



City of Bainbridge Island  
***EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT***  
***MEMORANDUM***

TO: City Council  
CC: Mark Dombroski and Directors

FROM: Darlene Kordonowy, Mayor

DATE: April 16, 2009

RE: City Sustainability Initiative – With Assistance and Support from the Citizens of Bainbridge Island

---

Living sustainably means using resources to meet our needs today in a way that will not compromise the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. A sustainable community meets the needs of its present population, leaves adequate resources for those that follow, and ensures that future generations have the same or better opportunities. Yet challenges of climate change, energy sufficiency, water supply, community health, housing affordability, and food security are raising serious questions about our future. As a society, are we using resources at a faster rate than we are replenishing them? Are we creating communities that are sustainable in the long run? Are government goals, policies and actions guiding us toward a sustainable future?

The economic crisis that has dominated the media, our conversations and our decision-making during the past 15 months has required sacrifices, caused deferral of process improvements and community-building strategies and delivered a wake-up call. As we recover, what will we put back in place? Or, will we busy ourselves with today's problems, wait for the good times to return and slip back to enacting unsustainable plans, projects and practices that contributed to this financial meltdown in the first place?

In the context of these current conditions and significant challenges, we have the responsibility to choose a different way to implement the sustainable future envisioned in our Comprehensive Plan. We began to fashion a different way early this year when we committed to putting our financial house in order. We agreed to a three-phased plan: "Building a Foundation for a Sustainable Financial Management Plan" (Foundation Plan). We need to broaden this effort and integrate the economic, environmental and social aspects of our organization – and our community – into our financial

decisionmaking process. As you read the background information which follows on the sustainability activities of the past decade, I hope we agree our track record addressing environmental and social issues has been guided by more vision than the choices we've made regarding our economic and financial well-being. The information you will read here describes four current projects that encompass the broader definition of sustainability and identifies actions, present and future, to set a course toward a community which is strongly founded on each of the three legs of the sustainability "stool" – economic, environmental and social.

## **BACKGROUND**

Beginning with our first Comprehensive Plan in the early 1990s, the City has strived to integrate sustainability principles and goals in its decision-making. Almost 20 years later, these principles remain a priority in our City government and in our community

Excerpts from the Comprehensive Plan include:

- Fifth Overriding Principle: Development should be based on the principle that the Island's environmental resources are finite and must be maintained at a sustainable level.
- Environmental Element, Goal 2: Encourage sustainability in city government operations.
- Environmental Element, Goal 4: Encourage sustainable development that maintains diversity of healthy, functioning ecosystems that are essential for maintaining our quality of life and economic viability into the future.
- Land Use Element, Goal 3: This Comprehensive Plan recognizes and affirms that, as an island, the City has natural constraints based on the carrying capacity of its natural systems. The Plan strives to establish a development pattern that is consistent with the goals of the community and compatible with the Island's natural systems.

## **CHRONOLOGY AND SAMPLING OF SUSTAINABLE ACTIVITIES**

- 2000, City Hall was completed and recognized by the American Institute of Architects with a Top Ten Green Award.
- Resolution 2002-7, the City Council adopted goals such as inviting and encouraging citizens, businesses, schools and clubs to engage in environmentally sound practices; co-sponsoring activities and providing support through city departments and continually evaluating city operations, facilities, services and purchasing to ensure the highest standard of environmental protection.

---

DARLENE KORDONOWY, MAYOR

Phone: (206) 842-2545 Fax: (206) 780-8600

[mayor@ci.bainbridge-isl.wa.us](mailto:mayor@ci.bainbridge-isl.wa.us)

City's Web Site: [www.ci.bainbridge-isl.wa.us](http://www.ci.bainbridge-isl.wa.us)

