What Cities Are Doing to Support Sustainability
Eco-Facts

- According to the National Resources Defense Council
  - More than 1,100 counties in the US will face higher risks of water shortages by mid-century
  - Electric power plants emit more than two billion tons of carbon dioxide each year, or roughly 40 percent of total emissions
- According to statisticbrain.com
  - 314 metric tons of CO2 is emitted each year in the US by cars and trucks
  - 70 million tons of fertilizer is used annually
  - Almost 4 million gigawatt hours of electricity is used annually, with 48% coming from coal-fired powered plants
**What is “Sustainability”?**

**EPA:** Sustainability is based on a simple principle: Everything that we need for our survival and well-being depends, either directly or indirectly, on our natural environment. Sustainability creates and maintains the conditions under which humans and nature can exist in productive harmony, that permit fulfilling the social, economic and other requirements of present and future generations.
According to the Natural Step:

- This integrated planning approach sets it apart from other traditional community plans. Because sustainability problems are often complex and overlapping, they cannot be solved in isolation and are best addressed using a comprehensive, systems-based approach that focuses on the root of the problem, rather than only the symptoms. For example, toxic effluent in rivers affects fish health (environmental), which affect people (social) and financial prosperity (economic). All of these elements and their connections must be considered to arrive at optimal solutions.
Further explanation

- Sustainability Plan helps to connect the dots and provides a road map
  - Transportation is related to water is related to waste
  - Waste is related to transportation is related to energy
  - Water is related to energy is related to waste is related to land use....
Who has a Sustainability Plan?

- Cities in
  - California
  - Oregon
  - Washington
  - Washington, D.C.
- But, what about Texas?
  - Austin
  - El Paso
  - Denton
  - Cedar Hill
Things are going on all over the map!

- Some have very aggressive programs
  - Seattle
  - Portland
  - Chicago
  - New York
  - Austin
  - Plano
  - And, more....

But, many don’t
What cities are doing to support sustainability

- MOST CITIES DO **NOT** HAVE A SUSTAINABILITY PLAN!
- Most cities champion certain environmental issues
  - Ft. Worth – Bicycling/Bike Share Program
  - Denton – Energy
  - Dallas – Zero landfill
  - Irving – Energy and Transit
What motivates a city to action?

- Politics
- Growth/Profit
- Public Pressure
- Climate change
- Recognition
- It’s the right thing
What limits a city from doing more or moving faster?

- Politics
- Funding
- Public pressure
- Apathy
- Just doesn’t believe we have a problem
- It’s government, folks!
  - Action item has to be vetted among committees, legal, city council
    - May include RFPs or bids, which will take longer
What is Irving Doing?

- We don’t have a sustainability plan...
- But, we’re doing a lot!
  - Environmental Policy
  - Executive Order for new city buildings to be LEED certified
  - Citizens Green Advisory Board
  - Net zero energy library (Gold)
  - Net zero energy middle school (Gold)
  - Irving Convention Center (Silver)
  - 5.5 mile Solar powered LED street lights
What is Irving Doing?

- Keep Irving Beautiful
- Tree City USA
- Campion Trail System
- Tree & landscape ordinance
- Strong energy codes for building construction
- NEW!! Community Gardens Grant Program
What is Irving Doing?

- DART, TRE & light rail
- Transportation funding for development of hike and bike trail along Rock Island Rd.
- Bike lanes as part of the Water Street Project
- 10 Level 2 EV charging stations; 38 Level 1
What is Irving Doing?

- Curbside and drop-off recycling programs
- White goods recycling
- Brush collection and mulch
- Curbside collection of special wastes
- Home chemical collection events
- E-Waste recycling
What is Irving Doing?

- Water conservation efforts
  - Drought plan
  - Leak detection program
  - Fats, Oils, and Grease (FOG)
  - Texas Stream Team
  - Water reuse

- **A LOT OF EDUCATION!**
  - Think Green web page
  - Think Green show
  - Water conservation outreach
  - Green classes, events and activities
  - Green Seam Project
  - Partnership with Green Business Council
What is Irving Doing?

- **Internal Operations**
  - Anti-idling campaign
  - Employee recycling
  - Energy reduction in the buildings
    - Vending machines
    - Motion detectors in offices
    - Upgrades to efficient lighting
    - Bulb crusher
    - Replacing HVAC systems
    - Energy Management System
  - Housing and Human Services requires new buildings to be Energy Star rated
What is Irving Doing?

- Internal Operations
  - Award-winning green fleet
  - Green purchasing requirement
  - Eco-friendly janitorial supplies
  - Mass transit reimbursement program for employees
  - Purchase Energy Star rated appliance and electronics
  - Employee education
What are Other Cities Doing?

- **Dallas**
  - Environmental Management System
    - ISO14001:2004 certified
  - Earth Hour participant
  - Purchases energy from renewable sources
  - Maintains a greenhouse gas emission inventory
  - Zero landfill plan
  - Landfill gas to energy program
  - Converts wastewater biogas to electricity
  - And, more...(see resources)
What are Other Cities Doing?

- Ft. Worth
  - Energy Management Plan
  - Bike Ft Worth
  - Recycling/waste diversion
  - Sustainability Task Force
  - Smart Flush toilet distribution program
  - Drought Plan
Plano
- Green Business Certification Program
- Solarize Plano
- Waste reduction/recycling
- Drought Plan
- Environmental Education Center
- Keep Plano Beautiful
What are Other Cities Doing?

- Richardson
  - Community Garden Program
  - Environmental education
  - Drought Plan
  - Rainwater harvesting ordinance
  - Large vehicle idling reduction ordinance
  - Recycling/composting programs
What are Other Cities Doing?

- Denton
  - Sustainability Plan
  - 40% of city-wide electricity comes from wind
  - Great solar rebates
  - Recycling program
  - Dino Dirt/composting
  - Keep Denton Beautiful
  - Special Event recycling ordinance
  - My Waste app
Where Can You Go to Find Out More?

- cityofirving.org/begreen
- http://www.greendallas.net/pdfs/FactSheet.pdf
- http://www.greendallas.net/
- http://fortworthtexas.gov/sustainability/
- http://www.ci.garland.tx.us/programs/green/
Where Can You Go to Find Out More?

Other resources

- Vision North Texas -
  http://www.visionnorthtexas.org/main.html
- North Central Texas Council of Governments –
  http://www.nctcog.org/
- Texas Smartscapes -
  http://www.txsmartscape.com/index.asp
- Sustainable Sites -
  http://www.sustainablesites.org/
What Can You Do to Help Increase Programs and Awareness?

- Be greener
- Try to involve/educate your neighbors
- Get involved in your community outside of your neighborhood
- Let your voice be heard
- Apply to be a member of a city board or committee
Questions?
For more information, contact:
Fran Witte, Sr. Community Outreach Coordinator
City of Irving
Office of Environmental Stewardship
fwitte@cityofirving.org
972-721-2355