

This document is an extract of a larger publication.

civilgrandjury.org is a project of UnGovr.org, a US-based 501(c)(3) nonprofit dedicated to government transparency and public accountability.



Appendix 1 also has text descriptions of the plans' histories.

The best plan examples have wide scopes, measurable goals, and contain provisions for evaluating progress on a regular rate.

Future of the Sustainability Principle in Governance

In the County of Los Angeles a strong set of laws, standards, and policies that codify sustainability does not exist.³⁰ This leaves the enforcement of sustainable actions uncertain.

The County's sustainability plan is currently in development. The future success of sustainability practices depends on a more complete adoption of plans throughout the County.

Some governing entities within Los Angeles County have sustainability plans (Appendix 1). They can be a basis for a complete, comprehensive, and consistent set of sustainability plans for the entire County.

In Los Angeles County, it is logical that the County and the City of Los Angeles form a sustainability partnership to provide leadership and support for all governing entities of the County.

III METHODOLOGY

Document Reviews.

The CGJ found that those cities that have adopted the sustainability principle in governance have codified their work in written documents. The CGJ reviewed the following sustainability plans and related documents in our research.

- City of Santa Monica Sustainability City Plan³¹
- City of Santa Monica 2012 Sustainability City Report Card³²
- City of Los Angeles pLAN for Sustainability³³
- City of Long Beach Sustainability Plan³⁴
- City of Glendale Greener Glendale Plan³⁵
- Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors Motion on creating and hiring a Chief Sustainability Officer (28 April 2016)³⁶

³⁰ www.mdpi.com/2071-1050/3/3/531/pdf

³¹ "Sustainable City Plan – City of Santa Monica" -

<https://www.smgov.net/uploadedFiles/Departments/OSE/Categories/Sustainability/Sustainable-City-Plan.pdf>

³² "2012 Sustainable City Plan Report Card – City of Santa Monica" -

https://www.smgov.net/Departments/OSE/Categories/Sustainability/Sustainable_City_Report_Card.aspx

³³ "pLAN" – <http://www.lamayor.org/sustainability>

³⁴ "Sustainable City Action Plan – City of Long Beach" - www.longbeach.gov/sustainability/nature-initiatives/action-plan/

³⁵ "Greener Glendale Plan – City of Glendale" - www.glendaleca.gov/home/showdocument?id=6934

³⁶ "Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors Motion on Chief Sustainability Officer" - file.lacounty.gov/SDSInter/bos/supdocs/101801.pdf

- Job Brochure for County of Los Angeles Chief Sustainability Officer ³⁷

Interviews

The CGJ conducted interviews with governmental officials associated with the various sustainability efforts within Los Angeles County. These included the following:

- Los Angeles County Office of Sustainability (within the Internal Services Department)
- City of Santa Monica Office of Sustainability.
- Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors Staff Members (2 Supervisorial Districts)
- City of Los Angeles Sustainability Office
- County of Los Angeles Sustainability Office (within the County of Los Angeles Office of the Chief Executive Officer)

Media Sources

The CGJ reviewed news items concerning sustainability from the following sources:

- Los Angeles Times
- San Gabriel Valley Tribune
- Beverly Press
- Green Car Report (email series)
- UCLA Grand Challenges – Sustainability (Website)
- Planning Report (Website)
- LA Mayor (Website)
- Think Progress (Website)
- My New LA (Website)
- Supervisor Sheila Kuehl (Website)

We would like to express our gratitude for the openness and cooperative attitudes of the people and organizations that have enabled this work.

³⁷ “Los Angeles County Chief Sustainability Officer Job Brochure” - file.lacounty.gov/SDSInter/dhr/245652_CS0.pdf

IV FINDINGS

Our investigation produced the following findings:

1. Examples of Los Angeles County Sustainability Successes and Need for Coordination

There are many examples within Los Angeles County of the successful adoption of the sustainability principle in governance. For this report we examined the plans of four cities. Each has formal plan documents that define the areas of sustainability they address and provide measurable goals. These goals are regularly evaluated to determine progress and allow corrective action. The goals of sustainability plans are applied to other government plans and actions for implementation. The CGJ endorses the current plans of Santa Monica, Los Angeles, Long Beach, and Glendale. Other governmental entities may also have plans. Because of the disparate paths to sustainability followed by the cities, there are some inconsistencies in these plans (Appendix 1).

