

Southern Oregon Climate Action Now

SOCAN

Confronting Climate Change

To: Conservation and Climate Outreach Commission (CCOC)
From: SOCAN-Ashland Climate Action Project
Date: February 16, 2021
Re: Urging Commission Endorsement of the 20's Plenty Initiative

The Ashland Climate Action Project of Southern Oregon Climate Action Now (SOCAN-Ashland), is a community-based organization of local residents engaged in advocacy, education, and community organizing to support the full and timely implementation of Ashland's Climate and Energy Action Plan (CEAP) in city operations and in the community at large.

We have reviewed the report, "Evidence Demonstrating the Efficiency, Safety, & Economic Benefits of Lower Maximum Speed Limits in Ashland, Oregon," presented at the CCOC's January 2021 meeting. We support the conclusions and recommendations of the report. We second the statement contained in the written testimony submitted by Siskiyou Velo in support of this proposal that "Lower speeds contribute to safe and convenient bicycle and pedestrian networks and will significantly enhance the livability of our cities."

In the Urban Form, Land Use & Transportation focus area of the CEAP, Strategy ULT-2 calls for us to "make Ashland more bike- and pedestrian-friendly." *"On-road transportation generates nearly one-fifth of Ashland total emissions. It is difficult to substantially improve the fuel efficiency of existing cars and trucks, so one of the most feasible methods of reducing emissions is to make other forms of transportation more desirable. A city that supports people walking and biking not only reduces the need for residents to drive but also offers the public health co-benefit of encouraging exercise."* (p.65)

We understand that both the Climate Policy Commission and the Transportation Commission have approved the motion to recommend that the City Council direct the Public Works Department to pursue reducing maximum speeds within the City to the maximum extent allowed by Oregon Revised Statute 810.180. Both Commissions have also approved a companion motion to "Request that the Southern Oregon legislative delegation ensure that Ashland is included among the jurisdictions which would be empowered, as Portland currently is, to set speed limits on roadways under the City's jurisdiction pursuant to HB 3055 (2021 legislative number)" was approved by the Transportation Commission and the February Climate Policy Committee meeting.

We have considered the discussion that occurred during the January 2021 CCOC meeting on this topic. We heard Commissioners express concerns about how this recommendation from the Commissions would be implemented. Considerations around implementation are outside of the jurisdiction of this Commission, but rest instead with the City Council.

We believe it is critical that the CCOC join with the climate policy commission and Transportation Commission in supporting this recommendation to the City Council.

Please contact Lorrie Kaplan, Chair of SOCAN-Ashland Climate Action Project at lorrie@socan.eco or 240-676-0040 for more information.



Southern Oregon Climate Action Now



Ashland Community Climate Action 2021 Survey

FEBRUARY 3, 2021. [The SOU Office of Sustainability](#) and the [SOCAN-Ashland Climate Action Project](#) invite community members to help Ashland reach its climate goals by helping to create the 2021 Ashland Community Climate Action Survey. The survey will be designed to help us gather community views and increase our understanding of: 1) how we can work together to take action in the community, 2) where to focus on our efforts and 3) how Ashland can be a leader in climate action. Bringing this information together will help us to effectively deliver Ashland's climate goals.

Community members are invited to [apply to serve on the survey Advisory Panel by March 7](#) or [submit suggested topics for the survey by March 15](#). The project also offers opportunities for volunteers.

Ashland's Climate Goals

The City of Ashland, Oregon, approved a [Climate and Energy Action Plan](#) (CEAP) in 2017 establishing goals and targets to reduce Ashland's emissions of climate pollution and prepare the city for unavoidable impacts.

Attaining the goals and targets requires commitment from the Ashland community and the City government. The primary community goal of the CEAP is to reduce overall Ashland community greenhouse gas emissions by eight percent on average every year to 2050. The primary goals for City of Ashland operations are to attain carbon neutrality by 2030 and reduce fossil fuel consumption by 50% by 2030 and 100% by 2050.

The Ashland Community Climate Action 2021 Survey

SOCAN-Ashland and the [SOU Office of Sustainability](#) are partnering to sponsor the Ashland Community Climate 2021 Survey. The overall survey purpose is to continue to build effective, sustained climate action in Ashland.

We are committed to:

- Embracing our responsibility to address climate change with urgency, optimism, and care for all members of our community, our natural environment, and future generations
- Building momentum for effective community action and results aligned with the Ashland Climate and Energy Action Plan
- Bringing forth the voices of all members of our community, in all its diversity. [Send your survey suggestions to us by March 15](#).
- A thoughtful, professional, and transparent process
- Using best practice survey methodologies, engaging expertise and survey technology from SOU
- Learning from other cities, nongovernmental organizations, research/academic institutions and scholarly publications

Role of the Advisory Panel

The Advisory Panel will be a key resource to guide the project, serving for the duration of the project (through December 1). There will be active and relatively inactive phases of work for the panel.

The Panel is expected to meet weekly from April 1-May 30 to provide input on the goals, focus, and questions of the survey, as well as on strategies for community outreach. The expected time commitment during this design phase is expected to be 1-3 hours per week, with opportunities for greater participation for those who have the interest and time to contribute.

The other active phase for the Advisory Panel will be in October and November, when the Panel will review survey results and identify key findings, and advise on how best to disseminate the survey findings for maximum impact.

Members of the community and local organizations can [use this application](#) to be considered for the Advisory Panel or to serve as a project volunteer.

Key Dates

March 7: Deadline to propose survey scope (topics)--please use this form

March 7: Deadline to apply for the Community Survey Advisory Panel

August 1 - September 15: Data collection phase; survey open to the community

November 15: Publication of survey report

Who We Are

The [Ashland Climate Action Project of Southern Oregon Climate Action Now \(SOCAN-ACAP\)](#) is a community-based organization providing advocacy, education, and community organizing to support the full and timely implementation of the CEAP. In 2020, SOCAN-ACAP conducted a community survey entitled, "Lessons Learned from Recent COVID Restrictions: Imagining the Future of Ashland." Of the 225 survey respondents, 61% stated that they are extremely concerned about climate change, while 29% described themselves as "very" concerned. Nearly 86% have taken action to reduce their own climate impact. [Read the full survey report.](#)

[The SOU Office of Sustainability](#) leads the University's commitment to sustainable practices, environmental stewardship, and research that advances understanding of local, regional, and global environmental issues. Through this partnership, SOCAN-Ashland and SOU-Sustainability seek to build on the 2020 survey by expanding community engagement and response; enhancing the survey design and methodology, and ensuring that the focus of the survey is on priority information that will help advance achievement of the goals of the CEAP.

All correspondence related to this project should be sent to Lorrie Kaplan, Chair, SOCAN-Ashland Climate Action Project - lorrie@socan.eco, and Beccs Walker, SOU Sustainability and Recycling Manager, walkerr6@sou.edu.

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