

DATE ISSUED: September 26, 2001

REPORT NO. 01-197

ATTENTION: Honorable Mayor and City Council
Docket of October 2, 2001

SUBJECT: Report on San Diego Livable Community Initiative

SUMMARY

Issue - Should the City of San Diego renew the San Diego Livable Community Partnership with the Department of Energy, and approve all of the prior and expanded components of the San Diego Livable Community Initiative?

Manager's Recommendations -

1. Renew the Partnership Agreement between the City of San Diego and the U.S. Department of Energy, Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy.
2. Approve the set of "Livable Community Indicators", and direct the City Manager to pursue a reporting system of specific information from city departments and regional agencies, to be coordinated by the Environmental Services Department (ESD).
3. Resolve to fulfill the City's commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, as described in the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives' (ICLEI) "Cities for Climate Protection" Program.
4. Direct the City Manager to establish a task force comprised of City staff and members of the scientific community to develop an Action Plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from sources within San Diego, coordinated by ESD.
5. Direct participation of appropriate city department staff in the ongoing design, implementation and evaluation of the San Diego Livable Community Initiative, including implementation of the Milestone Action Plan.
6. Direct the City Manager to establish a Sustainable Community Advisory Board with broad representation from businesses, tourism agencies, community organizations and City departments, coordinated by ESD.

Other Recommendations – None

Fiscal Impact – It is anticipated that implementation of the San Diego Livable Community Initiative will result in significant avoided financial costs to the City. By example, measures taken by the City during 1994-2000 to institute projects such as energy conservation and renewable energy projects, transportation efficiencies, alternative fuel decisions, and waste management improvements have collectively resulted in a reduction of an estimated \$23 million per year, compared with costs that could have been incurred if the projects had not been implemented. (Calculations based on EPA computer software.)

BACKGROUND

The City of San Diego has tremendous attributes, including its diverse culture, natural resources, climate, and strong economy. For many residents it is indeed “a city worthy of our affection.” However, recent public opinion polls have pointed to a growing perception of air and water quality deterioration, increased frustration with traffic, native species’ habitat loss, challenges with business attraction, and consequences associated with a widening economic prosperity gap. Uncertainty about San Diego’s ability to thrive in an era of rapid population growth and perceived resource constraints is a growing concern. For example, the recent energy reliability crisis has illuminated the region’s vulnerability to “outside” suppliers, and imposed severe hardship on residents and businesses. Moreover, this crisis may pale in comparison to expert’s projections about future water availability. We are being confronted with the fact that a “frontier mentality” of unlimited abundance is clearly flawed and must be replaced by a central organizing principle of sustainability. Generally well-intentioned but shortsighted public policy and uninformed individual actions are collectively undermining the quality of life for future generations. The principles of sustainability are founded in stewardship- the careful economic, long-term management of land, community and resources.

In order to raise the profile of these challenges, the City, through the Environmental Services Department, submitted an application to participate in the national Livable Community Initiative. In June 2000, the Department of Energy and White House announced the selection of the City of San Diego as one of ten national demonstration sites. A framing document, signed in November 2000 by Bill Richardson, former Secretary of the United States Department of Energy (DOE), and then Mayor Susan Golding acknowledged a formal collaboration with DOE, and identified objectives and responsibilities. A revised Partnership Agreement has been drafted to reflect the progress of the Initiative.

The San Diego Livable Community Initiative is led by the Environmental Services Department, and highlights aspects of programs led by other City departments, including Planning, General Services, Metropolitan Wastewater, Development Services, and Engineering and Capital Projects. As shown in Attachment One, collaboration within the city organization and with other local “partners” is an essential element. In fact, the Initiative is a virtual repository of a related set of innovative public policies and programs developed by the City and associated agencies and organizations. Also described in Attachment One is the mission and structure of the Initiative. There are six “theme areas”; three are organized around process and education and three are focused on technologies.

Activities related to process and education include: a set of indicators that establishes the scope and a baseline to track progress; a series of public forums; K-12 educational programs; creation of a more accessible system for information exchange with Tijuana; and a campaign to advance environmental management systems within City departments. The three remaining theme areas are technologies associated with alternative fuels, energy efficiency and renewable energy.

DISCUSSION

The City does not currently have a centralized system by which to qualitatively evaluate policy decisions and actions that may have long-term impacts on the sustainability of the community. The roles and responsibilities of the City as a consumer, a public service provider, a developer, and a resource manager present many opportunities to integrate such concepts as environmentally preferable purchasing, environmental management systems, green building practices, and improved conservation. The San Diego Livable Community Initiative proposes to identify, promote, and build upon City and regional programs aimed at strengthening the viability of San Diego for today and future generations, and to demonstrate San Diego's position as a national leader. The Initiative supports many of the Mayor's Goals, as well as other public service values, such as fostering civic engagement and increasing public education and outreach. Just as importantly, the Initiative is the connection between City departments, federal agencies, and many local agencies and organizations all with ultimately the same goal in mind: to build a livable community that endures for many generations to come. The recommended components of the Initiative are outlined below, followed by more complete descriptions:

1. Renew the Partnership Agreement between the City of San Diego and the U.S. Department of Energy, Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy.
2. Approve the set of "Livable Community Indicators", and pursue a reporting system that collects specific information from city departments and regional agencies, to be coordinated by the Environmental Services Department.
3. Resolve to fulfill the City's commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, as described in the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives' (ICLEI) "Cities for Climate Protection" Program.
4. Expand participation of appropriate city department staff in the ongoing design, implementation and evaluation of the San Diego Livable Community Initiative, including implementation of the Milestone Action Plan.
5. Establish a Sustainable Community Advisory Board with broad representation from businesses, tourism agencies, community organizations and City departments, coordinated by the Environmental Services Department.

