

**CITY OF CORVALLIS  
CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION MINUTES  
February 24, 2015**

The work session of the City Council of the City of Corvallis, Oregon, was called to order at 7:02 pm on February 24, 2015, in the Madison Avenue Meeting Room, 500 SW Madison Avenue, Corvallis, Oregon, with Mayor Traber presiding.

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Present: Mayor Traber; Councilors Baker, Beilstein, Brauner, Bull, Glassmire, Hann, Hirsch (7:30 pm), Hogg, York

Also present were facilitator Joseph Bailey, City Manager Brewer, Community Department Director Gibb, Acting Finance Director Chenard, Library Director Rawles, Parks and Recreation Director Emery, Police Chief Sassaman, and Public Works Director Steckel

**II. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**A. 2015-2016 City Council Goal Setting, continued**

The Council members discussed the draft goal language, reviewed the analysis provided by staff, and the public testimony (Attachments A and B).

The Council also discussed a desire to have more information as the term progresses for the costs to implement the goals. Staff agreed to work on mechanisms to track costs and report those costs quarterly with the goals updates.

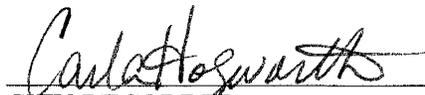
**III. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 9:05 pm.

APPROVED:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
MAYOR

ATTEST:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
CITY RECORDER

**To:** The Honorable Mayor Biff Traber and  
Members of the Corvallis City Council  
**From:** Corvallis Climate Action Plan Task Force  
**Date:** February 24, 2015  
**Subject:** City Council Proposed Climate Action Goal

Dear Mayor Traber and Members of the City Council:

Thank you for considering Climate Action as one of the goals for your 2015-16 term. We have reviewed the goal and the staff analysis and support combining the Georgetown University Energy Prize (GUEP) and the Climate Action Plan (CAP) under one overarching climate action goal. We look forward to working with the Council and City staff on both efforts.

This memo pertains only to the CAP portion of staff's analysis because that was the focus of the goal proposed by our organizations. Of the four options outlined, we support Option 2, but we believe it could be accomplished on a shorter timeline at less cost. Under Option 2, "Staff takes the draft Climate Action Plan proposed by the citizen-established Climate Action Plan Task Force and conducts a robust public involvement process..." We prefer this option because:

- **Option 2 builds on the draft CAP already developed.** The Scope of Work that the CAP Task Force completed in August 2014 for the Urban Services Committee said, "Given that City staff resources are limited, the CAPTF proposes to develop a community climate action plan for consideration and integration by the Corvallis City Council." Understanding that the Scope of Work was not binding, the Task Force nonetheless worked in good faith to complete a plan on the agreed-upon timeline. With hundreds of volunteer hours devoted to the CAP—which has also been reviewed by topic experts and consultants with whom the City has previously contracted (e.g., Dorothy Fisher Atwood, Kelly Hoell)—we believe that the foundational work is complete and that it would be a waste of City resources to start over.
- **Option 2 takes a holistic approach to climate action,** covering all sources of emissions in the community greenhouse gas inventory and offering both mitigation and adaptation strategies. Under Options 3 and 4, the City would take responsibility only for the topic areas that fit within its core responsibilities. In contrast, the CAP Task Force envisions the City leading the entire plan, but working in partnership with other entities (e.g., Benton County Health Department, Corvallis Sustainability Coalition) to develop the topic areas and to track progress. A comprehensive, holistic approach not only is more likely to reduce greenhouse gas emissions but also would reduce confusion and the likelihood of piecemeal, ad hoc initiatives that ultimately could be more costly in terms of Council and staff resources.

