

# EUGENE CITY COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY



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## Work Session: Land Use/Transportation Framework

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Meeting Date: April 28, 2010  
Department: City Manager's Office  
[www.eugene-or.gov](http://www.eugene-or.gov)

Agenda Item Number: B  
Staff Contact: Kevin Finney  
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### ISSUE STATEMENT

The City's land use and transportation policy decisions help shape development and infrastructure construction, outlining the community's future. The Sustainability Commission has discussed how it can most effectively contribute to discussions on increasing the sustainability of land use and transportation policies and investments, and has requested this meeting to share recommendations for council priorities and actions that could more fully address the potential changes anticipated by global climate change and the uncertainty of our long-term energy security.

### BACKGROUND

In June 2009, the council adopted the Sustainability Commission's FY10 work plan which was organized into eight outcomes. Outcome 2 of the work plan committed the commission to "Link land use and transportation planning more closely with sustainability goals," and the commission developed the following related goals for their work in FY10:

- Delegate the commission's Land Use and Transportation Subcommittee to research and prepare recommendations for discussion by the full commission and then make recommendations to council on land use and transportation issues;
- Maintain commission member participation on the Eugene Comprehensive Lands Assessment; and,
- Strengthen relationship with Planning Commission around sustainability issues.

The commission has identified these land use and transportation goals as a top priority for its work and has focused significant effort on gaining an understanding of the complexities of planning and land use issues. The attached document, "An Action Plan for Eugene," describes the foundational factors that the commission identified in its study and provides specific strategies for advancing a vision for Eugene's future.

### RELATED CITY POLICIES

Numerous City and regional policies are applicable, including:

- TransPlan, which guides transportation system planning in the Eugene-Springfield metropolitan area. Goal #1: Integrated Transportation and Land Use System. *Provide an integrated transportation and land use system that supports choices in modes of travel and development*

*patterns that will reduce reliance on the auto and enhance livability, economic opportunity, and the quality of life.*

- Council Resolution No. 4618, adopted in February 2000, outlining a definition and statement of intent regarding the application of sustainability principles to the City of Eugene, and affirming the commitment of City elected officials and staff to uphold these principles.
- Council Sustainability and Transportation Initiatives, adopted in February 2007
- Council vision and values related to sustainable development, adopted in May 2009.
- Eugene Growth Management Policies, adopted in February 1996, specifically -- Policy 10, Encourage the creation of transportation-efficient land use patterns and implementation of nodal development concepts. Policy 11, Increase the use of alternative modes of transportation by improving the capacity, design, safety, and convenience of the transit, bicycle, and pedestrian transportation systems. Policy 12, Encourage alternatives to the use of single-occupant vehicles through demand management techniques. Policy 13, Focus future street improvements on relieving pressure on the City's most congested roadways and intersections to maintain an acceptable level of mobility for all modes of transportation.

## **RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS**

At this time, no resource requirements have been identified.

## **COUNCIL OPTIONS**

The council may:

- 1) Provide direction to the Sustainability Commission and City Manager for follow-up.
- 2) Schedule future discussions.
- 3) Take no action at this time.

## **CITY MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATION**

This is a discussion at the request of the Sustainability Commission; the City Manager makes no recommendation.

## **SUGGESTED MOTION**

None.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

- A. An Action Plan for Eugene – A Report from the Land Use and Transportation Sub-Committee (LUTSCO) of the Eugene Sustainability Commission.

## **FOR MORE INFORMATION**

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## **An Action Plan for Eugene**

### **A Report from the Land Use and Transportation Sub-Committee (LUTSCO) of the Eugene Sustainability Commission. Adopted by the Sustainability Commission, April 21, 2010**

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The twin challenges of global climate change and declining world oil supply require effective local land use and transportation policies and actions to sustain our community's economic, environmental and social health. Though many view these challenges as beyond the scope and ability of local government to address, they do inspire us to make decisions that will benefit the community, regardless of our ability to have an impact on a global scale.

