

City of San Antonio: Mission Verde Sustainability Plan

Strategy #6: City of San Antonio: “Leading by Example”

Initiative #10: Address sustainability and resource efficiency across City facilities and departments

The City has organized two new tools to advance sustainability - the Office of Environmental Policy (OEP) and the Sustainability Task Force. The OEP facilitates the City’s coordinated movement toward energy efficiency, waste reduction, and vehicular emission improvements. The Sustainability Task Force brings key department directors together to spread best practices throughout the City. The Task Force consists of the City directors of Capital Improvements, Management Services, Finance, Fleet Maintenance and Operations, Office of Management and Budget, Purchasing and Contract Services, Solid Waste Management, and is chaired by the City’s Chief Information Officer and staffed by the OEP.

The goals of the Sustainability Task Force are:

- Increase accountability for efficient use of resources, support local economic development, and assist in protecting the environment;
- Maximize interdepartmental collaboration and knowledge sharing, and capture City wide efficiencies and cost savings;
- Integrate and improve existing operations;
- Provide a forum for communicating the City’s sustainability efforts to the larger community;
- Assist the City to become a leader and a model to other communities in the application of sustainable technologies and practices.

The OEP has taken the lead to accelerate energy upgrades to City facilities. The Sustainability Task Force has recommended a key water saving project at HemisFair Park in partnership with SAWS, a plug-in hybrid research program in partnership with CPS Energy, a new Administrative Directive to house key sustainability policies relating to greening the City fleet, Environmentally Preferable purchasing, recycling in City facilities, and Telework.

Action

Take advantage of all opportunities to improve sustainability within City operations and track the best practices and policies that are being implemented so that those outside the City may learn from those examples.

Timetable

February – May 2009: Implement planned staff improvements to OEP in order to expand capacity.

March 2009: Launch a website hosting a best practices section and build an exchange mechanism with major businesses and other public entities within the region.

April 2009: Issue sustainability directive.



Initiative #11: Maximize the Energy Efficiency of all City Facilities.

A large number of technology enhancements in areas such as lighting and HVAC have become available since most City facilities were constructed and began operations. A systematic audit of opportunities for energy and water improvements followed by implementation of these improvements, using a range of financing options, will improve energy and water efficiencies, workplace quality, and generate cost savings. OEP has initiated this work with audits and implementation plans for lighting improvements in police substations. Preliminary audit results show an average of a 1.5 year payback for lighting improvements.

A plan and schedule is in place to complete audits of all older facilities and prioritize upgrades according to those with the most to gain in efficiencies from lighting improvements.

Next, OEP will evaluate the potential for a full range of possible sustainability and resource efficiency services and benefits for City properties. For example, using strategically located City properties for car sharing locations, tree planting, and/or urban gardens expand benefits to the community beyond the core services offered at the properties.

Moreover, the City will partner with CPS Energy and SAWS as early adopters of efficiency and conservation programs developed by the utilities. As CPS Energy and SAWS roll out advanced metering initiatives, the City will integrate the new meters and related technology to help speed integration and effective use throughout the city.

The City will analyze new methods for integrating and financing distributed renewable energy. As new bond funding tools become available such as Qualified Energy Conservation Bonds (QECCB) and Clean Renewable Energy Bonds (CREB), the City will take steps to use such tools to facilitate the use of renewable energy in City facilities and possibly for the community at large.

The City will broadly disseminate best practices and pilot findings as learning opportunities for everyone.

Action

Pursue new financing tools to accelerate energy and water efficiency improvements in City facilities as well as the community at large.

Timetable

February 2009: Conduct feasibility study of QECCB and CREB bonds.

Ongoing: Coordinate with CPS Energy and SAWS in rolling out the Advanced Metering Initiative

Ongoing: AIM (Audit, Implement, Measure) for energy and water efficiency improvements in City Facilities

Ongoing: Identification and implementation of additional sustainability and resource efficiency opportunities in relation to City facilities.