Even if the Council chooses Option 2, we believe that, as currently written, it would accomplish too little on too lengthy a timeline—18 to 24 months just to develop a plan. Our organizations have made clear that we consider climate action to be a matter of great urgency, and we submitted a goal that we felt had a feasible implementation timeline. The Scope of Work emphasizes that the CAP Task Force accelerated its original timeline because, "Rather than merely going to the next City Council with the request to develop a climate action plan, we propose to complete a plan by the end of this calendar year and ask the Council to implement the plan." We see two areas in which staff's proposed timeline can be shortened:

- **Setting reduction targets.** The CAP Task Force has researched reduction targets and made recommendations in its draft. Even if starting from scratch, however, the process should take only 80-200 hours of staff time, according to ICLEI's *Quick Start Guide for Setting A Greenhouse Gas Reduction Target*. Eugene did it in about 48 hours, according to Climate and Energy Analyst Matt McRae. With data from the Corvallis greenhouse gas inventory and recommendations from the

scientific community about the reductions necessary, this step can be done fairly quickly and does not require a great deal of public input.

- **Public process.** We understand staff's desire for a robust public process. However, the draft CAP has already received much community vetting. Many of the objectives and actions are from the *Community Sustainability Action Plan*, which was developed by the Corvallis Sustainability Coalition in 2008 based on community input at three well-attended town hall meetings. The plan was updated in 2013, again with community input. In addition, the CAP Task Force held two public forums to engage community members on the six topic areas, conducted outreach to members of the participating organizations, and made the draft available to the general public on the CorvallisCAP.org website. While we do not view this process as sufficient for Council adoption of the plan, neither do we believe a public process should take 18-24 months. Rather, we encourage the City Council and staff to identify where there has been a lack of engagement (i.e., gaps in the public process) and to target and engage those groups. In any event, the focus of the public process should be more on engagement to implement a CAP than to generate more ideas.

Tightening the timeline will tighten the budget. We believe the estimated costs in all of the options are excessive because of the lengthy timelines. As stated, the estimates are also confusing. For example:

- Option 2 estimates FY 15-16 costs of \$50,000 to \$75,000 for 1.0 dedicated FTE. If the timeline were 18 months, with 4-6 months to hire a new employee and 12 months for the process, then wouldn't the 18-month costs be \$50,000 to \$75,000 for 12 months of the new employee's time instead of the \$100,000 to \$150,000 cited?
- It is unclear why the estimated FY 15-16 cost for a 0.5 dedicated FTE in Option 3 is \$40,000 to \$50,000, whereas a 1.0 FTE in Options 2 and 4 is \$50,000 to \$75,000. Shouldn't the 0.5 FTE be half the cost of the 1.0 FTE?

Finally, although we are most amenable to Option 2, neither it nor the other options address the process questions raised in the draft CAP, such as determining who is going to conduct future GHG inventories and on what schedule; oversee implementation of action items in the CAP; monitor, measure and report progress; and identify and seek funding, where necessary. We hope that the City would commit to these essential tasks as part of a climate action plan and goal.

We agree with the staff report that the goals will need a great deal of coordination. We trust the Council will examine how the proposed goals overlap and how they might work together to avoid duplication of effort and unnecessary expense. For example, we concur with staff's judgment that "Both the Climate Action and Vision goals are expected to need robust community input opportunities, and the ability to coordinate may lead to better information for both goals." Indeed, Appendix B of the draft CAP details many ways that "Climate Planning and the Corvallis Vision" can work together to bring about a sustainable budget, affordable housing, and economic vitality.

Once again, we appreciate the effort that the Council and staff have taken to analyze the proposed goals and reiterate our offer to work with you in a spirit of community collaboration to bring them to fruition.

Sincerely,

Corvallis Climate Action Plan Task Force:

Julie Arrington	Marys Peak Group—Sierra Club
Claudia Keith	League of Women Voters
Linda Lovett (Chair)	Corvallis Sustainability Coalition
Annette Mills	League of Women Voters
Kris Paul	350 Corvallis
Marjorie Stevens	First United Methodist Church Natural Step Ministry



February 24, 2015

The Honorable Mayor Biff Traber and  
Members of the Corvallis City Council  
501 SW Madison Avenue  
Corvallis, Oregon 97333

Subject: Proposed City Council Climate Action Goal

Dear Mayor Traber and City Council Members,

Thank you for considering Climate Action as one of the City Council's 2015-16 goals. The Corvallis City Staff has completed their analysis and we would like to give input, which is intended to add to your discussion of approaches not considered.

