



Update on Sustainability Staffing, Initiatives, and Funding August 2024

The past several years have seen a significant increase in sustainability operations in the City of Lakewood. The number of staff positions has increased along with the number of initiatives and areas of operation. The past year has also seen significant new revenue coming into the city for sustainability work. This memo is intended to provide City Council with information on expansions to sustainability operations in the City of Lakewood.

Staffing

Since the first sustainability manager position was created in 2012, staffing for sustainability has steadily increased, both in terms of new employees dedicated to sustainability and existing positions given responsibility for sustainability initiatives. Across the organization, there are 34 positions who play a major dedicated role in the City's sustainability operations. There are over 100 city employees spending at least some of their time supporting sustainability projects or whose position furthers the sustainability of the community or organization in some way.

This year, a staff reorganization created a new Department of Sustainability & Community Development. This department has the primary responsibility for new public-facing sustainability initiatives. Many of these current and upcoming initiatives are highlighted in the next section. Existing sustainability staff will be supplemented with two new positions if approved in the 2025 budget.

Importantly and intentionally, sustainability operations are not only siloed into a single department or division of the city organization. The cities that are most successful in promoting and achieving sustainability infuse the ethos and practice of sustainability throughout the organization. Over the past few years, Lakewood has added sustainability responsibility to almost every department in the city and is in the process of building a culture where sustainability is embedded as a core value in decision making.

Initiatives

Many of the City's major sustainability initiatives are led out of the Sustainability & Community Development Department. These include greenhouse gas management and reporting, sustainability data tracking, regional coordination on carbon reduction and electrification, the Sustainable Neighborhoods program, building energy and benchmarking, electric vehicle readiness, sustainable development standards, water conservation, zero waste programs, and many more. In 2025, the department expects to add additional programs including building energy performance, residential clean energy and efficiency incentives, organic waste programs, and multi-family recycling education and resources.

There are even more programs run within the city's other departments. Public Works has primary responsibility for recycling centers, organic slash facility, multi-modal transportation planning, bicycle planning, fleet electrification, water quality and stormwater management, and many more. Ongoing projects include a major update to the city's bicycle plan over the coming year and the opening of miles of new protected bicycle lanes, most recently on Garrison Street. Community Resources leads the City's parks and open space management, forestry and tree canopy programs and participates heavily in many of the other sustainability initiatives. Operational Services leads solar projects, off-site energy production, electric vehicle charging and work plan, and others. Various other departments also have roles in leading sustainability projects.

Advancing the City's sustainability and climate action goals requires collaboration between departments and staff across the organization. The Community Sustainability, Climate & Zero Waste Division in the Sustainability & Community Development Department regularly relies on cross-departmental collaborations to successfully implement programs and policies, and likewise, makes staff from the division readily available to departments across the organization to provide technical expertise and other resources as needed. This "whole of government" approach is facilitating the steady expansion of sustainability-supporting programs and services.

Funding for Sustainability

In addition to steady growth of staff capacity for sustainability, the past year has seen incredible growth in City revenues that are dedicated to sustainability initiatives and these revenues should rise significantly in coming years.

There are three new revenue sources for the Sustainability and Climate Action fund. The first is fees-in-lieu from the Enhanced Development Menu. Projects that require over 50 points may pay a fee-in-lieu for points above 50. No fees have yet been collected in this category, but revenue could be in the hundreds of thousands. Second, is the greenhouse gas mitigation program. New

buildings must meet a greenhouse gas emissions standard or pay a fee. This program has already collected over \$200,000 in 2024 and has an annual estimated revenue of between \$400,000 and \$700,000. The third source of revenue for this fund is from the construction and demolition waste program. This program is anticipated to collect between \$100,000 and \$250,000 annually.

The State of Colorado Plastic Pollution Reduction Act provides an additional new source of revenue for City sustainability work. This money comes from the collection of fees for single use bags. Revenue remitted to the city as of May 2024 has been over \$660,000 and the program should continue to bring in hundreds of thousands of dollars over the next several years.

New sustainability-related development fees are contributing to the general fund to offset staff work on development applications. Review fees for the enhanced development menu, greenhouse gas mitigation program, and construction and demolition waste management program should bring in tens of thousands of dollars per year.

