



DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

Planning Division

m e m o r a n d u m

TO: Laurel Lunt Prussing, Mayor
FROM: Elizabeth H. Tyler, FAICP, PhD, Director
DATE: October 11, 2012
SUBJECT: Final Draft of the Climate Action Plan Phase 1 (Plan Case No. 2191-PR-12)

A final draft of the Urbana Climate Action Plan has been prepared, incorporating comments and direction provided at the October 8, 2012 Committee of the Whole meeting. A digital copy of the revised draft, reflecting Council's direction, can be downloaded from www.urbanaininois.us/climateactionplan. Or if you would prefer a paper copy, please contact Community Development Services at (217) 384-2440 or tmandel@urbanaininois.us and speak with Teri Andel, Planning Secretary.

Revisions

The following amendments have been included in the final draft of the Climate Action Plan Phase 1:

1. Cover page edited to better reflect Urbana's efforts and goals.
2. The Urbana-Champaign Sanitary District is included as an implementation partner in Goal 4: Prepare for Climate Change Impacts (pages 61 and 66).
3. Data from the Champaign County Illinois Home Weatherization Assistance Program (IHWAP) regarding the number of units weatherized in Urbana (177 units in 2012) is included in the weatherization information on page 44 of the plan.
4. The website link for Equinox House edited to www.buildequinox.com.
5. Implementation table formatted to be larger.
6. An image of a roundabout at Stebbins Drive, Urbana IL has been included on page 49.
7. In order to make the section on Municipal Electric Aggregation more clear to the reader, Section 2.5 D Paragraph 2 (page 46) has been edited to read:

“Starting in August 2012, Urbana residents and small businesses will benefit from a two-year contract with Homefield Energy of Collinsville provided they choose not to opt out of the electricity aggregation program. As per the contract, 100% of the electricity will either be supplied from renewable sources or will be offset by Renewable

Energy Certificate (RECs) sourced from renewable energy generation including hydroelectric, wind and solar energy. Initial enrollment data indicates that 95 percent of Urbana’s residential and small commercial retail electricity customers have opted to be a part of the municipal electric aggregation group.”

8. Concerning a desire for guidance on the most cost effective strategies to achieve emissions reduction targets, Figure 15 on pages 52 to 53 of the Climate Action Plan (edited to show the extent of each example implementation action) shows which actions to Urbana’s 2020 emissions reduction goal could best reduce greenhouse gas emissions. City Staff will further research which strategies offer the best return on investment for Urbana’s specific set of circumstances and provide this information to City Council upon preparation.
9. Section 3.4 Title revised to ‘Future Steps and Challenges to Climate Action’.
10. Responding to the October 8, 2012 Committee of the Whole recommendation to address potential challenges to climate plan implementation in the document, Section 3.4 (page 67) has been revised to read:

“Over the next two years from the City Council’s adoption of Phase I, the strategies identified in this plan will be implemented and their effectiveness will be assessed through conversations with community organizations and resident groups, interviews with key stakeholders, surveys and public input sessions. Based on data gathered over the next two years, a Phase II document will be written defining additional strategies to take the City the rest of the way to its greenhouse gas emission reduction goal.

Plan Implementation

Successful implementation of the Urbana Climate Action Plan will have to negotiate a number of challenges that can make achieving the plan’s goals difficult:

Funding - Identifying sources of funding for the plan’s implementation strategies in an uncertain economic condition. Urbana is fortunate to have a number of institutions already addressing greenhouse gas emissions that can be utilized to implement the plan’s strategies. Many of these are listed in the plan’s implementation table. Furthermore, the City will pursue grant opportunities to fund the plan’s implementation strategies.

Balancing Local Government Priorities - Local governments have a great number of priorities and obligations in their service to residents. Implementation of the Climate Action Plan will be most successful where the actions can be tailored to create co-benefits serving additional local government priorities.

Regional Collaboration - Regional collaboration represents both opportunity and challenge. It is understood that when municipalities, agencies, and organizations collaborate on efforts of mutual concern, they take advantage of economies of scale and avoid working at cross purposes. However, in practice, regional collaboration is very difficult as the parties have to negotiate varying priorities, resources, and publics. Urbana’s Climate Action Plan will be benefit from engaging potential partners early, often, and face to face.

Determining Barriers to Adopting Sustainable Behaviors - Research has shown that adopting sustainable behaviors requires more than simply posting information on a website. The City will need to seek out existing research or conduct our own research to determine the most effective means to engage residents in sustainable behaviors through community-based social marketing strategies such as commitments, social diffusion, prompts, norms, and communication.

