CITY OF REDONDO BEACH

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT Strategic Plan
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**Redondo Beach Harbor Commission**

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SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

Planning for growth and ensuring that it occurs in such a way as to conserve resources is no longer an option – it is a necessity. Urban sprawl and inefficient use of resources have produced development trends that cannot be maintained. Past development patterns and practices are taxing the City’s infrastructure: we have been using resources at an alarming rate. The result is diminished overall livability, contrary to our City’s stated mission “to enhance the quality of life for those who live, work, visit and play in our community.”

To rectify the problem, the City of Redondo Beach has created a three-year Strategic Plan that promotes the concepts of Sustainable Development. Sustainable Development is defined as “development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.” It is not enough that a plan ensures quality of life for us today; it must sustain that quality of life for future residents of our community. The vision statement from that plan is “Redondo Beach will be the most livable, friendly and attractive California beach city.” Pursuit of the policies contained in this Plan will further promote the vision of the City.

This Plan sets forth goals, specific objectives, and methods of implementing sustainable (green) development policies and programs.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN PRACTICE

The idea of sustainable development is not new. City governments in Seattle, Portland, Austin, San Francisco, San Jose, and Santa Monica have adopted growth policies that promote sustainability. Various Redondo Beach City Departments also offer a variety of programs that advance conservation and other sustainability principles and have done so for several years. The City offers programs that do the following:

- Reduce residential and commercial waste generation
- Recycle used oil and household hazardous waste
- Enhance storm water quality
- Reduce energy consumption
- Use reclaimed water for irrigation
- Develop local jobs and housing, including mixed-use development
- Provide a voluntary program for preservation of historic structures.
- Promote awareness through education
This plan recommends continuing these programs. Further, it recommends augmenting them to reduce barriers to acceptance, provide incentives for use, and educate the stakeholders regarding available programs. Policy and program recommendations are guided by the following three concepts:

- Where possible, programs should be voluntary and incentive-based.
- Education should be a high priority in implementation.
- The City should take a leadership role in advancing sustainability.

STAKEHOLDERS

The stakeholders include residents, businesses, schools, developers, architects and designers, contractors, realtors, environmental groups, utility companies, elected officials and City management, and future generations.

BACKGROUND

The development of this plan began with direction from the City Council on April 16, 2002. In conjunction with Earth Day activities, the Mayor and City Council issued a proclamation endorsing the principles of sustainable development and stating the importance of developing a City-wide strategy. The City Council also directed that a Sustainable Development Policy be prepared and adopted to advance the City’s stated goal of “enhancing the quality of life in neighborhoods.”

Following this direction, a multidepartmental team – The Green Team – was assembled to develop recommendations and prepare a draft document for Council consideration. The team researched sustainable policies and programs throughout the country, developed vision and mission statements, and set forth goals and a strategic plan. This report recognizes there are seven different policy areas – land use, building, economic development, energy, water resources, materials and recycling, transportation – that need to be included when addressing sustainability.

The document has undergone considerable review by many commissions including Planning, Public Works, Harbor, and Recreation and Parks. It also has been reviewed by numerous staff members to ensure that it is clear and concise and provides meaningful implementation strategies.
SECTION 2: VISION, MISSION, GOALS

The vision, mission and goals of the Sustainable Development Strategic Plan are presented below.

VISION

To achieve city-wide knowledge and opportunities to build and occupy structures that have a maximum impact on the well-being of occupants and a minimal impact on the environment.

MISSION

To encourage and promote sustainable development through policies, strategies, and programs.

THREE-YEAR GOALS

- Increase community awareness of sustainable development practices.
- Revise applicable codes to promote sustainable urban design and development.
- Include sustainable building practices in City projects.
- Increase public and private water, energy resource and recycling conservation practices.
- Increase sustainable transportation practices.
SECTION 3: STRATEGIC PLAN

Each of the goals of the Strategic Plan requires a measurable set of objectives to maximize attainment over a reasonable period of time. The objectives presented below are designed for completion over six months. At that point, progress will be measured and objectives will be added and/or revised.

