

Agenda Item Number 7.3

Resolution No. 08-3931, For the Purpose of Adopting a Definition of Sustainability to Direct Metro's Internal Operations, Planning Efforts, and Role as a Regional Convener.

Metro Council Meeting
Thursday, April 3, 2008
Metro Council Chamber

BEFORE THE METRO COUNCIL

FOR THE PURPOSE OF ADOPTING A) RESOLUTION NO. 08-3931
DEFINITION OF SUSTAINABILITY TO)
DIRECT METRO’S INTERNAL) Introduced by Councilors David Bragdon, Rod
OPERATIONS, PLANNING EFFORTS, AND) Park, and Rex Burkholder
ROLE AS A REGIONAL CONVENER)
)

WHEREAS, the 2007 report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded that “warming of the climate system is unequivocal,” that “most of the observed increase in globally averaged temperatures since the mid-20th century is very likely due to the observed increase in anthropogenic greenhouse gas concentrations,” and that the impacts of climate change are likely to be more drastic and immediate than was previously expected; and

WHEREAS, the State of Oregon’s 2007 greenhouse gas reductions targets call for arresting the growth of greenhouse gas emissions by 2010, reducing emissions to at least 10 percent below 1990 levels by 2020, and reducing emissions to at least 75 percent below 1990 levels by 2050; and

WHEREAS, the cities of Portland, Beaverton, Gresham, Lake Oswego, Hillsboro, Milwaukie, and Oregon City, which together represent over 60 percent of the population under Metro’s jurisdiction, have all signed onto the U.S. Mayor’s Climate Protection Agreement, pledging to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions by 7 percent below 1990 levels by 2012; and

WHEREAS, a series of 2007 interviews conducted by Metro staff with staff and officials from city and county governments within the Portland area, including representatives of all the aforementioned cities, revealed a strong region-wide interest, and substantial progress on the part of some governments, in creating policies and programs to make internal operations more sustainable; and

WHEREAS, the same interviews also revealed a need for regional coordination and technical assistance in creating land-use plans, zoning and building codes, waste reduction programs, and public outreach programs to reduce energy and water use, single-occupant vehicle use, and waste generation; and

WHEREAS, in ordaining the Metro Charter, the people of the Metro region established a regional government that “undertakes, as its most important service, planning and policy making to preserve and enhance the quality of life and the environment for themselves and for future generations;” and

WHEREAS, sustainability considers the joint perspective of environmental, economic and community objectives, and

WHEREAS, the development of technologies and services to assist communities around the globe to become more sustainable and to respond to climate change will create opportunities for Oregon businesses to innovate and thrive; and

WHEREAS, Metro has the potential to reduce and/or sequester greenhouse gas emissions through its specific responsibilities for transportation planning, solid waste management, natural areas, and planning for long-term growth; and

WHEREAS, Metro has many existing programs, such as Transit-Oriented Development, the Green Streets Handbook, the Recycling Information Hotline, and Drive Less, Save More, that each reduce driving and waste generation in their own way but are not recognized for their sustainability functions nor coordinated to maximize mutual benefits; and

WHEREAS, in 2003 the Metro Council adopted Resolution 03-3338, "For the Purpose of Directing the Metro Chief Operating Officer to Establish a Sustainable Business Model for Metro Departments and Facilities and to Undertake Related Duties," adopted on March 22, 2003 authorizing the creation and implementation of a Metro sustainable business model; and

WHEREAS, Metro desires to work cooperatively with other governmental agencies and businesses to integrate sustainability into their operations; now therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED,

Sustainability, as defined in (1) below, shall be the guiding principle for all Metro policies and programs;

To achieve this, Metro shall:

1. Adopt the State of Oregon's definition of sustainability, as defined in ORS 184.421 (4), as the working definition that shall be used at Metro: "'Sustainability' means using, developing and protecting resources in a manner that enables people to meet current needs and provides that future generations can also meet future needs, from the joint perspective of environmental, economic and community objectives;"
2. Develop a regional climate change action plan to meet the State's greenhouse gas reductions targets and coordinate a regional approach to meeting the goals outlined in this plan;
3. Facilitate sharing of operational and planning practices that reduce waste generation; reduce consumption of energy, water, and other resources; save money; and strengthen economic development;
4. Implement stronger sustainable business practices within Metro;
5. Direct the Chief Operating Officer to coordinate existing and future Metro policies and programs toward meeting the definition of sustainability in sub-section (1), and to communicate Metro's policies and programs to the public in terms of how they address sustainability.

