

To: Climate Policy Commission, Conservation and Climate Outreach Commission  
From: Rick Barth, Tonya Graham, Stu Green, Becs Walker, Lorrie Kaplan  
Date: May 6, 2021  
Subject: A Proposal for Reinvigorating Community Leadership and Engagement to Achieve the Goals of Ashland's Climate and Energy Action Plan

Several months ago, the authors of this memo found ourselves engaged in numerous pair-wise discussions regarding how best to accelerate climate action in Ashland in accordance with the 2017 Ashland Climate and Energy Action Plan (CEAP). In the course of these discussions, we focused on various subjects that we believed had the potential for improvement including:

1. Climate action leadership and commitment from prominent Ashland institutions, business, organizations, and other key stakeholders.
2. The need for increased community involvement to address the climate crisis
3. The existence of multiple simultaneous community climate-related communications, some aligned and coordinated with CEAP implementation, and some not
4. A perceived loss of momentum and community visibility of the CEAP since its adoption in 2017.
5. Coordination between the City Council, City Staff, Climate Policy Commission (CPC) and the Conservation and Climate Outreach (CCOC) and other commissions

These shared concerns and the desire to identify solutions inspired us to begin a group dialogue.

We concluded that these issues can and should be addressed simultaneously, and we have since been meeting regularly to develop a concept to present to CPC and CCOC. While this proposal is still in the conceptual stage, with many decisions still to be made, it is now cohesive enough that we are pleased to bring it forward for discussion to the CPC and CCOC. As the public commissioners working most directly on the CEAP, climate action, and outreach in Ashland, we look forward to hearing your perspectives.

Everything that follows is focused on reaching Ashland's adopted climate goals of:

- Community reduction of GHG emissions by 8% on average every year from 2015 to 2050
- City of Ashland operations attaining carbon neutrality by 2030 and reducing fossil fuel consumption by 50% by 2030 and 100% by 2050
- City communities, systems, and resources prepared to be more resilient to climate change impacts

This proposal is based on the assumption that CPC will continue to support city staff with implementation momentum and will present some form of updated CEAP to the City Council in the fall of 2021.

We believe that for Ashland to reach its adopted climate goals the community must do the following simultaneously:

- **Build on existing implementation momentum.** We've made great strides in implementing various CEAP strategies, but action must be accelerated. With an escalated focus on climate action coming from the Biden administration, and significant work being done in Oregon under Governor Brown's 2020 Climate Change Executive Order 20.04, climate action is gaining more visibility than ever. And, since many local, state, national, and global climate goals hinge on reaching certain targets by 2030, a growing sense of urgency is appropriate. SOCAN-Ashland has identified a significant constituency of Ashland residents seeking to play a more active role in achieving community climate goals.
- **Develop a more detailed plan for moving forward.** While there is a section of the 2017 CEAP that is called an "Implementation Plan," we feel strongly that a more detailed implementation plan is required. This implementation plan should clarify, as much as possible, the basic who, what, where, when, why, and how questions that are crucial to the success of any strategic plan. In

some cases, CEAP strategy implementation may be best led by community organizations, whereas in other cases city staff, the CPC, and/or the CCOC, accountable to the City Council, are best positioned to lead implementation. In many cases, success will depend on effective cooperation among multiple parties. An implementation plan, developed with broad community input, can help to re-establish community buy-in, focus communications, and enhance clarity about our community climate priorities and how we are working together to reach our goals.

- **Seek commitment, leadership, and collaboration from key Ashland businesses, organizations, and the community at large.** We have observed that other Oregon municipalities have been successful in engaging and securing commitments from leading organizations in the community. High-level, visible leadership commitments go a long way to communicate the importance and urgency of climate action in our community. Moreover, since major stakeholders can have an outsized impact on whether we achieve or do not achieve our climate goals, their active participation in CEAP implementation is critical.
- **Massively scale up engagement and outreach.** We believe that both community engagement (two-way communication) and outreach (one-way communication) must be quickly and massively scaled up because our existing structure is not nimble enough to accomplish all that needs to be done in the time left to do it. More people need to be involved. Both new and existing people need to be better coordinated. Government structure and process are appropriate when considering compulsory actions and city programs and policies, but they are inefficient for education and voluntary compliance. The Ashland community needs to focus existing political will and build new political will to achieve our high-priority climate goals.

## ***Options for Moving Forward***

We have explored the strengths and weaknesses of various approaches to scaling up community leadership and collaboration to achieve our climate goals:

1. **Traditional government-led climate action implementation** (similar to status quo)
2. **Integrated commission campaign:** coordinated engagement and outreach efforts initiated by the Commissions
3. **Community Coalition:** development of an organization to promote leadership, commitment, and collaboration in CEAP implementation from community residents and key stakeholders (including businesses, organizations, and community groups).

