

**Sustainability Council
2017 Annual Report**

Sustainability is the community's ability to meet the environmental, economic and social equity needs of today without reducing the ability of future generations to meet their needs.

Department: Brookings City Clerk

Mission Statement: The City of Brookings is committed to becoming a leader among its peers in developing an environment that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. For this council, sustainability shall mean stewardship of all our resources in such a way that we can maintain a quality place to live today and leave a legacy of enhancement for future generations.

Members:

Norma Nusz Chandler, Chair	Nels Granholm	Jennifer McLaughlin
Stephanie Aure	Jane Hegland	Paul Peterson
Betty Beer	Benjamin Kleinjan	Holly Tilton Byrne*
Shelly Brandenburger	Mike Lockrem	Caleb Vukovich, SDSU Student
Alvaro Garcia*	Robert McGrath, Vice Chair	Riley Larson, SDSU Student*

**term expired/or resigned*

Purpose:

Membership: 12
Term: 3 years (student term – one year)
Residency Required for majority
Appointment January 1
Legal Reference Ordinance No. 04-11

Objectives:

Action: Investigate, prioritize, and facilitate activities that develop and encourage sustainable practices.
Education: Communicate the importance of sustainable activities to the Brookings community.
Advocacy: Propose to City Government and other organizations implementation of sustainable strategies, policies and activities.

Areas of Emphasis

1. Green municipal practices and procedures
2. Green community wide practices
3. Future quality of life issues
4. Sustainable community planning and design including high performance buildings and landscapes
5. Incorporation of SDSU resources
6. Promoting economic growth through sustainable activities
7. Understanding economic impact and value creation of sustainability practices

8. Promote local food resourcing
9. Promote use of renewable resources

An alternate list of Areas of Emphasis

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|-----------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. Regional economy | 7. Community knowledge |
| 2. Smart energy | 8. Reasonable Mobility |
| 3. Smart Resource use | 9. Healthy air |
| 4. Community design | 10. Clean water |
| 5. Green buildings | 11. Native Plants and Animals |
| 6. Healthy local food | |

2017 Initiatives

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

Curbside Composting. The Sustainability Council drafted a comprehensive report which investigated benefits and challenges associated with composting food scraps. The full report can be viewed at <http://www.cityofbrookings.org/index.aspx?nid=487>. The report was presented to City Council on August 8, 2017, who advised to pursue the Sustainability Council's four recommendations:

- The City of Brookings work in concert with the South Dakota Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) to develop regulations pertaining to food scraps. Since the landfill is a permitted solid waste facility, any regulations developed would apply to the City's operation as well as any privately owned facility. If possible, it would be advantageous to encourage the regulations be administered by the state as permit conditions versus administrative rules. Permit conditions allow the state to handle each solid waste facility on a case-by-case basis versus one-rule fits all. The state does have primacy for the administration of the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA), but must stay within the confines of the definitions of solid waste, which includes food waste as Municipal Solid Waste (MSW). Therefore, helping the state with examples of how to reword certain definitions to allow less restrictive composting regulations from Region 5, which includes Minnesota or Region 7, which includes Iowa, would be a good strategy.
- Once regulations are created, the City of Brookings should encourage private development of a Source Separated Organic Material Site and collection service. The City could also consider developing its own local regulations and providing the service itself. At that point, the key factors cited above would require in-depth analysis.
- Most cities initiate composting programs with a pilot program. Since large businesses and institutions generate the highest volume of waste, the Committee recommends, after regulations are in place, the City seek funding for a pilot program for the large consumer composting.
- Since Brookings has a high awareness of environmental protection, Brookings should develop a public education program to promote residential backyard composting and its benefits.

The goal for 2018 is to work with the South Dakota Department of Environment and Natural Resources to develop solid waste regulations that are less restrictive for "Source Separated Organic Material Site" composting operations.

National Wildlife Federation's Mayor' Monarch Pledge: Mayor Corbett continues to support the National Mayor's Monarch Pledge. Mid-year and year-end reports for 2017 were submitted on behalf of the City. The Parks, Recreation and Forestry Department planted pollinator plots with native vegetation to encourage pollinator populations. The Sustainability Council collaborated with the Parks, Recreation & Forestry Department, US Fish & Wildlife Service and Dakota Rural Action to design and produce cohesive signs for the pollinator plots at the Dakota Nature Park and the Pioneer Park Log Cabin locations. The Sustainability Council Chair presented to the Optimist Club regarding pollinator plots. Additionally, SDSU is applying to be certified a Bee Campus USA.

Sustainability Policy Liaisons. Sustainability Council members participated in an official liaison/voting member capacity for the following city initiatives and issues:

- Affordable Housing Task Force – Mike Lockrem, voting member and liaison between SDSU and the Council
- Bicycle Advisory Committee – Mike Lockrem, voting member and chair
- Comprehensive Master Plan Ad Hoc Committee – Ben Kleinjan, voting member
- Friends of Big Sioux River Board – Nels Granholm

Legislation. The Executive Committee monitored pending legislation and notified members of issues relating to sustainability.

