



City of Tualatin

## CITY OF TUALATIN Staff Report

**TO:** Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council  
**THROUGH:** Sherilyn Lombos, City Manager  
**FROM:** Nic Westendorf, Deputy Public Works Director  
**DATE:** May 28, 2024

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### **SUBJECT:**

Consideration of Resolution 5775-24 adopting the community Climate Action Plan (CAP)

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommend adoption of Resolution 5775-24 adopting the community Climate Action Plan (CAP)

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

#### **Plan Overview**

The draft community Climate Action Plan (CAP) is complete and ready for adoption! The plan provides a road map which the City can utilize to achieve its stated goal of net zero emissions by 2050. The final plan consists of 146 actions within 7 distinct focus areas that help the City adapt to and lessen our contributions toward the changing climate.

Key outcomes of the plan can be grouped into three buckets:

#### Preparing for climate change (*adaptation*)

- Natural systems, resources, and infrastructure
- Health and safety of people
- Economic shifts

#### Reducing emissions (*mitigation*)

- Buildings and energy
- Urban form and land use emissions
- Transportation – modes and fuel
- Consumption – food and goods

#### Next steps (*implementation*)

- Put City in a position to take action (clear plan, good position for external funding opportunities)
- Accountable and measurable progress
- Alignment with federal, state, and regional partner agencies

#### **The Process**

City Council approved the scope and contract in early 2022. The plan was created over more than two years and included engagement with the community, utility partners, commercial and industrial partners, industry experts, neighboring communities, partner government agencies, and City staff. The plan is

science based, community focused, built upon partnerships, and puts the City in a position to take meaningful action.

## **What's happened since we last met?**

### Phase 3 of Community Engagement

Phase 3 engagement asked the community to share their support or concerns for the key outcomes from the climate action plan. Overall, a majority of the community supported all outcomes of the Climate Action Plan.

Support was highest for outcomes found in the natural systems (75%) and health & safety focus areas (71%). Key takeaways include strong support for protecting people and the environment by adapting to our changing climate. In the written responses, support was also shown for making it safer and easier to make trips without a car through a combination of increased safety of bike and pedestrian infrastructure, bringing destinations like grocery stores, restaurants and homes closer together, and improving access to comfortable and efficient public transportation. There was also support for more sustainable consumption habits, though concerns exist about using regulations to accomplish those changes.

Support was lowest for outcomes found in the buildings and energy use focus area (53%). In the written responses, most concerns were related to use of government regulation to force people into action and the associated costs of those actions, particularly in the building and energy and transportation focus areas. Many commenters expressed concerns regarding banning natural gas. There is currently no shared definition of what density means or looks like in Tualatin, creating a wide range of responses to those actions with some people associating 'density' with Portland, which may not necessarily be the outcome in Tualatin. There also seems to be confusion over how development impacts the environment, which could be part of a larger conversation to scope and understand what density looks like in Tualatin in the future.

### NW Natural Response

NW Natural provided written comment in December 2023. Staff reviewed the comments, made some revisions to the plan, and prepared a written response to NW Natural. Thematically, NW Natural's comments fell into the following buckets: technical concerns with methodology and data, comments on action language and NW natural programs and technology, and concern over specific actions related to electrification and reducing natural gas use. All changes that the City made to the plan based on feedback from NW Natural related to comments on action language, language consistency, and language regarding NW Natural programs and technology. No changes to the Climate Action Plan methodology, data, or proposed actions were made in response to these comments.

### Density memo (beyond VMTs)

One identified criticism of the draft plan was the focus on emissions reductions specifically from reducing vehicle miles traveled (VMT) by increasing density. When scaling the plan, the emission reduction benefit from changes in urban form and land use (strategy 5.1) focused solely on reducing car trips. While this is one benefit, there are other benefits from dense developments such as reduced emissions from building energy and/or greenfield development. Those were not measured in the 'GHG Benefit' scale for strategy 5.1 because it would be extremely difficult (and expensive) to measure, requiring clearly defined scopes and outcomes. In addition to the emissions reduction benefits, dense development also provides a host of co-benefits including benefits to health & safety, equity, economic development, public transportation, quality of life, and cost of public infrastructure. In an attempt to measure and show those benefits the project team created a 'Densification Benefits Memo', Appendix 7 in the CAP, which looks at specific benefits and outcomes of increasing density in the downtown Central Urban Renewal Zone. For more detailed information on what impacts that increased density downtown could provide, please refer to the memo attached as Appendix 7 to the draft plan.

### Finalize plan document

In addition to the above efforts, staff have spent the last few months finalizing the draft plan including creating an executive summary, finalizing graphic design, and including all relevant appendices.

**Next Steps**

The plan is large and can feel overwhelming. The next step after adoption will be to create a small, prioritized work plan to identify actions to take over the next 5 years. This work plan will be brought back to Council for feedback and approval once a final draft has been developed by staff. Some preliminary work has already been done on the 5-year plan; this work will continue after Climate Action Plan adoption with the goal of bringing back the work plan for Council feedback late summer 2024. During the development of the work plan, additional questions will need to be addressed, including funding and staff capacity to carry out the actions identified in the work plan.

**OUTCOMES OF DECISION:**

If approved, the City will have its first community Climate Action Plan and staff will begin work on a 5-year work plan.

**ALTERNATIVES TO RECOMMENDATION:**

Council could choose not to adopt the Climate Action Plan or could direct staff to make changes to the draft plan prior to adoption.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:**

There are no direct financial implications from adopting the plan. Financial cost will come from executing actions found within the plan. Decisions regarding implementation will happen at a future Council meeting. The City already has \$23,000 budgeted for plan implementation in fiscal year 2023/24 which will be used for initial work.

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**ATTACHMENTS:**

- Presentation
- Resolution 5775-24
- Exhibit A – Draft Climate Action Plan