### ***Option 1. Traditional Government-led climate action implementation***

Oregon cities are required by the state to conduct community engagement. However, in many cases, city-led efforts can suppress community-based leadership and collaboration, and city-led engagement strategies may be insufficient to achieve long-range, large-scale shifts in community norms. In traditional government-led community communication, the engagement process typically flows as follows:

- council delegates policy development to a commission or ad hoc committee
- delegated body drafts a proposal
- feedback is solicited via community meetings, surveys, polls, and email
- delegated body refines the proposal
- council either decides against the proposal or adopts it, possibly after further refinement

This process can be lengthy, frequently months long, and can be as much as a year or more from start to finish. It is usually one-off or episodic; there is not a constant dialogue between government and community with continuous policy refinement. The amount of associated work is large enough that staff or volunteer commissioners cannot reasonably carry the load so paid consultant help is required. This adds to the required calendar time as the government consultant hiring process takes time. Consulting budget may not be available. Once the consultant has finished their expertise and the momentum they

bring to the process are lost. The CEAP adopted in 2017 used this process. That option is not available to us in 2021.

In Ashland, government outreach is conducted via websites, traditional media, and social media. Examples include:

- CCOC Sneak Preview column
- City website, e.g. new climate and energy web pages
- Monthly newsletter, traditionally associated with utility billing

### **Option 2. Integrated Commission Campaign**

This option is described in detail in “Climate Resilient Ashland - A Concept” which is aimed at improved coordination of city and commission outreach to residents on high-profile topics. Here are a few key components of the Integrated Commission Campaign concept:

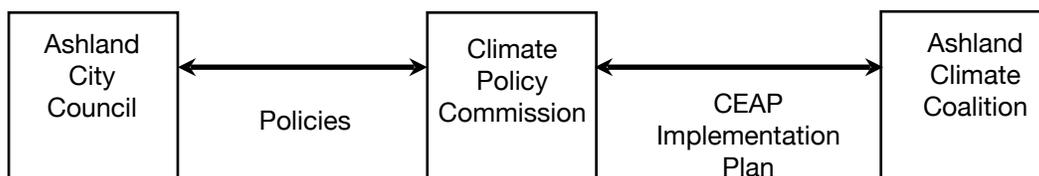
- **Element 1:** An annual outreach calendar with monthly themes on priority public education topics such as wildfire safety, water conservation, climate action, and more.
- **Element 2:** Neighborhood Ambassadors focused on neighborhood outreach and engagement. Since the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program already has a neighborhood focus, it has been proposed that these volunteers could possibly serve this function.
  - Neighborhood Ambassadors would require significant additional topical knowledge to have substantive climate change discussions with community members. It is not clear whether these volunteers can be reasonably expected to be skilled in community organization, emergency response, and climate change knowledge.
  - It is unknown whether CERT volunteers will be asked and then adopt the proposed new role of consistent community contact with climate change discussions. Historically they have volunteered to assist episodically with the expectation that their work is associated with low-frequency low-duration high-impact events.
  - Consistent contact between CERT volunteers and their respective neighborhoods should dramatically improve their capacity to act during low-frequency low-duration high-impact events. They will know their neighbors and their needs.
  - The Neighborhood Ambassadors element leverage existing community capacity. City staff manage the program; this city association brings with it city constraints.

### **Option 3. Community Coalition**

Many communities with climate action plans have organized coalitions of institutions, business, organizations, and other key stakeholders to mobilize community leadership, collaboration, and commitments. (See “Oregon Community Climate Coalitions” for examples.) These coalitions also spearhead resident engagement in community-based climate action. These coalitions often complement or augment the work of the city government.

The proposed coalition would be based on the following key elements:

- **Problem:** the current CEAP delivery structure is not sufficiently effective, nimble, or collaborative and ultimately will not be successful
- **Solution:** effective community involvement with an enhanced CEAP implementation plan
- **Relationship:**