ADOPTED by the Metro Council this _____ day of _____ 2008.

David Bragdon, Council President

Approved as to form:

Daniel B. Cooper, Metro Attorney

STAFF REPORT

IN CONSIDERATION OF SUSTAINABILITY RESOLUTION NO. 08-3931, FOR THE PURPOSE OF ADOPTING A DEFINITION OF SUSTAINABILITY TO DIRECT METRO'S INTERNAL OPERATIONS, PLANNING EFFORTS, AND ROLE AS A REGIONAL CONVENER.

Date: March 24th, 2008

Prepared by: Eliot Rose

BACKGROUND

The majority of scientists agree that reductions in greenhouse gases of 60 to 80 percent below 1990 are necessary to stabilize climate change, and the State of Oregon's 2007 greenhouse gas reductions targets call for arresting the growth of greenhouse gas emissions by 2010, reducing emissions to 10 percent below 1990 levels by 2020, and reducing emissions to 75 percent below 1990 levels by 2050. Currently, governments in the Portland area are pursuing these targets with whatever resources they have. Their progress depends on local policy direction and resources: many have created sustainability departments and/or plans and taken steps to reduce energy use within their own operations; a few have created public outreach programs designed to reduce energy use on the part of businesses and residents; and fewer still have implemented long-term plans to promote energy and transportation efficiency. PGE and Portland's Office of Sustainable Development (OSD) informally provide technical assistance in some of these areas to other agencies in the region, but both have expressed the need for a more stable information-sharing body. Multnomah County and OSD are currently working on an update of their Local Action Plan on Global Warming, and both have asked Metro to help develop a consistent region-wide approach to reducing greenhouse gases.

As a regional government that "undertakes, as its most important service, planning and policy making to preserve and enhance the quality of life and the environment for themselves and for future generations," Metro has a responsibility not only to reduce resource consumption and waste generation in its own operations, but to facilitate the development of region-wide policies that accomplish these goals. In July, Councilor Rex Burkholder convened a meeting of staff and elected officials from around the region who had expressed interest in conducting greenhouse gas inventories and combating climate change locally. Those present agreed that the region could address sustainability more effectively and comprehensively through collaboration than through continuing to pursue it on an individual basis. In follow-up meetings, staff and policymakers from cities and counties in the Portland area emphasized the need for Metro to play a convening role in developing energy-efficiency and waste-reducing policies, planning methods, and outreach campaigns. Another common suggestion was for a workgroup made up of members from both the private and public sector to craft a long-term plan for the region to meet the State's greenhouse gas reduction targets, and then work backwards to develop interim goals for different sectors.

At the same time, there has also been an increased awareness within Metro for the need to refocus the agency's planning projects and operations around sustainability. Metro's council goals encourage increased access for all, efficient use of land, and protection of natural resources, and the agency has long pursued projects to create livable and affordable communities, make transportation more efficient, and preserve rural lands and wildlife habitat. These goals and policies are all vital to the overall goal of achieving economic, environmental, and social sustainability, but many of them date from an era when it was common practice to pursue such efforts on an individual basis rather than develop an integrated

approach to sustainability. As a result, Metro lacks methods to quantify, balance, and unify these different goals, identify internal and external opportunities for collaboration, and to communicate progress toward meeting these goals to either the public or to other agencies in the region, both of which are increasingly concerned with climate change and overuse of natural resources.

