



## Item No. 13 Town of Atherton

### **CITY COUNCIL STAFF REPORT – REGULAR AGENDA**

**TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL**

**THROUGH: GEORGE RODERICKS, CITY MANAGER**

**FROM: STEPHANIE B. DAVIS, AICP PRINCIPAL PLANNER**

**DATE: APRIL 21, 2021**

**SUBJECT: REVIEW AND APPROVE THE DRAFT 2021 SUSTAINABILITY WORK PLAN AND BUDGET AS RECOMMENDED BY THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAMS COMMITTEE (EPC).**

### **RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that the City Council review, provide comment and approve a final 2021 Sustainability Workplan and budget as recommended by the Environmental Programs Committee (EPC).

### **BACKGROUND**

Traditionally in the last several years, the EPC has planned and assisted staff in facilitating a Town Earth Day Event to engage and educate the community on sustainability and climate related topics as well as promote the goals of the Town's Climate Action Plan (CAP). This year in light of Covid-19, instead of a more traditional EPC Sponsored Earth Day community event as has been held in prior years, the EPC explored alternative approaches to engage and educate the community. In lieu of an actual Earth Day event (virtual or otherwise) and after the course of discussion at two regularly scheduled EPC meetings and subsequent appointment of an EPC Ad-Hoc subcommittee, the EPC finalized a Draft 2021 Sustainability Work Plan and unanimously recommended City Council approval at their March 18, 2021 meeting.

### **ANALYSIS**

The EPC has prepared a draft 2021 Sustainability Work Plan in which they recommend City Council to approve (Attachment 1). It contains two specific components, summarized below.

#### 1. Commemorative Plaque

The EPC would like to commemorate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Earth Day, which occurred in 2020, by installing a commemorative plaque at one of the new, native tree species to be planted at the new Town Center. The EPC has reviewed the approved Town Center landscaping plan

and has preliminary identified a few trees adjacent to the new library, in which the plaque could be installed. The proposal would be for the plaque to be purchased this fiscal year, but not installed until the landscaping at the new Town Center has been planted – which would not occur until the following fiscal year. Upon EPC preliminary research, the estimated cost of plaque purchase is approximately \$200.

## 2. Seed Paper Bookmark Mailing

The EPC is recommending that plant-able seed bookmarks be mailed to every resident in Town. Such bookmarks are intended to be planted and grow into native flowers. Further, the bookmarks can be printed with educational and informative text. Should the Council approve this component of the proposed draft Sustainability Work Plan, the EPC has appointed an Ad-Hoc Subcommittee who, following any approval by Council, would work with staff on final printed text, order placement and Town-wide mailing prior to the end of this fiscal year. Preliminary ideas discussed by the EPC included the consideration of adding text to the bookmarks which would inform and educate the community on sustainability tools and resources useful for a resident. The possible topics of energy efficiency, water conservation, green building, alternative transportation modes, and/or recycling/composting tools were preliminarily discussed. Some examples of what a seed paper bookmark looks like are included below:

- <https://www.customearthpromos.com/seed-paper/seed-paper-bookmarks.html>
- <https://botanicalpaperworks.com/catalog/promotional-items/plantable-seed-bookmarks/>
- <https://www.ecomarketingsolutions.com/p/EPIAE-GJHIW/bookmark-wseeds-attached>

There are 2588 delivery addresses in Town. The estimated cost to purchase approximately 2,600 seeded bookmarks is approximately \$1.15 per bookmark, or a total of \$3,000.00 for each address in Town after taxes and shipping. It is further estimated to cost approximately \$1,500.00 for the bookmarks to be stuffed in envelopes, envelopes sealed and associated postage. The total estimated cost for mailing seed paper bookmarks to every property in Town is approximately \$4,500.00.

The total estimated cost to implement each of the two components specified above is \$4700.00. This estimate is under the available budget of \$5,000 as discussed under the FISCAL IMPACT section below.

## **POLICY FOCUS**

The EPC is charged under Resolution 2018-11 to “*provide the City Council with recommendations, outreach programs, and education on environmental issues facing the Town’s natural and built environment.*” Acting in an advisory capacity, the EPC has the following powers and duties:

- a. Upon request, make recommendations (programmatic and legislative) to the City Council on all matters pertaining to the Town’s natural and built environment and the Town’s regional role and responsibilities as one of the communities on the San Francisco Bay Peninsula.*

*b. Pursuant to established City Council programs and policy, assist staff in the creation of proactive community engagement programs for residents, commercial and public enterprises active within the Town's jurisdiction.*

Historically, the Town's EPC has been the primary body in creating and supporting an annual Earth Day event for the Town, as approved by the Council, which has traditionally been education based. In light of Covid-19 and challenges/prohibitions in organizing a community wide event at this time, and in the Committee's advisory role, the EPC is proposing a replacement approach in attempting to inform and educate the community around Earth Day. Further, as an advisory Committee, the EPC would only be allowed funds allocated by the Council on a programmatic basis, with those funds disbursed through staff. As a policy matter, it would be appropriate for the Council to review and approve a sustainability work plan and associated budget request, and provide any additional detail to staff.