- **Purpose:** community leadership and engagement to achieve Ashland's climate goals
- **Expectations of coalition members:**
  - Commit to implement actions within the CEAP
  - Demonstrate leadership in achieving Ashland's Climate goals
- **Using:** CEAP as adopted in 2017 with the addition of a more detailed CEAP Implementation Plan created in 2021 to answer the who, what, where, when, why, how of implementation
- **Priorities** will be aligned with those previously identified by CPC and staff:
  1. Buildings - fossil gas, energy efficiency (start here)
  2. Transportation - electrification and mode shift (close behind buildings work)
  3. Energy Source - integrate considerations of cost, equity, and resiliency
  4. Adaptation
  5. Consumption
- **Representation:**
  - Commissions - CPC, CCOC, Transportation, Wildfire Safety Commission, Forest Lands?, Health and Human Services, others?
  - Council - commission liaisons of above commissions
  - Citizens - robust participation across the community, with an emphasis on achieving diversity and equity
  - Organizations - ASD, SOU, OSF, Asante, Chamber of Commerce, faith-based groups
  - City Staff
  - Climate Groups - SOCAN, Rogue Climate, Pachamama, SOHEVA, Emerging Futures, others
  - Stakeholders - HVAC dealers, plumbers, restaurant owners, retail businesses, architects, ...

### Open issues

- Who should convene the coalition? CPC, a group of citizens, others?
- What is the best structure for the coalition? Many community coalitions utilize concentric membership circles that could include an executive body, core steering committee, and issue- or sector-based action teams or working groups.
- How would commissioners and council liaisons participate? Public meeting requirements for commissioners and city councilors will limit the ability of all commissioners or councilors to attend coalition meetings . These requirements could be addressed by rotating commissioners / councilors / liaisons; appointing representatives / liaisons (assumed above); and/or silent attendance
- What will be the funding needs of the Coalition and how will these be met? Coalition member contributions? Contributions from city residents? City funding? Grant funding? We believe that the Coalition could launch without initial funding but funding needs and sources would need to be explored within the first year to sustain the organization.

### Assumptions

- CEAP implementation does not naturally divide between city government and community. On some issues, it may be most appropriate and effective for the coalition to spearhead a climate strategy; in other cases, it will be more appropriate for CPC or other city organizations to take the lead. This division of labor is expected to be somewhat fluid. The community can provide political will and inform and support personal choices, complemented by supportive city policies and programs, such as on-bill financing, incentive programs, and, ultimately, requirements
- What we're currently doing is not sufficient to achieve Ashland's climate goals. We will be more effective in reaching our climate goals if we involve and engage the entire community.

## ***Recommendation***

We recommend against continuing to rely primarily on Option 1, Traditional government-led climate action implementation due to lack of funding, the necessarily slow associated process, and the communication and decision constraints imposed by that process.

We recommend that CPC and CCOC support Option 2, the Integrated Commission Campaign, as well as Option 3, the Community Coalition.

It seems clear that the proposed Option 2, the Integrated Commission Campaign to coordinate commission outreach should be implemented aside from any more major changes to scale up community leadership in CEAP implementation. Campaign coordination may evolve should such major changes occur.

We believe that scaling up a Community Coalition, complementing the work of the city, the CPC, and the CCOC, is the strategy that will be most successful to accelerate existing climate action momentum; develop and ensure community participation in a detailed CEAP implementation plan; build implementation commitment, leadership, and collaboration from key Ashland businesses, organizations, and the community at large; and massively scale up engagement and outreach.

We look forward to your input on this proposal.

| Oregon Community Climate Coalitions |            |   | Updated May 3, 2021   |  |  |          |  | Author: Lorrie Kaplan, Chair, SOCAN-Ashland  |  |
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| Jurisdiction                        | Population | Name  | Website   | About  | Purpose  | Projects | Climate Plan                                       | Climate Goals  |  |
| Beaverton                           | 98k        | Sustainable Beaverton                         | <a href="https://www.sustainablebeaverton.com/">https://www.sustainablebeaverton.com/</a>   |  |  |          | <a href="#">Beaverton 2019 Climate Action Plan</a> | The BCAP builds upon a guiding principle of keeping the global temperature increase to less than 1.5C with a community target of zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050, and a city operations target of 50 percent fossil fuel reduction and carbon neutral by 2030. The plan also consists of 86 action items that will move us toward our goals. |  |
| Bend                                | 93k        | The Environmental Center                      | <a href="https://envirocenter.org/">https://envirocenter.org/</a>   |  |  |          | <a href="#">Bend Community Climate Action Plan</a> | Reduce community fossil fuel use by 40% by 2030 and by 70% by 2050.  |  |
| Clackamas County                    |            | Clackamas County Climate Action Coalition     | <a href="https://www.facebook.com/Clackamas-Climate-Action-Coalition-1083013675421295">https://www.facebook.com/Clackamas-Climate-Action-Coalition-1083013675421295</a> |  | We are a committed group of Clackamas county citizens dedicated to moving the county to a livable future for all its people. We know that climate change is the overriding issue of our lives and that we need to address it NOW before it's too late. |          |  |  |  |
| Corvallis                           | 58k        | Corvallis Interfaith Climate Justice Committe | <a href="https://groups.io/g/CorvallisCJC">https://groups.io/g/CorvallisCJC</a>   | Corvallis OR area interfaith association of groups concerned with the protection and healing of the world from adverse climate-related effects due to human activities. Our focus is primarily on the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, adaptation, and justice for those affected. |  |          |  |  |  |