2. Sustainability Encouragement from the State

The State of California has offered significant support for sustainability.³⁸ Prime examples are in the state's legislation encouraging the reduction of carbon dioxide emissions and increasing renewable energy sources. There are many more specific cases in which the state has acted to facilitate sustainability practices.

3. Foundation for Sustainability Principle is Not Firm

The CGJ found that the plans are not built upon a strong foundation. We believe this exposes the plans to legal and political challenges that otherwise could be avoided. Lacking a strong foundation limits how enforcement can be performed. An example demonstrating this is that the City of Los Angeles' pLAN relies on Mayor Garcetti's intention to include sustainability goal performance in the personnel evaluations of his managers. While this can be effective for the City of Los Angeles and its current mayor, there is no assurance that the next mayor will be as active in favor of sustainability.

4. Differences between Federal and California Sustainability Policies

The Federal government is in the process of changing its policies regarding sustainability. A recent example is the setting aside of the Clean Power Plan executive order.^{39 40} The County of Los Angeles' support for sustainability may be challenged where it depends upon Federal collaboration.

³⁸ <https://www.kcet.org/redefine/lots-of-new-environmental-laws-in-california>

³⁹ "Will sustainability survive a Trump presidency" - <http://www.tgdaily.com/science/will-sustainability-survive-a-trump-presidency>

⁴⁰ <https://www.theguardian.com> > Environment > Trump administration

5. The Climate Change Threat Has Not Caused “Emergency” Action in the County of Los Angeles

The warnings on the results of humankind-caused climate change are daunting.⁴¹ “Emergency” local programs that deal specifically with reducing greenhouse gases may be appropriate even while complete sustainability plans are in development.

6. Successful Drought Response but Needs Follow Up

As discussed in Section II, the recent drought in California has caused a set of emergency response programs to reduce water consumption throughout Los Angeles County. This is a positive example of emergency actions taken on a sustainability issue. However, because Southern California has a persistent semi-arid climate, the temporary drought actions taken are appropriate as long-term policies. In addition, because of the large amounts of energy required to import or desalinate water, their extensive use may not be sustainable.

V RECOMMENDATIONS

The 2016-2017 Los Angeles County Civil Grand Jury makes the following recommendations with respect to “The Sustainability Principle in Governance” investigation.

1. The City of Los Angeles Chief Sustainability Officer and the County of Los Angeles Chief Sustainability Officer jointly should continue to build upon sustainability success examples by creating and leading a countywide Sustainability Working Group (SWG) including all governing entities of the County.
2. The City of Los Angeles Chief Sustainability Officer and the County of Los Angeles Chief Sustainability Officer jointly leading the SWG should complete the set of governing entity-specific sustainability plans covering the entire County.
3. The City of Los Angeles Chief Sustainability Officer and the County of Los Angeles Chief Sustainability Officer jointly leading the SWG should identify interdependencies between plan elements and working group member entities.
4. The City of Los Angeles Chief Sustainability Officer and the County of Los Angeles Chief Sustainability Officer jointly leading the SWG should use existing plans to create reusable plan templates.
5. The City of Los Angeles Chief Sustainability Officer and the County of Los Angeles Chief Sustainability Officer jointly leading the SWG should create a public awareness campaign demonstrating the practical value of the sustainability principle in governance.
6. The County of Los Angeles Board of Supervisors should fully exploit California state resources supporting sustainability by coordinating their sustainability plans with State guidance.

⁴¹ Climate Change: What Everyone Should Know. Joseph Romm, Oxford University Press, 2016