Furthermore, Metro's Environmental Action Team, ENACT, has no paid staff, only volunteers from other departments within the agency, making it difficult for the team to accomplish its mission. A 2007 report prepared for ENACT by AXIS Performance concluded, "In order to support all this work and to make future progress, Metro needs a full-time sustainability coordinator. Many municipalities in the area have sustainability coordinator positions and find that having someone dedicated to sustainability is crucial." These municipalities and counties include:

- Multnomah County, which has two sustainability managers (full FTEs devoted to sustainability) and sustainability liaisons (part-time devoted to sustainability) in each department, and they meet monthly to coordinate their efforts.
- Clackamas County, which has a full-time sustainability coordinator.
- Lake Oswego, which has a part time sustainability coordinator.
- Portland, which has full-time citywide sustainability managers and full-time sustainability coordinators in each bureau, and each bureau has to draft its own sustainability plan.

In response to the concerns of Metro's partners throughout the region, as well as to growing concern about climate change in the region and around the world, Councilors David Bragdon, Rex Burkholder, and Rod Park, with the help of council and departmental staff, have drafted a resolution to address the three sustainability-related issues outlined above:

- Metro's role as a convener in sustainability discussions
- The need for Metro to better coordinate and communicate programs and planning efforts that address sustainability issues
- The need for Metro to conserve energy, reduce waste, and save money in its own operations.

ANALYSIS/INFORMATION

1. Known Opposition

There is currently no organized opposition to the proposed resolution.

2. Legal Antecedents

Metro Council Goals: Many Metro Council Goals relate to this resolution, particularly the following:

- 2.2 Our community is inspired to create a better future for wildlife and the environment.
- 2.3 The region's waste stream is reduced, recovered and returned to productive use, and the remainder has a minimal impact on the environment.
- 2.4 Metro is a model for sustainable business practices.
- 2.5 Urban land is used efficiently and resource land is protected from urban encroachment.
- 3.4 Stable, affordable sources of energy, combined with energy conservation, position the region for sustained economic growth and stability.

Metro Council Resolution 03-3338: On May 22nd, 2003, the Metro Council passed Resolution 03-3338, "For the Purpose of Directing the Metro Chief Operating Officer to Establish a Sustainable Business Model for Metro Departments and Facilities and to Undertake Related Duties," directing the Chief Operating Officer to establish a sustainable business model for Metro departments. In 2007, ENACT hired AXIS Performance to assist in creating an action plan for implementing this resolution, and AXIS recommended that Metro hire a sustainability coordinator.

Oregon House Bill 3543: In 2007, the Oregon legislature passed HB 3543, which mandates reductions in emissions of 10 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and 75 percent below 1990 levels by 2050.

3. Anticipated Effects

If this resolution is adopted, the Chief Operating Officer and the Senior Management Team will have to create a work plan for implementing the different tasks addressed by the resolution. This may include procedures for establishing a Metro sustainability standard for planning efforts; integrating sustainability into internal operations through evaluations, budget procedures, and the organization of ENACT and facility Green Teams; and establishing a committee and/or workgroup.

Over the long term, this resolution will help to integrate sustainability into Metro policies, plans, and operations. While this resolution may not have a substantial effect on the scope and implementation of Metro's sustainability-related projects and policies, it will refocus them around a single goal. This will help Metro adopt a coordinated, agency-wide approach to climate change, energy use, waste generation, and other sustainability-related issues, and to engage and assist partners across the region in addressing these issues.

4. Budget Impacts

There is a wide range of potential budget impacts depending upon what elements the council chooses to include in the final resolution and adopt in the workplan. In particular, one item in the resolution, convening staff and officials from around the Metro area to create a regional climate change action plan, is a more aggressive step that will require greater staff and financial commitment. While this would be an unprecedented effort and the budget would depend heavily upon the process, scope, and timetable of the project, the best basis for comparison in the region is Portland and Multnomah County's Local Action Plan on Global Warming, which has required a total of slightly more than 1.0 FTE during the years that it is being compiled or updated, culled from planners and analysts in different departments throughout the two agencies.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

The Council should adopt the resolution.