



CITY OF SALEM

Written Testimony #1

City Council

555 Liberty St SE
Salem, OR 97301

Monday, September 20, 2021 6:00 PM

Virtual Meeting

City Council Work Session - Climate Action Plan

2.a. [21-323](#) Salem Climate Action Plan Work Session

Ward(s): All Wards

Councilor(s): All Councilors

Neighborhood(s): All Neighborhoods

Service Area(s): Safe Community; Welcoming and Livable

Neighborhood; Good Governance; Natural Environment Stewardship

Recommendation: Information only.

Attachments: [Salem Climate Action Plan Task Force](#)
[Salem Climate Action Plan Strategies v16](#)
[Benefit-Cost Analyses 8.27.21 Final](#)
[CAP Worksession Presentation Council v3 compressed.pdf](#)
[Public Comments received by 3:15 p.m. 9-20-2021.pdf](#)

Add - Written Testimony.

From: [RODNEY R STUBBS](#)
To: Chad@homefirestove.com
Cc: [citycouncil](#)
Subject: Climate Change Hoax arrives in your backyard.
Date: Thursday, September 16, 2021 4:51:59 PM

Chad: The Salem City Council is moving forward with its plan to ban Natural Gas. After watching 15 hours of the Climate Change videos, your Chamber of Commerce and Homebuilder representatives have not said a word in opposition, and I doubt they have informed their members about this proposed plan.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nYWlPLdPLys>

This policy will have a big impact on your business. You should notify your customer base because this plan will require replacing all their fireplace inserts, water heaters, stoves, and dryers that utilize Natural Gas. It will severely impact home values, and they simply will lose their home equity value and could cause bankruptcy as a result.

Restaurant owners who use Natural gas are also unaware of this policy. The Restaurant lobbyist is also colluding and supporting this policy, as he was a former Executive Director of the Chamber of Commerce.

They will be relying on wind power and solar energy. California and Texas went through blackouts because they closed their coal fire generation, and in California, they are closing nuclear power as a reliable source of energy.

This is what the progressives are pursuing in the Green New Deal are pursuing with their \$3 Trillion tax increase that impacts the taxes for anyone earning more than \$30,000 according to Mr. Kudlow, Trumps Secretary of State.

Thank you for the courtesy

City Council Agenda
<https://salem.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=A&ID=846264&GUID=526E69F1-D4FF-41BC-A119-5DAE27AEAF73>

Thank you for the courtesy

From: [Phil Carver](#)
To: [CityRecorder](#)
Cc: [Clair Clark](#); [Roberta A](#)
Subject: 350 Salem Comments on 9/20 City Council Climate Action Work Session
Date: Sunday, September 19, 2021 7:32:16 PM

Below are the comments of 350 Salem Oregon for the Sept. 20 Council Work Session on the Climate Action Plan
Philip H. Carver, Ph.D.
Co-coordinator 350 Salem OR

350 Salem Comments on Climate Action Plan Sept. 20, 2021

Introduction

To meet the Council's goal of a 50 percent reduction in greenhouse gases by 2035 it is critical that the City focus on the most effective reduction strategies immediately, particularly related to transportation emissions. The science has spoken -- business as usual is not an option. This memo focuses on these strategies. Many of our priority strategies have long lead times and must be implemented immediately, while other reduction strategies can be adopted over time as funding becomes available.

350 Salem Oregon generally supports the ideas in the Sept. 20 presentation. Though significant exceptions are assumptions 11, 12 and 13 for modeling Scenario 2 for 2050. These driving bans are not realistic. Instead, the City should work with the state and federal government to have 90% of the surface vehicles be battery-electric. Aircraft (#13) can be fueled with renewable hydrogen which the City can facilitate as that market develops.

Further the presentation does not include HOW to encourage density and more use of walking, bikes and transit. Below we have specific suggestions and places where we feel mandates are more appropriate than incentives. If the City does not have legal authority to mandate these measures, it should lobby the legislature to grant that authority.

350 Salem supports most of the 173 strategies (with two exceptions listed below). Still, the City must focus its limited staff resources and funding on the key measures that will implement the good ideas in the Sept. 20 presentation. Below are what we believe are key implementation strategies to achieve the Council's greenhouse gas reduction goals. Differences from the measures in the presentation are in **bold**.

