



Memorandum

TO: TRANSPORTATION & ENVIRONMENT
COMMITTEE

FROM: John Stufflebean

SUBJECT: SEE BELOW

DATE: 03-20-07

Approved

Date 3/13/07

**SUBJECT: URBAN ENVIRONMENTAL ACCORDS STRATEGIC PLAN AND
PROGRESS TOWARDS GOALS ATTAINMENT**

RECOMMENDATION

Accept this report on the Urban Environmental Accords Strategic Plan and Progress Toward Goals Attainment.

BACKGROUND

The San José City Council signed the Urban Environmental Accords in 2005 along with 90 other cities around the world. The Accords are the result of UN Environmental Day 2005, which was held in San Francisco and focused on the environmental impacts of cities. Developed by cities, they consist of 21 Actions that cities can pledge to complete which address energy, waste reduction, water, urban nature, transportation and environmental health. Depending upon how many Actions a city completes, it can achieve a designation of Local Sustainable City (8-11 Actions), National Sustainable City (12-14), Regional Sustainable City (i.e. North America; 15 - 18) or Global Sustainable City (19-21). A complete list of the actions is attached.

While the Accords were developed at a UN conference, the UN is not overseeing or verifying their implementation. Worldwide, 100 cities have become signatories. Bay Area cities that have become signatories include Berkeley, Emeryville, Novato, Oakland, and San Francisco. Cities have a seven-year timeframe in which to complete implementation activities for most of the Actions from 2005 to 2012. Some actions have a timeframe out as far as 2040.

The Accords consist of broad goal statements providing flexibility to cities on how to implement them. No formal verification will be conducted by the Urban Accords Institute; instead cities will self-report to the Institute on their progress. The Accords Institute is attempting to organize a US meeting of signatory cities in conjunction with the UN Environment Program in the United States.

The Accords provide San Jose with an overarching environmental framework it can use to improve the quality of life for residents, improve the City's environmental performance, and demonstrate global leadership on sustainability issues. Implementation can result in resource conservation (energy and water), pollution prevention, waste reduction, greenhouse gas reductions, an enhanced urban tree canopy, and healthier buildings. As a signatory to the Accords, San Jose can enhance its reputation on the global stage. San José has already addressed many of the Actions and will be able to document existing achievements in several instances. This memorandum provides a status report on the City's activities relating to implementing the UN Accords.

ANALYSIS

The Accords align with several adopted Council policies or initiatives including: the Sustainable City Major Strategy (part of the City's 2020 General Plan), the Green Building Policy, the Water Policy Framework, the Energy Policy, the Environmentally Preferable Procurement Policy, and the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI) Cities for Climate Protection Campaign. In addition, several existing regulatory programs administered by the City address many of the issues covered by the Accords.

A preliminary analysis of the 21 Actions has been completed and indicates that, at a minimum, 16 actions could be accomplished with some additional effort. This would result in Regional Sustainable City status. To achieve Global Sustainable City status, additional resources would be required as well as considerable coordination with relevant agencies. As part of a work plan to be submitted in June 2007, initial estimates for resource needs to achieve each of the Actions will be provided so that Council will be able to make informed choices about which Actions to pursue. Coordination with all affected departments will occur before final recommendations are presented for council approval. Coordination has begun with several departments and the Issues Working Group was briefed in March.

The preliminary analysis indicates that seven actions are achievable as part of existing programs and are therefore complete or ongoing. Staff will document and continue implementation and improvement of programs relating to these actions:

- Action 1: "Adopt and implement a policy to increase the use of renewable energy to meet ten percent of peak load within seven years." This Action is being addressed as 12 percent of PG&E energy is from renewable sources.
- Action 2: "Adopt and implement a policy to reduce peak load by ten percent through energy efficiency, shifting the timing of energy demands, and conservation measures within seven years." The City has achieved an on-going annual savings of 20 percent.
- Action 6: "Implement "user-friendly" recycling and composting programs, with the goal of reducing per capita solid waste disposal to landfill and incineration by twenty percent

in seven years.” The City’s recycling programs have met this goal and staff continues to research additional diversion opportunities.

- Action 7: “Adopt a policy that mandates a green building rating system standard that applies to all new municipal buildings.” Council adopted the LEED silver rating for new buildings and implementation is in process.
- Action 16: “Every year, identify one product, chemical, or compound that is used within the City that represent the greatest risk to human health and adopt a law to reduce or eliminate their use by the municipal government.” The City’s Environmentally Preferable Procurement Policy Steering Committee is implementing this action.
- Action 19: “Cities should develop policies to increase access to adequate and safe drinking water for all by 2015. Cities with potable water consumption greater than 10 liters per capita per day will adopt and implement policies to reduce consumption by 10% by 2015.” The Santa Clara Valley Water District and the City are collaborating to ensure adequate and safe drinking water supplies, including water conservation and water recycling programs. Since 1992, the City has conserved over 8,000 acre feet of water annually. The Water District, in cooperation with the City, is researching opportunities for 60,000 acre feet of additional annual water conservation county-wide by 2030.
- Action 20: “Protect the ecological integrity of the city’s primary drinking water source (i.e. groundwater, rivers, lakes, wetlands and associated ecosystem).” The City works with the Water District and the SFPUC to ensure protection of the water supply.

