



City of Palm Springs, Office of Sustainability

To: Sustainability Commission

From: Lindsey-Paige McCloy, Director, Office of Sustainability

Re: January Updates to the Sustainability Commission

Meeting Date: 16 January 2024

The Office of Sustainability would like to provide this update on activities since the last Commission meeting to help speed discussion at the in-person meeting. The following items can be discussed in more depth at the meeting, if desired by the Commission.

Upcoming Meetings and Events

- Next Council meeting topics: None scheduled
- Next Subcommittee meeting dates:
 - SSCOWR: Thursday, February 1
 - Climate Action/Transportation: Wednesday, February 14
 - Ad-Hoc Subcommittee on Water: TBD
- Next Farmers' Market table: TBD, probably Saturday, February 10
- Possible VillageFest table in January on a Thursday evening
- Presenting to the Upper West Side neighborhood meeting on January 20
- Table at the Palm Springs Health Run on January 27
- Next shredding and e-waste event: TBD
- Opportunities for Commissioner involvement:
 - We will still be administering the Transportation Survey until January 15. Help us get to 1000! Commissioners are welcome to join us at our public events to help administer the survey via iPads, paper, or directing people to the online option via QR codes. Please reach out to Christian if you're interested in helping administer the survey.
 - Thanks to Commissioner feedback, Juliet's survey is ready for prime time! Please take and share the survey at this link.
 - English - <https://arcg.is/1849bv0>
 - Spanish - <https://arcg.is/1ymynb0>

Commission Administrative Matters

- Our commission is now back up to 10 members, which means that our subcommittees can return to 5 members! Current numbers and members as follows:

- SSCoWR: Don Barrett, Roy Clark, Bernard Rottner, Prema Walker, **Ken Alexander (new addition)**
- Climate Action: Roy Clark, Kathy Cohn, Erik Graham, Prema Walker, **Bernard Rottner (returning from waiting list)**; Max Dirdah – waiting list
- Per AB557, as of January 1, 2024, all meetings must return to in-person unless a state of emergency is declared. Extremely limited provisions are available in the event a commissioner needs to participate in a meeting remotely. Please reach out to LP if you will need to explore a remote option.
- Commissioners have all been assigned **email addresses**, and the address and password will be distributed to you directly by LP. **Please remember** that you must be mindful of the Brown Act in communicating by email (i.e. no email, chain, or “linear” meetings – any email communication is recommended to go through Staff but should usually be 1-1 otherwise – and definitely don’t include more than 4 people discussing a topic collectively via email) and of the Public Records Act (any email communication using these addresses is considered public information and can be requested or published as such). **Due to issues accessing the address, we are still sending information to personal and City emails.**
 - Please let LP know if you are having issues accessing the email address!

Updates on Ongoing Work

Water

The State Legislative Analyst’s Office published a report on the potential impacts of the new water rules that we discussed in the fall. You can read the report here: [Assessing Early Implementation of Urban Water Use Efficiency Requirements \(ca.gov\)](#) and a CalMatters article summarizing the report here: [California's new water conservation rules too costly, analysts say- CalMatters](#)

Turf Conversion

(Note – No change to this information from last month except for the percentage committed funding. Information remains relevant!)

The public turf conversion match has been approximately 45% committed. The team is also currently developing and advising turf removal projects at San Rafael in the Sunrise Norte assessment district (funded by Measure J) and at City Hall.

The City Council has requested a report on turf conversion options at City Hall that conform with the original landscape plan (which, incidentally, was much more of a desert landscape than what exists today) which our team and Planning will compile over the coming weeks and will also share with the Commission. Planning is taking the lead on the development of this document.

Planning, DWA, and our team are working closely together to present some educational materials to project applicants because we’re seeing some confusion about the City’s requirements, especially for large projects. While DWA doesn’t place many requirements on projects to receive the turf rebate, City rules place some parameters on

what larger projects can contain. Projects above 2500 square feet are required to comply with the City's Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance, and many HOA projects have approved landscape plans that must be appropriately altered and updated. This bulletin contains some guidance on effective projects: [638348673474130000 \(palmspringsca.gov\)](https://www.palmspringsca.gov/638348673474130000)

Many project owners aren't aware that they need City approval for landscape alterations when they pursue the DWA rebate. This mismatch and confusion can slow down projects or result in costly redesigns. DWA, Planning, and Sustainability will work together to deliver presentations to ONE-PS and to area landscape architects and landscapers to encourage them to proactively incorporate the City's guidelines and rules.

Waste

We applied for just over \$90,000 in funding to CalRecycle to assist with our edible food recovery program, an important component of SB1383. These grants are allocated on a formula basis to cities based on their populations. We anticipate hearing about this funding this month.

