

BEFORE THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
FOR MULTNOMAH COUNTY, OREGON

RESOLUTION NO. 07-173

Approving Efforts to Develop an Update to the 2001 Portland Multnomah Local Action Plan on Global Warming, Including the Formation of a Citizen-Advisory Committee to Provide Recommendations for the Update

The Multnomah County Board of Commissioners Finds:

- a. Multnomah County and the City of Portland have assumed leadership roles in working together to identify aggressive, prudent actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
- b. In 2001, Multnomah County and the City of Portland adopted the Local Action Plan on Global Warming (Plan) to combat the threat of global climate crisis (Resolution No. 01-052). Due to this important step, Multnomah County and the City of Portland are some of the only U.S. jurisdictions to have kept their total greenhouse gas emission levels steady since 1990. This means that despite the region's population gain, per capita emissions are down 14%. To date, Multnomah County government has decreased its operational greenhouse gas emissions by approximately 3% below 1990 levels.
- c. Despite these impressive achievements, Multnomah County and the City of Portland have not reached our goals under the Plan and recognize that further efforts are necessary to decrease greenhouse gas emissions. No other issue threatens our planet with such dramatic, far-reaching impacts, and at the same time, many of the most promising solutions to global climate change are local initiatives.
- d. There is broad agreement in the scientific community that the current global climate change is due to human-caused greenhouse gas accumulations from fossil fuel use, agriculture, and land-use change. Carbon dioxide is the primary greenhouse gas that is produced when fossil fuels are burned to generate electricity and power our transportation systems.
- e. U.S. and global annual temperatures are now approximately 1.0 degrees F warmer than at the start of the 20th century, and the rate of warming has accelerated over the past 30 years, increasing globally since the mid-1970s at a rate approximately three times faster than the century-scale trend. The past nine years have all been among the 25 warmest years on record for the contiguous U.S., a streak which is unprecedented in the historical record.
- f. Most of the consequences of global climate change will probably result from one of three physical changes: sea level rise, higher local temperatures, and changes in rainfall patterns. By the end of this century, average global temperatures could rise 11.5 degrees

Fahrenheit; sea level could rise two to six feet; many glaciers and summer ice caps could disappear entirely; and extreme weather patterns like drought, wild fires, floods, and hurricanes will likely be more prevalent. It is estimated that over 40% of species could go extinct.

- g. In the Pacific Northwest, new regional climate models show we should expect warmer, wetter winters and hotter summers. The affect on our economy could be substantial due to winter flooding, summer droughts, loss of shoreline, forest fires, diminished fish habitat, retreating glaciers, decreased snow pack, and increased disease vectors. Agriculture, fisheries, hydropower, forestry, tourism, and social service providers can expect to be impacted.
- h. The World Health Organization and the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change estimate that projected climate change-related exposures are likely to affect the health status of millions of people, particularly poor and vulnerable communities, due to increased exposure to extreme weather conditions, food access, infections disease vectors, and mass migration.
- i. In 2006, the Stern Report commissioned by the British government concluded that taking action now to avoid the worst effects of global climate change would cost 1% of global gross domestic product and the failure to act now could cost the global economy 20 times that amount. The report estimates that slowing carbon emissions could bring great savings to the world economy, possibly in the range of \$2.5 trillion a year.
- j. Multnomah County and the City of Portland have enjoyed huge benefits from the Plan: less tax money spent on energy, more convenient transportation, a greener county, and expertise in energy efficiency that is helping local businesses win contracts worldwide.
- k. The State of Oregon has set a goal to arrest increases on greenhouse gas emissions by 2010; achieve 10% emission reductions below 1990 levels by 2020; and achieve 75% emission reductions below 1990 levels by 2050. In addition, the state has established a Global Warming Commission for examining cap and trade systems, for developing an educational strategy on global warming issues, for tracking global warming impacts on Oregon and other issues.
- l. Efforts to update the Plan support the county's adopted Sustainability Principles (Resolution No. 04-019) which state that Multnomah County has a responsibility to future generations to prevent negative impacts to the natural environment, recognizing future generations will inherit the consequences of our decisions.

The Multnomah County Board of Commissioners Resolves:

1. To continue its leadership role with the City of Portland to combat global climate change by developing an update to the 2001 Portland Multnomah Local Action Plan on Global Warming and reduce total Multnomah County emissions of greenhouse gases.
2. To approve the formation of a Portland/Multnomah Steering Committee to provide recommendations for an update to the Local Action Plan on Global Warming.
3. The Sustainability Program shall support the overall efforts of the update and provide the Board of Commissioners with an updated Plan for review in 2008.

ADOPTED this 1st day of November, 2007.


BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
FOR MULTNOMAH COUNTY, OREGON




Ted Wheeler, Chair

REVIEWED:

AGNES SOWLE, COUNTY ATTORNEY
FOR MULTNOMAH COUNTY, OREGON

By 
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SUBMITTED BY:

Ted Wheeler, Chair
Maria Rojo de Steffey, Commissioner, District 1
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Multnomah County Sustainability Program