Federal Partnership Agreement:

The Partnership Agreement provides the framework for a relationship between the City and the Department of Energy (DOE), fostering a local set of cohesive energy and environmental projects. As shown in Attachment Two, it states the shared belief of each agency that community prosperity and sustainability are definitely linked with a clean,

reliable, and affordable energy supply. The city offers an ideal pilot for demonstrating how DOE- respective technologies, policies, and resources can be integrated to meet community “livability” challenges, and may serve as a model for other communities.

To date, the DOE has completed an economic feasibility study evaluating the use of alternative energy technology at a City landfill. Staff from both the Seattle Regional Office and DOE Headquarters in Washington, DC have consistently been very accessible and have provided meaningful assistance. As an example, DOE has incurred expenses of more than \$60,000 for completing the “Brightfield” feasibility study at the Miramar Landfill and has authorized a contractor to evaluate the Chollas Operations Center.

San Diego Livable Community Indicators:

As shown in Table One the San Diego Livable Community Indicators have been organized by whether they correspond to many of Mayor Murphy’s top ten goals and other measures of importance.

Identification of the indicators began with a series of five public outreach forums entitled “The Dashboard Series”, co-sponsored by the City of San Diego in 1999. The forums offered the public a chance to “vote” on what aspect they were most interested in tracking. This list of indicators was refined further by City staff and local partners to also reflect measurements specific to the Initiative. The set of indicators is not a comprehensive list to monitor every aspect of a “livable community”. Rather, it represents a snapshot that will track progress of the Livable Community Initiative, serving as an educational tool for policy makers, local agencies, and interested sectors of the community. A baseline will be established using a 3-5 year set of historical data for each indicator, beginning with 1996.

TABLE ONE

RELATED CATEGORY	LIVABLE COMMUNITY INDICATOR
<i>Mayor’s Goals:</i>	
Goal # 2- Reduce traffic congestion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual number of days exceeding the California standard for Ozone air pollution • Vehicle miles traveled per capita per year • Percent of residents within 0.25 miles of a retail store • Percent of residence within 0.25 miles of public transit • Number of cars per household • Percent of San Diegans who rideshare to work (carpooling, transit)
Goal # 3- Create neighborhoods we can be proud of	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of new affordable housing created per year • Rate of home ownership within the City as compared with the national average • Average number of trees per mile of street • Per capita spending for public infrastructure • Number of household on waiting list for subsidized housing assistance (Sec. 8)
Goal # 4- Clean up our beaches and bays	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual number of beach closures and postings
Goal # 8- Make San Diego	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incidents of violent crime committed by adults per year

America's safest city	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incidents of violent crime committed by children per year • Participation in school-sponsored after school childcare programs for grades K-8
Goal # 9- Pursue energy independence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KWh consumed per capita per year • Percent KWh renewable energy in residential and commercial buildings • Number of City facilities using alternative energy sources • Number of City facilities at which the "Green Building Policy" is fully implemented • The number of submittals to Development Services Dept. that include renewable energy

TABLE ONE (continued)

<i>Mayor's Goals:</i>	LIVABLE COMMUNITY INDICATOR
Goal # 10- Complete MSCP open space acquisition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage and number of species that are covered by the Multiple Species Conservation Program moving from the designation of "unprotected" to "protected" • Percent completion of the City of San Diego target open space acquisitions by 2007 which will provide increased interconnecting linkages for wildlife movement, protect San Diego's unique biodiversity, and enhance the region's quality of life
<i>Additional Categories</i>	
Water Conservation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potable water consumed per capita per year • Gallons of reclaimed water used per year
Enhancing environmental management systems in public programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of City facilities certified as ISO 14001, such as Landfill Operations (Environmental Services Department) and Sewage Conveyance and Treatment (Metro Wastewater Department) • Dollars saved through City fleet management fuel-reduction strategies • Number of vehicles converted from standard diesel fuel, a significant air pollutant, in the City fleet and other large fleets • Combined annual savings (energy, fuel, etc...) resulting from the use of City environmentally preferable purchasing policies, such as Energy Star, Green Building, Recycled products, and others
Fostering civic engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percent voter participation for ages of 18-35 per year • Number of donations to San Diego Red Cross Blood Bank per year • Assessment of volunteerism within the City per year • Number of participants in City-sponsored survey to assess public perception about local environmental, economic and equity issues
Expanding educational opportunities provided by the City	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual number of City-sponsored environmental education venues for youth, grades K-12 • Annual number of City-sponsored Community Forums
Improving the information network between San Diego and Tijuana	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number of meeting per year of cross-border information exchange between San Diego and Tijuana • Number of border-related forums related to energy, environment, public works, and public health • The number of "hits" per year of the City's Border Wastewise website
Increasing the number of San Diegans who earn a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percent of people under 25 with at least 2 years of specialized education after high school