SDSU Intern. An intern was sponsored with a partnership with SDSU's College of Education & Human Services. The intern provided research on the composting project and was utilized by the Brookings Committee for People who have Disabilities for the public-right-of-way policy research; Historic Preservation Commission on the plaque installation and the Bicycle Advisory Committee for public education and SDSU bicycle counts.

Heartland Regional Sustainability Coordinators Network. Thornes is a member of the five-state USDN Heartland Sustainability Coordinators Group, and actively participated in all 12 monthly conference calls and coordinated the 2017 regional meeting in Dubuque. Membership is by invite only and members must meet participation requirements.

Recycling Containers in City Buildings/facilities. A Survey was conducted to understand the interest and need for recycling container in city offices. A policy will be drafted in 2018 based on information collected in 2017. Recommendations will be made on container type, size and location in offices and public areas.

EVENTS & EDUCATION:

Green Drinks & Brookings Register Columns. The Brookings Sustainability Council hosted Green Drinks, 10-minute presentations on sustainability issues, on the last Thursday of the month at the Wooden Legs Brewing Company. Green Drinks are free and open to everyone. These events are very informal that includes people who work in the environmental field. Guest presenters also submit a 600 word companion column that is published in the Brookings Register.

- Mark Cochrane – How does climate change show up in your life?
- Timothy Hansen – Environmentally and Economically Sustainable Electricity for the Future
- Dr. Jonathan Lundgren – The Truth Behind the Bee Problem?
- Jessica Garcia Fritz – Public Space (or a 2,000+ Year History of the Space In-Between Buildings)
- Dan McColley – Creating a World Where Everyone has a Decent Place to Live
- Bill & Julie Ross – Step-By-Step Sustainability

2018 topics will include:

- January: Microgrid Project & Solar Energy / Reinaldo Tonkoski
- February: Passive House / Chuck MacBride
- March: Prairie Farm / Carter Johnson
- April: Historic Preservation / Angela Boersma
- May: Farmer's Market / Kristin Gjesdal
- June: Dr. Holm
- July: N/A
- August: N/A
- September: Concentrated animal feeding operation (CAFO) / Bob Thaler
- October: TBA
- November: N/A
- December: N/A



Poster/Ad Outreach Campaign. The Council continued the annual public education poster campaign with distribution via traditional posters, advertising in special issues of the Brookings Register, Facebook ads, website, and public access channel. Poster topics: single stream recycling, plastic bags, reuse of landfill (2), historic (2), smart energy, rainwater, bike safety, Mayor's Ride, reuse, local foods, and LEDs. The Council works with SDSU University Relations Staff to develop content and images. In 2017, the Council released a new poster on Monarch butterflies.

Storm Water/Clean Water. The Council assisted the City Engineer with the annual review of the Small MS4 Storm Water Management Program as required by the DENR and Clean Water Act. The City Engineer distributes an illicit discharge flyer to help educate



industry and residents on how to reduce sediment and contaminants from entering storm water drains and polluting downstream streams and rivers. The Council shared other avenues to distribute this important information, including Earth Day. The Council also continues its exploration of permeable pavement. Additionally, Member Granholm attended the Concentrated Animal Feeding Operation (CAFO) training conducted by the SDSU Extension Service. This information is useful with the recent CAFO's applications in the area. Granholm also attended the Big Sioux River Water Summit.

Dubuque Growing Sustainable Communities Conference. Nusz Chandler, Thornes and Carruthers attended this annual conference, which is a unique opportunity to access the latest information on a wide variety of sustainability topics for leaders in government, education, healthcare and businesses of every stripe who seek a balance between economic prosperity, environmental integrity and social/cultural vibrancy in their communities.

Earth Day. The Sustainability Council conducted the Earth Day event at Larson Nature Center on April 22, 2017 with informational booths and the focus topic of pollination: Deputy Mayor Keith Corbett presented the Mayor's Monarch Pledge; Dr. Jon Lundgren from Blue Dasher Farm presented, "The Truth Behind the Bee Problem," Dakota Rural Action demonstrated how to make a pollinator hotel; milkweed plants/seeds and a rain barrel were given-away and volunteers cleaned up the park. The 2018 Earth Day Event will be held at Good Roots with composting being the highlighted theme.



Farmer's Market Kickstart Grant

The Sustainability Council assisted the Farmer's Market in obtaining a Kickstart Grant to provide energy and bicycle racks for the weekly outdoor Farmer's Market from May until October.

Brookings Municipal Utilities Presentation from Executive Vice President / General Manager Steve Meyer. Meyer presented a wealth of information regarding the sustainability topics Brookings Municipal Utilities is working on, including: the current and past structure of Brookings' energy sources; Missouri River Energy Services' Red Rock Hydroelectric Project on the Des Moines River near Pella, IA; street light LED replacement; automated metering infrastructure; and Brookings' aquifer and wastewater treatment plant.

Developed "Changing Culture" Strategies.

- Benchmark document provided in annual and orientation meetings with department heads.
- Subcommittee assigned to meet with newly elected City Council Members to provide overview of the benchmark document.
- Encouraged city elected officials, department heads and city employees to attend regional and local sustainability conferences and participate in sustainability practices webinars.
- Emailed articles, reports, newsletters and other educational materials to department heads and key staff.