



CITY OF SANTA BARBARA

COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

AGENDA DATE: April 15, 2008
TO: Mayor and Councilmembers
FROM: City Administrator's Office
SUBJECT: Green Cities California Resolution

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council adopt, by reading of title only, A Resolution of the Council of the City of Santa Barbara to Join with the Cities of Berkeley, Los Angeles, Pasadena, Sacramento, San Diego, San Francisco, San Jose, Santa Monica and the County of Marin to Create Green Cities California, to Cooperatively and Collectively Take Action to Accelerate Local, Regional, National and International Efforts to Achieve Sustainability.

DISCUSSION:

Green Cities California is a collaboration of California agencies that joined together in October 2007 to discuss common environmental issues. Current member agencies include the Cities of Berkeley, Los Angeles, Pasadena, Sacramento, San Diego, San Francisco, San Jose, Santa Monica and the County of Marin, representing over 8 million California residents.

The effort was founded by sustainability coordinators of the cities mentioned above to improve communication and information sharing among cities with innovative environmental programs. Participating cities are pursuing aggressive policies in the areas of green building, alternative fuel, renewable energy, waste prevention, water conservation, toxic reduction, and greenhouse gas emissions planning. In these areas, the City of Santa Barbara shares many best practices with the other cities.

The group was formed with several goals to help cooperate on regional, state, and national environmental policies. The coalition of cities intends to coordinate on key legislative proposals by making recommendations to support or oppose legislation. The cities also wish to initiate policy actions as a collective group to improve implementation and leverage group resources.

REVIEWED BY: _____Finance _____Attorney

Agenda Item No. _____

Initial Actions

The first actions of the Green Cities Resolution were determined by the sustainability coordinators as priority initiatives that could be duplicated in other cities and encourage the public to follow. Each effort relates to daily practices and represents a step a business or individual can take to protect the environment. These actions include the following:

1. Purchase of "100% post-consumer recycled" paper for all government operations
2. Elimination of the purchase of bottled water for government operations and government-sponsored events
3. Develop a campaign for the municipal purchase of local California foods
4. Develop an emissions offset plan for municipal air travel
5. Develop fuel efficiency standards for municipal vehicle fleets

The City has already implemented several actions. The City's Central Store purchases and stocks only 100% post-consumer recycled paper for City printing and duplicating needs. Tap water is poured at City meetings and events instead of providing bottled water. The City purchases vehicles that are fuel-efficient or operate on alternate fuels whenever available to meet operational needs.

The City's staff Green Team members have expressed an interest in moving forward on the remaining actions. While the City organization does not make significant food purchases, there are opportunities to encourage the purchase of local California foods. An emissions offset plan can also be developed to create an internal or public fund for the City's upcoming renewable energy or energy conservation projects. Details of both initiatives would need to be developed.

These efforts would help reduce greenhouse gas emissions, discourage the use of virgin paper and plastic, support local food growers, and educate the public about simple actions that can reduce their impact on the environment.

On February 25, 2007, the Sustainability Council Committee heard a presentation on the Green Cities California initiatives and forwarded the resolution to Council for adoption.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT

As part of the Sustainable Santa Barbara Program, the adoption of the Green Cities California Resolution is a significant step toward the protection and enhancement of the environment. The partnership will encourage sharing information and best practices for environmental policies and initiatives.

PREPARED BY: Nina Johnson, Assistant to the City Administrator

SUBMITTED BY: Jim Armstrong, City Administrator

APPROVED BY: City Administrator's Office