Data Collection - Timely, comprehensive, and detailed data is necessary for tuning implementation strategies and judging the results of actions undertaken. Sometimes, reliable data does not exist. But where it does exist, it can be time consuming to collect and analyze. Furthermore, data necessary to plan climate action implementation strategies often resides with many different agencies and companies with varying degrees of privacy regarding the sharing of data. The City will benefit from developing partnerships with data suppliers that appropriate types of data are supplied in regular intervals.”

Prepared by:

Aditi Kambuj
Planner I

Attachments:

Minutes from the October 4, 2012 Plan Commission meeting.

The Final Draft of the Urbana Climate Action Plan can be downloaded from www.urbanaininois.us/climateactionplan If you would prefer a paper copy, please contact Community Development Services at (217) 384-2440 or tmandel@urbanaininois.us and speak with Teri Anel.

cc: Sustainability Advisory Commission members

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING

URBANA PLAN COMMISSION

DRAFT

DATE: October 4, 2012

TIME: 7:30 P.M.

PLACE: Urbana City Building – City Council Chambers
400 South Vine Street
Urbana, IL 61801

MEMBERS PRESENT: Tyler Fitch, Lew Hopkins, Michael Pollock, Marilyn Upah-Bant

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Carey Hawkins-Ash, Andrew Fell, Dannie Otto, Bernadine Stake, Mary Tompkins

STAFF PRESENT: Robert Myers, Planning Manager; Aditi Kambuj, Planner I; Teri Anandel, Planning Secretary; Scott Tess, Environmental Sustainability Manager

OTHERS PRESENT: Gary Cziko, Carol McKusick, Susan Taylor

NEW BUSINESS

Plan Case No. 2191-PR-12: Review and comment on the draft Climate Action Plan

Aditi Kambuj, Planner I, introduced Scott Tess, Environmental Sustainability Manager for the City of Urbana. She began her presentation by explaining how the Climate Action Plan came about. She stated that the plan is intended to provide a basis for policies and programs which would be most effective in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and energy use while maintaining quality of life and economic development for Urbana citizens. She talked about the following:

- 2005 City Council Common Goals Initiative
- 2007 U.S. Mayors Climate Protection Agreement
- 2008 Sustainability Advisory Commission (SAC)
- Timeline
- Providing a basis for implementing City Council goals and City of Urbana policies
- Public input
- Plan making
 - Community-wide in scope
 - Principles: inform, motivate, participation
 - Plan priorities: transparent and readable
 - Plan structure

- Urbana’s sustainability vision
- Urbana’s climate action focus
- Plan development using five steps
 - I. Inventory of existing sources and levels of greenhouse gases created on behalf of Urbana
 - 2007 Baseline gas emissions report by sector
 - 2007 Emission by source
 - 2007 Baseline emissions rank by source and sector
 - II. Forecast future emissions
 - 2020 Greenhouse gas emissions projections
 - 2007 Baseline emissions and projected 2020 increase in emissions under a business as usual scenario by sector and source
 - III. Create targets for reduced emissions
 - 25% below 2007 levels by 2020 and 80% below 2007 levels by 2050
 - IV. Create goals and action steps
 - Focuses on mitigating the largest emissions sectors
 - Focuses on the most achievable actions
 - Includes actions for more complex sectors and adaptation actions to climate change impact
 - 5 Goals : 15 Actions
 1. Reduce emissions from building energy consumption
 2. Reduce emissions from gasoline consumption
 3. Formulate strategies to reduce emissions from rental and industrial sectors
 4. Prepare for climate change impacts
 5. Pursue coordination and outreach
 - V. Create the most effective strategies to implement goals

Ms. Kambuj stated that she would answer questions from the Plan Commission. Comments and questions were as follows:

Has the United States ever officially recognized and approved the Kyoto Protocol? Ms. Kambuj said no, not as a nation. However, the US Mayors Protection Agreement stems from the belief that local action can help. Communities across the United States are already making progress by signing onto the US Mayors Protection Agreement, which calls for communities to meet or beat the Kyoto Protocol.

Do projections for 2020 included in Table 2 assume no changes in the direction we are headed? Ms. Kambuj replied yes. These are “business as usual” projections based on moving forward with current standards and processes.

