

Case Study: Sustainable Council Program

COUNCIL NAME

Campbelltown City Council

WEB ADDRESS

campbelltown.nsw.gov.au

POPULATION

158,941

Overview

The Campbelltown area is one of the nation's fastest growing population and employment centres. With such significant growth, Council has a major role to play in the sustainability of the region. Campbelltown City Council takes a two-pronged approach of an overarching sustainability strategy to influence policies and projects, and a culture change program led by a Sustainability Committee, which aims to educate, inspire, support and involve staff.

Background

The Sustainable Council Program has grown over a number of years, refining its vision, gaining support and building presence. It was born from a realisation that sustainability was already happening in some ways across Council programs, in discreet projects and outcomes weren't acknowledged or valued. It became clear that a strategic, collaborative and whole-of-Council approach was required.

Implementation

The Sustainable Council Program comprises of two main elements:

1. A Sustainability Strategy which is the umbrella for a suite of strategic plans and policies to coordinate the development, implementation, evaluation and monitoring of sustainability across Council; and,
2. A culture change program led by a Sustainability Committee, which aims to educate, inspire, support and involve staff.

Learning from previous experiences, it was critical that the program did not become another item for the shelf. As such, the Sustainability Committee, the governing body for the 'culture change' element, was established first. This was followed by four working parties focussing on sustainable council, sustainable catchments, sustainable land and sustainable facilities.

The Committee and working parties provide a whole-of-Council platform to discuss, advocate, plan and implement sustainability. With these drivers in place, the Sustainability Strategy was able to quickly start achieving wins. The Sustainable Council Program is an ever evolving program which recognises that sustainability is more about the journey than the destination.

The Sustainable Council Program receives financial support through external grant funds, Council's operational budgets and Council's Corporate Sustainability Fund. To date, the Fund has provided over \$600,000 to support projects.

Outcomes

The achievements of the Sustainable Council Program have been significant. The Sustainability Strategy has achieved:

REFERENCES

www.campbelltown.nsw.gov.au/files/assets/public/documents/sustainabilitystrategyoctober2015reducedsize.pdf

- Review of Council's Corporate Sustainability Fund, recommending projects pay back the the Fund across an agreed payback period. This has led to reinvestment of \$71,000.
- Continued refinement of Council's sustainability accounting tool, which captures consumption and cost information for the key areas of electricity, solar, gas, water, paper, waste and vehicle fleet.
- A recent increase in capacity of 258 kW of photovoltaics, with a total capacity of 537 kW across its four largest energy consuming facilities.
- Collaboration with a multi-agency working party investigating urban heat across Western Sydney and the applicability of various cooling strategies at a precinct level.
- An internal sustainable facilities policy to guide the construction, upgrade and operation of Council facilities.
- Replacement of Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC) at Campbelltown Arts Centre, Council's second largest energy consuming facility. The new HVAC will result in energy savings of 132,273 kg CO₂ per year (a 29% reduction) and cost savings of \$18,587 (a 20% reduction).

Through the culture change stream, Council has achieved:

- The inclusion of sustainability into Council's staff induction program.
- An ongoing sustainability feature in Council's quarterly staff newsletter providing information, tips and tricks on sustainability topics.
- 52 "Bright Ideas" received from staff.
- Food waste workshops provided to 38 staff.
- A staff recycling competition which collected 259 used cosmetic, cleaning containers, toothpaste tubes and toothbrushes.
- 492 volunteer hours to revitalise a prominent reserve with 2,100 plants planted.

Key Learnings

One of the key benefits of the Sustainable Council Program is the value of a cross-disciplinary team which drives the success of any culture change project. This collaborative approach has demonstrated the importance of breaking down organisational silos to facilitate successful sustainability projects. Also, leading with relationships, partnerships and culture change has greatly improved the implementation rate and quality of sustainability strategies, projects, policies and procedures.

The next steps of the Sustainable Council Program involve the continued prioritisation of projects to be implemented, as well as a broader discussion around shifting towards an outcomes-based framework rather than a project-based framework.

Contact

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This project was the 2017 winner of the Local Sustainability Award at the LGNSW Excellence in the Environment Awards