According to the initial analysis, the following additional actions are anticipated to be achievable. Their feasibility and associated resource needs will be discussed in the June 2007 workplan report.

- Action 3: “Adopt a citywide greenhouse gas reduction plan that reduces the jurisdiction’s emissions twenty five percent by 2030 and which includes a system for accounting and auditing greenhouse gas emissions.” This action should be accomplished by complying with recently passed State Legislation (AB 32). The exact implementation and goals of AB 32 are still being decided on the state level. City staff is developing both a greenhouse gas reduction goal and a climate change action plan.
- Action 4: “Establish a policy to achieve zero waste to landfills and incinerators by 2040.” This is currently being addressed in the Integrated Waste Management (IWM) master planning process. The timeframe for implementation makes this action possible to achieve.
- Action 5: “Adopt a citywide law that reduces the use of a disposable, toxic, or non-renewable product category by at least fifty percent in seven years.” While this is not yet underway, it appears to be feasible with minimal impacts to resources and budget. For instance, City could pursue ordinances similar to ones adopted by other cities that reduce the use of styrofoam containers.
- Action 8: “Adopt urban planning principles that advance higher density, mixed use, walkable, bikeable and disabled-accessible neighborhoods which coordinate land use and transportation with open space systems for recreation and ecological reconstruction.” This is being addressed in part through existing policies and programs such as the smart

“driving industry” in San José. The Las Plumas HHW facility would contribute to the achievement of this action.

- Action 10: “Ensure that there is an accessible park or recreational open space featuring environmental education, arts, or organic community gardens – particularly in lower income neighborhoods – within half-a-kilometer of every city residents by 2015.” Parks Recreation and Neighborhood Services has indicated that this action will be addressed through a planned update to the Greenprint.
- Action 11: “Conduct an inventory of existing tree canopy coverage in your city; and then establish a goal based on ecological and community consideration to plant and maintain canopy coverage in not less than 50% of all available sidewalk planting sites.” A committee has been established and is determining how to conduct the inventory and fund additional tree plantings. Funding is already available through the Department of Public Works for a tree canopy analysis. The Department of Transportation has indicated additional resources would be necessary to implement this action.
- Action 12: “Pass legislation that protects critical habitat corridors and other key habitat characteristics (e.g. water features, food-bearing plants, shelter for wildlife, use of native species, etc.) from unsustainable development.” Several city programs and policies address this that may make local legislation unnecessary.
- Action 21: “Address storm water pollution and reduce the volume of wastewater discharge by 10% in seven years through the expanded use of recycled water and the implementation of a sustainable urban watershed planning process that includes participants of all affected communities and is based on sound economic, social, and environmental principles.” The South Bay Water Recycling program currently recycles approximately 10% of treated wastewater and additional efforts to increase the use of recycled water continue. Stormwater pollution is addressed through the City’s stormwater NPDES permit and the Santa Clara County Urban Runoff Pollution Prevention Program (SCVURPPP).

Several other actions, such as reducing single occupancy commutes, are pending more in-depth analysis with other agencies and would likely require a regional approach. A few of the actions, such as action 13 to expand public transportation to within a half a kilometer of all city residents and action 18 to improve air quality, may not be recommended for inclusion in actions counted towards Regional or Global Sustainable City achievement. While the City can make progress on all actions, some, such as these, are either not feasible for the City to accomplish to the extent outlined in the accords or are out of the City’s control. However, in all cases, significant progress could be made toward meeting the intent of the specific actions.

In November 2006, the City Manager’s Office requested that departments identify department leads to work with ESD’s UN Accords coordinator. Agencies anticipated to take a role in the Accords include the Environmental Services Department, the Office of Economic Development, the Redevelopment Agency, General Services, Public Works, Planning, Building and Code Enforcement, Parks, Recreation, and Neighborhood Services, and the Libraries.

Outside agencies include the Bay Area Air Quality Management District, Our City Forest, the Santa Clara Valley Water District, Santa Clara Valley Urban Runoff Pollution Prevention

leads to work with ESD's UN Accords coordinator. Agencies anticipated to take a role in the Accords include the Environmental Services Department, the Office of Economic Development, the Redevelopment Agency, General Services, Public Works, Planning, Building and Code Enforcement, Parks, Recreation, and Neighborhood Services, and the Libraries.

