

Minneapolis Community Environmental Advisory Commission

April 11, 2014

Council Member Gordon, Chair, Health, Environment and Community Engagement Committee:

Thank you for directing City Sustainability staff to work with the Community Environmental Advisory Commission (CEAC) to develop a long-term carbon emissions reduction goal supplementing the City's short- and mid-term goals of 15 percent by 2015 and 30 percent by 2025 (from a 2006 baseline), and to report back with a recommendation no later than April 14, 2014.

Having met with staff and amongst ourselves (at both the subcommittee and CEAC level):

CEAC recommends that the City adopt a long-term carbon emissions reduction goal of 80 percent or more by 2050 (from a 2006 baseline).

This goal, which is similar to the Minnesota state goal adopted in 2007, is based on the well-supported scientific findings of the IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change), which recommends reductions in CO2 emissions of approximately 80 percent by 2050 to limit temperature increases to below 2 degrees Celsius. Since 1990, the IPCC has reported on the international scientific and policy consensus on the consequences from global climate change. The IPCC's Fifth Assessment Report will be completed in 2014. CEAC recommends that the City continue to monitor the scientific consensus on climate change to assure City policies are consistent with those recommendations.

We believe that a goal above 80 percent is also justified (giving the increasingly evident dangers of climate change, and the downside risk of runaway global warming); hence the phrase "or more." Achieving even an 80 percent reduction would be a major undertaking, requiring a transformation in our approach to transportation, building energy use, waste, food, and more.

An 80 percent goal also aligns the City with state and Hennepin county goals, and may therefore better support City engagement in stakeholder arenas such as the state legislature, Met Council, and the Public Utilities Commission.

Further, CEAC recommends that the City **make the 2050 goal a key consideration in:**

- the Minneapolis Comprehensive Plan;
- transportation and infrastructure planning;
- engagement at the Public Utilities Commission;
- utility partnership and franchise agreements;
- capital investments; and
- policy decisions in general.

It is important to meet our carbon-reduction goals in ways that are fair and equitable, and that don't exacerbate other environmental concerns. If done right, decarbonization will lead to increased jobs, investment, and quality of life in our sustainable, growing city.

Finally, we also recommend that the City **continue to refine its carbon accounting and tracking methods**, as best practices evolve, to address upstream and “embedded” GHG emissions, along with other relevant categories of emissions (and/or carbon sinks) not yet included.

Sincerely,

Darrell Gerber, CEAC Chair

April 11, 2014

Current CEAC members:

Darrell Gerber (Chair), Shalini Gupta (Vice Chair), Ross Abbey, Marty Broan, Lisa Daniels, Sam Grant, Tony Hainault, Meleah Houseknecht, Roxxanne O'Brien, Pat Mulloy, Jennifer Ringold, Michelle Schroeder, Michelle Stockness, Jamison Tessneer, Alexis Troschinetz, James Nash, Brian Ross, Eduardo Cardenas

Cc: Gayle Prest, Director of Sustainability
Brendon Slotterback, Sustainability Program Coordinator
Council Member Andrew Johnson, Vice Chair, HECE Committee
Council Member Jacob Frey
Council Member Elizabeth Glidden
Council Member Alondra Cano
Council Member Lisa Bender