- Resolution 2002-49 (updated 2005-13), authorized the Non-Motorized Advisory Committee and supported the Non-Motorized Transportation Plan to promote alternative modes of transportation.
- 2004 – 2006, many public events and ongoing planning activities conducted through Winslow Tomorrow promoting sustainability in general and specifically, the concept of a green, walkable, pedestrian and bicycle-friendly downtown.
- April 29, 2005, I signed the U.S. Mayor's Climate Protection Agreement. (More information on the agreement is available at Mayor Greg Nickel's website, <http://www.seattle.gov/mayor/climate/cpaText.htm>).
- Resolution 2005-78, the City Council reaffirmed its commitment to resource conservation, utilization of renewable energy, and the related goals of the Comprehensive Plan.
- 2006, the City Council adopted as one of the City's eight strategic goals, to: Ensure the sustainability of our natural resources and protect our natural systems. This goal has been endorsed by each subsequent Council.
- 2006, a series of Brown Bag Lunches were held at city hall to foster community discussion on opportunities for moving toward a more sustainable community. These lunches became the launching pad for the non-profit organization Sustainable Bainbridge.
- 2006, a three-student team from Bainbridge Graduate Institute documented their work analyzing the city's readiness for a sustainability initiative and created a baseline to determine the extent to which the city was applying sustainable measures throughout its activities. *Sustainable City Plan, June 2, 2006*, also included recommendations for areas to address.
- Resolution 2007 – 10, the City Council supported "Saving Energy Together," a local sustainable energy program.
- 2007, the city provided \$7,700 in funding for outreach and educational efforts by the Bainbridge Island Clearinghouse -- Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency, and \$3,000 in support of Sustainable Bainbridge.
- 2007, the city established an educational page about Solar Energy on its web site <http://www.ci.bainbridge-isl.wa.us/default.asp?ID=1120> providing resources for homeowners and others; sponsored the Solar Energy Forum, an educational event at City Hall; and funded an educational video of the 2006 Solar Energy Forum and Solar Home Tour.

---

DARLENE KORDONOWY, MAYOR

Phone: (206) 842-2545 Fax: (206) 780-8600

[mayor@ci.bainbridge-isl.wa.us](mailto:mayor@ci.bainbridge-isl.wa.us)

City's Web Site: [www.ci.bainbridge-isl.wa.us](http://www.ci.bainbridge-isl.wa.us)

- March, 2007, Honeywell conducted an Energy Evaluation & Audit of city hall and the WWTP and reported that these facilities were being operated in an “energy efficient manner”.
- 2007, legislature adopts SHB 1135, establishing aquifer conservation zones on the island.
- 2007, the Planning Department and the 2025 Growth Advisory Committee sponsored a Community Conversation on Growth and Sustainability with Patrick Condon, an internationally recognized Landscape Architect and Planner.
- 2007, the Core 40 Program, initiated by the Non-Motorized Transportation Committee, proposed a network of non-motorized facilities across the island that encourages the reduction of greenhouse gasses.
- 2008, the City retained a consultant team to revise and reorganize Titles 17 (Subdivisions) and 18 (Zoning) of the city’s municipal code. Part 2 of their *Diagnosis and Annotated Outline, April 2008* presented three major “themes” for improving Bainbridge Island’s development regulations, the third of which “encourages sustainable development”.
- 2008, the city joined ICLEI-Local Governments for Sustainability, a membership organization of local governments committed to advancing climate protection and sustainable development. ICLEI US’s mission is to build, serve, and drive a movement of local governments to advance deep reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and achieve tangible improvements in local sustainability. (ICLEI was established as the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives. The organization is now officially ICLEI-Local Governments for Sustainability.)

## **FOUR PROJECTS ENCOMPASSING THE BROADER DEFINITION OF SUSTAINABILITY**

### **Project Design and Evaluation Training**

Tools are needed to design and implement sustainable programs and projects. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Coastal Services Center has offered the city a Project Design and Evaluation Training Course, free of charge. 30 City staffmembers and officials will participate in the training, which will be held at City Hall on Thursday, April 30 and Friday, May 1.