Outside agencies include the Bay Area Air Quality Management District, Our City Forest, the Santa Clara Valley Water District, Santa Clara Valley Urban Runoff Pollution Prevention Program, the Watershed Management Initiative, school districts, organic farming interests, Sustainable Silicon Valley, International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives, Pacific Gas & Electric, and agencies involved in public transportation such as the Valley Transportation Authority, Metropolitan Transit Commission, and RIDES for Bay Area Commuters. Work is already underway on some actions.

The next steps are to work with department leads to develop a workplan that will: document actions achieved, define which additional actions could be implemented, gain consensus on the implementation approach and determine resource requirements. A meeting with department representatives was held on March 22. A detailed workplan will be presented in June 2007 and yearly progress reports will be provided to the Committee each June to coincide with World Environment Day (June 5).

PUBLIC OUTREACH

The Environmental Services Department website includes information on the UN Accords and several public inquiries have resulted from this information, as well as inquiries from other signatory cities. Several Actions will require outreach, as the public will have a role to play in the successful implementation of some of the actions. Outreach needs will be developed as part of the work planning effort.

COST AND BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

There are no cost implications at the present time. These issues and funding options will be addressed during the annual budget process.



JOHN STUFFLEBEAN

Director

Environmental Services Department

Attachment

For questions, please contact Linden Skjeie, Supervising Environmental Services Specialist, Environmental Services, at 408-975-2577.

ATTACHMENT

UN Environmental Accords – List of Actions

Energy

Action 1: Adopt and implement a policy to increase the use of renewable energy to meet ten percent of peak load within seven years.

Action 2: Adopt and implement a policy to reduce peak load by ten percent through energy efficiency, shifting the timing of energy demands, and conservation measures within seven years.

Action 3: Adopt a citywide greenhouse gas reduction plan that reduces the jurisdiction's emissions twenty five percent by 2030 and which includes a system for accounting and auditing greenhouse gas emissions.

Waste Reduction

Action 4: Establish a policy to achieve zero waste to landfills and incinerators by 2040.

Action 5: Adopt a citywide law that reduces the use of a disposable, toxic, or non-renewable product category by at least fifty percent in seven years.

Action 6: Implement “user-friendly” recycling and composting programs, with the goal of reducing per capita solid waste disposal to landfill and incineration by twenty percent in seven years.

Urban Design

Action 7: Adopt a policy that mandates a green building rating system standard that applies to all new municipal buildings.

Action 8: Adopt urban planning principles that advance higher density, mixed use, walkable, bikeable and disabled-accessible neighborhoods which coordinate land use and transportation with open space systems for recreation and ecological reconstruction.

Action 9: Adopt a policy or implement a program that creates environmentally beneficial jobs in slums and/or low-income neighborhoods.

Urban Nature

Action 10: Ensure that there is an accessible park or recreational open space featuring environmental education, arts, or organic community gardens – particularly in lower income neighborhoods – within half-a-kilometer of every city residents by 2015.

Action 11: Conduct an inventory of existing canopy coverage in your city; and then establish goal based on ecological and community consideration to plant and maintain canopy coverage in not less than 50% of all available sidewalk planting sites.

Action 12: Pass legislation that protects critical habitat corridors and other key habitat characteristics (e.g. water features, food-bearing plants, shelter for wildlife, use of native species, etc.) from unsustainable development.

Transportation

Action 13: Develop and implement a policy which expands public transportation coverage to within half-a-kilometer of all city residents in ten years.

Action 14: Pass a law or implement a program that eliminates leaded gasoline (where it is still used) and that phases down sulfur levels in diesel and gasoline fuels, concurrent with using advance emission controls on all buses, taxis, and public fleets to reduce particulate matter and smog-forming emissions from those fleets by 50% in seven years.

Action 15: Implement a policy to reduce the percentage of commute trips by single occupancy vehicles by 10% in seven years.

Environmental Health

Action 16: Every year, identify one product, chemical, or compound that is used within the City that represent the greatest risk to human health and adopt a law to reduce or eliminate their use by the municipal government.

Action 17: Promote the public health and environmental benefits of supporting locally grown organic foods. Ensure that 20% of all city facilities (including schools) serve local and organic food within seven years.

Action 18: Establish an Air quality Index (AQI) to measure the level of air pollution and set the goal of reducing by 10% in seven years the number of days categorized in the AQI range as “unhealthy” or “hazardous.”

Water

Action 19: Cities should develop policies to increase access to adequate and safe drinking water for all by 2015. Cities with potable water consumption greater than 10 liters per capita per day will adopt and implement policies to reduce consumption by 10% by 2015.

Action 20: Protect the ecological integrity of the city’s primary drinking water source (i.e. groundwater, rivers, lakes, wetlands and associated ecosystem)

Action 21: Address storm water pollution and reduce the volume of wastewater discharge by 10% in seven years through the expanded use of recycled water and the implementation of a sustainable urban watershed planning process that includes participants of all affected communities and is based on sound economic, social, and environmental principles.