



Legislation Text

File #: 19-0743, Version: 3

TO: Mayor Richard C. Irvin

FROM: Planning Commission

DATE: October 18, 2019

SUBJECT:

A Resolution Approving Revisions to the City of Aurora Sustainability Plan to Enhance the Quality of Life for Present and Future Generations of Aurorans by Planning for Natural, Social and Economic Resilience. (City of Aurora - 19-0743 / KDWK-19.104-PZ/S - AM - All Wards)

PURPOSE:

To update the 2009 Aurora Sustainability Plan to plan for Natural, Social and Economic Resilience.

BACKGROUND:

The City of Aurora has a long history of embracing sustainability and sustainable practices that make the City an environmental leader in the region. This leadership is exemplified by the multiple area plans the City has developed that use sustainability as the central guiding principle. Sustainability has been central to the development process even before the adoption of the sustainability plan. In the effort of shaping its future through thoughtful planning in 2001, the City approved the Countryside Vision plan; in 2006 the Riverfront Vision Plan and the Seize the Future Master Plan, then the revised FoxWalk Overlay District Design Guidelines and the RiverEdge Park Master Plan in 2008. The City hosted GreenTown conferences in our downtown which lead to the formation the Fox Valley Sustainability Network, an ongoing entity working on various issues and projects within the Valley. Aurora is also a signatory municipality for the US Mayors Climate Protection Agreement, the Global Covenant of Mayors, and Cool DuPage; initiatives aimed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

On August 11, 2009 the City approved the "City of Aurora Sustainability Plan" and set forth the purpose, composition, and responsibilities of the Sustainable Aurora advisory board which was actually formed in 2014.

The purpose of the plan was and still is to be a long term framework for making educated decisions based on resource conservation and life cycle costs for both present and future residents of the City. The Plan identified six focus areas with goals for each to guide future decision making for the City. The existing document is composed by two sections:

1) The City of Aurora Sustainability Plan which identified six areas of focus and goals to guide sustainable practices. The six focus areas include: 1) Community Development and Land Use; 2) Transportation and Infrastructure; 3) Energy Efficiency, Conservation and Management; 4) Waste Minimization, Reuse and/or recycling; 5) Water Quality and Conservation; and 6) Education and Engagement.

2) The City of Aurora Sustainable Projects which identified projects the City has already completed or

were ongoing, and a detailed collection of proposed projects which all helped shape the framework of the Plan.

Recognizing that, in order to address ongoing issues, concerns and opportunities, a revised plan was needed; the Sustainable Aurora advisory board decided to undertake this task.

DISCUSSION:

The Sustainability Plan appears to a prospect reader as obsolete in its structure, references, management practices, and also not easy to navigate.

In 2015, each member of the advisory board extensively researched nationwide best practices and took the time to create an overarching plan that ties together all aspects of sustainability policies and programs within a community. The Plan would include substantial community engagement, and it will help the City package all of its various measures and options under a single umbrella. The revised Sustainability Plan will provide a framework for tracking the City's goals, policies and implementation activities and will guide our community toward long-term sustainability.

In order to achieve these goals, from a task oriented structure, the Plan moves to a more strategic approach that could lead the City to track its continued efforts over time.

The proposed changes entail a simplified structure, additional sections to reflect the worldwide sustainability culture; and three additional focus areas: Climate, Resilient Community and Social Justice.

The Plan, although primarily focused on Aurora, embraces trends, best management practices and frameworks of the Chicago Metropolitan Region. In order to undertake the task, the Sustainable Aurora advisory board used the Greenest Region Compact 2 report from the Metropolitan Mayor's Caucus as a template.

Municipal plans for reducing emissions and enhance energy efficiency can be instrumental in attracting outside funding, and an approved document shows commitment and support for utilizing these funds.

Due public notice was given for the public hearing on this matter. As of the date of this memo, staff has not received public inquiries regarding this petition.

POLICIES AND GUIDELINES / IMPACT STATEMENT:

The Staff's Evaluation and Recommendation are based on the following Physical Development Policies:

- 90.0 To assure the protection, conservation and improvement of the quality of air, water, land and aesthetic resources within the City.
- 91.0 To enhance the quality of the environment by identifying, protecting, and preserving those natural resources elements that serve important environmental functions and contain valuable or unique natural features.
- 91.1 (3) To encourage the maintenance and enforcement of Federal and State environmental quality standards.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Planning Commission recommended APPROVAL of the Resolution Approving Revisions to the City of Aurora Sustainability Plan to Enhance the Quality of Life for Present and Future Generations

of Aurorans by Planning for Natural, Social and Economic Resilience.

ATTACHMENTS:

Exhibit "A" 2009 Sustainability Plan
Exhibit "B" 2019 Draft Sustainability Plan Update
Redline-Sustainability Plans Comparison
Sustainability Plan Presentation

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cc: Alderman Michael B. Saville, Chairperson
Alderman Sherman Jenkins, Vice Chairperson
Alderman Carl Franco
Alderman Robert J. O'Connor
Alderman Juany Garza



CITY OF AURORA, ILLINOIS

RESOLUTION NO. _____
DATE OF PASSAGE _____

A Resolution Approving Revisions to the City of Aurora Sustainability Plan to Enhance the Quality of Life for Present and Future Generations of Aurorans by Planning for Natural, Social and Economic Resilience.

WHEREAS, the City of Aurora has a population of more than 25,000 persons and is, therefore, a home rule unit under subsection (a) of Section 6 of Article VII of the Illinois Constitution of 1970; and

WHEREAS, subject to said Section, a home rule unit may exercise any power and perform any function pertaining to its government and affairs for the protection of the public health, safety, morals, and welfare; and

WHEREAS, the approval of the Seize the Future Master Plan, the Riverfront Vision Plan, the RiverEdge Park Master Plan, the pledges to the Global Covenant of Mayors and Cool DuPage Initiative demonstrate the City's desire to continue development and foster sustainability for current and future generations; and

WHEREAS, as evidenced by green initiatives undertaken by the Sustainable Aurora Advisory Group and by individuals there has been a continued focus on sustainable initiatives and solutions to assist in the mitigation of existing environmental concerns, and through the action of these individuals, the City of Aurora has been identified as a regional leader in sustainable practices; and

WHEREAS, it is recognized that a collective plan of action is necessary to foster a comprehensive approach to ensure that Aurora is sustainable environmentally, economically and socially; and will thrive well into the future; and

WHEREAS, the Sustainable Aurora Advisory Group was formed by executive order to facilitate collective action to achieve green initiatives on a City-wide scale and has created a database of initiatives which have guided the framework of the City of Aurora Sustainability Plan; and

WHEREAS, the 2019 City of Aurora Sustainability Plan, attached as Exhibit "B" 2019 Sustainability Plan, is a long-range plan for enhancing the quality of life for present and future Aurorans and provides a guiding framework for making educated decisions based on resource conservation, community sustainability, resilience, and preparedness; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of the City of Aurora, Illinois, hereby recognizes the City of Aurora Sustainable Aurora advisory group's collective efforts to exploit strengths and address ongoing opportunities, and adopts the 2019 City of Aurora Sustainability Plan, attached as Exhibit "B", to enhance the quality of life for present and future generations of Aurorans by planning for natural, social and economic resilience.