

City of Salem Strategic Plan
Community Inventory of Greenhouse Gas Emissions
Proposed Action

Concept

Prepare a community-wide environmental strategy and a greenhouse gas emissions inventory.

Department Director Sponsor

Kristin Retherford, Urban Development
Norman Wright, Community Development

Staff Lead

TBD, Community Development

Purpose and Scope of Initiative

The City of Salem's Strategic Plan (2017) called for the preparation of a community-wide environmental strategy that takes into account the energy conservation at City facilities and in City operations, and the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in our community. In developing an Environmental Action Plan, the City Council sought opportunities for collaboration with our local utilities, state agencies, and educational institutions. The Action Plan should also include provisions to:

- Make data-driven decisions to prioritize investments that make a measurable impact
- Report regularly on progress toward measures to Council and the community
- Emphasize equity in terms of access to resources to help all members of our community reduce their individual impact on the environment.

This strategy assumes:

- The Environmental Action Work Group, consisting of representatives from City Council, local utilities and community groups, remains interested and engaged in this work.
- The greenhouse gas inventory and the Environmental Action Plan are two separate but related activities. While the two activities may run concurrently, because the Environmental Action Plan will benefit from the baseline data in the greenhouse gas inventory, our recommendation is to begin with the inventory. The data and findings from the inventory would also benefit two other Strategic Plan activities: (1) the visioning effort and (2) the Comprehensive Plan Update.
- The greenhouse gas inventory:
 - Can produce a baseline measure.
 - May be updated every two to three years.
 - Will rely on existing data sources, obtainable through partnerships with local utility providers, and can be completed with the support of Willamette University professors and students.

- May take a year to develop.
- The Environmental Action Plan:
 - Is focused on improving outcomes from baseline data for: 1) energy conservation in City facilities and City operations and 2) reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in our community.
 - Includes a community outreach and engagement component and may be articulated as part of community engagement in support of Vision for Growth and Development activities.
 - The resulting Environmental Action Plan will be higher level in its focus and implement incremental actions with high return on investment likely in the areas of:
 - Urban form, buildings and energy
 - Land use and transportation
 - Food and agriculture
 - Consumption, waste and materials management
 - Natural systems or natural resources
 - Will be reliant on partnerships to achieve outcomes within budget constraints in its implementation.

Cities across Oregon have taken varied approaches to this type of work. Some have staffing dedicated to environmental sustainability and have established advisory boards or commissions to oversee performance.

- Eugene, for example, has both a dedicated staff person and a commission. In pursuit of their updated action plan, Eugene is seeking an additional investment of \$480,000 for consulting support in the plan development, outreach and engagement and a two-year limited duration FTE to support the work.
- Ashland has a Conservation Commission and about one third an FTE person supporting energy conservation in their electric utility, in addition to economic development and the City's administration. Ashland has just completed a \$130,000 to 140,000 Climate and Energy Action Plan effort and a \$43,000 inventory. They've hired an FTE to support implementation of the Plan and updating of the inventory every three years.
- In 2016, Bend adopted a resolution concerning implementation of climate action goals with a plan to dedicate staffing to manage the baseline assessment, staff a Climate Action Steering Committee, develop and implement climate action plans for the city operations and facility and one for the community. With significant funding contributions from local partners, the cost is estimated at \$175,000 each year for two years.

Subject Experts, Business Leads, Community Partners

- Participants in the Environment Action Plan Work Group including 350SalemOregon, PGE and Northwest Natural. This work will rely on a partnership with Willamette University.
- Peter Fernandez, Public Works
- Mina Hanssen, Human Resources

Checklist

- How does the proposal align with the mission, vision, values and desired outcomes of the Strategic Plan?
This proposal for a greenhouse gas inventory and an Environmental Action Plan is directly related to the City's mission, vision and values.

- Is the City currently working on this?
As a municipal corporation and in its day-to-day operations, the City is responsive to City, State of Oregon and federal regulations protecting natural resources and the environment. The City of Salem complies with all state and federal laws and regulations protecting our environment and drinking water, to prevent flooding, and to treat stormwater and wastewater. In its regulatory role, the City passes on regulations to development to ensure these protections and preserves resource lands surrounding the City.

- Is this a new initiative for the City of Salem?
This would be a new initiative for the City of Salem. To achieve the broader outcome of an Environmental Action Plan and greenhouse gas inventory, the City would rely on partnerships with residents, businesses in our community, local utilities, educational institutions and State agencies. While the City is responsive to environmental regulations in its day-to-day operations and acts as a regulatory body for our local community, the ability to reduce greenhouse gas emissions across the community is not wholly within the City's capacity to influence. Staff would likely return to Council when the draft plan is complete and provide status reports periodically on progress.

- Is this critical to developing the organizational capacity (funding or staffing resources) to deliver a Strategic Plan initiative or further mission, vision or values?
Developing a greenhouse gas inventory and the strategies and recommendations within the Environmental Action Plan are likely to affect more than two functional areas within the City's operations and will result in a need for increased coordination and communication across internal City functions in collection of data and preparation of a progress report to the community.

Cost Estimate

- How many FTE are working on it, will be working on it?
It will be challenging to support this scope of work and sustain activity in support of updating the greenhouse gas inventory every two to three years and to implement recommendations within the Environmental Action Plan within existing resources. The proposal relies on City staff as the project manager of consulting support and an ongoing internship.

- What are the other annual costs associated with the activity? Are these one-time or ongoing expenses, for how long?

Greenhouse Gas Inventory. To build a baseline inventory and establish a database, staff are anticipating an annual paid internship at \$40,000 to \$50,000. It is likely that an investment of \$15,000 to \$20,000 will be required to build a technological solution to maintain the community inventory data in an easily updated database.

- Is there any off-setting revenue associated with this activity? Estimate annual offsetting revenue.
No.
- Can it be managed within the current budget?
No. This work will require new and ongoing resources.

Project Schedule, Estimated Time to Complete

As the greenhouse gas inventory is developed, there will be community conversations about activities the City and the community could undertake to reduce our impact on the environment. These actions can be prioritized and give the City a focus for immediate, near-term and longer-term actions to protect our environment.

Project Support

- Is it supported elsewhere in the community?
Through the Environmental Action Plan Work Group, our local utilities and educational institutions have expressed interest in supporting this work. There are also several community groups who may lend support.
- What is the community benefit of the project?
Salem would be able to establish a baseline for greenhouse gas emissions. Using this data to establish targets for reductions and updated in the inventory within three years the City could measure the impact of its actions to be more energy efficient and reduce emissions.

Other Project Considerations

- How many people will this impact? Can we estimate ROI?
Through this work, we can identify actions with the highest return on investment as priorities for implementation.
- Can this outcome be achieved through some other method?
Staff will need to convene and participate in the development of the greenhouse gas inventory and Environmental Action Plan.
- What are the tradeoffs of doing this now? Are there other implications of doing this?
Because this is a request for new resources and there is no off-setting revenue, there are budget trade-offs in engaging in this activity now. The long-term nature of this work suggested a need for a sustainable source of funding for monitoring

progress against the Environmental Action Plan outcomes and maintaining the inventory data for regular reporting to the City Council and community.

- Is this being done by others in our community?
This is not currently being done by others in the community. There are some organizations conducting data gathering and analysis which could be beneficial to the project.
- Has this been attempted before? What was the outcome?
In 2008-2009, the City prepared a community sustainability strategy with dedicated EECBG/ARA funding.