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Land Use & Environment Committee

Regional Climate Mitigation Plan

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Title

Regional Climate Mitigation Plan

Recommended Action

Committee Recommendation:

Not referred to a committee.

City Manager Recommendation:

Move to recommend City Council adoption of revised community-wide greenhouse gas emissions reductions targets and baseline year.

Report

Issue:

Whether to recommend adoption of the revised community-wide greenhouse gas emissions reductions targets and baseline year. Adoption will provide common targets among local jurisdictions working collaboratively on a climate action plan.

Staff Contact:

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Presenter(s):

Danelle MacEwen

Karen Parkhurst, Thurston Regional Planning Council

Background and Analysis:

In November 2015, the City formally committed to what is now known as the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy. The Global Covenant is a coalition of cities committed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions at a local level. Currently, more than 7,400 cities worldwide participate. As a member of the Global Covenant of Mayors, the City committed to several actions, including the development of a climate action plan.

A climate action plan is typically comprised of two elements - a climate mitigation plan (reducing greenhouse gas emissions) and a climate adaptation plan (adapting to a changing climate).

Thurston Regional Planning Council (TRPC) recently completed a climate adaptation plan for Thurston County. In addition, the City is actively developing a Sea Level Rise Management Plan as another important adaptation effort. The focus of this discussion with the Land Use and Environment Committee is on regional climate mitigation planning.

In April 2018, Thurston County, Olympia, Lacey, Tumwater and TRPC signed an interlocal agreement to complete Phase 1 of a Regional Climate Mitigation Plan. Phase 1 is a ten-week effort and includes the following components:

- Assess each jurisdiction's existing climate policy with an emissions reductions goal;
- Recommend a common, community-wide emissions baseline and targets;
- Identify mitigation actions each jurisdiction has adopted and/or implemented;
- Develop a scope of work for Phase 2, which would include a public engagement strategy, assessment of actions necessary to reach the shared emissions reductions targets and implementation strategies, including collaborative strategies and those unique to each jurisdiction.

Currently, each jurisdiction has different adopted emissions reductions targets. Olympia's targets, contained in the Comprehensive Plan, are based on a 1990 baseline. Olympia's adopted targets are:

- 25% of 1990 levels by 2020
- 45% of 1990 levels by 2035
- 80% of 1990 levels by 2050

The participating jurisdictions desire to adopt common targets using the same baseline year. TRPC conducted an analysis of each jurisdiction's current emissions targets, as well as targets recommended by international climate scientists and those adopted by state and local governments. The project team, which is comprised of staff representatives from each jurisdiction, agreed to recommend the adoption of targets as follows:

- 45% below 2015 levels by 2030
- 85% below 2015 levels by 2050

Adoption of these revised targets would put all four jurisdictions on the same path to emissions reductions. These targets are also consistent with the Sustainable Thurston Plan, which Olympia accepted in 2014. TRPC's analysis of the proposed targets is attached. Essentially these proposed targets, using 2015 as the baseline, would get Olympia to the same place as the currently adopted targets by 2050. Revision of the targets, however, will require an amendment to the City's Comprehensive Plan.

TRPC and the regional staff team continues to work on the development of the scope of work for Phase 2 of the Regional Climate Mitigation Plan. Staff proposes bringing this work to the Land Use and Environment Committee (LUEC) in August. If supported by the LUEC, staff recommends taking the scope, including the revised emissions reduction targets, to the City Council in early September.

Neighborhood/Community Interests (if known):

There is strong community interest in local action on climate change. Thurston Climate Action Team,

a local non-profit organization, has expressed interest in engaging with the City in the development of a climate action plan. People for a Carbon Free Olympia and local students from Olympia High School have also expressed interest in the City's climate action work.

Options:

1. Recommend City Council adoption of revised community-wide greenhouse gas emissions reductions targets and baseline year. The targets of 45 percent below 2015 levels by 2030 and 85 percent below 2015 levels by 2050 will be the same for all jurisdictions participating in the Regional Climate Mitigation Plan.
2. Keep the current community-wide targets adopted in the City's Comprehensive Plan. This will potentially create confusion in the regional planning process.
3. Recommend different community-wide emissions reductions targets.

Financial Impact:

None at this time. \$80,000 in funding for the ongoing climate mitigation planning is included in the 2018 budget.

Attachments:

Memo from Thurston Regional Planning Council