



City Council Report

City Council Meeting: February 25, 2020
Agenda Item: 9.A

To: Mayor and City Council
From: Susan Cline, Director, Public Works, Office of Sustainability & the Environment
Subject: Public Hearing to Accept the 2019 Sustainability Rights Report

Recommended Action

Staff recommends that the City Council hold a public hearing, receive public comment and accept the proposed 2019 Sustainability Rights Report pursuant to Santa Monica Municipal Code (SMMC) Chapter 12.02 Sustainability Rights (Attachment A).

Executive Summary

The City of Santa Monica is committed to protecting, preserving and restoring the natural environment. Representative of that commitment is the City's Sustainability Rights ordinance, which recognizes the rights of both humans and the natural environment to exist and flourish, asserts the rights of residents on behalf of the environment, and codifies the commitments made in the Sustainable City Plan. The Sustainability Rights ordinance requires that a public hearing be held, and that staff provide a report on the health of the local environment. The attached report analyzes 12 metrics to evaluate the health of our local environment and our progress protecting the rights recognized in the Sustainability Rights ordinance. In order to prioritize these efforts across the City, the Sustainability Rights metrics were integrated into the City's Framework for a Sustainable City of Wellbeing.

Background

Environmental crises such as climate change, resource depletion, habitat destruction, species extinction, and soil, air, and water pollution continue to increase globally, and cities around the world are experiencing resulting negative environmental impacts. In response, Santa Monica's environmental stakeholders urged the Council to adopt an ordinance that would recognize the rights of both humans and the natural environment

to exist and flourish, subordinate corporate rights insofar as those rights threaten sustainability, and commit the City to meeting specified environmental goals by specified dates and taking other specified actions to fulfill the commitments made in the Sustainable City Plan.

On April 9, 2013, City Council adopted Ordinance No. 2421 establishing sustainability rights (Attachment B). The Sustainability Rights ordinance is based on the belief that Earth is a community whose members are humans, animals, plants, rivers, streams, and ecosystems and where all members of the community must have rights to ensure the sustainability of the whole. Santa Monica’s City Council recognizes both the rights of natural communities and ecosystems within Santa Monica to exist, thrive and evolve and the rights of individual human beings that make up the City of Santa Monica to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment. The peoples’ rights include, but are not limited to: the right to affordable and accessible water from sustainable water sources for human consumption, cooking, and sanitary purposes; the right to a sustainable energy future based on sustainable renewable energy sources; the right to a natural climate unaltered by fossil fuel emissions; the right to sustainable, comprehensive waste disposal systems that do not degrade the environment; the right to clean indoor and outdoor air, clean water and clean soil that pose a negligible health risk to the public; and the right to a sustainable food system that provides healthy, locally grown food to the community.

On June 5, 2019, Council approved the revised Framework for a Sustainable City of Wellbeing. Most of the metrics identified for the Sustainability Rights report were integrated in the Framework to measure the outcome areas of Health and Place and Planet (Attachment C). On June 11, 2019, Council approved the creation of Article 12 titled “Sustainability” in the Santa Monica Municipal Code (Attachment D).

Past Council Actions

04/09/13 (Attachment B)	Adoption of Ordinance No. 2421 Sustainability Rights
06/05/19 (Attachment C)	Approval of the Revised Framework for a Sustainable City of Wellbeing

Discussion

Staff worked with the Task Force on the Environment to identify specific metrics derived from the Sustainable City Plan that measure the health of the local environment and the progress on protecting the rights recognized in the Sustainability Rights ordinance. For the past 25 years, the Sustainable City Plan has allowed the City to take a comprehensive approach to triple bottom line sustainability and has identified outcomes for environmental protection, economic vitality, and social equity. For the purpose of the Sustainability Rights ordinance, reporting is focused on environment and public health metrics. Table 1 provides a summary of the rights and associated metrics that are analyzed in the attached report.

Table 1: List of Sustainability Rights Metrics

THE RIGHT TO	METRIC
Affordable and Accessible Water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percent of water sourced locally
Renewable Energy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amount of installed solar citywide • Percent of residents and businesses receiving renewable energy
Natural Climate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percent of carbon emissions reduced below 1990 levels.
Waste Disposal System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percent of materials diverted from landfill • Pounds of waste generated daily per person
Clean Air	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of exceedance days for Federal air quality standards
Clean Water and Soil	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of beach water quality warnings for dry and wet weather days • Amount of trash collected on the beach annually
Healthy Food	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total gross annual sales from Santa Monica farmers markets • Percent of residents living within a quarter mile of a

	grocery store or farmers market
Urban Forest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percent of tree canopy coverage

These metrics were presented to Council at the June 11, 2019 Council Meeting in conjunction with the creation of Article 12 in the Santa Monica Municipal Code titled Sustainability. Since June 11, 2019, staff has collected and compiled data from different City departments, as well as external organizations. Using the 2020 targets established in the 2014 edition of the Sustainable City Plan as a reference, staff has analyzed the progression of the 12 metrics (Attachment E). The results and analysis of the data will help guide future City decision-making.

The following table is a summary of the attached report on the state of the local environment. The attached Sustainability Rights Report contains a more detailed analysis of each metric.

