



CITY OF BEVERLY HILLS STAFF REPORT

Meeting Date: August 5, 2008
To: Honorable Mayor & City Council
From: Shana Epstein, Environmental Utilities Manager
Jonathan Lait, AICP, City Planner
Subject: Sustainability Guiding Principles
Attachments: Sustainability Guiding Principles

INTRODUCTION

The City of Beverly Hills began embarking on developing green policies with the creation of the Sustainability General Plan Topic Committee. A group of 20 devoted community members created a report of their goals for the City. Many of those goals were not necessarily elements of the General Plan, but more operational. Since that committee disbanded, a group of staff members from almost every department in the City have met regularly to share what they are doing to implement some of the more operational aspects of the committee's report. As the report was discussed amongst policy makers, the City Council has raised sustainable programs and policies to be a priority. In conjunction with developing the Sustainability Master Plan, the staff committee known as the Sustainability Task Force drafted the Sustainability Guiding Principles to serve as an umbrella for all the green initiatives. It is important to note that sustainability encompasses more than environmental issues, but economic feasibility and social equality as well.

DISCUSSION

The Guiding Principles are as follows:

- City policy will be guided by a long-term vision of sustainability.
- The City will lead by example.
- The protection and preservation of the environment is a priority for the City.
- The City values cultural, economic and environmental diversity.
- Economic, environmental and social impacts will be key considerations in City policy and actions.
- The City will inform and inspire all community members to take action.
- Partnerships are necessary to achieve a sustainable community.
- Local actions have regional, national and global implications.

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The full description of these principles is attached. This tool is not only a quick reference to all decision makers regarding issues facing Beverly Hills – big or small, but also a communication piece to illustrate some of the key values of the City.

The aforementioned principles were considered in updating the policies in the Draft General Plan, and form the foundation of a Sustainability Master Plan. The Master Plan will be considered concurrent with the General Plan. It will include implementation strategies that would be applied to City operations and facilities, and would be reflected in City legislation. The Master Plan will propose policies addressing the following issues:

- Climate Protection, Air Quality & Green Buildings
- Energy
- Water
- Land Use, Transportation & Open Space
- Materials & Waste
- Environmental & Public Health
- Economic Development
- Social Equity
- Community Education & Civic Participation

The City has already achieved many Green Initiatives that give credibility to these values:

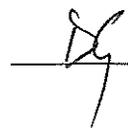
- The City diverts 60% of its solid waste stream from the landfills.
- The City has installed smart irrigation controllers, which helped the City as a water customer use 8% less water last summer compared to the summer before.
- The most energy efficient computers are purchased.
- The City is implementing its new Green Building Ordinance.
- The water utility rates are structured to encourage conservation.
- Safety and enforcement personnel ride bicycles.
- Water rebates to the community have increased annual water savings to 2.7 million gallons.
- The City fleet utilizes biodiesel for large vehicles, like trash trucks and street sweepers.
- In 2001, the City did a large lighting retrofit project that resulted in annual savings of 993,891 kwh.
- Many more activities and outreach occur each year.

FISCAL IMPACT

At this time there is no fiscal impact to accepting these principles. Fiscal responsibility is included in these guiding principles.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the City Council approve the attached Sustainability Guiding Principles, which will be not only in the Sustainability Master Plan, but also serve as ideals to be used in the City's decision making processes – policy and administrative.


 David Gustavson
 Approved By 

The City of Beverly Hills Sustainability Guiding Principles

The following eight principles provide the City guidance in all levels of decision making.

1. City policy will be guided by a long-term vision of sustainability.

Beverly Hills is committed to meeting today's needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. The City will ensure that each of its policy and program decisions are interconnected through the common bond of sustainability as expressed in these guiding principles.

2. The City will lead by example.

The City is committed to making decisions which minimize negative environmental, economic and social impacts, and set an example for others. The City will establish goals and objectives for City operations and facilities, as well as city wide impacts, and will regularly evaluate, measure and report the Plan's status. The City will develop and abide by an environmentally and socially responsible procurement policy that emphasizes long-term values and serves as a model for others.

3. The protection and preservation of the environment is a priority for the City.

Beverly Hills is committed to protecting, preserving and restoring the natural environment. City decision-making will be guided by a mandate to maximize environmental benefits and reduce or eliminate negative environmental impacts.

4. The City values cultural, economic and environmental diversity.

A healthy environment is integral to the city's long-term economic and social interests. All geographic and socioeconomic sectors of the population must have access to the benefits of a sustainable community.

5. Economic, environmental and social impacts will be key considerations in City policy and actions.

The City's financial and human resources are limited. The City and community will therefore regularly reevaluate its priorities, programs and policies to ensure that the best possible investments in the future are being made. The evaluation of each program's cost-effectiveness will be

based on a complete, life cycle analysis of the associated environmental, economic and social costs and benefits.

6. The City will inform and inspire all community members to take action.

For the City's program to be successful, all community members, including individual citizens, community-based groups, businesses, schools and other institutions must take an active part in efforts in reaching sustainability goals. The City will be a leader in educating and inspiring all community stakeholders to become active in the Plan and to take personal responsibility for their own actions.

7. Partnerships are necessary to achieve a sustainable community.

Partnerships among the City government, School District, businesses, residents and all other community stakeholders are necessary to achieve a sustainable community.

8. Local actions have regional, national and global implications.

Local sustainability issues cannot be separated from their broader context. This relationship between local and regional, national and global issues will be recognized and reflected in the City's programs and policies.