Finally, there are significant grant opportunities in the sustainability field. Staff has applied for a \$12 million grant from the Department of Energy for building emissions reduction. If awarded, this grant will pay for the city's entire building energy benchmarking and performance program, including up to three staff positions. Currently DRCOG has nearly \$200 million available through the climate pollution reduction grant that will help pay for wide ranging technical assistance, rebates, workforce training, and administrative services. Many more federal and state grants are consistently opening up for local communities to pursue an ever increasing range of sustainability initiatives.

Moving Forward

As we plan for 2025, City Council will see several budget requests for these expanding sustainability endeavors totaling over \$750,000 in new spending. New positions are being requested in Sustainability & Community Development for creation of the energy benchmarking and performance program and in Public Works for the Construction and Demolition Waste Program. New expenditures are being proposed to utilize the revenue identified above. Staff is also taking steps to embed sustainability deeper into the organization's culture. Potential upcoming changes include sustainability statements in position descriptions, additional sustainability training during onboarding, and sustainability review in staff reports and policy decision making. Lakewood continues to prioritize and expand its sustainability services in a manageable and effective manner.

City of Lakewood Sustainability Projects and Collaborations – July 2024

Sustainability Planning	Sector	Departments/Division	Funding
Comprehensive Plan Update	Municipal Operations & Communitywide	Comprehensive Planning/Sustainability/Community Resources/Public Works/Economic Development	GF
Sustainability Plan Data Tracking & Annual Report	Municipal Operations & Communitywide	Sustainability	GF
Steering Committee for Jefferson County Climate Action Plan 2022	Regional Collaboration	Sustainability	GF

Energy, Water, & Built Environment	Sector	Departments/Division	Funding
Whitlock Solar Project	Municipal Operations	Sustainability/Operations	Partially funded through a State grant
Municipal Off-Site Renewable Energy Strategy & Portfolio	Municipal Operations	Sustainability/Operations	GF
Carbon Pollution Reduction Grant	Regional Collaboration	Sustainability	\$199 million EPA grant for DRCOG region
Front Range Beneficial Electrification Network	Regional Collaboration	Sustainability	GF
Small Business Energy Campaign	Communitywide	Sustainability	Visits supported by staff provided through Xcel Partners in Energy Program
Outdoor Water Conservation & Turf Replacement Program	Communitywide	Sustainability	State grants (two separate grant programs)

Building Energy Benchmarking & Performance	Communitywide	Sustainability	Applied for \$12 million Federal grant - notification to take place in September/October
Residential Energy Rebate Program	Communitywide	Sustainability	Sustainability & Climate Fund
Sustainable Development Standards & Review	Communitywide	Sustainability/Development Review/Public Works	Revenue generated from Planning fees for staff review & from fees-in-lieu of performance for some projects
Public Works Campus Master Plan	Municipal Operations	Public Works/Operations/Community Resources/Sustainability	GF

Climate Action & Resilience	Sector	Departments/Division	Funding
GHG Inventory Management & Reporting	Communitywide	Sustainability	GF
CDP Annual Emissions and Climate Action Reporting		Sustainability	GF
Municipal Operations GHG Emissions Inventory	Municipal Operations		GF
Climate Hazard & Social Vulnerability Study	Municipal Operations & Communitywide	Sustainability/Police/Community Resources/Public Works	GF

Zero Waste & Circularity	Sector	Departments/Division	Funding
Construction & Demolition Waste Diversion Program	Communitywide	Development Review/Sustainability/Public Works	GF
Organic Waste Pilot Program (PROPOSED 2025)	Communitywide	Sustainability	GF
Multi-family Recycling Education (PROPOSED 2025)	Communitywide	Sustainability	GF
Municipal Zero Waste Program	Municipal Operations	Sustainability/Operations/Community Resources	GF
Open Hauling Cities/EPR Program Strategic Plan	Communitywide	Sustainability	GF
Waste Diversion Resource Center - ONLINE	Communitywide	Sustainability/Public Works	GF
Quail Street Recycling Center	Communitywide	Public Works	GF
Rooney Road Recycling Center	Regional	Public Works	GF
Rooney Road Slash Facility	Regional	Public Works	GF

