

ADMINISTRATIVE MEMORANDUM NO. 20 - 092

TO: Planning and Zoning Board
VIA: David L. Recor, ICMA-CM, Director of Development Services *DR*
VIA: Jennifer Gomez, AICP, Assistant Development Services Director *JG*
FROM: Jean E. Dolan, AICP, CFM, Principal Planner *JED*
SUBJECT: Sustainability Strategy
DATE: March 11, 2020

Concurrent with the Comprehensive Plan update, the City launched a new sustainability initiative with the development of a Sustainability Strategy so that both policy documents could support the other and provide a strong foundation for the City to purposefully become more sustainable and resilient. To implement this intention, RS&H, Inc. was hired to develop a strategic approach for the City's sustainability activities.

The RS&H team implemented a process to create a qualitative baseline of the City's past and present sustainability related projects, benchmarked that performance against peer cities and conducted a process of engagement and interviews with the City Commissioners, the City Manager and thirteen senior staff representing most City Departments. In addition, RS&H reviewed extensive information documenting the City's past and present efforts, including policies, plans and regulations.

The result of this preliminary sustainability strategy was presented to a selection of City staff at a workshop on August 14th, 2019. In addition to calibrating the qualitative baseline and benchmarking findings, the workshop began the process of establishing a sustainability vision for the City, establishing focus areas for the City's sustainability efforts (see Figure 1) and developing a portfolio of projects. The workshop represents the first step towards enhancing the City's sustainability performance via a strategic workplan.

FIGURE 1: SUSTAINABILITY FOCUS AREAS



The recommended workplan consists of eight conceptual initiatives phased over a five-year period. The initiatives come at a modest cost relative to potential social, economic and environmental benefits, including mitigation of and adaptation to climate change (Figure 2).

Sustainability Workplan

1. The first step (Workplan Phase 1) would establish a quantitative baseline for evaluating the City's present sustainability performance in the six focus areas proposed for organizing the City's efforts (Figure 1). Including a Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Inventory, this activity supplements the qualitative baseline developed as part of this strategy.

2. A comprehensive baseline is essential for establishing goals to achieve the City’s emerging Sustainability Vision. Similarly, completing a comprehensive climate change Vulnerability Assessment would allow the City to designate Adaptation Action Areas (AAAs) to lay the groundwork for adaptation planning (Workplan Phase 2).
3. Although the City has already implemented some projects with sustainability benefits, they have been championed by individual departments rather as a part of a strategic portfolio designed to meet sustainability goals. This strategy includes several project recommendations derived from benchmarking and collaboration with City staff that could be developed and implemented as part of a portfolio of sustainability projects (Workplan Phase 3).
4. An Adaptation Action Plan would supplement the sustainability project portfolio by identifying and prioritizing adaptation actions to address critical vulnerabilities (Workplan Phase 4).
5. New policies may be required to enable projects. Updating existing municipal policies to align with the City’s vision and goals is also necessary (Workplan Phase 5).
6. As projects are underway, a communications strategy (Workplan Phase 6) would help inform internal and external stakeholders about the City’s sustainability and resilience initiatives and accomplishments, building support for the program.
7. A Data Management System (Workplan Phase 7) would improve the ability of the City staff to effectively manage projects by automating the process of tracking and reporting key performance indicators.
8. As the sustainability program matures, the City can consider third-party verification (Workplan Phase 8) of its program via a recognized standard to validate its achievements and leadership.

The City has incorporated this 8-phase program into the Comprehensive Plan, Climate Change Element Goals, Objectives and Policies and the first step, the Greenhouse Gas Inventory, Quantitative Baseline and Goal Setting has been recommended for inclusion in the 2020 Strategic Plan and the 2020-21 budget that is currently being developed for adoption by the City Commission in September, 2020.

F. Alternative Motions

- (1) **Motion to recommend approval of the proposed Sustainability Strategy** as the Board finds the proposed strategy will provide a strong foundation upon which to build the City’s sustainability program.
- (2) **Motion to table** the proposed Sustainability Strategy to allow further analysis of any issues raised by the Board, Staff, Applicant or the general public.

Staff recommends motion number (1).

G:\Zoning 2009\Special Projects\Sea Level Rise and Sustainability Coordinator Related\sustainability coordinator related\RS&H Contract Documents and Work