

Scope of City of Spokane's Sustainability Strategic Planning Process

Question: What is meant when we refer to city government's operations, services, programs and policies?

Key Points:

- **Internal focus:** clean up our own act, lead by example – includes all our internal operations, programs and policies + we address energy and climate uncertainties to ensure we're still able to provide reliable, quality services to the community in the future
 - Community will likely have a harder time thinking of what to suggest around this piece, so we'll need to stress this aspect to be sure we get some of this type of input.
- **and External focus:** make sure city government is HELPING the community to “go green”, making sure we're not an obstacle to their efforts
 - Involves our departments that generate externally focused programs and policies: community development, workforce development, economic development, human services, planning, building, etc.
 - Easier for the community to think of ideas to suggest that relate to this piece, so this input will likely just flow on its own.
- At this point, we just want to make sure we're doing what we can as a city government to **help**, not hinder; **encourage**, not deter; **create options**, not burdensome requirements.

Examples:

- City government is currently trying to encourage the community to conserve water. We've changed the rate structure so people pay more per unit of water after they exceed a certain level of consumption. We're not forcing them to use less, or shutting off their water after they've exceeded a limit - we're just using a financial **incentive to encourage** them to use less. The choice is theirs, in the end.
- We just want to be sure we've done what we can as a city government so we're not in the way, preventing people from doing the “green” things they want to do. For example:
 - City government recently updated the housing code to now allow smaller, denser housing types such as cottage housing, zero-lot line development, townhouses, etc. That doesn't mean we're requiring everyone to now live in a cottage housing development – it's just that now we've made it an **option**, whereas people didn't have that option before because it wasn't allowed.
 - Likewise, the community frequently says they wish they had the **option** to recycle more. So maybe city government needs to figure out all the related market and processing issues so we can start accepting more things to be recycled.

Examples of questions we'll ask the work groups to consider:

Operations:

- Heat:
 - How should the City heat our buildings in order to be less reliant on oil and reduce our greenhouse gas emissions?

- Electricity:
 - What power sources should the City consider in order to keep the lights on and power the computers? How will we carry on business as usual during brownouts?
- Fuel:
 - What fuels should the City consider for our fleet in order to reduce our reliance on oil?
- Procurement:
 - How far do our goods travel before they arrive here? What can the City do to increase local sourcing options in order to eliminate any additional diesel surcharges incurred with long distance shipping?
 - Do we buy products that have been or could be recycled?

Services:

- Garbage:
 - If rising oil prices dictate a reduction in the frequency of garbage pick-up, can expanded recycling options help reduce the quantity of garbage that people need to store? What are the health impacts of storing garbage for more than 1 week?
- Water:
 - How would unstable power delivery affect the delivery of City services such as pumping water? How will that impact our ability to put out fires?
- Wastewater:
 - Climate adaptation: How will earlier spring floods and summertime drought impact the way we handle stormwater and wastewater?
- Street paving:
 - What other products should we consider when asphalt becomes too expensive due to rising oil prices?
- Police and fire protection:
 - Will climate change bring an increased risk of fire due to summertime drought and building deterioration (if people run short of money to maintain their homes and businesses)?
 - How will rising fuel costs impact the mobility of the Fire and Police departments?

Programs:

- Internal:
 - Does the City have a CTR program?
- External:
 - What can the City do regarding workforce development, economic development, community development, and human services to assist the community in their efforts to deal with energy and climate uncertainties?

Policies:

- Internal:
 - How can the City more effectively implement its duplex printing/copying policy?
- External:
 - What changes can the City make to land use and transportation-related policies, and the Building code to be sure the community has the option to do the “green” things they’re interested in doing?
 - What incentive programs can the City offer to encourage the community to support and shift toward “going green”.