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| Corvallis | 58k | Sustainable Corvallis | <a href="https://sustainablecorvallis.org/">https://sustainablecorvallis.org/</a> |  | Our primary purpose is to foster communication and collaboration, so we can accelerate progress toward a sustainable future. Our work has built on the efforts and accomplishments of the City of Corvallis and other community groups. Participation is open to local organizations and individuals who support our vision, mission, and goals. There is no fee for participation. | <p><b>Solarize Corvallis:</b> A grassroots initiative to install solar panels at as many local buildings as possible by the year 2025.</p> <p><b>No Food Left Behind:</b> Provides information, resources, helpful tips and smart strategies to help people waste less food.</p> <p><b>It's On Us:</b> Support a community-sourced fund to provide meals for folks who need a boost.</p> <p><b>Buy Local First:</b> Consider locally owned independent businesses first when making purchases.</p> <p><b>Saving Green:</b> A free sustainability assistance program for businesses and organizations in Corvallis.</p> <p><b>Community Scrapbook:</b> See the key accomplishments of our partners and our Action Teams!</p> | <a href="#">Corvallis Climate Action Plan</a> | <p><b>CORVALLIS COMMUNITY GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS WILL BE REDUCED BY 75% BELOW 1990 LEVELS BY THE YEAR 2050.</b></p> <p><b>Goal 1--</b>The Climate Action Plan will establish and monitor greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets for the Corvallis community that guide short-, medium-, and long-term priority strategies and actions the City and community partners will undertake to achieve at least Corvallis' proportionate share (or some other expression of commitment) of greenhouse gas mitigation. Periodic reporting and updates to the Climate Action Plan will enable the City to respond to changing conditions and needs.</p> <p><b>Goal 2—</b>The Climate Action Plan will reflect the urgent need to effect significant greenhouse gas emissions reductions in the near term by prioritizing, as highest and most immediate, actions which are relatively the most effective and readily achievable by the City organization and community partners.</p> <p><b>Goal 3—</b>The Climate Action Plan will support community preparation for anticipated climate changerelated impacts (such as water shortages, severe weather events, and unpredictable energy prices and availability) and enhance the community's ability to adapt and be resilient.</p> <p><b>Goal 4—</b>The Climate Action Plan will seek and foster cooperative partnerships and leadership from local public institutions, private businesses, non-profit organizations, and community members, as well as regional, state and federal agencies and interests that can have a significant impact on the Climate Action Plan's success.</p> <p><b>Goal 5—</b>The Climate Action Plan will incorporate actions that achieve other co-benefits in addition to greenhouse gas emissions reductions, including: <input type="checkbox"/> Energy efficiency and greater energy independence from fossil fuels <input type="checkbox"/> Sound economic investments (positive cost-benefit or return on investments) <input type="checkbox"/> Community livability <input type="checkbox"/> Environmental quality and</p> |
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| Jurisdiction                        | Population | Name                                  | Website   | About  | Purpose  | Projects | Climate Plan                                | Climate Goals                               |  |
| Eugene                              | 168k       |                                       |   |  |  |          |   |   | <p><b>Community Goals</b><br/>Reduce community fossil fuel use by 50% of 2010 levels by 2030</p> <p>Reduce total community greenhouse gas emissions to an amount that is no more than the city of Eugene's average share of a global atmospheric greenhouse gas level of 350 ppm by 2100, which was estimated in 2016 to require an annual average emission reduction level of 7.6%</p> <p><b>City Operation Goals</b><br/>All City of Eugene owned facilities and operations shall be carbon neutral by 2020, meaning no net release of greenhouse gas emissions</p> <p>Reduce the City of Eugene's use of fossil fuels by 50% compared to 2010 usage</p> |
| Eugene/<br>Springfield              |            | Eugene<br>Interfaith Earth<br>Keepers | <a href="https://interfaithearthkeepers.org/">https://interfaithearthkeepers.org/</a> | Eugene/Springfield communities of faith committed to the care of God's creation. | Interfaith EarthKeepers are of many faiths working together to save our sacred planet. We advocate for the powerless and our endangered planet, and demonstrate possibility in the face of antipathy. We support a ban on fossil fuel infrastructure development and on fossil fuel exports. We support electric vehicles, solar power, labelled GMOs, a carbon tax and campaign finance reform. |          | <a href="#">The Climate Action Plan 2.0</a> |   |  |