350 Salem OR's TOP TEN Climate Action Strategies

Strategies that are the same as the Sept. 20 presentation are marked with an “*”
Where a strategy is a way of implementing an item in the presentation it has a “+”
The letter-number combinations refer to the August 8 list of 173 strategies

Transportation

1. No more widening (or adding lanes to) existing roadways. No new freeways or parkways. Invest instead in pedestrian and biking network/safety to transit network, schools and major employers (provides funding for TL01 and TL05)+
2. Charge for city-controlled parking in and near downtown (TL27)*
3. **Mandate** that major employers implement sustainable transportation for employees+
4. Lobby/support intercity transit and rail at the state level (TL17)
5. Improve pedestrian safety at crossings (TL39)

Electric Vehicles

6. **Require** EV charging stations at new (and later at existing) multifamily residences (stronger version of TL30)

Solid Waste

7. Send all of Salem's mixed trash to the Coffin Butte landfill. Adopt a comprehensive municipal waste program to reduce methane emissions.

Development

8. **Ban** new fossil gas residential and commercial hookups+
9. Exempt System Development Charges within ¼ mile of the core transit network+

Administration

10. Hire a city staff person to implement CAP (CM28)*

Oppose

- Consider and evaluate the potential for low carbon/RNG offerings for homes and businesses (EN27)
- Add hydrogen to natural gas system (EN28)

Discussion

Below, we have provided further context and justification for our recommendations. We feel these strategies are the most important strategies for the city to pursue right away. In

selecting these strategies, we prioritized potential greenhouse gas reductions, while considering other concerns, such as cost of implementation and impact on social justice.

Transportation

1.

No more widening or adding lanes to existing roadways. Instead, invest in pedestrian and biking network and safety measures to access the transit network, schools and major employers

Salem will not reduce transportation emissions by 2035 if vehicle travel increases. It should plan for no increases in driving. Widening or adding lanes does not decrease congestion. It just encourages people to live in fringe areas of Salem or in outlying communities until congestion rises again to higher levels. These funds should instead be spent making the areas near transit, schools and employment more amenable to walking, biking and transit use. This is the most important measure to quickly reduce driving and transportation emissions. It is a stronger version of TL01, TL02, TL03 and TL05.

2.

Charge for city-controlled parking in or near downtown (TL27)

This measure is primarily to discourage commuters from using downtown parking instead of paying for parking. The City has been unsuccessful in discouraging commuters from moving their cars every few hours. Most major cities charge for on-street downtown parking. The additional funds should be used to encourage walking, biking and transit use. Library parking should be exempt from parking fees in order to enable lower-income families to access family library programs. Education (including library programs) is a capstone of equity.

3.

Mandate major employers implement sustainable transportation for employees+

These measures are sometimes referred to as transportation demand management. They include a wide range of options, such as:

- Charging for employee parking
- Cash payments to employees for carpooling
- Transit passes
- Emergency ride home
- Car/van pool coordination

- Secure bike parking onsite

- Showers and lockers for bicyclists(See OHSU commute rewards program).

Also, encourage employers to allow individual employees to have variable working hours and to telecommute. The City should adopt these practices as a model.

4.

Lobby/support intercity transit and rail at the state level (TL17)

This strategy is essential for reducing commuting from other cities to Salem, which is a major source of congestion and wear-and-tear on city roads. The city cannot fully fund these measures but can lobby its state senators and representatives, state agencies, and the governor.

5.

Improve pedestrian safety at crossings (TL39)

People will not walk to transit, shopping, schools and work if they don't feel safe.

Electric Vehicles

6. Require EV charging stations at new (and later at existing) multifamily residences. (stronger version of TL30)

This measure is required to facilitate EV ownership by apartment renters and condo owners.

