

**COUNCIL ACTION FORM**

**SUBJECT: COOL CITIES INITIATIVE – CARBON FOOTPRINT  
REDUCTION GOAL**

**BACKGROUND:**

Phase 1 of the Cool Cities Agreement calls for the City to develop a baseline carbon footprint from all City operations. This baseline data was presented to the City Council in February 2008. It should be remembered that since sufficient data is not available to determine CO<sub>2</sub> levels in 1990 (as suggested in the Cool Cities Agreement), the Council has agreed to rely on an average of the past 6 years of data that is available to establish our baseline. This baseline was developed using consumption data for the sectors referred to as buildings, fleets, and street lights for City operations, and for the various utilities that we operate.

Baseline CO<sub>2</sub> Greenhouse Gas Emissions from City Operations

|                     |                   |
|---------------------|-------------------|
| Buildings           | 4,873 Tons        |
| Fleet               | 4,682 Tons        |
| <u>Streetlights</u> | <u>3,797 Tons</u> |
| TOTAL               | 13,352 Tons       |

Baseline Greenhouse Gas Emissions from City-Owned Utilities

|                         |              |
|-------------------------|--------------|
| Resource Recovery Plant | 2,940 Tons   |
| Water Plant             | 4,057 Tons   |
| WPC Plant               | 3,733 Tons   |
| Electric Plant          | 829,000 Tons |

Phase 2 of the Cool City Agreement urges the City to adopt a carbon footprint reduction goal and to set the target time frame in which to meet this goal. The U.S. Mayors Agreement recommends a 7% reduction of carbon emissions, based on 1990 data, by year 2012.

Staff has assembled a list of projects, changes in operations, changes in energy sources, and other tasks or investments targeted at reducing energy consumption. These efforts involve operational changes and capital investments, and the individual operating departments will be inserting these items in their budgets over the next five years.

## **ALTERNATIVES:**

1. The City Council can establish a goal to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> levels in City operations by 15% by 2014. This allows us to schedule any "investments" needed to accomplish this reduction in our five-year Capital Improvements Plan.
2. The City Council can establish a goal to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> levels in City operations by 7% by 2012 as suggested by the Cool Cities Agreement.
3. The City Council can establish a goal to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> levels in City operations by some other percentage and/or by some other year than offered in Alternatives 1 and 2.

## **CITY MANAGER'S RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

It appears that many communities throughout the country are establishing more significant carbon reduction goals with longer timeframes. We believe that a smaller interim goal with a shorter time horizon will encourage the City not to put off action until a later date. We also believe that the City should be more aggressive than is being suggested by the Cool Cities Agreement in terms of reducing our carbon emissions for City operations. **Therefore, it is the recommendation of the City Manager that the City Council accept Alternative #1 and establish a goal to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> levels in City operations by 15% by 2014.**

The City Council should remember that the first task as it relates to the Cool Cities Agreement was to focus our efforts on our internal operations. The action taken in support of Alternative #1 will bring us a step closer to accomplishing this task. However, in order to establish reduction goals as they relate to our Electric, Water, Water Pollution Control, and Resource Recovery utilities, this effort must be broadened beyond our internal operations to the demand for these services by our utility customers. Until this happens, it might be premature to establish goals for our utilities.

There are some actions that the Council can take to help accomplish its goals of reducing carbon emissions. For example, committing the Electric Utility to increase the use of alternative fuels by 10% will help. However, this action alone will only reduce the Electric Utility's overall carbon emissions by 3%. In order to have greater impact, the residential, commercial, and industrial segments of our community must also commit to take actions that will reduce the demand on our utilities to produce carbon emissions.

The recent AMOS public seminar was an excellent first step in educating our citizens about the importance of reducing this demand on our various utilities that produce carbon emissions. More education is needed so that hopefully voluntary actions will help reduce carbon emissions. If volunteer efforts from all of the segments of our community fail, the Council will need to decide if mandatory practices should be introduced.