---

DARLENE KORDONOWY, MAYOR

Phone: (206) 842-2545 Fax: (206) 780-8600

[mayor@ci.bainbridge-isl.wa.us](mailto:mayor@ci.bainbridge-isl.wa.us)

City’s Web Site: [www.ci.bainbridge-isl.wa.us](http://www.ci.bainbridge-isl.wa.us)

This course provides coastal resource management professionals with the knowledge, skills and tools to design and implement projects that have measurable impacts. After attending the workshop, participants will be able to:

- Describe the context of project design and evaluation within the scope of agency and organization missions, strategic plans and established program niches
- Explain the role of logic models in project design and evaluation and create logic models for their projects
- Use performance measurement as part of project evaluation

### **ICLEI Cities for Climate Protection Project**

**The Cities for Climate Protection assists cities to adopt policies and implement quantifiable measures to reduce local greenhouse gas emissions, improve air quality, and enhance urban livability and sustainability.**

**Goal:** understand how the City of Bainbridge Island's decisions affect energy use and how these decisions can be used to mitigate global climate change while improving community quality of life.

**Methodology:** use an interdepartmental team and ICLEI tools and training to identify the city's greenhouse gas emissions, adopt an emissions target, develop a Local Action Plan to meet established reduced emissions targets, and establish performance measures to gauge progress towards meeting emission targets.

#### **Timeline**

- Establish baseline emissions: Interdepartmental team will be formed in May 2009, and will begin groundwork to measure city's emissions targets.

**Anticipated completion December 2009**

- Establish emissions targets: **December 2009 - March 2010**
- Develop action plan: **December 2009 – March 2010**
- Establish performance measures: **March 2010 – April 2010**

#### **ICLEI's Five Milestones for Climate Protection:**

##### **1. Conduct a baseline emissions inventory and forecast**

The City first calculates greenhouse gas emissions for a base year (e.g., 2000) and for a forecast year (e.g., 2015). The calculations capture emissions levels from all municipal operations (e.g., city owned and/or operated buildings, streetlights, transit systems, wastewater treatment facilities) and from all community-related activities (e.g., residential and commercial buildings, motor vehicles, waste

streams, industry). This inventory and forecast provide a benchmark for planning and monitoring progress.

**2. Adopt an emissions reduction target for the forecast year**

The City passes a resolution establishing an emission reduction target for the city. The target is essential. It both fosters political will and creates a framework that guides the planning and implementation of measures.

**3. Develop a Local Climate Action Plan**

The City then develops a Local Climate Action Plan, ideally with robust public input from all stakeholders. The plan details the policies and measures that the local government will take to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and achieve its emissions reduction target. Most plans include a timeline, a description of financing mechanisms, and an assignment of responsibility to departments and staff. In addition to direct greenhouse gas reduction measures, most plans also incorporate public awareness and education efforts.

**4. Implement policies and measures**

The City implements the policies and measures contained in their Local Climate Action Plan. Typical policies and measures include energy efficiency improvements to municipal buildings and water treatment facilities, streetlight retrofits, public transit improvements, installation of renewable power applications, and methane recovery from waste management.

**5. Monitor and verify results**

Monitoring and verifying progress on the implementation of measures to reduce or avoid greenhouse gas emissions is an ongoing process. Monitoring begins once measures are implemented and continues for the life of the measures, providing important feedback that can be use to improve the measures over time. ICLEI's software provides a uniform methodology for cities to report on measures.

## Island To Island Challenge

Early last year, informal discussions began with an elected official from Mercer Island on making our two communities more sustainable. From these discussions, an idea was developed to form an Island to Island Challenge. The challenge would be a fun way for the communities of Mercer Island and Bainbridge Island to support each other toward creating more sustainable island communities. It is also an opportunity to build energy and excitement among community members to inspire sustainable action. The cities will work together by sharing ideas, reporting on their progress, celebrating milestones together, and challenging their communities to work together to build a sustainable future. It is fitting that we take up this challenge as we update our Comprehensive Plan in 2011 and embark on our work with ICLEI to become a more sustainable community.

