside Management planning effort, to support expanding transportation services and needs in Bellevue.
- Developing the Environmental Stewardship Initiative 2022 Workplan.

Finally, Bellevue expects Puget Sound Energy (PSE) will make further changes to cost methodology for its Green Direct program. Changes to the methodology are required after PSE executed, and the Utility and Transportation Commission (UTC) approved, a settlement to resolve a 2020 power rate case. In that case (which did not involve Green Direct subscribers), PSE sought to increase rates by \$88 million (~4.1%). The Association of Western Energy Consumers (AWEC), an organization of large industrial energy users, opposed the increase and petitioned for lower rates for non-Green Direct subscribers. The resulting settlement reduced the authorized increase to \$65.3 million (~3%) through a suite of actions, including amending the previously developed, but unapproved, methodology to calculate the energy charge credit used in the Green Direct program. The change reduces the energy charge credit from the current \$0.0444838/kWh to \$0.039346/kWh. This will increase rates for all Green Direct subscribers, and Staff estimates the City's annual energy costs may increase \$75,000. As part of the upcoming collaborative discussions facilitated by PSE, Staff will work with PSE, Green Direct subscribers, and other PSE customers to develop a cost methodology that is fair to all ratepayers and supports development of renewable resources in accordance with state and local carbon emission goals. The Green Direct program presently supplies renewable energy for about 70% of Bellevue's municipal operations annual energy consumption.

## POLICY & FISCAL IMPACTS

### Policy Impact

#### 2021-2025 Environmental Stewardship Plan, (Res. 9859, 2020)

- The Environmental Stewardship Plan was adopted on December 14, 2020 and includes updated environmental goals and targets and 77 actions for implementation over the next five years.

#### Bellevue City Council Vision and Priorities (2021-2023)

- Priority #8: Implement the Environmental Stewardship Plan, which identifies actions in five focus areas:
  - Climate change
  - Energy
  - Materials management and waste
  - Mobility and land use
  - Natural systems.

#### 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)

- Council joined the King County Cities Climate Collaboration (K4C) on August 4, 2014 by signing an Interlocal Agreement (Resolution No. 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 the K4C and support for the regional countywide greenhouse gas emissions reduction goals.

#### **Fiscal Impact**

The adopted 2021-2022 City Budget includes \$250,000 for 2021 and 2022 to implement the Environmental Stewardship Plan, \$125,000 per year from 2023-2027 (CD-46), and \$50,000 over the two years for enhanced engagement.

#### **OPTIONS**

N/A

#### **ATTACHMENTS & AVAILABLE DOCUMENTS**

A. Sustainable Bellevue Plan Implementation Progress October 2021

#### **AVAILABLE IN COUNCIL LIBRARY**

Environmental Stewardship Plan, 2021-2025