Solid Waste

7. Send Salem's solid waste to the Coffin Butte landfill instead of to the incinerator

Salem citizens should not be complicit in the annual emissions of over 160,000 metric tons of greenhouse gases from the Covanta Marion incinerator, not to mention toxic chemicals that are poisoning vulnerable communities in Brooks, Woodburn, Keizer and North Salem. Although the greenhouse gas emissions from Covanta were similar to landfiling in 2006, this situation is rapidly changing. The Department of Environmental Quality is requiring better methane controls at Coffin Butte. Covanta's fossil fuel emissions from burning plastic are increasing with the difficulties in recycling. Most importantly, the carbon credit Covanta receives for generating power to displace emissions from grid-based power will decline rapidly with the shift to carbon-free power under recently passed HB 2021.

Adopt a comprehensive municipal waste program to reduce methane emissions (Expand MW19)

Methane emissions occur when wet organic matter is placed in a landfill. West Salem trash already goes to the Coffin Butte landfill. The City should increase its effort to see that food waste is placed in the green trash bins for composting.

Development

8. Ban all gas residential and commercial hookups+

Attorneys for the City of Eugene think Oregon municipalities have this authority. Buildings constructed now with “natural” fossil gas hookups will lock in decades of emissions and are inconsistent with Salem being carbon neutral by 2050. The use of gas appliances is bad for indoor air quality. In particular, children living in homes with gas stoves had a 42% higher risk of experiencing asthma symptoms, and, over their lifetime, a 24 percent increase in the risk of being diagnosed with asthma

9. Exempt System Development Charges within ¼ mile of the core transit network (TL41 and TL45)+

Studies show that developments in this area and near downtown do not require substantial street and other investments, unlike developments in fringe areas. This is the strongest measure to create walkable, compact mixed-use areas, something necessary for meeting the 2050 GHG goal.

Administration

10. Hire a city staff person to implement CAP (CM28)*

Implementing a CAP will require changes in operations in every department. A staff person reporting to the City manager can encourage changes, monitor progress and interface with residents.

Other items 350 Salem Supports:

- Phase out sales of fossil-fueled lawn equipment (EN30)
- Carbon capture through soil sequestration on City owned land (FD08)
- Incentivize or require EV charging stations for employees by medium and large employers

This strategy will enable PGE and Salem Electric to sell surplus solar electricity mid-day, rather than having the employees recharge their cars when they return home in the evening (hours of peak use). This change will facilitate utilities transitioning to solar power.

- Expand tree canopy in areas with little tree cover (NR09).

Urban trees are effective at reducing the heat island effect. Expanding tree cover in low-income areas, which are typically hotter than wealthier areas, is a climate justice measure.

- Reduce neighborhood speed limits (“20 is plenty!”) (pedestrian safety measure)

Oppose

- Consider and evaluate the potential for low carbon/RNG offerings for homes and businesses (EN27) and add hydrogen to natural gas system (EN28)

These two strategies are not under the jurisdiction or influence of the City. They falsely imply that natural gas has a viable role if the City is to be carbon neutral. Economically viable supplies of renewable natural gas (RNG) are highly limited. Renewable hydrogen has much more valuable uses than putting it into a natural gas pipeline, such as industrial production and aircraft fuel. Currently 99.9% of hydrogen is produced using fossil fuel

From: [Brian Hines](#)
To: [citycouncil](#)
Subject: Climate Action Plan is a dud
Date: Saturday, September 18, 2021 9:41:21 PM

"It's a dud." That's how the Salem Breakfast on Bikes blogger views the Climate Action Plan being discussed by the City Council next Monday. He's followed the plan much more closely than I have, so I believe him. The six progressive councilors need to make sure that the Climate Action Plan achieves the greenhouse gas emission goals set by the City Council -- which so far it doesn't, not even close.

Here's a blog post I wrote tonight about this.

<https://hinessight.blogs.com/salempoliticalsnark/2021/09/city-council-needs-to-strengthen-climate-action-plan.html>

— Brian

Brian Hines
Salem, Oregon USA
brianhines1@gmail.com
<https://www.facebook.com/OregonBrian>
<https://www.facebook.com/StrangeUpSalem>
<https://www.facebook.com/SalemPoliticalSnark>
<https://www.facebook.com/SalemCanDoBetter>
<https://twitter.com/oregonbrian>
www.hinesblog.com (blog)
www.churchofthechurchless.com (other blog)
www.salempoliticalsnark.com (other other blog)
www.brianhines.com (web site)
<https://brianhines.journoportfolio.com> (selection of my writings)