

**City of Wichita
City Council Meeting
September 7, 2021**

TO: Mayor and City Council

SUBJECT: Ordinance Creating Sustainability Integration Board

INITIATED BY: Department of Public Works & Utilities

AGENDA: Unfinished Business

Recommendation: Approve first reading of the ordinance creating the Sustainability Integration Board.

Background: As of March 1, 2021, the City of Wichita (City) is one of 120 cities and communities that have been certified through Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED). Originally LEED-certified in 2015, the City continues to identify opportunities to implement environmental initiatives that will improve the quality of life in Wichita. LEED initiatives generally focus on building design, building operation and maintenance, interior design and construction. In 2019, the City began pursuing additional efforts to broaden the scope of environmental opportunities by participating with two additional agencies, Carbon Disclosure Project (CDP) and the American Council for an Energy Efficient Economy (ACEEE). Participation with these additional agencies has expanded the City's scope to include emission reduction, transportation improvements, and policies related to food consumption and waste.

In April 2021, the City entered into an agreement with Wichita State University's Environmental Finance Center (EFC) to develop a list of potential sustainability initiatives and a decision matrix to enable prioritization. This work is continuing and is expected to be completed and presented within the first quarter of 2022.

On August 17, 2021, an ordinance was presented to the City Council to establish a Sustainability Integration Board. Action on the proposed ordinance was deferred until September 7, 2021, to allow for public input and possible revisions.

Analysis: As the City begins to evaluate, prioritize, and implement sustainability initiatives, representation of community members, business and industry, and environmental experts will be necessary. The EFC has recommended that a representative body be formed and that the membership be comprised of individuals who possess the skills and expertise needed to collaboratively address complex sustainability issues, integrate with existing advisory boards and operational departments, and represent the diversity of the community. Integration of sustainability initiatives across all relevant existing boards and throughout all operational departments allows for greater efficiency in evaluation and implementation, utilizes existing expertise within administration and governance structures, and avoids narrowing the focus to a single topic or department.

Public input was gathered and a number of changes to the ordinance have been made. Changes include improvements to the statement of purpose for the Sustainability Integration Board, expansion of duties and the provision that the board retains the ability to meet more often than quarterly. Although some public input requested changes to the structure of the board, it is recommended that the structure that was originally proposed remain for the Sustainability Integration Board.

The framework of the proposal is similar to that of other City of Wichita advisory boards. It is proposed that the City Council appoint seven members to this committee who represent at least one of the following areas of expertise:

- business/industry;
- climate change and resilience;
- economic development;
- education;
- emergency management;
- energy use/conservation;
- finance;
- food systems;
- green building;
- local environmental issues;
- natural ecosystems;
- renewable energy; and
- transportation.

It is further recommended that each of the following boards and commissions appoint a representative:

- Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Board;
- Board of Park Commissioners;
- Diversity, Inclusion, and Civil Rights Advisory Board;
- Mayor's Youth Council;
- Metropolitan Area Planning Commission;
- Stormwater Advisory Board; and
- Transit Advisory Board.

An integrated model is recommended due to the multi-disciplinary nature of sustainability. An integrated board avoids a narrowing of focus and isolation of information. Without the proposed integration, efforts by individual boards may be duplicated or in direct conflict with each other. Integration allows coordination, collaboration, and assists in the meaningful distribution of responsibilities throughout the organization, increasing capacity and efficiency in addressing complex sustainability challenges.

Once formed, the Sustainability Integration Board should meet at least quarterly to begin development of an adaptation plan and mitigation plan, review the work products and recommendations of the EFC, and make recommendations to the City Council.

Financial Considerations: There is no cost associated with formation of the Sustainability Integration Board.

Legal Considerations: The ordinance has been reviewed and approved as to form by the Law Department.

Recommendations/Actions: It is recommended that the City Council place the ordinance on first reading and authorize the necessary signatures.

Attachment: Ordinance