

BACKGROUND

Beginning in April 2008 the Sustainability Committee created three subcommittees designed to examine particular issues and present work back to the larger Committee for review. The three subcommittees included:

- Long Range Planning/Sustainable Development Subcommittee
- Urban Landscape Subcommittee
- Education Subcommittee

In March 2010, following completion of the Climate Action Plan, the Sustainability Committee agreed to revise the subcommittee focuses to align with the Climate Action Plan, replacing the existing subcommittees with the following three subcommittees:

- Building Energy/Water Conservation,
- Food & Agriculture/Green Infrastructure
- Non-land use Transportation

Staff created an Implementation Plan for the CAP, which was adopted by City Council on July 6, 2010. The plan identifies CAP measures for short term implementation, measures to be implemented as part of the General Plan, and measures for medium/long term implementation. A common thread through the CAP is community outreach, engagement and the “community challenge” to reach the greenhouse gas emissions reduction goal.

As discussed in the Implementation Plan, the Sustainability Committee’s role in CAP implementation is to: continue to take an active role during implementation, utilize its expertise to promote community awareness, and serve as the lead on particular outreach components of the CAP in coordination with staff.

Additionally, as particular Measures within the CAP are under development, the Committee could provide input and assist with planning and administration of public workshops. The Committee can also work in a liaison capacity to collaborate with other community groups and serve as a conduit regarding the many opportunities available to the general community.

It should also be noted that the City Council recently made changes to a number of City Committees/Commissions, including elimination of at-large and student appointees, however the number of members on the Committee remained the same to retain the multidisciplinary approach.

Over the past several months the Sustainability Committee has discussed the role and focus of the subcommittees, and whether the subcommittees should be further redefined. A calendar template was developed to help outline the major themes of sustainability and climate action to, 1) serve as an outreach item and, 2) to guide subcommittee roles and work. Staff met with a subset of the Sustainability Committee in January to discuss the item further, resulting in the following general CAP themes and proposed subcommittee roles to compliment these themes.

RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Establish 3 subcommittees, with an emphasis on community outreach:

1. Public Education
2. Events
3. Technical/Financial

B. Subcommittee Tasks

The Public Education and Events subcommittees will be tasked with conducting different outreach methodologies in conjunction with the following “seasonal themes” of sustainability and the CAP:

Quarter 1 – Winter: “Green Cleaning”

recycling/reuse/waste diversion, less toxic products, proper disposal of toxic products

Quarter 2 – Spring: “Planting/Greening”

bay friendly landscaping, urban forestry/tree planting, community gardens, water conservation

Quarter 3 – Summer: “Localization”

alternative modes of transportation, shop local, community building

Quarter 4 – Fall: “Green Home & Energy”

weatherization, energy efficiency improvements, renewable energy improvements

Public Education Subcommittee Tasks

1. Develop educational posts for Albany Patch on selected topic, with resources of how readers can take action (can also post to City web & cable)
2. Conduct two public education projects based on the “seasonal themes”. Examples include:
 - Educate residents about City’s residential energy efficiency rebate program (\$600 rebate) – neighbor: neighbor basis, block captains – block challenge, coordinate with other related organizations (COA/Transition Albany, e-trees).
 - Work with Library to have a display of any environmental theme (reuse art, ghg emissions calculations, did you know facts, etc. Engage students to create displays.
 - Educate residents about solar lease opportunities for homes. Create list of resources /providers & engage local companies to target Albany residents (Sungevity, Solar Cities, others).
 - Develop a “weatherization for dummies” bill insert along with resource list (garbage bills) & web/cable/city buildings

Events Subcommittee Tasks

1. Organize the annual Arts & Green Festival (and/or work to identify 3rd party to organize)
2. Engage in one additional event annually. Examples include:
 - Work with Urban forester to support a tree (or landscape) planting party, recruit students / locate planting sites at schools, or recruit residential blocks for tree planting
 - Volunteer for National Night Out - attend block parties with City staff
 - Support bike-to-work day in coordination with Albany Strollers & Rollers

Technical/Financial Subcommittee Tasks

1. Assist with developing a local Carbon Fund for community projects
Provide support to potential ballot measure process, conduct grant research.
2. Provide technical assistance/feedback on particular items as they arise

C. Administration

Typically, subcommittees will provide a short update during the “reports” section of the agenda. The reports section allows for question & answer by the Committee, but action should not be taken under this section of the agenda. All work, proposals, etc. developed by the subcommittees will be presented back to the Sustainability Committee for review/approval as a discussion item. Subcommittee will notify staff when a discussion item is needed for the upcoming agenda.

D. Liaison Role

Continue liaison role (representative from SC) with other Commissions as necessary (P&Z, Park & Recreation, and Traffic & Safety).

Continued Sustainability Committee Role

The above identifies how the formation of focused subcommittees can add to the effectiveness of the larger Committee. It should be noted that the overall role of the Sustainability Committee, as established by City Council remains: ...to advise the City Council on policies, programs, and issues promoting environmental sustainability in the City of Albany and to provide leadership, technical assistance, education, and outreach to members of the public, schools, local businesses, and city agencies on innovative programs to promote environmental sustainability...

The charge of the Committee shall be to work with City staff, other City Commissions, Committees and Boards, and with local and regional organizations and community groups to develop and implement programs and policies, and to engage in community building that promotes environmental sustainability for residents, businesses, local government and other entities within the City of Albany.