Historically, land use and transportation planning have not been well integrated, which has impeded efforts to use land and energy in the wisest ways.

Going forward, we need community decision processes based on a clear understanding of the close interrelationship between land use and transportation systems and the impact of our choices on climate and energy consumption. On this foundation, our community can take actions to reduce its energy consumption and impacts on climate. Our community can also become better positioned to weather the economic and other challenges that may arise from repercussions of climate change and declining oil supply beyond the scope of local control.

## **Integrated Challenges of Energy and Climate Change Require Integrated Decision Making and New Thinking**

The content of this document is built on a foundation of the following factors that were developed as the result of LUTSCO's input from community policy makers, community members and widely available scientific data.

### **1. Climate change will adversely affect cities**

Scientific consensus on global climate change has generated action among policy makers at all scales in virtually every nation. City governments are at the forefront of climate action planning – and rightfully so, as a carbon-constrained economy and costly climate events will come home to roost at the municipal level.

### **2. Energy supplies and costs are becoming increasingly volatile**

Energy experts see global energy supply and demand on a collision course, with some predicting a repeat of 2008's price spikes coming to world oil markets as soon as the economy recovers. All current information suggests that an economic recovery will be slow in coming and that the new economy will have higher unemployment, with its attendant social issues. Many observers believe we are entering a volatile time in energy markets, creating an urgent need to rethink business models and consumption patterns.

### **3. The nexus of land use and transportation is the key focal point**

Our economy's greenhouse gas emissions result overwhelmingly from our dependence on fossil fuels, so these challenges are inextricably intertwined. Specifically, it is buildings and transportation – our

roads, homes and commercial buildings, and our patterns of land use, land development and construction – that together make up more than half of our energy demand, determining much of our “carbon footprint.”

#### **4. Integrated decision-making is essential**

In order to frame our policy discussions and make informed decisions for our community’s future, we must address the connections between land use and transportation. Our planning processes for transportation and the built environment are sophisticated, but they don’t integrate well and only occasionally address the concerns of energy security and climate change. We rarely explicitly consider land use and transportation together with an eye to our carbon footprint and its effect on our city’s and children’s future. We can no longer afford to make decisions separately. We need decision-making processes that ensure we examine land-use/transportation concerns through a twin energy/climate lens.

#### **5. We must align the conversation**

The City of Eugene and its residents are already taking on many critical issues in land use, transportation and the nexus of the two. Many of these efforts will lower greenhouse gas emissions from buildings and vehicles, leave more dollars in our pockets, and create a more livable community.

But these current land use or transportation efforts are often separate from each other. Some are led by advocacy organizations, others organized by city staff. Some are grassroots efforts focused on behavior change, others are focused on improving formal institutions and codes. In many cases, they have overlapping aspirations, but don’t reinforce each other. We need diverse efforts to create long-term, positive change, but without shared language and understanding, our work is vulnerable. Narrow short-term concerns can often pull us off the long path to realizing a new vision.

Success comes when we can identify what we can agree on as a community. We’re more likely to reach that common vision when we engage each other in a clear discussion about the very real effects of the coming volatility in energy prices and climate change. We need to frame policy decisions in the context of the energy and climate future because these issues affect all three components of triple bottom line sustainability.

Over time, the community is best served by the Council and staff integrating energy and climate concerns into all policy decisions, regardless of whether they appear to be energy or climate related. The current challenge is that many ad hoc decisions unintentionally move us in the wrong direction – toward sprawl, auto-dependence, decreased long-term livability and less economic security.

