



Staff Report

File #: 20-383
Version: 1

Date: 10/12/2020
Item #: 5.b.

TO: Mayor and City Council
FROM: Councilor Tom Andersen, Ward 2

SUBJECT:

Motion from Councilor Tom Andersen regarding adopting goals as part of the City’s Climate Action Plan.

Ward(s): All Wards
Councilor(s): All Councilors
Neighborhood(s): All Neighborhoods

MOTION:

I move that the City Council adopt the following goals as part of the City’s Climate Action Plan (CAP):

- By 2035, Salem’s greenhouse gas emissions shall be reduced to 50% of the citywide greenhouse gas emissions for the baseline year of 2016, and
- By 2050, Salem should be carbon neutral.

DISCUSSION:

Gov. Brown’ Executive Order 20-04 calls for Oregon’s Greenhouse Gas (GHG) levels to be:

- At least 45 percent below 1990 levels by 2035; and
- at least 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050.

The Governor's goals do not include consideration of sequestration of carbon in trees and soils. Carbon neutrality includes consideration of carbon sequestered in trees and soils.

From 1990 to 2016 Oregon’s emissions roughly grew from 56 to 62 million metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent (MMTCO2e) according to the Oregon Global Warming Commission.

Having 2035 and 2050 goals is a reasonable timeline for GHG goals. They are far enough away to set stringent goals, but close enough to inspire early actions. They represent the timelines urged by

international agreements.

Annual targets are not practical for two reasons: it is impractical to do annual emission inventories and even if it were, annual emissions have considerable variation, making analysis of one-year trends difficult.

Ultimately, protecting the stability of our climate and adapting to climate change impacts are the most urgent tasks our city faces. The City should adopt goals that are strong yet achievable. The action plan should lay out policies that could reasonably achieve these goals.

Achieving the emissions reductions necessary to stabilize the climate this century will require strong actions by every party. This includes strong actions by city, state and federal governments and by most citizens and businesses. See below for the goals from other northwest cities.

Examples of GHG Reduction Goals in Other City Climate Action Plans

The City of Portland's CAP had the following:

- Achieve a 40 percent reduction in carbon emissions by 2030 and
- an 80 percent reduction by 2050 (compared to 1990 levels)

In June of 2020 this policy was amended to; at least a 50% reduction in carbon emissions below 1990 levels by 2030 and net-zero carbon emissions before 2050.

The City of Corvallis CAP has the following:

The Task Force set a target to reduce greenhouse gas emissions 75% by 2050 (as compared with 1990 levels), [aligning with Oregon's statutory target ORS 468A.205(1)(c)].

The City of Eugene CAP has the following:

- Reduce community fossil fuel use by 50% of 2010 levels by 2030

The City of Bend CAP has the following:

- Achieve a 40% decrease in fossil fuel use by 2030 and a 70% decrease by 2050 (from a baseline year of 2016).

The City of Milwaukie CAP has the following:

- By 2040, Milwaukie's buildings will have no net emissions, and by 2050, Milwaukie will be a

fully carbon-neutral city. [The difference between emissions and net emissions would be the carbon sequestered by growing the tree canopy from 27 to 40 percent].

The City of Ashland CAP has the following:

- For the Ashland community: Reduce overall Ashland community greenhouse gas emissions by 8% on average every year to 2050 [With a 2016 base this would be a 94 percent reduction by 2050].

Attachments:
None.