



Agenda Item #: _____

Staff Report

City of Manhattan Beach

TO: Honorable Mayor Ward and Members of the City Council

THROUGH: Richard Thompson, Interim City Manager

FROM: Sona Kalapura, Environmental Programs Manager

DATE: July 20, 2010

SUBJECT: Consideration of the Proposed 2010-2011 Environmental Work Plan and Renewal of the Environmental Task Force

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the City Council **APPROVE** the development of a renewed Environmental Task Force (ETF) comprised of 10 qualified and diverse citizens to address the specific goals identified in the 2010-2011 Environmental Work Plan. Staff further recommends that City Council direct staff to recruit diverse applicants based on specific selection criteria for Council appointment.

FISCAL IMPLICATION:

City Council has allocated a limited amount of funds in the current budget to support the development of recommendations from the Environmental Task Force (\$5,000). The primary fiscal implications will be costs associated with hosting public outreach events and advertising to promote the City's environmental programs. If additional funds are required, staff will return to City Council to request approval.

BACKGROUND:

Our current environmental program began in 2007 when the City of Manhattan Beach signed the U.S. Mayors Climate Protection Agreement. In 2008, the City produced its comprehensive Green Report declaring its commitment to environmental stewardship, not only for climate protection, but for all areas of city operations. The City then created a 19-member citizen Environmental Task Force (ETF) which operated for 18 months (October 2008 - April 2010). The ETF used the Green Report to evaluate and make recommendations to City Council for new policies in the areas of Solid Waste Reduction and Recycling, Sustainable "Green" Building Design, Climate Protection, and Water Conservation and Storm Water Management.

DISCUSSION:

Important goals of the City's Green Report have been moved forward by the first ETF, and many more require action. With the completion of the first term of the Environmental Task Force, staff recommends that the City's environmental efforts be taken to the next level through a focus on community engagement in environmental stewardship.

This report identifies and recommends the second phase of a renewed Environmental Task Force based on an environmental work plan culled from the Green Report to be utilized as the guide for the ETF. In addition to the goals of the Green Report, staff has incorporated feedback from the first ETF experience, including the input of the City Council co-chairs (Mayor Ward and Councilmember Cohen), to develop the proposed environmental work plan and structure. A resounding theme in this feedback is the need to move into a strong public outreach phase. As such, you will see this component in the following goals of the 2010-2011 Environmental Work Plan.

Staff is recommending the following areas as the Environmental Work Plan for 2010-2011 for the new ETF to focus on:

1. Energy Conservation and Clean, Renewable Sources
2. Urban Forestry and Sustainable Landscaping
3. Zero Waste

1. Energy Conservation and Clean, Renewable Sources

The source of, and emissions from, energy production will continue to be a critical component of eco-sustainability. The City recently completed a comprehensive energy audit of our municipal operations, and we are poised to evaluate the next phase for not just the City but the community at large. Many cities around the world are implementing solar and other clean, renewable energy source systems. Our ETF will research, evaluate, recommend and educate our community on viable energy sources and systems. (Refer to the table below for specific project goals.)

2. Urban Forestry and Sustainable Landscaping

The City recently initiated tiered water rates for the community, as well as adopted permanent water conservation restrictions. Now it is time to help our community embrace them. Our goal is to preserve and protect our natural resources for future generations, without depleting our fresh water supply, nor contaminating our ocean with stormwater runoff. The Manhattan Beach City Council joined the Metropolitan Water Department this year with a goal of enhancing our independent water supply and decreasing our importation. The next ETF will help us do that by bringing to the attention of our community the abundance of beautiful, environmentally friendly landscaping and tree cover options to our citizens. The ETF will also bring forth an array of soft-scape, pervious land cover instead of impervious hardscape that now covers most of our city (and 75% of Los Angeles). In addition to conserving a vast amount of fresh water for drinking purposes as opposed to landscaping, a new pervious landscape will help purify the water that feeds our drinking aquifers, as well. (Refer to the table below for specific project goals.)

3. Zero Waste

The City is instituting tiered waste rates, and is about to enter into a long term contract with a solid waste hauler. The next step is to teach our community how to limit and eliminate waste. Composting and anaerobic digestion are household terms in other communities around the world. They should be in our community, as well. The ETF will evaluate programs in other cities, research best practice implementation methods, and share this information with the community through outreach events. The ETF will also investigate “waste-to-energy” programs the city and businesses might participate in such as the current Long Beach facility program. (Refer to the table below for specific project goals.)

