

Climate Emergency and Sustainability Proposed Ordinances 7/17/2024

Here are some ordinances that could be passed in a city or other jurisdiction that would go a long way towards increasing consciousness of environmental matters and start to begin the process of mitigation of global warming, environmental and spiritual sustainability, and healthy living (the following below is a work-in-progress that others are invited to add on to):

The following would require very little expenditure of money and can be implemented immediately:

1. Aggressive, continuing efforts to educate both the city staff and the public at large on the latest climate science; direct mailers to all city dwellers, sign posts and billboards throughout the city explaining the seriousness of the climate crisis and the need for concrete action by each and every person and details about what each person needs to start to do such as using less meat, plastics, and gasoline, getting on clean energy electricity plans, and so forth; local schools and colleges, city hall, and the libraries should have dedicated bulletin boards with information about the climate crisis;
2. Frequent and regular meetings for all people concerned about the climate hosted by the city or designated organizations with ability to affect the decision-making process in the committees and councils;
3. Purchasing renewable energy as whole municipalities/organizations (“municipal aggregation”);
4. Divestment of all city retirement funds from fossil fuels; and from all banks, insurance companies etc. that fund fossil fuel development;
5. Increase the pace of change through the committees and councils. We cannot afford to go through the normal process for each and every change that we need because of time constraints and the urgency of this crisis. We could work on a separate effort to invoke some sort of emergency process based on the fact that this is an emergency that would streamline the changes. That is after all one of the main reasons to declare that this is an emergency. Perhaps this would be an

ordinance change that would affect the normal rules and procedures of how new ordinances are passed in the jurisdiction?

6. No natural gas connections to new developments. Heat pump requirements (changes to building codes, city ordinances, and permitting processes so as to prevent the construction of new local fossil fuel infrastructure; and improvement to energy efficiency). Start a “phase-out” of existing natural gas infrastructure over 2 years: start a mandated turning off natural gas to stoves and forcing people to buy electric cooktops and electric ovens and electric heat (with subsidies or exemptions based on need for those who can’t afford this);
7. Taking effective measures to protect existing acres and bodies of water that are still in a natural state (banning development that would destroy wetlands, streams, and rivers) (restricting development to already built-upon land);
8. Banning of plastic bags; and bottles, takeout food containers, plastic cutlery, straws (except for those with bad teeth); or increased taxes on such;
9. Replacement of existing modes of public transportation (or mandates on new vehicles) with electric vehicles and aggressive promotion of the use of public transportation; no charge public transit, EV chargers where ever possible and provisions for EV chargers in all new buildings;
10. Mandating that every restaurant would have to have at least 3 vegan complete meal dishes that are fully advertised on all of their menus (demand more vegan choices in restaurants);
11. Mandating the placement of recycling bins where ever there is also a garbage can in businesses; composting bins for households and commercial food establishments;
12. Banning use of pesticides and herbicides on public property and properties owned by municipalities and public organizations;
13. Increasing taxes on meat;

14. Increasing taxes on oil for factories;
15. No more lights outdoors that waste energy or in indoor spaces that nobody is using such as hallways; motion activated lights; outdoor lights need to be mandated to be on timers so that they are off during daylight hours with fines given for outdoor lights that are on during daylight hours;
16. All public officials and city workers could be mandated to give monthly reports on what they are doing to reduce their carbon footprint;
17. Mandated classes or educational programs in public schools educating school children about the climate crisis;
18. Banning of BPA's;
19. Banning the use of paper labels on plastic packaging (which makes recycling more difficult or impossible);
20. Mandating that all packaging material used by all manufacturers going forward is recyclable;
21. Banning of gas-powered leaf blowers;
22. Eventual replacement of gas-powered snow blowers and lawn mowers with electric ones with a schedule that ends in eventual banning of gas-powered snow blowers and leaf blowers and complete replacement with electric ones (which can be powered by renewable energy);
23. Mandating that any new construction of pavements in parking lots, plazas, walkways, and driveways must be done using permeable pavement materials;
24. Fines for throwing out stuff that is not really trash. This will encourage reusability of stuff and prevent unnecessary creation of more waste;
25. Mandating that every new gas station have an equal number of electric vehicle chargers as gas pumps and that every old gas station start

phasing in electric vehicle chargers until there are an equal number of chargers as gas pumps over a period of 3 years;