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| Lake Oswego | 39k | Lake Oswego Sustainability Network | <a href="http://losn.org/index.html">http://losn.org/index.html</a> | <p><b>Our Vision for our community:</b> Lake Oswego is a community in which the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It is a flourishing and thriving city with a vibrant economy that respects, restores and cares for the community of life.</p> <p><b>Our vision for our organization:</b> The Lake Oswego Sustainability Network provides grassroots leadership, inspiration, resources, opportunities for collaboration, and innovative solutions to help Lake Oswego become more sustainable.</p> <p><b>Our Mission:</b> To promote an economically, ecologically, and socially healthy community. We will achieve our mission by using the sustainability framework and topic areas, action teams, and a democratic, highly participative decision-making process.</p> | <p><b>Statement of Purpose:</b> Connecting people in service to the future. The purpose of our network is to connect people who have a passion for building a bright future for our children, so that they may support and inspire each others efforts. The Network does not take a position on particular issues or require everyone to agree on strategies. However, we will connect those who wish to work towards common goals, lobby in favor of specific initiatives, or work on projects with each other. We will facilitate lively presentations on various topics, providing inspiration and education for our members. We encourage all actions to support our vision, mission, and sustainability framework.</p> <p><b>Our Sustainability Framework: Our community will:</b> Reduce and ultimately eliminate our community's contribution to fossil fuel dependence and to wasteful use of scarce metals and minerals. Use renewable resources whenever possible. Reduce and ultimately eliminate our community's contribution to dependence upon persistent chemicals and wasteful use of synthetic substances. Use biologically safe products whenever possible. Reduce and ultimately eliminate our community's contribution to encroachment upon nature (e.g., land, water, wildlife, forests, soil, ecosystems). Protect natural ecosystems.</p> | <p>The Network currently supports nine Action Teams focusing on specific sustainability issues: Economic Vitality, Education, Energy, Emergency Preparedness, Water, Climate Change; Faith-based, community Solar, Transportation, Food.</p> <p><b>Example:</b> The Energy Team is focused on educating Lake Oswego residents about energy efficiency and providing opportunities for energy efficiency improvement in all aspects of residential, city and business activities.</p> <p><b>Activities</b><br/>Sales of inexpensive LED Bulbs to get residents to try them and learn how they save both money and energy<br/>Energy Efficient House tour – find energy efficient homes to have a Sustainability Advisory Board sponsored home tour in conjunction with Resiliency Organization of West Linn (ROWL)<br/>Explore opportunities for a community solar program - possibly in conjunction with West Linn Lottery through Adult Community Center for home audit of light bulbs and other energy efficiency opportunities choosing one home where PGE bills can be compared pre-</p> | <p><a href="#">Sustainability and Climate Action Plan of Lake Oswego</a></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>By 2035, Lake Oswego's buildings will have no net emissions from electricity use.</li> <li>By 2045, Lake Oswego's buildings will have no net emissions from onsite combustion of fuels.</li> <li>By 2050, Lake Oswego will reach carbon neutrality through reduce or offsetting our carbon emissions from buildings, transportation, and manufacturing and disposal of products within the City.</li> </ul> |
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| Jurisdiction                        | Population | Name  | Website   | About | Purpose  | Projects | Climate Plan  | Climate Goals   |  |
| Milwaukie                           | 21k        |   |   |       |  |          | <a href="#">Milwaukie Community Climate Action Plan</a> | <p>The city's Climate Action Plan and the climate emergency declaration set out a timeline of achievable goals to reach community wide carbon neutrality, meaning the community will reduce greenhouse gas emissions and offset, or capture as much carbon as the Milwaukie community emits. The Climate Action Plan goals are:</p> <p>By 2030, Milwaukie will be powered by clean, carbon-free electricity.</p> <p>By 2035, Milwaukie's buildings will have no net emissions from all building fuel types, including natural gas and oil.</p> <p>By 2045, Milwaukie will be a fully carbon-neutral city.</p> |  |
| Newberg                             | 23k        | Newberg Community Sustainable Solutions Group | <a href="https://www.facebook.com/groups/236952620463805">https://www.facebook.com/groups/236952620463805</a> |       | Our mission is to build a broad coalition of community partners to provide leadership, collaboration, and guidance on actions that will reduce our community's greenhouse gas emissions and increase our community's resiliency. |          |   |   |  |
| Silverton                           | 10k        | Sustainable Silverton                         | <a href="http://beyondbins.org/sustainablesilverton.html">http://beyondbins.org/sustainablesilverton.html</a> |       |  |          |   |   |  |