



City of Ferndale

CITY COUNCIL STAFF REPORT

MEETING DATE: July 31, 2019 BILL # _____

SUBJECT: Greenhouse Gas Resolution

DATE: July 31, 2019

FROM: Jori Burnett

PRESENTATION BY: Staff

EXHIBITS

EXHIBIT 1 Draft Resolution

RECOMMENDATION: Adopt a Greenhouse Gas Resolution, attached as Exhibit 1, for the purposes of describing those policies that have already been implemented by the City, clarifying expectations for certain new policies, and complying with Washington State requirements for funding thresholds.

BACKGROUND: Over the past decade the City has adopted a variety of policies, procedures, and codes that are intended to address greenhouse gas emissions and climate change. Some of these policies were made for the purpose of reducing environmental impact, others were adopted based simply on best management practices and industry standards. The policies have never been listed together as part of a description of the City's efforts to address climate change.

Washington State requires that "all state agencies must consider whether the agency receiving the funds¹ has adopted policies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions."² These State requirements have been in place since 2010, and while the City has continued to receive State funding during that time period, it has typically done so on a project-by-project basis.

ANALYSIS: By adopting a Greenhouse Gas Policy, the City will at a minimum reduce staff time that is currently expended researching City codes to identify existing text that may fit the State's requirements. If adopted, the policy can simply be referred to or attached to a grant or loan application.

By adopting a Greenhouse Gas Policy, the City will also be better-able to ensure that these policies are adhered to throughout the organization, and to identify ways to

¹ State funds.

² RCW 70.235.070.

improve and expand those policies in the future. As noted, Exhibit 1 is primarily focused on listing policies, rather than a lengthy list of policies that could be enacted in the future. Council is not asked to put on their policy hats in order to adopt the draft resolution. Instead, the resolution is more a reflection of what the Council has already adopted, and administrative policies that have been enacted as part of the City's daily operations.

LEGAL REVIEW: The resolution reflects existing policy and does not commit the City to enact additional policies or legislation without prior review.

FISCAL IMPACT: Adoption of these policies could in theory have a significant positive fiscal impact on the City as it may make the City more competitive for State funding. Failure to adopt these policies could make the City less competitive.

Some of the policies themselves do result in costs and benefits to the City, at least initially: for example, the purchase of asset management software for the City's fleet represents a relatively small startup cost (less than \$5,000 initial cost, smaller costs to maintain the software subscription) but is expected to quickly pay for itself by reducing unnecessary maintenance and more-quickly identifying preventative maintenance. Similarly, potential conversion of lighting systems will result in initial costs, but the long-term efficiencies will reduce lifetime costs of the systems overall.

ALTERNATIVES: No action, modification of listed policies.

A no action alternative would not adopt a greenhouse gas policy. The City would continue to seek State funding, likely by indicating that one or more of the policies that are listed in Exhibit 1 are, by default, the City's greenhouse gas policy. This approach has not disqualified the City yet, but it appears that State agencies are placing a greater emphasis on these policies than they had in the past.

This alternative would also require additional staff time; as the City increases its grant writing efforts, creating "plug and play" policies and lists will enable the grant writers to focus on the arguments for the specific project, rather than spending their time researching the City's policies.

A second alternative would be a modification of existing policies, where the Council changes the list of policies that are contained in Exhibit 1. The City's greenhouse policies should continue to evolve over time, but Staff would recommend that unless there are clear modifications that should be made, that the current list be adopted and then subsequently modified as necessary.

CONCLUSIONS: The City is expected to have a Greenhouse Gas Policy; it has not yet taken that formal action. Staff recommends approval. No public hearing is required. The matter could be placed on either the regular or consent agenda of a future Council meeting.

RESOLUTION #

**A RESOLUTION OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF
FERNDAL, WASHINGTON, ESTABLISHING A GREENHOUSE
GAS REDUCTION POLICY**

WHEREAS, the City of Ferndale recognizes the need to observe environmentally sustainable practices and procedures in order to provide a high quality of life for future generations, and;

WHEREAS, pursuant to RCW 70.235, Washington State has mandated that all state agencies reduce the production of greenhouse gases, through programs that provide economic and quality of life benefits intended to reduce energy bills, preserve green space, improve air quality, promote transportation choices and sponsor economic development through energy conservation and the creation of new energy sources, and;

WHEREAS, the City Council finds that the citizens of Ferndale and surrounding areas will gain from reasonable policies and procedures that conserve and protect the environment, that reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and which will better-ensure the resilience of the community to climate change; and