26. Mandating that apartment buildings start to put in electric chargers of all varieties and AC outlets (for additional EV owners to plug in their own chargers) in their garages;
27. Mandating that apartment buildings transition to handicap accessible, and that new apartment buildings are built handicap accessible;
28. New ordinance for No-Tear Downs and a reform to the No-Vacancy (Uninhabitable) Tax Breaks (developers can't just tear down a building and leave a vacant lot, reaping a tax break for an empty lot, and not have any redevelopment plan);
29. Mandating that all apartment buildings and condos bigger than 3 floors have fire escapes, so that in the event of a fire, people have an escape route;
30. Sustainability matrix point system to guide sustainable building development including incentives and disincentives for various building features in line with sustainable development (see Edgewater Environmental Coalition's plan at [this link](#));
31. All businesses must allow free use of bathrooms to the public, when they are in working order (knowing full well that if they are not provided, people will "use the bathroom" in harder to clean places);
32. An ordinance that mandates that all new construction in buildings that use permanently installed air conditioners to also have a heat pump heating function;
33. An ordinance that mandates that when defective air conditioning equipment is being replaced that they must be installed also with a heat pump heating function;
34. An ordinance that mandates that when defective natural gas furnaces or water heaters are being replaced that they must be replaced by electric heat;

35. Mandating that restaurants must get their food only from local grocery stores;

The following items will help with spiritual sustainability, keeping our communities healthy, vibrant and strong and resistant to stagnation, corruption, and disease:

36. Forming a committee to re-evaluate all criminal and custody cases decided by previous judges and determining whether to shorten certain sentences or decisions based on the fact that we are losing people of strength and character due to arbitrary decisions made by disgruntled judges. Also, the ability for incarcerated people to appeal to this committee up to three times to have their cases re-evaluated to see if certain sentences can be shortened;

37. The banning of loud beeping noises from the backing up or parking of vehicles. This noise destroys the peace of mind of people living in residential neighborhoods and is not worth the safety deterrent from people who should already be vigilant about where they are walking. The sound of backing up of trucks, especially in areas with heavy construction, is a menace to the stability, sanity, and spiritual health of the people.

The following items require a little more money:

38. The replacement of all lead water pipes with more safe and healthy water pipes. This is solely for the health of the people, but the people need to be healthy in order to enjoy a truly sustainable society;

39. Solar panels on government buildings;

40. Promoting the establishment of “green roofs” on large, flat-roofed buildings; or solar cells;

41. “rewild” acreage that has been developed but has fallen out of use;

42. Starting aggressive, large tree-planting projects;

43. Replacing lawns with natural prairies and pollinator gardens;

44. Aggressive promotion of the use of renewable energy coupled with phasing out of fossil fuel use and drastic reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by the city itself and promulgation of ordinances that require the same sorts of efforts from both private businesses and residences. To implement such a policy, the jurisdiction would have to investigate ways to raise funds to assist companies and individuals to make the necessary changes; however, changes made today will pay for themselves tomorrow in energy cost savings, as well as avoidance of an inevitable 11th hour crunch which could easily require spending more money in way less time; this resolution and its education components would greatly help with this process;

45. Continuing the improvement of roads for use by bicyclists;

46. Implementation of climate-adaptive land use planning;

47. Requiring greenhouse gas and co-pollutant impact, reduction and drawdown statements in all relevant jurisdiction motions (as is required for fiscal impact--assuming so required) and permitting processes;

48. Establishing a climate emergency department to oversee the citywide mobilization effort;

49. Fountains should be put on timers to prevent the wasting of our most prized and needed resource water. We all see this: too much fountains on in the rain and being ran at night;

50. All fast-food businesses should be held responsible for having separate paper, plastic, and food waste bins.

51. Making a practice of having a recycling bin wherever there is also a normal trash bin on city sidewalks and corners. This will get people more into the practice of everyday recycling, which becomes more and more important as recycling practices become more effective.