



## **MEMORANDUM**

**Date:** November 14, 2008

**To:** Houghton Community Council

**From:** Joan Lieberman-Brill, AICP, Senior Planner

**Subject:** 2007-2008 City Initiated Climate Change Comprehensive Plan Amendments  
Intended for Adoption by City Council (ZON07-00001)

## **RECOMMENDATION**

- Receive a status update on the proposed Comprehensive Plan Amendments on climate change, and confirm Houghton Community Councils' concurrence.

## **BACKGROUND DISCUSSION**

At your June 23 study session briefing on the 2007-2008 city initiated Comprehensive Plan Amendments (CPA), the Houghton Community Council (HCC) requested that they receive a status update on the climate protection action plan prior to adoption of the climate change amendments by the City Council in December. The proposed climate change amendments are attachment 1 to this memo.

As was noted at your June meeting, the City Council (CC) had adopted Resolution 4696 on April 15, 2008, which establishes the Council's intent to adopt the proposed 2007-2008 revisions to the Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Map into the final adopting ordinance in December, along with several private amendment requests (outside Houghton's disapproval jurisdiction) that are being processed separately. The CC did not support the edits to the draft policies and narrative on climate change recommended by the Community Council.

At the June study session, Erin Leonhart, City Intergovernmental Relations Manager, addressed the HCC regarding the status of Kirkland's Climate Action Plan, the context in which the city is striving to reduce its carbon emissions, including newly adopted state legislation, and answered questions. At that time, Erin noted that city staff planned to return to the CC in 2008 with a draft Climate Protection Action Plan.

Since then, at their July 1, 2008 meeting, the CC accepted a staff proposal that the Climate Protection Action Plan be postponed until 2009 for three primary reasons, summarized below, and also contained in the report provided to the HCC in late June of this year. Nothing has changed since that time.

First, Governor Gregoire signed House Bill 2815, effective June 12, 2008. The Bill requires the Department of Ecology to develop “a design for a regional multisector market-based system to limit and reduce emissions of greenhouse gas...” and to provide a report to the legislature by December 1, 2008 to include rules requiring annual reporting of greenhouse gas emissions. In addition, the Department of Transportation is required to “adopt broad statewide goals to reduce annual per capita vehicle miles traveled by 2050...” Legislative requirements pertaining to emissions reductions and annual reporting, once established and adopted, will be considered in developing our own action plan and this information is currently unknown. Guidance provided by the State will help make jurisdictional comparisons easier, be consistent with statewide efforts and instill increased confidence in those comparisons.

Second, staff would like to involve the public in development of the action plan to raise awareness about the issue of climate change and to develop solutions that will resonate with the community. This can be done through existing outreach efforts and community events.

Finally, the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI) is testing improved software that will assist in the development of our action plan. Staff believes that the improved software will result in a better action plan product especially in the area of determining how much potential reduction the various measures will obtain.

The next step is for the CC to adopt the climate change amendments on December 16, along with all other annual amendments to the Comprehensive Plan. HCC comments on all proposed City Initiated amendments, including those addressing climate change, will be transmitted to CC in the adoption memo to the CC.

Attachments:

1. Proposed Natural Environment Climate Change amendments Goal 5 narrative, Policy and narrative NE-5.1, and Policy and narrative NE-5.2

Cc: File ZON07-00001  
Planning Commission  
Kirkland Neighborhood Associations  
Kirkland Alliance of Neighborhoods  
Kirkland Chamber of Commerce

## V. NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

### AIR

#### **Goal NE-5: Improve air quality and reduce Kirkland's contribution to climate change.**

The surrounding air, both outdoors, and indoors, has the potential to affect human health. It is important to maintain the quality of outdoor air since all life forms depend on it, and the quality of indoor air is dependent on that of the outdoors. Air pollution officially exceeds federal health standards in all or part of ten Washington counties, including King County. Although all Washington counties currently meet federal health standards for air pollution it is necessary to remain vigilant. Air pollution that includes greenhouse gases also contributes to climate change or global warming.

The largest source of air pollution in Kirkland is motor vehicle use. Kirkland should continue to adopt and promote smart transportation and land use choices as part of a strategy to reduce air pollution and slow climate change. Motor vehicles are also widely believed to contribute to climate change, also known as global warming. The Kirkland community also contributes to air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions through energy consumption and landfilled waste, among other things.

A comprehensive approach, including transportation and land use strategies, waste reduction, urban forest preservation, protection, and enhancement, purchasing decisions, and public outreach is necessary to reduce Kirkland's contribution to air pollution and climate change.

#### **Policy NE 5.1: Continue and enhance current actions to improve air quality and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.**

The City pursues several actions to help reduce vehicle emissions to improve regional air quality and address climate change. First, great care has been taken to provide a pedestrian friendly environment in Kirkland. In 1995, adoption of the Non-Motorized Transportation Plan provided additional guidance for a systematic enhancement of a network of pedestrian and bicycle facilities linking important destinations both inside and outside the City. ~~In addition~~Second, Kirkland works to implement the State Commute Trip Reduction Law through a transportation management program. The program includes providing incentives to City employees to walk, bike, use transit, and rideshare to work, and the City coordinates with regional agencies to assist Kirkland employers in meeting their Single Occupancy Vehicle (SOV) trip reduction and vehicle miles traveled (VMT) targets. ~~In addition~~Third, many City vehicles utilize an alternative fuel to reduce pollution and boost fuel efficiency. In addition, for the many important functions trees serve, including improving air quality, the City supports street tree planting throughout the city and retention of existing trees on private property. Too, Kirkland is at the forefront in the area of waste reduction. The City is focusing on environmental outreach and development of new programs to reduce waste through reduction and recycling in both the residential and business communities. Finally, the City strives to purchase energy efficient and renewable technology products and services whenever feasible.

#### **Policy NE-5.2: Inventory global warming emissions in City operations and in the community, set reduction targets and create an action plan.**

Climate disruption is an urgent threat to the environmental and economic health of our communities. With less than 5% of the world's population, the United States produces more than 25% of the global greenhouse gas emissions, and those emissions are continuing to grow. There is a broad scientific consensus that

Carbon Dioxide (CO2) and other greenhouse gases released into the atmosphere have a profound effect on the Earth's climate and there is clear evidence of human influences on climate due to changes in greenhouse gases. Local government actions taken to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and increase energy efficiency provide multiple local benefits by decreasing air pollution, creating jobs, reducing energy expenditures, and saving money. Seattle, along with a growing number of other U. S. cities, is leading the way by committing to the U. S. Mayors Climate Protection Agreement. On May 17, 2005, Kirkland City Council signed a resolution endorsing the U. S. Mayors Climate Protection Agreement.

The City is pursuing five milestones to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in City operations and throughout the community:

1. Conduct a greenhouse gas emissions inventory and forecast to determine the source and quantity of greenhouse gas emissions in the city;
2. Establish a greenhouse gas emissions reduction target;
3. Develop an action plan with both existing and future actions which, when implemented, will meet the local greenhouse gas reduction target;
4. Implement the action plan; and
5. Monitor and report progress.

The Kirkland Council by resolution committed to the following greenhouse gas reduction targets for the Kirkland community and governmental operations:

- o Interim: 10% below 2005 levels by 2012
- o Primary: 20% below 2005 levels by 2020
- o Long-term: 80% below 2007 levels by 2050