WHEREAS, the various funding sources have made it a requirement to memorialize the City's efforts to reduce greenhouse gases as a prerequisite to application submittal for grant, loan and other financial assistance programs;

NOW THEREFORE, THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF FERNDAL DO RESOLVE THAT THE FOLLOWING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES ARE ADOPTED AND ARE HEREBY MEMORIALIZED AS THE CITY OF FERNDAL GREENHOUSE GAS REDUCTION POLICY:

Citizen-Oriented Policies

- Enforcement of mandatory summer watering restrictions (existing – est. 2018. Res 18-07-30-A)
- Seasonal multimedia conservation-related citizen outreach (ongoing)
- Maintain partnership with waste disposal companies to update and maintain solid waste collection policies, increased citizen outreach on conservation measures (2019. Ferndale Municipal Code § 8.04)

- Installation of rooftop solar panels now exempt from building permits (2017. Ferndale Municipal Code § 15.04.140 A (1))

Capital Improvement Policies

- The Transportation Element of the Ferndale Comprehensive Plan places an emphasis on multi-modal transportation options (2016 Comprehensive Plan, Transportation Element, Goal 2 Policy D, E, F; Goal 5; Goal 5, Policies A-N)
- The City, in partnership with Puget Sound Energy and the Transportation Improvement Board, has converted to 100% high efficiency street lights. (Complete 2019)
- The City requires all future developments to include high efficiency streetlights (2017, Ferndale Municipal Code § 19.35.080 A (2)).
- Consideration of roundabouts (where applicable) in transportation network (2016 Transportation Element, Goal 1, Policy K.)
- City water source no longer draws water directly from the Nooksack River (City conversion to well water- 2015)
- Ferndale Comprehensive Plan requires consideration of integration with intelligent traffic control devices where applicable (2016 Comprehensive Plan, Transportation Element – “Intelligent Transportation Systems.”)
- Received Washington State Complete Streets grant award. The adoption and implementation of complete streets policies allows the City to focus on integrating both motorized and non-motorized transportation options, allowing visitors and residents to safely and effectively travel within the City without relying exclusively on single occupancy vehicles. (2018)

City Best Practices

- Adoption and implementation of software-based vehicle asset management and tracking, for the purpose of improving overall fleet efficiency, emissions, monitoring, and best practices (2019).
- Six-year fleet asset management plans adopted, for the purpose of removing less-efficient vehicles from the fleet and developing processes and procedures for the identification of such vehicles (2019).

- Employee education of workplace energy use best management practices (recycling, turn off lights, re-use or reduction of paper) (2019).
- Audit of City facility energy use (Puget Sound Energy, 2017)
- Audit of City facility waste practices (SSC 2019. Implementation in process)
- Conversion to electronic permit tracking system (2018)
- The City has established an informal but consistent practice of re-using existing buildings for City facilities (including re-use of a skating rink for a Boys and Girls Club and currently a community center; re-use of a former fire station as a City Hall and now Council Chambers/Court; re-use of a bank for current City Hall; re-use of a library for current police station. The City is actively considering the re-use of a school facility for future City Hall, court, and Council Chambers).
- With the exception of newly-planted landscaping and natural turf associated with ballfields, no City watering during summer months (2019)
- All new publicly funded buildings must include energy efficient design (2010. Ferndale Municipal Code § 18.94.050 (C)).

Land Use Policies

- Encourage high density mixed-use development in urban core (2016 Comprehensive Plan, Land Use Element. Goal I B, Policy i., ii. Goal III, Policies C, D. Housing Element. Goal 3, Goal 12, Policies A, B, C.)
- Provide incentives for high density mixed-used development in areas that promote walkability and non-motorized transportation (MFTE, 2018. Catalyst, 2019)
- Practice: promotion of infill development; the City has not expanded its boundaries for ten years)

- One of first jurisdictions to establish an annexation blueprint/ phasing plan to guide annexations based on extension of services, capital plans (Annexation Blueprint, 2011)
- Participant in FEMA Community Ratings System (CRS), enhanced floodplain protection and flood awareness policies (2015-present)
- Promotion of native plants in all private development (2016. Ferndale Municipal Code § 18.74.050).

Future Initiatives

- The City shall seek to establish a comprehensive urban forestry plan, promoting the retention of existing vegetation and the development of a sustainable street tree and street vegetation system
- The City shall work with public and private partners to replace existing athletic field lighting with high efficiency fixtures.

APPROVED AND ADOPTED by the City Council of the City of Ferndale in regular session this 5TH day of August, 2019

ATTEST:

Jon Mutchler, MAYOR

Susan Duncan, CMC, CITY CLERK