

## An Environmental Commission for the City of Long Beach

A Briefing for the City Council's Economic Development Committee  
May 8, 2006



## Environmental Commission Potential Scope and Challenges

- Must prioritize items for a monthly (or bi-weekly) agenda
- Must allocate appropriate time for many worthy issues
- Regulatory Role vs. Visionary Role
- Providing Incentives
  - City policies and practices are progressing
  - Great opportunity, but little progress, in private sector

## Strategic Plan Timeline

- 1984 – 1986
  - Development of Strategic Plan 2000
- 1996 – 1997
  - Community Scan (AMPG, Inc.)
- September 1998
  - First Meeting of All Task Forces

## Strategic Plan Timeline

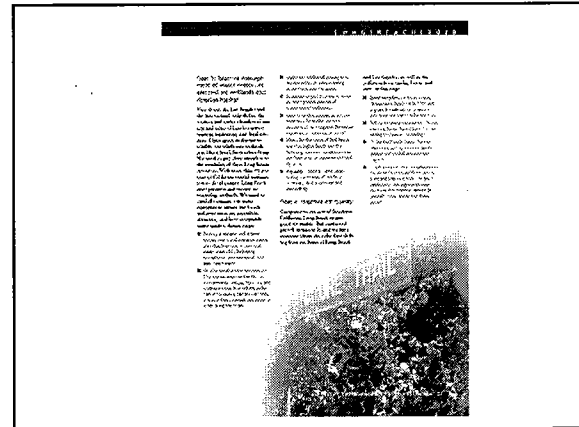
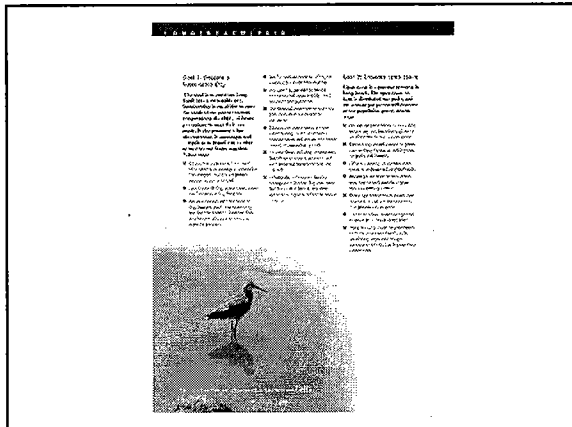
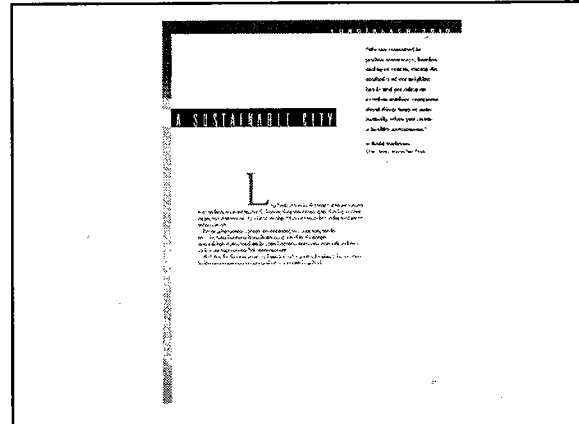
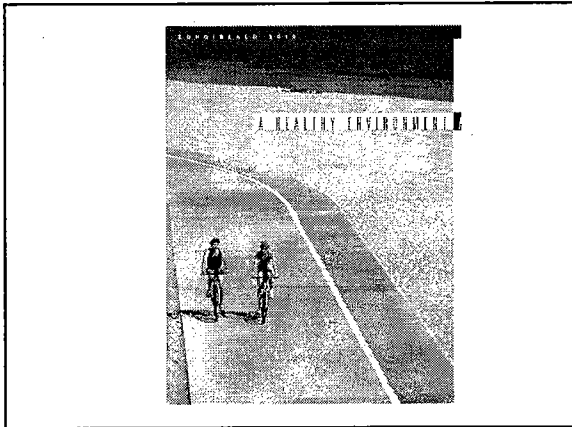
- February 1999
  - First Community Forum at Convention Center
- June 1999
  - Second Community Forum at Convention Center
- September 1999
  - Task Force reports go to Coordinating Committee

## Strategic Plan Timeline

- December 1999
  - Strategic Plan package presented to Council
- June 2000
  - City Council Approval of Strategic Plan 2010
- January 2001
  - Strategic Plan published in brochure format

## Strategic Plan Brochure

- Available on the City's web site:
  - <http://www.ci.long-beach.ca.us/>
  - Click on "Guide to Government" option on the left column menu
  - Go to "City Government Resource Documents" section at the bottom of the page
  - Click on "Strategic Plan – 2010"
  - Click on "Complete Document"
  - Environmental Goals are printed on pages 24-27



## What Worked

- Representation for all Council Districts
- Representation for Environmental Groups
- City Staff and Commissioners with Expertise
- Community Participation
- Presentations by Outside Experts
- A Subcommittee Structure
- A Deliberative Process