<p>“living wage” based on local cost of living factors.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percent of workers with middle income wages of \$20-45K per year • Percent of families with children in the San Diego Unified School District that are below the poverty level
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Cities for Climate Protection Action Plan:

In 1997, the City of San Diego was chosen to participate with a select group of cities throughout the world in a model program developed by the International Council on Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI). This international program is called “Cities for Climate Protection”(CCP), and the work is focused on identifying sources, quantities, and reduction strategies of two greenhouse gas emissions, carbon dioxide (CO2) and methane. Sources of CO2 and methane emissions are the same as those that diminish air quality, increase traffic congestion, increase energy bills, and contribute to global warming and climate change.

The CCP commitment from each participating city includes the following steps:

- 1) Establish a baseline year (1990), complete an inventory of projects that have reduced CO2 and methane from baseline to present, and quantify greenhouse gas (GHG) emission reduction using an Environmental Protection Agency software program.
- 2) Set an emission reduction target for 2010, then develop and implement a Local Action Plan to meet that target.
- 3) Monitor and verify emission reductions.

Attachment Three is a resolution that declares the City’s commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to the extent possible.

City staff have completed the first phase of analysis, including 1990 baseline data and a rationale for a 7%, 15%, and 60% emission reduction target. A list of projects implemented by the City of San Diego between 1994-2000 has been identified that achieves GHG emission reduction. The cumulative impacts of these projects represent tremendous financial and environmental benefits. The City realizes an estimated \$23 million savings each year through cost avoidance related to energy, transportation and waste reduction, and an annual reduction of approximately 836,000 tons of CO2. A community-wide assessment of projects remains to be done. It is recommended that the City Manager establish a task force comprised of City staff and members of the scientific community to review and expand the City’s Local Action Plan, and which is coordinated by Environmental Services Department.

San Diego Livable Community Initiatives Milestones:

The Initiative’s Partners have divided into six subcommittees based on their area of expertise, and it is through the subcommittee process that the Milestones have been developed. The 2-4 year milestones identify actions to be conducted either by individual agencies, organizations and/or through collaborative work. With this information, the City is in a better position to ask federal agencies to leverage resources and provide expertise that will augment and support these local interests.

Broadening Participation of City Staff:

As previously noted, the Initiative essentially builds upon excellent programs and policies that are already in place or planned. There is a two-fold benefit for expanding the breadth and depth of City staff participation in specific aspects of the Initiative. First, the role of government in creating a sustainable future is continually reinforced in a tangible way. Second, additional staff input would ensure that all City programs and policies consistent with the objectives of the Livable Community Initiative would be included and reported.

Establish Sustainable Community Advisory Board:

One of the most difficult aspects of sustainability is its complexity and its ultimate pervasiveness into every decision affecting San Diego. Whenever policy is created, there is always some measure of impact on the quality of life for residents, and as such, becomes part of a complex web of interconnectedness between economics, environment and community well-being. It is tied to business attraction and retention issues, thereby strengthening or weakening the economic safety net that supports better neighborhoods, better schools and ultimately, a better future. As of this date, there is no government agency, community group, or private sector function whose job is to make certain that policy decisions reflect sensitivity to sustainable development.

A San Diego Sustainable Community Advisory Board could fill this role; serving to provide oversight on public decision-making. This Board would coalesce community experts who have the necessary expertise to appropriately advise the Mayor, Council, and City departments as to whether sustainable practices are reflected in their recommendations. It would also serve as a reviewing body for the San Diego Livable Community Initiative and to other environmental initiatives that center on growth related issues.

Board Members would be representatives from the business sector, faith-based organizations, school districts and universities, environmental organizations, social service agencies, and financial institutions.

Attachment Four outlines the Board's mission as well as proposed structure. The Environmental Services Department would take the lead on staffing the Board and would coordinate participation by other applicable City departments, thereby providing a broad range of expertise to support the Board.

CONCLUSION

As a community, the City of San Diego is ready to create a clearer path for a sustainable way of life. The San Diego Livable Community Initiative is one of many collaborative efforts that demonstrate

a strong resolve to balance economics, environment, and community services, leaving a legacy of a city worthy of affection for many generations to come.

Respectfully submitted,

Richard L. Hays
Environmental Services Director

George I. Loveland
Senior Deputy City Manager

LOVELAND/HAYS/LGP

Note: The attachments are not available in electronic format. A copy is available for review in the Office of the City Clerk.

- Attachments:
1. San Diego Livable Community Initiative
 2. Partnership Agreement
 3. Resolution Relating to Cities for Climate Protection
 4. San Diego Sustainable Community Advisory Board