7. The City of Los Angeles Mayor and City Council should fully exploit California state resources supporting sustainability by coordinating their sustainability plans with State guidance.
8. The County of Los Angeles Board of Supervisors should lobby the State for additional sustainability support.
9. The City of Los Angeles Mayor and City Council should lobby the State for additional sustainability support.
10. The County of Los Angeles Board of Supervisors should strengthen the sustainability principle in governance in law, standards, and policies and with suitable enforcement mechanisms.
11. The County of Los Angeles Board of Supervisors should adopt strategies in combination with the State and other agreeable governing entities to ensure sustainable practices despite uncertainties in sustainability support from the Federal government.
12. The County of Los Angeles Board of Supervisors should pursue policies that reduce the total greenhouse gas emissions in the County given the global climate change risks. For example, specify electric vehicles and renewable-based charging infrastructure whenever feasible and require renewable energy sources for government consumption.
13. The City of Los Angeles Department of Water and Power should pursue policies that reduce the total greenhouse gas emissions in the City given the global climate change risks. For example, specify electric vehicles and renewable-based charging infrastructure whenever feasible and require renewable energy sources for government consumption.
14. The County of Los Angeles Board of Supervisors should continue water conservation measures put in place for recent drought as a sustainable long term policy for the semi-arid Southern California climate.
15. The City of Los Angeles Department of Water and Power should continue water conservation measures put in place for recent drought as a sustainable long term policy for the semi-arid Southern California climate.
16. The County of Los Angeles Board of should minimize dependence on imported and/or desalinated water because of the large amounts of energy they require.
17. The City of Los Angeles Department of Water and Power should minimize dependence on imported and/or desalinated water of the large amounts of energy they require.

VI REQUIRED RESPONSES

California Penal Code Sections 933(c) and 933.05 require a written response to all recommendations contained in this report. Responses shall be made no later than ninety (90) days after the Civil Grand Jury publishes its report and files it with the Clerk of the Court. Responses shall be made in accord with Penal Code Sections 933.05 (a) and (b).

All responses to the recommendations of the 2016-2017 Civil Grand Jury must be submitted on or before September 30, 2017, to:

Presiding Judge
Los Angeles County Superior Court
Clara Shortridge Foltz Criminal Justice Center
210 West Temple Street
Eleventh Floor-Room 11-506
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Responding Agency	Recommendations
County of Los Angeles Chief Sustainability Officer	15.1, 15.2, 15.3, 15.4, 15.5
City of Los Angeles Chief Sustainability Officer	15.1, 15.2, 15.3, 15.4, 15.5
County of Los Angeles Board of Supervisors	15.6, 15.8, 15.10, 15.11, 15.12, 15.14, 15.16
City of Los Angeles Mayor	15.7, 15.9
Los Angeles City Council	15.7, 15.9
City of Los Angeles Department of Water and Power	15.13, 15.15, 15.17

VII ACRONYMS

CAFE	Corporate Average Fuel Economy
CGJ	2016-2017 Los Angeles County Civil Grand Jury
BOS	Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors
CSO	Chief Sustainability Officer
EV	Electric Vehicle
GHG	Greenhouse Gases
LEED	Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design
PACE	Property Assessed Clean Energy
SWG	Sustainability Working Group

VII COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Douglas Benedict Chair
Gerard Duiker
Henry C. Guerrero

APPENDIX 1

SELECTED SUSTAINABILITY, PLANS OF LOS ANGELES COUNTY

The following table is a summary and comparison of the sustainability plans that were reviewed in preparing this report. Some liberty has been taken with terminology to provide better comparability between the individual reports.

The paragraphs below present some additional facts concerning the sustainability plans we have reviewed.

The City of Santa Monica’s Sustainability City Plan

The City of Santa Monica has the longest history in the application of a Sustainability Plan in Los Angeles County. A citizens’ committee proposed the original concept and the original plan was produced in 1994. The plan had been revised three times through 2014. The plan includes nine “Goal Areas” (Resource Conservation, Environmental and Public Health, Transportation, Sustainable Local Economy, Open Space and Land Use, Housing, Community Education and Civic Participation, Human Dignity, and Arts and Culture). Each of these have specific targets with measurable criteria for success. These criteria are evaluated yearly and a letter grade is given in a proprietary process. In some cases criteria are subjective or are declared to have “no target”.⁴²

Santa Monica’s sustainability efforts are recognized for their quality and success. In particular, Santa Monica has a large number of solar roofs; a large number of LEED-certified buildings; an increasing number of efficient, high-density apartment buildings; and excellent light rail terminals. It also has a high level of waste recycling, is very bicycle-friendly, and is close to being self-sufficient for potable water (based on local wells).⁴³

The City of Long Beach’s Sustainable City Action Plan

Long Beach has a Sustainability Plan similar to Santa Monica’s but specific to the Long Beach situation. It has been in place since 2010.⁴⁴

The City of Los Angeles Sustainability Plan

The City of Los Angeles in an action sponsored by Mayor Eric Garcetti wrote and released a Sustainability pLAN in 2015 and is in the process of performing the first evaluations of progress for 2017.⁴⁵ It lists 14 elements for sustainable management (Local Water, Local Solar Power, Energy-efficient Buildings, Carbon and Climate Leadership, Waste and Landfills, Housing and Development, Mobility and Transit, Prosperity and Green Jobs, Preparedness and Resiliency, Air Quality, Environmental Justice, Urban Ecosystem, Livable