---

DARLENE KORDONOWY, MAYOR

Phone: (206) 842-2545 Fax: (206) 780-8600

[mayor@ci.bainbridge-isl.wa.us](mailto:mayor@ci.bainbridge-isl.wa.us)

City's Web Site: [www.ci.bainbridge-isl.wa.us](http://www.ci.bainbridge-isl.wa.us)

## Living Community Case Study

Jason McLennan, island resident and Chief Executive Officer of CASCADIA Regional Green Building Council, is gathering a team of experts to conduct a Living Community Case Study of Bainbridge Island. This Case Study would provide the City and Bainbridge residents with a report setting forth a holistic vision of a sustainable Bainbridge future. The vision would look at fulfilling the following basics:

1. A strong sense of community
2. A vibrant, healthy environment
3. Substantial self-reliance in meeting food, energy, water, and other basic needs
4. Carbon neutral and zero harmful waste discharge

The City has been asked to participate by facilitating quick and reliable access to public information and data including, but not limited to, maps, plans, topos, energy and water use data, city budgets and current infrastructure plans. The results of this Case Study will provide access to a new layer of critically important information -- not typically available to a community -- that can be used to plan our future and make decisions about our infrastructure and civic needs. While the specific outcomes of this approach can't be predicted at this time, what is certain is that there will be a greater level of understanding of sustainability within the context of the resources and restraints found on Bainbridge Island. This will provide the City and its residents with new tools, allowing for more informed and resource appropriate decisions about infrastructure and land use planning.

## NEXT STEPS

Currently, the city administration is developing a calendar and an achievable scope of activities for Phase III of our Strategy to Build a Foundation for Sustainable Financial Management. This effort will establish the foundation for the city's 2010 budget and set the stage as we make important choices for the 2011-2012 biennium. During Phase III, we will take a closer look at our utilities, reevaluate how we fund our capital projects, and develop our business plan – what services do we provide, how can we provide them most effectively, and how do we fund these activities. As we identify performance measures and establish our foundation plan, the lens of sustainability will support a more unified vision regarding the City's goals, objectives and priorities.

The Sustainability Initiative is designed to move us in this direction. The actions we have taken to date include naming an internal coordinator, Special Projects Planner Kelly Dickson, and acquiring the ICLEI Clean Air and Climate Protection software. During the next 120 days, we will hold the Project Design and Evaluation Training, which will foster staff effectiveness across the city's programs; train staff to begin data collection under

---

DARLENE KORDONOWY, MAYOR

Phone: (206) 842-2545 Fax: (206) 780-8600

[mayor@ci.bainbridge-isl.wa.us](mailto:mayor@ci.bainbridge-isl.wa.us)

City's Web Site: [www.ci.bainbridge-isl.wa.us](http://www.ci.bainbridge-isl.wa.us)

the ICLEI model, and begin collecting that data. This will help us establish a baseline and quantifiable measures for progress. Creation of a staff and citizen's green ribbon commission has been a standard practice for each city that has worked with ICLEI, and as a city and a community, we need to determine whether that is an approach that we want to take. The commission's job would be to help the city develop a local action plan for moving towards sustainability. There are other specific elements of the ICLEI program, such as a requirement that the City Council adopt a Resolution affirming our community's commitment to climate protection, and the opportunity for Council members to participate in ICLEI training workshops. Additional steps will include engaging in the Island to Island Challenge, and continuing to explore how to integrate the screen of sustainability as we design future actions to set a course toward a sustainable community.

---

**DARLENE KORDONOWY, MAYOR**

Phone: (206) 842-2545 Fax: (206) 780-8600

[mayor@ci.bainbridge-isl.wa.us](mailto:mayor@ci.bainbridge-isl.wa.us)

City's Web Site: [www.ci.bainbridge-isl.wa.us](http://www.ci.bainbridge-isl.wa.us)

# Building a Foundation for a Sustainable Financial Management Plan - Preliminary

