



## FAQ about Corvallis' proposed Climate Recovery Ordinance



### **Q. What is an ordinance?**

**A.** Ordinances are legally binding and enforceable city laws that provide consensus solutions to problems at the municipal level, providing for public safety and well-being.

### **Q. Why is this ordinance necessary?**

**A.** The effects of climate change are becoming increasingly tangible, measurable, and dangerous. Scientists say we are reaching a point of no turning back, and serious action needs to occur quickly if we want to keep the Earth habitable. Corvallis passed a climate change *resolution* in the year 2000, and it wasn't implemented. Now we need a climate change *ordinance*, which is binding.

### **Q. How can a small area like Corvallis have a meaningful effect on climate change?**

**A.** The City of Corvallis and its citizens can contribute to the overall reduction of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions while serving as an example to other similar cities. Local effort is essential because state and federal action has largely been ineffective. If Corvallis sets scientifically up-to-date and binding GHG reduction targets, it will send a strong message, and facilitate our progression towards a low-carbon future. A study released by the U.S. Conference of Mayors Climate Protection Center in 2008 indicated that adhering to federal, state, and local goals promoting renewable energy, energy efficiency, and alternative fuel can transform the economy by increasing the number of green jobs five-fold. The report suggests that cities are especially well-placed to reap the benefits, as more than 85 percent of green jobs are located in metropolitan areas.

### **Q. How would the ordinance be implemented?**

**A.** The ordinance will support a Corvallis Climate Action Plan that includes the City of Corvallis operations and the community (residents and businesses). This action plan has already been developed by the Climate Action Task Force (CATF), which reflects a wide range of community interests and perspectives received through work with External Advisors and Expert/Interested Reviewers, and through receiving public input.



**Q. What are the long-term goals of the proposed climate-change ordinance?**

A. The goals of the ordinance put the City of Corvallis on track to be at least 47 percent below 2012 levels by 2025, 68% below 2012 levels by 2035, and at least 85% below 2012 levels by 2050.

- a) By the year 2020, all city-owned facilities and city operations shall be carbon neutral;
- b) By the year 2030, reducing fossil-fuel consumption from the Corvallis community, including all businesses, individuals, and others working in the city collectively, by 50% compared to 2012 usage;
- c) Prepare a numerical community-wide goal or “carbon budget,” for Corvallis to do its share in achieving 350 ppm of CO<sub>2</sub> in the atmosphere by the year 2100.<sup>1</sup> (The best available science sets 350 ppm as a goal to mitigate or avoid the most harmful negative consequences of climate change.)

**Q. Are the goals of the ordinance realistic for Corvallis?**

The ordinance goals proposed for Corvallis are consistent with the science-based framework of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and the recent GHG reduction targets established at the 2015 United Nations (UN) Climate Conference in Paris. They are realistic if we act now. More importantly, scientists agree that they are necessary to avoid catastrophic consequences.

**Q. What other communities are taking action on climate change?**

The only community that has set binding GHG reduction targets is Eugene, Oregon (with Ashland, and Portland close behind).. Many cities and counties are working on sustainability initiatives, but unless their work includes GHG reduction targets that are binding, measurable, based on up-to-date science, with a feedback system to stay on track, their sustainability initiatives will not be sufficient to meet their reduction goals and avoid the worst effects of climate disruption.

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<sup>1</sup> For instructions on how to calculate a budget for Corvallis, see the [Eugene 350 Carbon Budget Whitepaper](#) .