Table 2: Summary of Sustainability Rights Report

Metrics	2020 Sustainable City Plan Target	Most Current Data	Performance
Percent of water sourced locally	100% of water sourced locally	Approximately 72% of water sourced locally	Moving toward target
Amount of installed solar (citywide)	7.5 mega-watt	6.3 mega-watt	Moving towards target and on track
Percent of residents and businesses receiving renewable energy	100% receiving renewable energy	93% receiving	Moving towards target and on track
Percent of carbon emissions reduced below 1990 levels	20% reduction	29% reduction	Target met
Percent of materials diverted from landfill	85% diversion	81% diversion	Moving away from target and needs improvement
Pounds of waste generated daily per person	2.7 pounds	5.3 pounds	Moving away from target and needs

			improvement
Number of exceedance days for Federal air quality standards	0 days	2 days	Needs improvement
Number of beach water quality warnings for dry and wet weather days	17 warnings	170 warnings	Needs improvement
Amount of trash collected on the beach	Annual decrease	13% increase from previous year	Needs improvement
Total annual sale for Santa Monica Farmers Markets	Annual increase	3% increase in sales from previous year	Target met
Percent of residents living ¼ mile of a grocery store	100% of residents live ¼ mile of a grocery store	68% of residents live ¼ mile of grocery store	Needs improvement

Affordable and Accessible Water – In 2019, the City obtained 72 percent of water from local sources. While this percent is increasing, additional projects and efforts have been identified to increase water supply from local sources and achieve water self-sufficiency by 2023.

Renewable Energy – In 2018, Santa Monica collectively generated 6.3 MW from installed solar. This amount continues to grow as a result of new construction building codes. While the City is on track to meet the 2020 target, additional measures were taken to provide access to renewable energy for all residents and businesses and the City joined the Clean Power Alliance. In 2019, 93 percent of residents and businesses receive renewable energy through either Clean Power Alliance, Southern California Edison, Direct Access Provider, or Los Angeles Department of Water and Power.

Natural Climate – In 2018, Santa Monica reduced carbon emissions by 29 percent below 1990 levels. This exceeds the original Sustainable City Plan target of 20 percent reduction by 2020. City Council adopted the Climate Action and Adaptation Plan in May 2019 to further the City’s efforts to reduce carbon emissions and meet the target of 80 percent reduction by 2030.

Waste Disposal System – In 2018, Santa Monica diverted 81 percent of materials from landfill, while generating 5.3 pounds of waste daily per person. This diversion rate has decreased from the previous year and per capita waste has increased significantly. The City is working to address the changes in the global recycling market and encourage behavior change by adopting a Zero Waste Strategic Plan.

Clean Air – In 2018, Santa Monica experienced two days exceeding Federal air quality standards (ozone). While the number of exceedance days for Federal air quality standards fluctuate slightly over the years, overall the number of days is minimal. Staff recognize that achieving zero exceedance days is an ambitious target. While the City does not directly regulate air pollution, the City is working to improve air quality by encouraging alternative modes of transportation and transitioning Big Blue Bus fleet to all-electric.

Clean Water and Soil – In 2019, Santa Monica experienced 170 beach water quality warnings from the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health. While the number of beach warnings had increased during wet weather days, Santa Monica's beach water quality has improved overall, and Santa Monica was removed from Heal the Bay's Beach Bummer list in 2019.

Healthy Food System – In 2018, the Santa Monica Farmers Markets generated \$19.5 million in annual gross sales and continue to increase. Of the \$19.5 million, \$18.3 million were agricultural sales. While the City is on track to meet the 2020 target for Farmers Market sales, the City also monitors residents' proximity to grocery stores to reflect access to healthy food. In 2019, 68 percent of residents live within a quarter mile of a grocery store or farmers market.

Urban Forest – In 2014, the City conducted a tree canopy coverage study that measured coverage at 20.5 percent. It has been six years since a tree canopy coverage study has been conducted. While the City monitors and tracks the number of public trees planted and removed, the tree canopy coverage study looks at both public and private trees. Future assessments of tree canopy coverage will look at coverage by

neighborhood. Additional studies are necessary to determine the amount of canopy loss or gain in recent years. Currently, the City is developing an urban forest conservation ordinance to help preserve our tree canopy coverage citywide.

The City will continue to report on these metrics and conduct a public hearing every two years.

Additionally, the City is committed to fully implementing the targets outlined in our Sustainable City Plan to further effectuate inherent rights of the people and natural communities of the City of Santa Monica. Staff has provided an update on the progress of the Sustainable City Plan indicators specific to the natural environment in the attached Sustainability Rights Report as well as the Sustainable City Plan performance dashboard. The Sustainable City Plan performance dashboard (data.sustainablesm.org) is a public website where the community can take a closer look at the data collected and includes more information on each metric. The majority of the 2020 metrics that the City is measuring were initially identified in the 2000 version of the Sustainable City Plan and updated in 2014.

Task Force Recommendation

On June 11, 2019, the Council directed the Task Force on the Environment to develop recommendations for a consistency determination for the Sustainability Rights ordinance. The consistency determination would be a mechanism to ensure activity within Santa Monica aligns with the Sustainability Rights ordinance. At the September 16, 2019 Task Force meeting, the group discussed the complexity of developing a consistency determination and therefore more time would be required to develop a recommendation for the Council. The Task Force created a subcommittee to work on developing recommendations to present to the Council at a later date (Attachment F).

Financial Impacts

There is no immediate financial impact or budget action necessary as a result of the recommended action. Staff will return to Council if specific budget actions are required in the future.

Prepared By: Amanda Grossman, Sustainability Analyst

Approved

Forwarded to Council



Susan Cline, Director

2/17/2020



Rick Cole, City Manager

2/17/2020

Attachments:

- A. 2019 Sustainability Rights Report
- B. April 9, 2013 - Sustainability Rights Ordinance
- C. June 5, 2019 - Framework for a Sustainable City of Wellbeing
- D. June 11, 2019 - Creation of Article 12 Staff Report
- E. 2014 Sustainable City Plan
- F. September 16, 2019 Task Force on the Environment Motion
- G. Written Comments
- H. PowerPoint Presentation