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

The 2020/2021 Fiscal Year (FY) Budget includes \$5,000 for the EPC - General Support for committee work. The \$5,000 could be dedicated to fund the activities proposed within the Draft 2021 Sustainability Work Plan – the details as proposed by the EPC are estimated to not exceed \$5,000 and the ability to execute the Work Plan within this budget maximum is found to be feasible. Any materials, efforts, or staffing resources associated with these proposed activities that exceed this existing \$5,000 budget would need to be authorized by the Town Council. Attachment 1 includes a recommended Draft 2021 Sustainability Work Plan that includes a total budget estimated at approximately \$4,700.00, while incorporating the recommendations of the EPC as described in the Analysis section above.

### **PUBLIC NOTICE**

Public notification was achieved by posting the agenda, with this agenda item being listed, at least 72 hours prior to the meeting in print and electronically. Information about the project is also disseminated via the Town's electronic News Flash and Atherton Online. There are approximately 1,200 subscribers to the Town's electronic News Flash publications. Subscribers include residents as well as stakeholders – to include, but be not limited to, media outlets, school districts, Menlo Park Fire District, service providers (water, power, and sewer), and regional elected officials.

### **COMMISSION/COMMITTEE FEEDBACK/REFERRAL**

This item \_\_\_ has or X has not been before a Town Committee or Commission.

- Audit/Finance Committee (meets every other month)
- Bicycle/Pedestrian Committee (meets as needed)
- Civic Center Advisory Committee (meets as needed)
- Environmental Programs Committee (March 18, 2021)
- Park and Recreation Committee (meets each month)
- Planning Commission (meets each month)
- Rail Committee (meets every other month)
- Transportation Committee (meets every other month)

\_\_\_\_ Tree Committee (meets each month)

**ATTACHMENT**

1. Draft 2021 EPC Recommended Sustainability Work Plan

## EPC RECOMMENDED 2021 SUSTAINABILITY WORK PLAN

### Background:

Each year the EPC assists to plan and implement an Earth Day event to engage and educate Town members in areas related to the Town's Climate Action Plan and sustainability. In 2020 the City Council approved an EPC work plan consisting of an educational movie, exhibits and student displays. Unfortunately, the COVID-19 pandemic and associated quarantine restrictions led to the event being paused and then cancelled. At the end of the 2019-20 Fiscal year, the EPC's budget expired, however within that budget the EPC was able to successfully distribute an educational mailer focused on home sustainability and energy savings to all residents.

The EPC discussed the possibility of a virtual event consisting of a movie or a panel of experts for the 2021 Earth Day Event. However, the EPC concluded that people have screen fatigue and found it to be challenging and inconclusive if a virtual event would successfully engage and educate Town residents as intended by the EPC. The EPC also expressed concerns that they want to utilize the budget in a manner which is likely to most benefit and impact Town resident's long term.

### Proposal:

The EPC would like to propose a 2021 Sustainability Work Plan comprised of the following three components. The estimated budget to implement the two proposed tasks is included below.

1. Commemorative Plaque

Select one of the newly to-be planted trees within the existing approved landscape plans for the new Town Center and commemorate it with a plaque in honor of the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Earth Day.

2. Seed Paper Bookmark Mailing

Purchase a plant-able seed bookmark to be mailed to every resident in Town. Each bookmark is intended to be planted to grow into native flowers, and can be printed with educational and informative text related to sustainability tools and useful resources for residents. Should the Council approve this component of the proposed draft Sustainability Work Plan, the EPC has appointed an Ad-Hoc Subcommittee who, following any approval by Council, would work with staff on final printed text, order placement and Town-wide mailing prior to the end of this fiscal year.

### Estimated Budget

Since the available Fiscal Year 2020-2021 budget will expire in June 2021, each option is anticipated to spend the estimated costs below within this fiscal year.

Task	Estimated Cost
Commemorative Plaque	\$200.00
Seed Paper Bookmark Mailing (includes purchase + Town wide mailing)	\$3000.00 (product) + \$1500.00 (mailing)
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$4700.00</b>