## **Next Step for Eugene: A Detailed Vision, with Overarching Goals**

### **1. Elements of a shared vision for Eugene’s future:**

- We need a decreased reliance on energy from outside the community, energy sources with increasing and volatile prices, and carbon intensive energy sources
- For our future success as a city we must lower greenhouse gas emissions from businesses, households and economic activity
- Patterns of land use and modes of transportation must further energy and climate goals
- Policies, plans and Council-level decision making should incorporate climate and energy
- Economic development policies should encourage businesses that can prosper in a carbon-constrained economy and help all businesses lower their dependence on outside energy sources

- A sustainable community is one where social justice, environmental stewardship and economic prosperity are the bases for good policy

## **2. Specific strategies that advance this vision:**

- Facilitate compact residential development that fits with and enhances neighborhood character
- Involve the community in developing a shared vision of sustainability
- Better integrate non-auto transportation corridors with commercial activity
- Foster a vibrant downtown that includes housing options
- Ensure access to open space by transit and non-motorized modes
- Increase bicycle and pedestrian connectivity, especially linking residential and commercial centers (remove physical and psychological barriers)
- For motorized passenger transportation, plan to adopt forms that lower dependence on outside energy sources and reduce carbon emissions
- Focus local transportation spending to reflect climate and energy issues, and leverage state and federal transportation funding to the fullest extent possible to these ends
- Establish codes, incentives and zoning to connect development with transit and other alternative modes
- Promote and give priority to green building, carbon reduction, site selection, and more efficient use of existing urban land
- Ensure that policy revisions – for example, to TransPlan and the Urban Growth Boundary – take the maximum allowable action inside the constraints of state law to meet these goals
- Where state law fails to incorporate energy and climate concerns, seek to incorporate those concerns prior to accepting outcomes focused on the short run
- Use inter-jurisdictional and inter-agency collaboration to further this vision

## LIST OF EXISTING EFFORTS

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The Land Use and Transportation Subcommittee (LUTSCO) spoke with representatives of the following efforts, either before the Subcommittee or in other forums:

- Opportunity Siting and Infill Compatibility Standards
- Bicycle and Pedestrian Action Committee (B-PAC)
- West Eugene Collaborative (WEC)
- EmX (Lane Transit District's Emerald Express)
- Local efforts to prepare for the deployment of electric vehicles
- Eugene Comprehensive Lands Assessment (ECLA)
- Green building strategies currently being advanced by City of Eugene staff
- Energy and climate action planning by City of Eugene staff

## RESOURCES

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*Pathways to a low-carbon economy*, McKinsey & Company (2009). Available at [www.mckinsey.com/clientservice/ccsi/pathways\\_low\\_carbon\\_economy.asp](http://www.mckinsey.com/clientservice/ccsi/pathways_low_carbon_economy.asp).

*Averting the next energy crisis*, McKinsey & Company (2009). Available at [www.mckinsey.com/mgi/publications/next\\_energy\\_crisis](http://www.mckinsey.com/mgi/publications/next_energy_crisis).

*Descending the Oil Peak: Navigating the Transition from Oil and Natural Gas*, Portland Peak Oil Task Force (2007). Available at [www.portlandonline.com/osd/index.cfm?c=42894](http://www.portlandonline.com/osd/index.cfm?c=42894).

*Moving Cooler: An Analysis of Transportation Strategies for Reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions*, Cambridge Systematics, Inc. (2009). The Urban Land Institute, Washington, D.C. Available at <http://www.movingcooler.info/>.

*Driving and the Built Environment: The Effects of Compact Development on Motorized Travel, Energy Use, and CO2 Emissions -- Special Report 298* (2009). Available at [http://www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record\\_id=12747](http://www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record_id=12747).

*Opportunities to Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions through Materials and Land Management Practices*, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response (2009). Available at <http://www.epa.gov/oswer/publication.htm>.

## AUTHORSHIP AND CONTACT INFORMATION

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This memo was prepared for the Sustainability Commission by the Land Use and Transportation Subcommittee. If you have questions, please contact the City of Eugene City Manager's Office and ask for staff support to the Sustainability Commission. Special thanks to LUTSCO members Joshua Skov, Howie Bonnett, Josh Bruce and Rusty Rexius. Thanks also go to several Sustainability Commissioners who provided valuable input, feedback and editing, to David Funk for additional revising and editing, and to Paul Conte for his helpful critique of the revised document.

For more information, please visit the Commission's web site:  
[www.eugene-or.gov/sustainabilitycommission](http://www.eugene-or.gov/sustainabilitycommission)