As of the writing of this document, we are about to present the PSDS extension proposal to the City Council. We will report on the outcome of the presentation during the meeting.

Since PSDS's quarterly bills were issued at the first of the year, we've received 10 inquiries for our low-income discount program.

Foodware

Thanks to those who have been making official reports to Code Compliance of styrofoam in the wild! We will be issuing 1 repeat notice to a restaurant that is in the educational period but has not transitioned away yet and from which we receive a number of reports.

Batteries

We have collected batteries from City Hall, Demuth Park, the Fire Station, the Library, and the Farmers' Market this month. We are seeing an uptick in collection volumes.

Airport

The Master Plan Working Group will hold its next meeting on January 25. LP will attend.

EV Charging Stations

Current status of the stations is as follows:

- Museum Station: 5 of 6 Level 2 (medium speed) chargers functioning, all 4 DCFC (fast chargers) partially functioning due to broken charger clips. Roughly 20% of sessions on the DCFC fail
- City Hall Station: 1 of 2 DCFC fully functioning, the other mostly functioning; 1 of 2 L2 functioning

We did not hit our goal of returning 50% of the Out of Service stations to service this month, but we did return 50% of our out of service L2s and increased service by approximately 30%. We have been working extensively with Chargepoint and with our service provider to replace the broken charging cables and broken units.

New L2 chargers at the Convention Center and the parking lot behind the Village Green (downtown) have been commissioned and are increasing in usage as residents and visitors get used to the new hardware.

We are performing a system audit of the parking time limits to make sure that enough time is allocated for appropriate charging use at each site. We are also developing a set of “Good Neighbor” best practices and signage for each site.

Transportation

Christian launched the Transportation Survey December 1st and has administered the survey via web/newsletter, at the Farmer’s Market, the ONE PS December Meeting, the Visitor Center, at both Community Centers and various other places. So far, we have received 164 responses to the Transportation Survey and 12 responses to the Visitor Transportation Survey. Any Commissioners who are interested in helping administer the survey should contact Christian.

Christian is working on applying for a Bicycle Friendly Community evaluation via the League of American Bicyclists for the City.

Urban Environment

We will host a study session with the Planning Commission this quarter to discuss tree ordinances, as discussed in our October meeting. Outreach continues for the development of this program and achieving the TreeCity designation. Internal outreach has been very promising and productive.

Christian is leading the development of proposals for Sustainable Transportation Planning Grants focused on urban heat and shade adaptation to encourage more active transportation. We will provide more updates on this during this meeting.

Community Garden

There is now only one plot remaining in the garden! Christian will plan a meet & greet / potluck with the Community Garden members in February.

Buildings and Energy Efficiency

Juliet has been collating a variety of data sets that describe existing conditions of Palm Springs buildings and embarking on a community outreach and engagement strategy for building retrofit programs. She has published a survey of energy efficiency practices thanks to the Commission’s feedback at the last meeting.

Juliet is also finalizing analysis for our possible cannabis and renewable energy reach codes to help us understand cost implications and greenhouse gas reduction opportunities.

Greenhouse Gas Inventory and Accounting

Christian is working through the utility data acquisition process to obtain data for our 2022 Greenhouse Gas Inventory. Data has been acquired from SoCalGas, Southern California Edison, and Desert Community Energy. The team will complete contracting with PlaceWorks this month.

Fleet Electrification

We are working with Public Works and our City departments to implement a fleet electrification strategy. We are currently hampered by a lack of charging infrastructure and a lack of available models; however, we've been funded this year to make significant progress on infrastructure installation, and the CARB Advanced Clean Fleets Rule requires that a certain percentage of our new medium-duty vehicle purchases be electric starting next year. We are working closely with Fleet to develop our strategy and hope to present that to the Commission in Q1 of 2024. We will also be applying for supplemental State funding.

Key Goals for Next Month

We're hoping to continue on the following:

- Scheduling a shredding event in collaboration with PSDS
- Study session for the Tree Ordinance with Planning
- Submit grant application for heat and shade study
- Mapping key building data to understand target neighborhoods for efficiency programs
- Community outreach and project strategy for City turf conversion projects
- Fixing at least 50% of our out-of-service EV charging equipment by the end of Q1
- Eliminating 25% of the styrofoam used at VillageFest per month starting in Q1
- Signing up 15 more people per month for the low-income discount program for waste services
- Convening interagency group on fleet electrification
- Continue collecting transportation survey data and building survey data
- Apply for grant opportunities for sustainable transportation planning and EV charging
- Hiring 2 new staff to focus on waste and on program administration
- Prepare campaign and program for Earth Day
- Finalize contract for GHG analysis