1. Increase community awareness of sustainable development practices

Six-Month Objectives:

- Create education packets on incentives offered by the State and local government and utility companies.
  Responsible persons: The Public Works Director (lead) and the supporting Public Works staff.
  Due date: October 28, 2004

- Consolidate information and provide a report on available grants for water conservation.
  Responsible persons: The Public Works Senior Management Analyst (lead) and the Superintendent of Parks.
  Due date: September 30, 2004

- Develop a program to recognize, reward, and publicize outstanding sustainable development projects.
  Responsible persons: The Economic Development Manager (lead) and Public Works Senior Management Analyst.
  Due date: September 30, 2004

- Prepare a draft brochure on green building for review by the “Green Team” that includes the economic benefits of sustainable development practices.
  Responsible persons: Senior Management Analyst (lead) and Associate Planner.
  Due date: October 28, 2004

Future Objectives

- Conduct an education workshop on how to improve sustainability through urban design.
• Conduct six business visitations (three per quarter) to enhance outreach efforts and inform businesses about the City’s sustainable development practices.

• Compile information on sustainable development in collaboration with surrounding south bay cities and/or utility companies, and make that information available on the internet, resource center or other centralized location such as the City library.

• Compile a list of developers and companies committed to and involved in sustainable development practices and send them information regarding the City’s sustainable policies and programs.

• Provide training on sustainable practices to City departments.

• Develop a local sustainable building guide and make available to the public via the web, building department and other locations.

2. **Revise applicable codes to promote sustainable urban design and development.**

**Six Month Objectives:**

• Review one section of the existing Building Code for barriers to green building and prepare a report recommending revisions.
  Responsible persons: Building Regulations Manager
  Due Date: October 28, 2004

• Develop recommendations for revisions to the home-based business requirements to enhance opportunities for establishment of businesses/offices that reduce commuting in preparation for submission to the Planning Commission.
  Responsible persons: Planning, Transit and Enforcement Services Director (lead), Associate Planner.
  Due Date: September 30, 2004

**Future Objectives**

• Review the Zoning Ordinance for possible zoning changes to promote sustainable practices.

• Prepare commercial design guidelines.

• Add landscape guidelines to existing land use policy and code revisions to promote sustainable design by reducing hardscape and increasing natural drainage through controlled grading, drought tolerant landscaping,
shading and native plants, and regulation to save large trees where appropriate.

- Develop a comprehensive landscape code encouraging the use of irrigation systems and water wise plants, as well as the use of mulch for weed control and water conservation.

- Present a recycled/reused product procurement resolution or ordinance to the City Council.

3. **Include sustainable building practices in City Projects**

- Incorporate sustainable design features into one Capital Improvement Project.
  Responsible persons: Capital Projects Program Manager (lead), Engineering, Public Works, and Planning staff.
  Due Date: September 30, 2004

- Conduct two tours of City Hall to demonstrate sustainable development and conservation practices.
  Responsible persons: Economic Development Manager (lead) and Public Works Superintendent and support staff.
  Due Date: October 28, 2004

4. **Increase public and private water, energy resource and recycling conservation practices.**

**Six Month Objectives**

- Prepare an energy conservation report for the public on the status of efforts and put the report on the City website.
  Responsible persons: Public Works Director (lead) and support staff
  Due Date: September 20, 2004

- Present an evaluation of alternatives to the City Manager for modification of the energy plan check fee to encourage residents, builders and developers to use sustainable building practices.
  Persons responsible: City Engineer/Building Official (lead), Building Regulations Manager.
  Due Date: August 27, 2004
Future Objectives

- Evaluate the impact of requiring new public facilities to exceed minimum energy efficiency standards, as an example of how to reduce operational costs.
- Develop a program with which all participants must comply or exceed energy efficiency requirements of Title 24. Provide incentives such as reductions in fees. Criteria may include: compliance with EPA Energy Star for Buildings program, reduced C&D waste, energy savings, and recycled buildings.
- Prepare sustainable building design guidelines.
- Study the feasibility of participating in a regional seawater desalination project.
- Develop a strategy to promote low-flow plumbing fixtures.
- Identify a site for drop-off of excess building materials from construction sites.