⁴²“Sustainable City Plan-City of Santa Monica”,

<https://www.smgov.net/uploadedFiles/Departments/OSE/Categories/Sustainability/Sustainable-City-Plan.pdf>

⁴³“Sustainability Report Card for Santa Monica”,

https://www.smgov.net/Departments/OSE/Categories/Sustainability/Sustainable_City_Report_Card.aspx

⁴⁴“Sustainable City Action Plan – City of Long Beach”, www.longbeach.gov/sustainability/nature-initiatives/action-plan/

⁴⁵ pLAN, <http://www.lamayor.org/sustainability>

Neighborhoods, and Lead by Example). Los Angeles has a potential advantage because the Department of Water and Power is a City-owned public utility. The pLAN took about two years to write. Performance to the goals is “motivated” by having their performance achievements being included in the Mayor’s performance appraisal of the various responsible managers. Since adoption of a Sustainability pLAN was a Garcetti initiative, it could be set aside by the next mayor(s).

The City of Glendale’s Greener Glendale Plan⁴⁶

Glendale has produced a sustainability plan comparable to the others reviewed here.

The County of Los Angeles Board of Supervisors (BOS)

The County has recently adopted a more aggressive sustainability approach with the creation of the position of Chief Sustainability Officer (CSO) for the county⁴⁷. This position was filled in the fall of 2016. The first action for the CSO is the preparation of a County Sustainability Plan which is expected to require about two years to negotiate and prepare. Before the current County effort was begun, there had been a voluntary effort between County departments to create sustainability actions. This approach had been unsuccessful in defining and reaching sustainability goals, motivating the new approach.

⁴⁶ www.glendaleca.gov/government/city-departments/public-works/greener-glendale

⁴⁷ “County Hires First-Ever Chief Sustainability Officer”, Supervisor Sheila Kuehl – <http://supervisorkuehl.com/conuty-hires-first-ever-chief-sustainability-officer/>

	Los Angeles 'Sustainable City pLAN'	Santa Monica (Sustainable City Plan)	Long Beach (Sustainable City Action Plan)	Glendale (Greener Glendale Plan)
Local Water				
Increase local water sourcing	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Improve stormwater quality	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Conserve through per capita potable water reduction	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Conserve through municipal water reduction	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Reduce number of annual sewer spills	Yes			
Expand recycled water production	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Replace water pipe infrastructure	Yes			Yes
Create an integrated water strategy				Yes
Smart grid approach to inform customers of their consumption	Yes			Yes
Local Solar				
Increase installed capacity	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Increase total cumulative energy storage capacity	Yes	Yes		
Leverage private and public partnerships to advance solar	Yes	Yes		
Expand solar-ready requirements to retrofit projects	Yes			
Fund electrical-grid upgrades	Yes			Yes
Create bidirectional grid to prepare for electric vehicles	Yes			
Energy Efficient Buildings				
Use PACE financing to retrofit residential homes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Create benchmarks to monitor building energy use	Yes	Yes		
Make workforce training investments to meet increased demand for qualified building professionals	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Increase participation in energy-efficiency and green business certification programs	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Incentivize or require LEED Silver or better for new construction and major rehabilitation	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Pilot Net-Zero Energy municipal buildings	Yes	Yes		
Production of green housing		Yes		Yes
Carbon & Climate Leadership				
Increase percentage of electricity from renewable sources	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Develop comprehensive climate action and adaptation plan with inventory reporting	Yes		Yes	Yes
Sign on to the Mayors' National Climate Action Agreement	Yes			
Retire coal power plants	Yes			
Incorporate GHG reduction targets into City Planning	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Reduce energy consumption of individuals and buildings	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Assist companies with technologies related to climate change mitigation and adaptation	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Reduce municipal transportation vehicle emissions	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

