

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

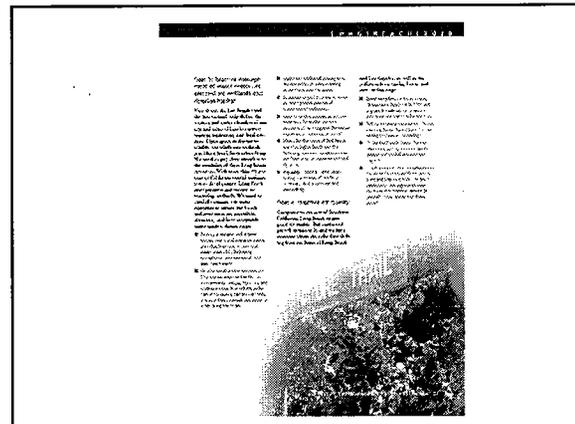
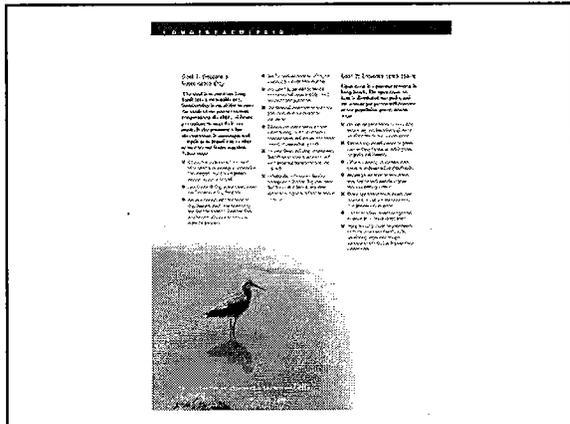
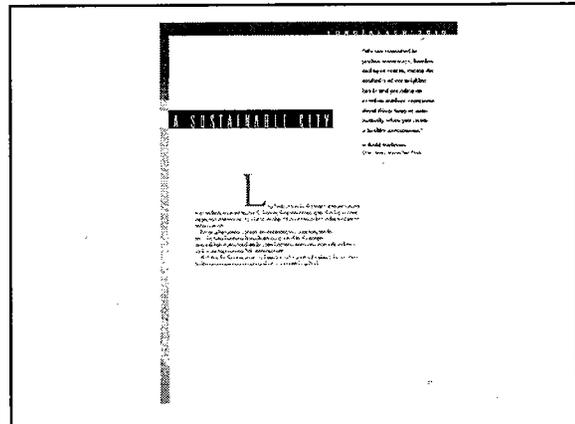
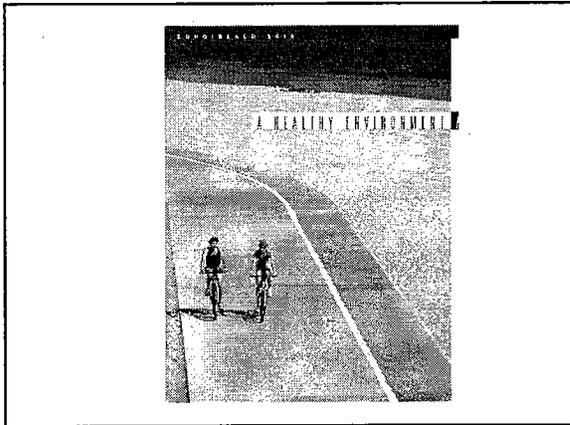
- February 1999
 - First Community Forum at Convention Center
- June 1999
 - Second Community Forum at Convention Center
- September 1999
 - Task Force reports go to Coordinating Committee

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



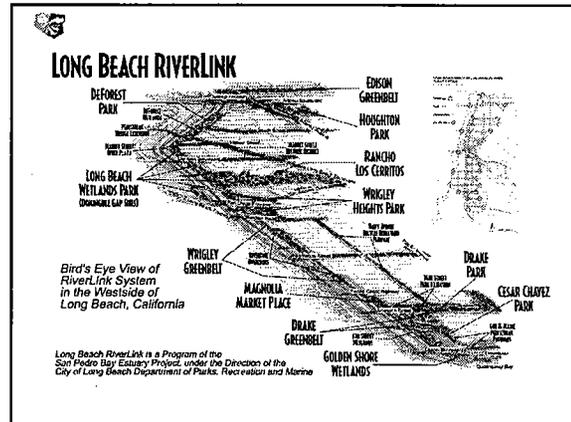
- ### What Worked
- Representation for all Council Districts
 - Representation for Environmental Groups
 - City Staff and Commissioners with Expertise
 - Community Participation
 - Presentations by Outside Experts
 - A Subcommittee Structure
 - A Deliberative Process

- ### 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

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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

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