#### Plan Development

In the Staff analysis, the ICLEI steps for plan development were referenced: 1. Complete a greenhouse gas inventory; 2. Set emission reduction targets; 3. Develop a plan to achieve the targets; 4. Implement the plan; 5. Monitor and evaluate progress. The staff recommended accomplishing 2 and 3 and then begin 4. However, we believe that all five steps need to be considered in the climate action plan development. Steps 4 and 5—implementation of greenhouse gas reduction and monitoring and evaluating progress—can and should occur as a climate action plan is being completed.

The Corvallis Climate Action Plan Task Force asserted that “Many of the action items recommended in this plan align with work already underway across the City organization in solid waste management, stormwater management, urban forestry, and other existing City programs.” The intended action items in the draft Corvallis Climate Action Plan (CAP) are to “be part of the work that the City will be doing when it updates the Comprehensive Plan and Transportation Master Plan.” As a result, the actions will require **a redirection** of City staff. Therefore the plan development will supplement work already underway that reduces greenhouse gases.

A climate action plan is a guide or road map showing how the city will meet their greenhouse gas reduction goals. Therefore the climate action plan process must be systemic within city government. It should be included and inform any future City Plan updates, such as the Comprehensive Plan, Transportation Plan, and 2020 Vision Statement. Ideally, the CAP should inform all of the other five City Council proposed goals: 1) OSU/City Relations, 2) Economic Vitality, 3) Housing Development, 4) Vision and Action Plan for Corvallis, and 5) Sustainable Budget. There are many needed climate actions such as working with businesses and other regional partners in resource efficiency, multi-modal transportation options, sustainable economic development, and planning for livability. Now is the time to integrate GHG reduction into all city government decision-making processes.

## Plan Options

Of the four options that the City staff outlined, we support Option 2, but with concerns about the estimated timeline, cost, and the lack of implementation and evaluation of progress (as discussed above). As written, it would accomplish too little with too lengthy a timeline—18 to 24 months just to develop a plan.

In Option two, staff will use the draft CAP, and will conduct a public involvement process that the Task Force initiated. City staff proposes hiring a 1.0 FTE (\$50,000 to \$75,000), and if public involvement is added the City calculates that the cost will rise anywhere from \$100,000 to \$150,000. However tightening the timeline will tighten the budget. The CAP Task Force has already spent hundreds of volunteer hours working on the CAP, including community collaboration. If this volunteer process was continued, the cost of public involvement would go down substantially, and the timeline and associated costs would shrink.

The volunteer possibilities of this important issue are unique and should be recognized. In particular, the CAP Task Force members are willing to work with City staff to take advantage of funding opportunities that they have identified. Some of the possible funding sources include: STAR Communities. Climate Action Champions, Partnership for Sustainable Communities, and 100 Resilient Cities.

It is important to note that once the City acquires the necessary tools that are provided by ICLEI (and others), and begins the climate action plan process, the City will have the track-record of envisioned or implemented climate change projects, which greatly increases the City's eligibility for grants. Therefore, if a volunteer CAP Task Force or working group was formed, and a 1.0 FTE was hired, he or she could leverage the volunteer potential, which should cut back on costs and allow the 1.0 FTE to work on implementing a plan to reduce GHG emissions.

## Georgetown University Energy Prize

We support combining the Georgetown University Energy Prize (GUEP) with the Climate Action Plan where the GUEP is an immediate-term action used to lessen the carbon footprint of Corvallis residents. The city can implement it before the full CAP is in place. The GUEP presents a unique opportunity. Many volunteer hours have been invested in the project. The GUEP can be used to educate and show Corvallis residents about the many ways and reasons to achieve energy conservation, while working to win the Georgetown Energy prize. It is a path the city can take while performing the more complicated, longer term action of implementing a CAP.

Thank you for all the work that the Council and staff have done thus far to analyze the proposed goals, and we look forward to working with you in the future on a Climate Action Plan goal.

Respectfully,

**Debra Higbee-Sudyka**  
**Conservation Committee**  
**Oregon Chapter Sierra Club**  
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