5. Increase sustainable transportation practices

- Perform outreach to major employers and their employees to promote development of programs to increase participation in transportation programs.
  Responsible persons: Transit Manager (lead) and Economic Development Manager.
  Due Date: August 27, 2004

- Provide recommendations for incentives to employees and employers for promoting sustainable transportation policies.
  Responsible person: Transit Manager
  Due Date: October 28, 2004
SECTION 4: BARRIERS TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

It is important to understand factors that could inhibit the successful implementation of sustainable practices. These barriers can be grouped into three categories.

INFORMATION BARRIERS

There is no commonly accepted working definition of sustainable development.
Residents are confused as to the meaning of sustainable development. Ask two persons to define it. One might refer to energy conservation, while another mentions recycling. We are lacking a consensus on minimum performance standards, methods of evaluating and measuring development, the activities that are environmentally stressful, and what are the economic impacts. Without a specific, working definition it is difficult to promote the concept, identify goals, and measure results.

For purposes of the Strategic Plan, Sustainable Development is defined as “development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”

We lack a public policy defining benefits and a method of communicating those benefits to the stakeholders.
Sustainable development is more than doing the “environmentally right thing.” The efficient use of resources and other smart growth practices provide social, physical, and economic benefits. We need to define tangible benefits and communicate them to the stakeholders.

The great amount of information on sustainable development is scattered. Thus, it cannot be widely promoted and distributed.
Helpful information is available on various websites, in databases, as product information, and from incentive programs. However, few architects, developers, or members of the community have the time or money to conduct research.

Many members of the community believe that some resource-efficient products are inferior to traditional products.
In the past, such products as low-flush toilets and plastic lumber failed to perform as well as traditional products. The public needs to learn that, over time, these and many other products have improved to the point that they perform as well or better than traditional products.
REGULATORY AND PROCESS BARRIERS

It is unclear from various codes and regulations that Sustainable Development is a priority for the City.
Over time, City codes and regulations have responded to legislative mandates and local issues. While some codes and regulations include Sustainable Development practices, there has not been a concerted effort to make sure this occurs.

Some codes and regulations are inconsistent with Sustainable Development practices.
Considerable progress has been made in this area by allowing smart growth practices such as mixed-use development, shared parking, and overlay zoning. However, regulations and codes pertaining to building materials, transit development, home occupations, and water and energy conservation must be examined. They need to be modified to facilitate – rather than hinder – sustainable practices.

The City has few, if any, minimum performance standards or benchmarks for Sustainable Development.
Sustainable Development lends itself readily to results-oriented performance measurements. Further, benchmarking will demonstrate the universal value of Sustainable Development and facilitate acceptance and implementation.

INCENTIVE BARRIERS

Information is lacking on the long-term economic benefits of Sustainable Development.
Most economic analysis of project costs is limited to first-time costs; it does not consider potential long-term life-cycle savings. Rarely do analysts consider long-term durability, maintenance cost savings, or replacement cost savings.

Incentive programs (rebates, loans, technical assistance, and recognition programs) are complex and lack uniformity.
This complexity and lack of uniformity is a deterrent to the use of incentive programs. Residents do not know how to take advantage of them. Most incentive programs are dispersed across City departments or provided through outside agencies such as utility companies.

Most available incentive programs are offered to developers, not homeowners, architects, or those involved in construction.
To successfully incorporate sustainable practices into a project, it is critical to provide information early on to homeowners, designers, architects, and those involved in construction. Uninformed people resist change. Education on the benefits of sustainable development options will be critical.