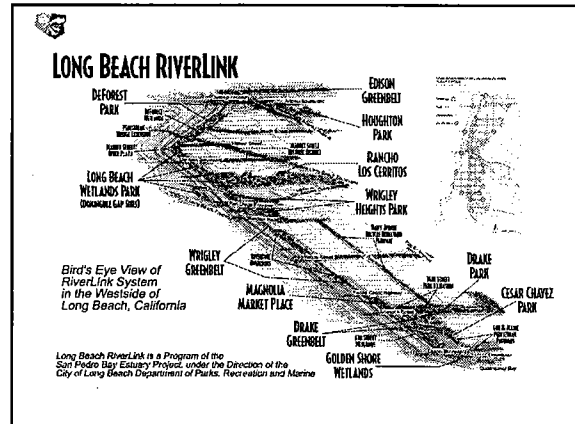
## Representation for all Council Districts

- Local Issues Identified
  - Air Quality
  - Noise
- Place-Based Planning
  - Colorado Lagoon
  - Los Angeles River (RiverLink)
  - Corridor Strategy

## Long Beach RiverLink Project

➤ Further Developed "Strategic Plan 2010" Goals, such as:

- Creating Vegetated Linkages Between Los Angeles River and Neighborhoods
- Providing More Urban Nature, Especially in Underserved Neighborhoods



## Representation for all Council Districts

- "Ownership Interest" by Each Councilperson

## Tasks Assigned by Council

- Sustainable City Program
  - Del Roosevelt
- Wood Purchasing Policy
  - Alan Lowenthal

## Representation for Environmental Groups

- Expertise and Passion
- Task Force Membership
  - Bikestation
  - Eco-Link
  - Friends of the Los Angeles River
  - Sierra Club
- Presentations
  - Action Resource Center (wood purchasing policy)
  - Long Beach Organic
  - Los Angeles and San Gabriel Rivers Watershed Council
  - Los Cerritos Wetlands Task Force
  - TreePeople
  - Trust for Public Land

## City Staff and Commissioners with Expertise

- City Departments Represented on Task Force
  - Energy Recovery Bureau
  - Fire
  - Harbor
  - Health and Human Services
  - Planning and Building
  - Water
- Commissions Represented on Task Force
  - Marine Advisory
  - Water

### Community Participation

- Environmental Task Force Meetings
  - Twice Monthly for Nine Months
  - Conducted in Various Council Districts on Weeknights
  - Average Attendance of 40
- Community Forums at Convention Center
  - Held on Saturday mornings
    - February 13, 1999
    - June 19, 1999
  - Hundreds of Attendees
  - Hundreds of Suggestions

### Presentations by Outside Experts as Appropriate

- Air Quality Management District
- City's Advance Planning Department
  - Air Quality Element of General Plan
  - Demographics
- City's Bureau of Environmental Health
  - Hazardous Materials Program
  - Toxic Discharges
- League of Women Voters
  - Population issues

### Subcommittee Structure

- Air Quality
- Water Quality
- Land Use
  - Open Space
  - Built Environment
- Sustainable City

### A Deliberative Process

- Identification of Issues
- Technical Presentations to Task Force as Appropriate
- Independent Research
- Subcommittee Analysis
- Task Force as a Whole

### What Worked

- Representation for all Council Districts
- Representation for Environmental Groups
- City Staff and Commissioners with Expertise
- Community Participation
- Presentations by Outside Experts
- A Subcommittee Structure
- A Deliberative Process

### Major Challenges

- Over 99% of Streams and Wetlands Lost
  - Originally 5,500 Acres
  - Currently 45 Acres
- Completely Built Out City
  - Open Space is inadequate (5.9 acres per thousand)
  - Open Space is poorly distributed
- Nonpoint Source Air & Water Emissions
- Population Pressures

## Major Opportunities

- Resources That Did Not Exist in 1986
  - Clean Fuel Technology
  - GIS-Based Decision-Making Software
  - Internet Resources
  - Unprecedented Regional Collaboration on Environmental Issues
- Good Municipal Models
  - Santa Monica's Sustainable City Program (1994)
- The Motivation of Many Good People to Create a More Livable Long Beach

## Major Recommendations

- Create a Sustainable City Program
- Enhance Open Space
- Restore Wetlands and Riparian Habitat
- Improve Air Quality
- Improve Water Quality and Better Manage Water Resources

## Sustainable City Program

Recommendations of Environmental Task Force

- Coordinate all City Departments under the umbrella of a Sustainable City Program
- Create an Environmental Policy Analyst position to support the Program
- Create a Sustainable Development Board (Environmental Commission)
- Establish Baseline Data and Sustainability Benchmarks

## Environmental Commission Suggested Membership and Activities

- Candidates with environmental or technical credentials, and other public membership
- Consider new initiatives for Sustainability
- Consider financial incentives
- Evaluate progress toward sustainability benchmarks on a periodic basis
- Commission could serve as Tree Board (Tree City USA)

## Environmental Commission Suggested Membership and Activities

- Environmental Task Force report contains additional recommendations

## Environmental Commission Potential Scope and Challenges

- Must prioritize items for a monthly (or bi-weekly) agenda
- Must allocate appropriate time for many worthy issues
- Regulatory Role vs. Visionary Role
- Providing Incentives
  - City policies and practices are progressing
  - Great opportunity, but little progress, in private sector