2010-2011 Environmental Work Plan and Focus of the Environmental Task Force

	Energy Conservation and Renewable Energy	Urban Forestry and Sustainable Landscaping	Zero Waste
G O A L S	<p>Develop a <i>Solar Manhattan Beach Incentive and Assistance Program</i> for Residential, Commercial, Industrial and Public Facilities;</p> <p>Evaluate other viable clean, renewable energy sources for all community sectors.</p>	<p>Create our <i>Manhattan Beach Urban Forestry and Sustainable Landscaping Incentive and Assistance Program</i>, consisting of a user-friendly program to promote abundant choices for native, drought resistant greenery, tree cover, water capture, softscape and irrigation methods.</p>	<p>Develop a <i>Manhattan Beach Race to Zero Waste Program</i> to educate our community on consumption habits and viable methods of elimination; as well as identify “waste-to-energy” opportunities.</p>
M E T H O D S	<p>Work with local utilities, government entities, nonprofits, and the private sector to identify and evaluate solar and other energy programs, grants, rebates, low-interest financing and vendors.</p> <p>Evaluate solar lease programs, power purchase agreements, donor programs, and other options.</p> <p>Promote the LA County AB811 (low-interest financing) program to businesses and residents.</p> <p>Encourage community to participate in solar mapping for all projects with kW information to post to the City’s solar information website.</p> <p>Develop guide to Energy Star and non-VOC products for buildings.</p>	<p>Work with local groups such as the Tree Musketeers, VOICE, the Manhattan Beach Botanical Garden and others to craft the program.</p> <p>Further develop the municipal pesticide/herbicide policy, and evaluate, recommend and promote pesticide/herbicide-free alternatives.</p> <p><i>Rainwater Harvesting & Irrigation.</i> Work with local utilities, government agencies, nonprofits and the private sector to identify and evaluate water capture, such as cistern and harvesting systems, green roofs, drip irrigation, gray water and other systems. Also identify pricing, rebates, and grants.</p>	<p>Work with the new solid waste hauler, businesses, residents, City and schools to identify areas ripe for waste reduction, and elimination.</p> <p>Develop “Conscious Consumption” Educational Model – practical ways for businesses and residents to maximize re-use and recycling.</p> <p>Restaurants and Bars: Cost-effective ways to minimize FOGs, food recycle, compost.</p> <p>Work with the City of Long Beach and identify other “waste-to-energy” opportunities for all community sectors.</p>
O U T R E C H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Craft Web Page; • Facilitate Stakeholder Workshops (builders, architects, etc.); • Educate through Community Classes for residents, businesses, restaurants, etc.; • Event Presence: Home Town Fair, Farmers Market, Earth Day, Schools, etc.; • Sustainability Summit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Craft Web Page; • Facilitate Stakeholder Workshops (builders, architects, etc.); • Educate through Community Classes for residents, businesses, restaurants, etc.; • Event Presence: Home Town Fair, Farmers Market, Earth Day, Schools, etc.; • Sustainability Summit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Craft Web Page; • Facilitate Stakeholder Workshops (builders, architects, etc.); • Educate through Community Classes for residents, businesses, restaurants, etc.; • Event Presence: Home Town Fair, Farmers Market, Earth Day, Schools, etc.; • Sustainability Summit

Role and Structure of an Environmental Committee

The Environmental Task Force will support the development of an integrated environmental strategy for the City of Manhattan Beach by evaluating the City's current policies and practices, and providing specific recommendations for improving the City's environmental impact.

Role: Under the direction of the Environmental Programs Manager, ETF members will:

- Attend public meetings, and working group meetings, as needed
- Conduct research to identify best environmental practices for the community
- Collaborate with City staff, neighboring cities, and other organizations to develop environmental guidelines and tools for community use
- Coordinate and participate in public outreach events and other community events

Term:

- One-year period, with a possibility to extend service

Membership:

- 10 Citizen Members
- 2 Council Members (Mayor and Councilmember Cohen)
- 1 Environmental Programs Manager

Selection Criteria Considerations

The Mayor and each Council Member would appoint 2 members. The goal is to select a broad spectrum of community stakeholders (residential, commercial, industrial, education, nonprofit) that represent the City's geographic diversity, and possess a range of skill sets. ETF members would be selected based on their:

- Sustainable landscaping and urban forestry expertise or experience
- Solar and clean, renewable energy expertise or experience
- Waste management in commercial/industrial/business sector
- Waste management in residential sector
- Local real estate knowledge
- Small business representative
- Large business representative
- Environmental non-profit representative

Conclusion:

The 2008-2010 Environmental Task Force was a highly successful program due to the foundation of the Green Report, City Council and Staff's commitment to carrying out the Green Report's mission, and the selection of exceptional citizen members with a strong work ethic and commitment to the environment.

Staff recommends that Council direct staff to craft an application process for a new 10 member Environmental Task Force based on the identified criteria; and to bring back to City Council the qualified applicants for Council selection and formation.

CC:

Jim Arndt, Public Works Director

Laurie Jester, Interim Community Development Director