



WASHOE COUNTY

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STAFF REPORT BOARD MEETING DATE: March 23, 2010

DATE: March 1, 2010
TO: Board of County Commissioners
FROM: Washoe County Green Team
THROUGH: Dave Childs, Assistant County Manager
SUBJECT: Presentation by the Washoe County Green Team regarding current activities. (All Commission Districts).

SUMMARY

Presentation by the Washoe County Green Team regarding current activities and success's of this inter-departmental team effort. It has been over a year since the Green Team has given the Board an update and there is much to report.

County Priority supported by this item: *Preserve and Enhance our Quality of life.*

PREVIOUS ACTION

Following support from the Board of County Commissioners at the April 7, 2008 strategic planning retreat, the Washoe County Green Team was formalized. **The vision of the Green Team is to preserve our resources and sustain our future. As a resource for both employees and citizens, the role of the team is to lead, manage, and implement best practices and programs in Washoe County for creating a sustainable community.** The County Commission last received an update from the Green Team on October 28, 2008. On October 28, 2008, the County Commission gave approval for the county to join the *International Council for Environmental Initiatives* (ICLEI) in order to proactively reduce our greenhouse gas emissions.

BACKGROUND

The County Green Team has been meeting monthly to work on the following items of particular interest:

- **Change the World, Start with ENERGY STAR Campaign:** The National Association of Counties (NACo) awarded Washoe County the first place award in the large county category and the county will receive a \$5,000 grant from Wal-Mart to enhance current energy conservation measures of the county. Wal-Mart

AGENDA ITEM # _____

representatives are scheduled to attend the April 27, 2010 County Commission meeting to present the check to the county.

- **Solar Photovoltaic Power:** This project will install four 30 kW solar photovoltaic systems, two on the 9th and Wells Administration Complex, one on the Reno Senior Center and one on the Northwest Library. The project cost is reimbursed from a Federal Energy Efficiency Conservation Block Grant (EECBG) in the amount of \$401,200 and NV Energy Solar Generations Rebates in amounts exceeding \$321,260.
- **Greenhouse Gas Emission Inventory:** The County has completed Milestone 1 (Emissions Inventory) of a 5 step process that is part of the ICLEI “Local Governments for Sustainability” program. Once approved by ICLEI we will move forward with step 2 (Setting a Reduction Target). ICLEI is an international non-profit dedicated to supporting local governments efforts to build sustainable communities by offering technical and professional support to help build performance based programs. The complete Milestone 1 (Emission Inventory) can be found at www.washoecounty.us/green.
- **Employee Bicycle Commuter Program:** The Green Team has worked closely with interested county employees *Bike to Work Committee* to promote enhancements to the workplace that will encourage the use of bicycles for commuting to work making Washoe County a bicycle friendly employer. The project includes:
 1. Development of a secure and appropriate location to store bicycles.
 2. Identification of a secure location for commuter lockers and installation of lockers.
 3. Identification of a shower area at the 9th street complex for employee use.
 4. Development of *Biking to Work Guidelines* for employees (attached).
- **Bicycle Safety Committee Grant:** The County has applied for a \$1,000 dollar Mini Grant from the Nevada Biking Committee to be used to install bike racks inside the 9th street complex garage. The Green Team anticipates applying for similar grants in the future.
- **Recycling Programs:** The Green Team has initiated a CFL light bulb recycling program that is available to employees here at the 9th street complex. Our recycling operations have been expanded to include the blue bins for glass, aluminum, plastic in addition to the exiting recycling of paper.

The non-profit organization *Keep Truckee Meadows Beautiful*, in conjunction with Washoe County Regional Parks and Open Space spearheaded the recycling of 18,360 pounds or 9.81 tons of phone books during this year’s effort and we will be requesting approx 100 trees for this year’s October planting. This past October, Washoe County planted 150 trees from the results of the 12 tons of phone books that were recycled in 2008 from Washoe County. 75 trees were planted at Rancho San Rafael, 55 at Hidden Valley Park and 20 at Washoe Golf

Course. The trees were planted with help from over 100 volunteers from the community and organizations

Keep Truckee Meadows Beautiful, in conjunction with Washoe County Regional Parks and Open Space spearheaded the 2009 Christmas tree recycling program. Approximately 10,500 trees have been recycled in the area with 3,375 trees at Rancho San Rafael Park and over 3000 trees at Bartley Ranch Park. The mulch from these trees will be available to the community at Rancho San Rafael Park and Bartley Ranch Park in the spring of 2010.

The Truckee River Clean up day on September 26th, 2009 was very successful with 12 tons of trash removed along the river, 2 tons of recyclable material, 118 storm drains stenciled, and 29 trees wrapped to protect them from beaver damage.

- **Energy Conservation:** Public Works has been busy with heating, ventilating and air conditioning (HVAC) reprogramming activities at many county facilities that saving energy and costs.

Re-programmed several of the chiller plant controls at Mills Lane to reduce energy consumption and the number of starts on the 300 ton chillers by 3,800 annually. This along with the re-programming of the system to meet the standard county energy policy reduced the total energy usage by 846,000 kWh last year. This netted the county a savings of approx. \$42,000 in utility cost.

Converted 119 pneumatic [Variable Air Volume \(mixing boxes in the ceiling\)](#) to [Direct Digital Controls](#) at the Parr Jail. Based on a previous project completed by an outside contractor, the project would have cost \$220,000. Staff completed the project in house for \$110,000. This project improved occupant comfort, reduced maintenance calls and provided energy savings.