Sustainable Transportation	Sector	Departments	Funding
Multi-modal transportation planning	Communitywide	Public Works/Sustainability	GF
Bike Plan Update	Communitywide	Public Works/Sustainability	GF
Feet Electrification	Municipal Operations	Public Works/Sustainability/Operations	Supported in part by various State grants
Xcel Electric Vehicle DC Fast Charging Project	Municipal Operations	Sustainability/Operations	Xcel funded and managed
Electric Vehicle Charging at Recreation Centers	Municipal Operations	Sustainability/Operations	Federal Energy Efficiency Community Block Grant Funds with potential to add State grant funds
Electric Vehicle Work Plan	Municipal Operations & Communitywide	Sustainability/Operations/Public Works/Information Technology	Xcel-funded work plan and 2-years of implementation support

Community Cohesion & Quality of Life	Sector	Departments/Division	Funding
Sustainable Neighborhoods Program	Communitywide	Sustainability	GF
Earth Day Festival	Communitywide	Sustainability/Resource Development/Community Resources/Public Works	Significant event support from revenue generated through vendor booth fees and corporate sponsorships
Neighborhood Support Program	Communitywide	Planning	GF

Environmental/Natural Systems	Sector	Departments	Funding
Parks, Open Space, and Land Management	Municipal Operations	Community Resources	GF
Forestry	Municipal Operations	Community Resources	GF
Reduce-cost tree program	Communitywide	Community Resources	GF
Tree preservation & planting program	Citywide	Sustainability/Community Resources	Potential to use Sustainability & Climate Fund to support.

Sustainability Supporting Revenue

Sustainability & Climate Action Fund	Description	Allowable Uses for Funds	Future Revenue Potential
Enhanced Development Menu	Developers may choose to pay a fee-in lieu of meeting point requirements under the EDM standards in Article 13 of the Zoning Ordinance. This only applies for large developments that must earn more than 50 points and fees can only be paid for a portion of their required points.	Must be used to support projects that provide community amenities and benefits in alignment with the menu of options in the EDM.	Uncertain. No fees collected to date.
GHG Mitigation Program	Developers may chose to pay a fee-in lieu of meeting point requirements under the GHG Mitigation performance standard in Article 13 of the Zoning Ordinance.	Projects (and administration) of projects and programs that result in a reduction or avoidance of GHG emissions.	Annual estimate range is \$385,000 to \$750,000. This includes \$135,000-\$150,000 from single-family homes; \$250,000-\$600,000 from larger projects
C&D Deposit/Refund	The city may require a performance	Waste diversion	TBD. Initial estimate

Program	security deposit for project required to complete a Construction and Demolition waste diversion plan. Forfeited deposits will go into the fund. Anticipate implementing the deposit/refund program in the 4th quarter of 2024.	programs and administration	range is \$100,000-\$250,000 annually
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Plastic Pollution Reduction Act	Description	Allowable Uses for Funds	Future Revenue Potential
Bag Fees	Fees collected from businesses required by state law to remit a portion of fess collected for use of single-use bags	Must be used for waste diversion programs and education	\$400,000-\$500,000 annually but reducing overtime as more people use reusable bags
Sustainable Dev. Planning Fees	Description	Allowable Uses for Funds	Future Revenue Potential
EDM Site Plan review fee	\$1,250 minimum to \$12,500 maximum	General fund	\$20,000-\$50,000 annually
GHG Mitigation program review fee	\$250 per acre, up to 5 acres PLUS \$100 per each additional acre > 5 \$50 per each additional acre > 15 Applicable to new construction over 2,500 sf and major additions/remodels	General fund	\$10,000-\$40,000 annually
C&D Waste Management Review Fee	\$200 per application - Permits for demolition or construction associated with projects which also have to comply with the EDM	General fund	\$5000-\$20,000 annually

Earth Day Revenue	Description	Allowable Uses for Funds	Future Revenue Potential
Booth Fees	Fees collected for vendor booths	Offsets event costs	\$3,000-\$5,000 annually
Sponsorships	Sponsorships are solicited annually	Offsets event costs	\$14,000-\$16,000 annually

Future Grants	Description	Allowable Uses for Funds	Future Revenue Potential
Department of Energy - Net Zero Buildings	Funds would support Building Emissions Reduction Strategy and Administration	Benchmarking and Building Performance Standards, Policy development, administrative infrastructure, workforce development, rebates and incentives for building owners, and staffing	If awarded, \$12 million will be available over 9 years
Climate Pollution Reduction Grant - Decarbonize DRCOG	Regional collaboration awarded \$199 million from the EPA	Wide ranging program providing technical assistance, rebates and incentives, workforce training, and admin services	TBD