



Office of the City Manager

INFORMATION CALENDAR

February 25, 2014

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From:  Christine Daniel, City Manager

Submitted by: William Rogers, Deputy City Manager

Subject: Update on Activities of the Multi-departmental Sustainability Working Group

INTRODUCTION

The City's Sustainability Working Group (SWG) is a multi-departmental team focused on further integrating environmentally sustainable practices throughout City operations. Established in May 2013, the SWG is chaired by the Deputy City Manager and was developed by staff in response to an April 2012 Council referral requesting that the City Manager look into the feasibility of consolidating certain environmental functions into a new Department of the Environment. The purpose of this item is to provide Council with a progress report on the work of the SWG to date.

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

The SWG developed three strategies for implementation in 2014 designed to further integrate environmentally sustainable practices into City operations. These are: 1) create a new "Environmental Sustainability" section in all reports to City Council, 2) integrate environmental sustainability practices throughout the Citywide Work Plan, and 3) launch an Environmental Achievement Award program to celebrate and recognize City staff for environmental leadership. The SWG is guiding the implementation of these strategies.

New "Environmental Sustainability" section in all Council reports

Beginning with the March 11, 2014, City Council Meeting, all staff reports to City Council will include an "Environmental Sustainability" section. Including this section in City Council reports will require staff in all City departments to consider and articulate the linkages between the subject of the report and the City's environmental sustainability goals. Ultimately, the goal is to encourage and assist staff to include environmental considerations at the earliest stages of a given project or program. It also provides the City Council with the necessary information to include environmental considerations when making decisions.

In an effort to facilitate this transition, the SWG developed several resources to assist staff in completing the "Environmental Sustainability" section, including:

- **Staff Trainings** -- In December 2013 and January 2014 SWG members provided 4 trainings to approximately 60 staff on how to complete the “Environmental Sustainability” section
- **Template Revisions** -- SWG members revised City Council report templates
- **Technical Assistance** -- SWG developed guidance documents that provide staff with easy to understand instructions, clear examples and links to the City’s environmental goals and policies
- **Consultation** -- Staff in the Office of Energy & Sustainable Development is available for consultations with staff as they are developing reports to City Council, and will review all City Council reports to assist staff to complete the new section effectively

The new City Council report section does not fulfill requirements for environmental review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and is not intended to be an exhaustive analysis of environmental issues. Rather, it is designed to help integrate environmental considerations into the work of City Government.

Several other cities include a similar environmental section in their reports to City Council, including the City of Oakland; Park City, UT; and Surrey, British Columbia.

Integrate Environmental Sustainability Practices throughout Citywide Work Plan

Starting with the next Citywide Work Plan update in fiscal year 2015, all City departments will be required to integrate environmental sustainability practices into their departmental work plans. The purpose of this strategy is to consider how the work each City department is planning and/or implementing can be accomplished in a manner that more effectively advances the Climate Action Plan and other City environmental goals. City staff and outside experts will assist City departments to identify opportunities to “green” existing or planned efforts. Each City department will begin by identifying 2-4 specific practices and articulating those practices in the department work plan.

Environmental Achievement Awards Program

The Environmental Achievement Award is a new program designed to celebrate City employee actions that benefit the environment and encourage a culture of sustainability throughout our organization.

City of Berkeley employees (full or part-time) or employee teams can be nominated by any other City employee for demonstrating a commitment to environmental sustainability. The main award criteria include innovation and creativity, leadership and collaboration, and achievement of a clear environmental benefit (e.g., reduced solid waste, energy savings, cleaner transportation, and many others). Employees may be nominated for a specific action, program, project, event, or process improvement, or for ongoing integration of environmental stewardship into their daily work. The actions can be focused on improving services for the community or on internal City operations.

Nominations for the 1st Environmental Achievement Awards are due March 3, 2014. Information about the program and a quick and easy paperless Environmental

Achievement Award nomination form are available on iCoBWeb at <http://icobweb/environment/>. A ceremony will be held to recognize and celebrate awardees. The Sustainability Working Group will select the winners.

BACKGROUND

The purpose of the Sustainability Working Group is to integrate environmentally sustainable action throughout City operations. It was formed in response to an April 3, 2012, City Council referral requesting that the City Manager evaluate the costs and benefits of creating a new “Department of the Environment.” The City Manager conducted an evaluation and, in a November 13, 2012, Information Report to City Council, recommended administratively establishing a multi-departmental Sustainability Working Group.

The SWG was established in May 2013 and is chaired by William Rogers, Deputy City Manager. Other SWG members are:

- Donna LaSala, Director, Department of Information Technology
- Jane Micallef, Director, Department of Health, Housing & Community Services
- Mark Numainville, City Clerk
- Matt Nichols, Principal Transportation Planner, Transportation Division
- Neal DeSnoo, Manager, Office of Energy & Sustainable Development
- Scott Ferris, Director, Department of Parks, Recreation & Waterfront
- Timothy Burroughs, Climate Action Coordinator, OESD

The SWG generally meets bi-monthly.

POSSIBLE FUTURE ACTION

The SWG plans to develop a training on environmental sustainability for all City staff. The training will be integrated into the Citywide Training Program.

The SWG continues to identify strategies that will facilitate integration of environmentally sustainable practices throughout City operations. Further, the new City Council report section and the integration of “green” practices into the Citywide work plan will help to identify systemic barriers to environmental practices that the SWG can help to resolve.

FISCAL IMPACTS OF POSSIBLE FUTURE ACTION

SWG activities will result in a range of practices designed to advance the City’s environmental sustainability goals. Some of the actions will have an ongoing cost and others will result in cost-savings. The fiscal impacts of each future action will be evaluated.

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