Re-programmed all the heat pumps at the Spanish Springs Library to reduce the number of equipment starts. The contractor supplied program had the pumps cycling too frequently. This along with re-programming set points to comply with the county energy policy reduced the total energy usage by 192,000 kWh. This netted the county a savings of approx. \$9,600 in utility cost.

Added occupancy sensors to the Jan Evans gymnasium and C wing housing that is seldom used. The HVAC operating time for the gymnasium was reduced from 84 hrs/week to 26 hrs/week. The HVAC operating time for C wing housing was reduced by 6,000 hrs over a 9 month period. This along with re-programming set points to comply with the county energy policy reduced the total energy usage by 1,135,000 kWh. This netted the county a savings of approx. \$56,700 in utility cost.

Added aerators to the majority of water faucets and installed new flush diaphragms to inmate toilets to limit water usage at the 911 Parr detention facility. This is saving the county nearly 1,000,000 gallons of water each month (approx. \$2,000 each month).

Automated water pumping based on time of day and effective utilization of storage capacity. Water pumping now takes into consideration energy rate structure, which is variable depending on time of day. Potential energy savings will be identified after one year of analysis. This allows for consideration the seasonal fluctuation in water use. In addition to time adjustments, Water Resources has begun to purchase and install higher quality pumps that take into account energy use during start up and shut down modes (variable speed pumps) whenever they need to replace pump motors on its 54 wells.

- **County Regulations Guiding the Development of Renewable Energy:** Department of Community Development staff is presently working on new Development Code standards that will guide and promote the use of solar, geothermal and wind energy in the county. The county approved the Virginia Peak Wind Project last year which we hope will be our states first commercial wind farm. Staff is presently working to permit a 20MW solar generation power station being proposed on the Fish Springs Ranch property west of Pyramid Lake.
- **Cooperation with Local Agencies and Partners:** Washoe County Green Team reached out to other local agencies and partners to help improve sustainability throughout the region. Our team members are also participants on regional working groups including GreenUp, Sierra Green Building Association (SIGBA), renewable energy, Keep Truckee Meadows Beautiful (Illegal Dumping Task Force and board) and more. In addition, team members volunteered and helped to organize on regional projects including tree, phone book and electronic recycling programs. The team leaders for Sparks, Washoe County, City of Reno, and University of Nevada Reno meet informally monthly to discuss opportunities for cooperation.

FISCAL IMPACT

The \$5,000 grant from Wal-Mart will be used to enhance the county's current energy conservation measures and the \$1,000 dollar Mini Grant will be used to install bike racks inside the 9th street complex garage.

RECOMMENDATION

Accept the presentation by the Washoe County Green Team regarding current activities.

POSSIBLE MOTION

Move to accept the presentation by the Washoe County Green Team regarding current activities.

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Attachment(s):Biking to Work Guidelines

cc: Adrian Freund, Community Development
Dan St. John, Public Works
Doug Doolittle, Regional Parks and Open Space
Kathy Carter, Community Relations
Dr. Mary Anderson, District Health Department

Biking to Work



Thank you for electing to bicycle to work. Your choice of transportation helps reduce your carbon footprint and contributes to your healthy lifestyle. These suggested guidelines were prepared by Washoe County's Green Team to assist you with your biking commutes. The Green Team encourages your cooperation with these few guidelines and thanks you for choosing to "Bike to Work".

- ✓ Bicycle lockers and racks are provided on a first come, first served basis. Please do not leave locking devices on unoccupied lockers or racks. Your courtesy will enable other bicyclists to use the locker or rack when you are not.
 - Six bicycle lockers are located outside of Buildings A, B and C within the County's administration complex.
 - Bicycle racks are also located at various locations outside of Buildings A, B and C.
 - Bicycle racks will be installed in the near future at the loading dock area inside the parking garage under Building A. If you require access to the garage to use these racks, please coordinate with Dave Solaro, Public Works representative on the Green Team.
 - The County will assume no liability for your bicycle or bicycle parts/components. Remember to properly secure your bicycle and remove those components/parts of value when storing your bicycle in any County locker or rack.
- ✓ Remember that bicycles are road vehicles and not for use on sidewalks and pedestrian paths. Please keep the sidewalks and paths around and into the various County buildings for use by pedestrians and walk your bicycle in these areas.
- ✓ Your safety is of utmost concern to Washoe County and the Green Team. Wear your helmet and display appropriate reflective devices. Install lights as needed to ensure that others, particularly drivers, can see you. Use hand signals to indicate turns and follow traffic laws.
- ✓ Two shower rooms are available in the storage area ("cages") inside the parking garage under Building A. The showering areas are available for your use to "clean up" or "freshen up" either before or after your commute. Please respect that others will use the showering area and keep it clean. Pick up after yourself and don't leave personal soap or shampoo in the showering area. Report damaged or not functioning lights, spigots, faucets, and seats to Public Works, Attn: Leticia Harris so they can be fixed or repaired.
- ✓ Clothes lockers will be installed in the near future inside one of the "cages" within the parking garage storage area. Clothes locker areas are for you to store your commuting and/or work clothes. Lockers are on a first come, first served basis. Please do not leave locking devices on unoccupied lockers. Remember to pick up after yourself and help keep the locker areas clean and serviceable.

The Green Team would like to thank you for your choice to "Bike to Work". Hopefully your efforts will encourage others to start commuting by bicycle to work, and perhaps to even consider personal recreation by bicycling around our community!

Green Team