	Los Angeles 'Sustainable City pLAN'	Santa Monica (Sustainable City Plan)	Long Beach (Sustainable City/Action Plan)	Glendale (Greener Glendale Plan)
Waste & Landfills				
Investigate emerging conversion technologies	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Increase commercial recycling rates, reduce pollution from heavy-duty waste-hauling vehicles recovery opportunities	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Move toward zero waste	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Encourage materials recovery	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Develop infrastructure for recycling of specialty waste	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Recruit remanufacturers for material recovery and resale	Yes		Yes	
Increase recycled content asphalt	Yes		Yes	
Reduce per capita waste generation	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Develop commercial food-waste recovery programs and expand edible food redistribution programs			Yes	Yes
Promote use of recycled materials	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Promote composting	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Housing & Development				
Transit Oriented Development	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Increase affordable housing	Yes	Yes		Yes
Minimize the loss of existing affordable housing units	Yes	Yes		
Update parking regulations to include standards for bike and car-share infrastructure	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Mobility & Transit				
Complete integrated biking and bike share plan	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Increase multi modal connections at rail stations	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Implement first/last mile strategic plan	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Move to Transportation Management Organizations (TMOs) with car sharing, and improved pedestrian connectivity for major events and destinations	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Prosperity & Green Jobs				
Increase minimum wage/maintain livable wage	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Create green jobs	Yes		Yes	Yes
Attract private investment through Clean Tech Incubator	Yes		Yes	
Remove barriers to entrepreneurship and business growth	Yes		Yes	
Attract mature green industries	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Create public/private partnerships for apprenticeship programs in green industries	Yes		Yes	
Create partnerships with higher education institutions to retain high-skill graduates	Yes		Yes	
Preparedness & Resiliency				
Implement enhanced Reverse 911 system	Yes			
Install new cool roofs	Yes			Yes
Pilot installation of "cool slurry" pavement	Yes			
Increase electrical and water backup systems	Yes			
Plan for disaster recovery at major installations	Yes			
Avoid dependence on single company or small group of companies for local jobs		Yes		Yes

	Los Angeles Sustainable City Plan ¹	Santa Monica Sustainable City Plan	Long Beach Sustainable City Action Plan)	Glendale (Greener Glendale Plan)
Environmental & Public Health				
Increase access to fresh, local, and organic produce		Yes	Yes	Yes
Encourage reduction in meat and dairy usage		Yes		
Encourage consumption of low-carbon food		Yes		Yes
Reduce residential household hazardous waste		Yes	Yes	Yes
Restore and maintain wetlands		Yes	Yes	
Maintain clean beaches		Yes	Yes	
Increase City purchase of sustainable products		Yes	Yes	
Sustainable Local Economy				
Encourage sustainable business practices		Yes		Yes
Establish Job/Housing balance		Yes		Yes
Establish workforce housing near large job centers		Yes	Yes	Yes
Seek businesses that pay greater than or equal to cost of living		Yes		
Measure energy use to total economic activity by business sector		Yes		
Measure water use to total economic activity by business sector		Yes	Yes	
Establish live/work districts		Yes		Yes
Encourage government & businesses to buy local				Yes
Encourage residents to buy local				Yes
Sustainability coordination within the City to continue outreach and educational programs (residents and businesses)				Yes
Monitor City's progress consistent with the Beacon Award criteria				Yes
Maintain list of businesses and schools that are implementing green practices		Yes		Yes
Open Space and Land Use				
Install regionally appropriate plants		Yes	Yes	Yes
Incorporate neighborhood elements (roundabouts, meandering sidewalks, etc.) that create a sense of place			Yes	Yes
Improve community education and civic participation		Yes		
Increase number of registered voters		Yes		
Increase attendance at a city-sponsored meetings		Yes		
Residents should feel free to voice their concerns on community decisions that affect their lives		Yes		
Residents are positive about the city as a good place to live		Yes	Yes	Yes
Increase participation in active neighborhood organizations		Yes	Yes	Yes
Increase community involvement in sustainability programs		Yes	Yes	Yes
Human Dignity				
Provide shelter and city services to homeless		Yes		
Improve public safety		Yes		
Reduce incidents of physical abuse		Yes		
Improve educational results		Yes		
Empower women, minorities, and people with disabilities with leadership roles				
Resident satisfaction rating with government services		Yes		Yes
Create environmentally friendly jobs in low-income neighborhoods		Yes		
Arts and Culture				
Promote creative sector business		Yes		
Community participation in the arts		Yes		
Create and expand unique neighborhood identity using special signage, public art, and unique architectural styles				
Promote the City as a green city				Yes
Attract sustainability-related events			Yes	Yes