The University of Illinois campus and the remainder of Urbana are so intertwined. Is the University of Illinois included in the greenhouse gas calculations provided Table 2? Ms. Kambuj answered that the University’s building energy consumption is not included in the totals in Table 2 because, as they have their own power plant, their energy usage is not included in the Ameren utility data used as the basis for these figures. However, the estimates for transportation and solid waste disposal in Table 2 include all of Urbana, including the campus.

As an institution, is the University of Illinois addressing these questions in the same way that the City of Urbana is? Ms. Kambuj responded yes. The University of Illinois has its own climate action plan and has joined with other university campuses to reduce energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions. The University's goal is to be carbon neutral by 2050.

How does the 100% renewable come to pass? Does the City actually buy the power and send it to Ameren? Or do they buy credits? Ms. Kambuj replied that it is both. The State of Illinois mandates that an increasing percentage of electricity sold by Illinois' largest utilities (25% by 2025) must be produced directly from renewable energy sources. Additionally, through municipal aggregation, Urbana can require use of renewable energy credits which pays for renewable energy production in the Midwest.

Mr. Fitch commented that it is great how much traffic is reduced by people using MTD buses. However, he sees the extra damage done to streets and roads by the buses and asked if the City would set aside funds to cover these additional road maintenance costs. Robert Myers, Planning Manager, stated that the City of Urbana, the City of Champaign and MTD have been working together to apply for a Small Starts Grant from the US Department of Transportation (Federal Transit Administration) to rebuild infrastructure in the core of both cities to support transit. The grant application could be made for tens of millions of Federal dollars. This would be beyond the White Street-Springfield Avenue Corridor Study reviewed by the Plan Commission. Money could be used to reconstruct streets and install transit-supporting infrastructure.

What is the implication of calling this "Phase I"? Ms. Kambuj indicated that a timeline is included in the Climate Action Plan on Page 16. The idea is that Phase I will kick off implementation for sectors where we have a clear direction, and for other sectors set up two task forces and further engage the public. Phase II of the Plan will incorporate what we will learn over the next few years.

Mr. Hopkins commented that given the number of fairly concrete actions that the City is already taking, this set of implementation actions and sub-actions seem pretty vague and generic. He wondered if the City should be more specific in the Plan about what we are actually doing or intending to do.

How will the proposed Climate Action Plan directly affect what the Plan Commission reviews and considers in terms of land use, planning and zoning? Will analysis of development proposals coming before the Plan Commission include information on greenhouse gas emissions? Ms. Kambuj explained that there is an Outreach Action that will allow the Sustainability Advisory Commission to make a recommendation on City plans and policies. Mr. Myers added that he could see the proposed Climate Action Plan influencing development policies like the Comprehensive Plan. However, this Plan is not about red-line limits or mandates. If it were, he suspects that public reaction to the Plan would be very different. Instead, the Plan is about cooperation, public education, and finding common ground, as well as using incentives.

There was discussion about how to reduce energy use in rental properties. Tyler Fitch would like to see tenants have information on the true costs of the housing they are looking to rent, including utilities. Can someone like the City or Tenant Union create a form for students to use when speaking with potential landlords so they will ask the right questions to know the true housing costs, including electricity, garbage collection, and etc.? To be competitive, landlords advertise the lowest rent cost and hide the tenant paid utilities. Mr. Myers added that there are also transportation costs to be considered. The Center for Neighborhood Technology has prepared information for the Champaign-Urbana area showing housing plus transportation costs by census tracts. And now the Champaign County Regional Planning Commission has calculated this at the block group level.

Mr. Myers asked if he could add that it may be helpful to know that most of Urbana's greenhouse gases indicated in the Plan are actually created outside the city but on behalf of Urbana. Greenhouse gases from production of commercial, residential, and industrial electricity used in Urbana, as well as from Urbana's solid waste, are created elsewhere.

Is the City of Champaign doing anything similar? Ms. Kambuj stated that the City of Champaign is completing a Sustainability Plan. Mr. Myers added that Champaign's plan is a broad sustainability plan which includes an aspect of greenhouse gas emissions. An informal Sustainability Practitioner's Group, including the City of Champaign, the University of Illinois, the City of Urbana and the Regional Planning Commission meet periodically to coordinate to the extent possible. Like air and water pollution, greenhouse gas emissions are a regional issue.

Mr. Fitch commented that the proposed plan was created well and the amount of work put forth in creating the plan is evident.

Mr. Myers noted that the Plan Commission's comments will be forwarded Committee of the Whole on October 8, 2012.