



Office of Mayor Miro Weinberger

MEMORANDUM

To: City Councilors
From: Mayor Miro Weinberger
Date: December 10, 2013
Re: Burlington Sustainability Program Partnership Proposal

Overview

This memo outlines a plan for a Burlington Sustainability Program, developed from the Legacy Program's environmental component. The City intends to re-invigorate its relationship with Legacy stakeholders through a one-year pilot partnership among the City of Burlington (the City), the University of Vermont (UVM), Fletcher Allen Health Care (FAHC), Champlain College (Champlain), and the United Way (UW).

The purpose of the Program would be to (i) effectively coordinate the work on shared projects among the major program stakeholders and (ii) lead the City's effort to implement the joint projects and find cost-savings through sustainability measures. Consistent with the recommendations outlined in the major stakeholders' various planning documents (i.e., the City's IBM Smarter Cities Challenge report and Climate Action Plan, UVM's Climate Action Plan, and Champlain's Sustainability Plan), the overarching goals of the Program would be to reduce our community's greenhouse gas emissions, improve lakeshore protection and water quality issues, and leverage the City's existing Smart-grid infrastructure.

The Program would require clear, jointly-devised metrics to measure progress in achieving these goals, and a clear reporting structure (described below). Given the City's position embedded in a larger community, success of the program will require the success of the broader partnership. For discussion, several topics for potential project collaboration during the pilot year include:

- **Transportation**, including electric vehicle (EV) charging station deployment and the shared EV concept proposal in the IBM Smarter Cities Challenge report, smart parking management, fuel reduction through eco-driving projects, commute to work initiatives and Neighborhood-focused efforts to enhance walkability and reduce single occupancy vehicle use in the City, and the coordination of land use and transportation policies;
- **Energy**, including bringing to conclusion the long-standing district heating conversation, efficiency in public and private sector buildings, and the formation and deployment of student and other volunteer teams to conduct walk-through energy audits;
- **Waste**, including jointly managed education and outreach efforts to bolster recycling and composting, and the possible co-deployment of interactive waste disposal units.

Structure and Funding

The Program would formally begin implementation in FY15 (July 1, 2014). Prior to its launch, stakeholders would name a Steering Committee potentially composed of representatives from the different stakeholders, the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission's Environment – Community – Opportunity – Sustainability (ECOS) Plan Leadership Team (to ensure regional integration), and the Legacy Steering Committee. The responsibility of the Steering Committee from January 2014 – June 2014 would be to:

- Refine the pilot-year partnership goals
- Select the joint projects to be implemented in FY15
 - Identify working groups to lead each project
- Define the metrics to measure progress
- Establish the staff and financial commitments to the Program for FY15
- Define the Steering Committee's authorities and annual meeting schedule
- Decide whether to host a "Sustainability Summit" to engage the public and re-launch the program
- Identify the staff contacts for each stakeholder to ensure consistent communication
- Establish a regular reporting process on the project implementation progress
- Develop a shared sustainability message among all Program stakeholders

The City's Sustainability Coordinator will dedicate 35 percent of her time to staffing the Steering Committee and preparing to implement the selected projects in FY15. The City will seek investments from stakeholder partners to offset the time dedicated to partnership activities and staffing the Steering Committee across FY14 and FY15. In addition, the City will need to request no more than \$39,603 from the FY14 contingency fund.

Building on Legacy

The Sustainability Program would build on the success of the Legacy Program. Begun under Mayor Peter Clavelle, provided a blueprint for the City's future on the issues of education, equity, economics, and the environment. For more than ten years, the City and other stakeholders supported the Legacy Program and provided financial support, high-level participation on the Steering Committee, and institutional expertise.

The program was a success, and seeded successful initiatives around each E, including the Partnership for Change (education), BTV Ignite (economics), and the Diversity and Equity Strategic Plan (equity). The Legacy Program also helped foster the cross-sector initiatives related to the environment—such as the different Legacy stakeholders climate action plans—that would be well-served by a Burlington Sustainability Program able to effectively coordinate among different partners on shared goals as well as lead the City's implementation efforts. The City remains committed to working with other stakeholders to enhance Burlington's reputation for sustainability and build productively from the Legacy Program's successes related to the environment.