

## **Ideas for the City of Gainesville to Consider Pursuing Regarding Energy Efficiency and Air Emission Reductions**

*Suggested by Pegeen Hanrahan from Thoughts and Discussions at the Sundance Summit, 2006*

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### **Our Own Facilities and Practices (and Those of Our Sister Local Governments)**

- Review the status of using LEED certification (or Green Globe or other appropriate standard) for city buildings and renovations.
- Benchmark energy usage in city buildings and create an inter-departmental or inter-building competition to reduce energy demand (review this on a basis that can be compared easily, like \$/year/sq ft. or KWhr/year/sq ft. "The Inter-departmental energy challenge." Suggest the County and School Board do the same (to be fair to those in older buildings, perhaps we should just measure the reduction in usage).
- Review whether there are lighting fixtures and/or appliances or other energy users that should be updated.
- Review polices for turning off lights, computers, etc. at the surge protector. Communicate good practices to employees.
- Review fleet policies including whether we should be using biofuels, alternative fuel vehicles, smaller vehicles and whether our fleet is "right sized" (The City of San Francisco reduced their overall fleet size by 1/3 after reviewing who really needed a car assigned every day and who could use a pool vehicle).
- Review water conservation programs within city buildings.
- Follow-up on offer from Austin Energy official to visit Gainesville and provide peer review for our energy efficiency programs.
- Look into add-on technologies to reduce emissions for older diesel buses. (There is a good contact person at FDEP on this, Marty Costello).
- Look into applicability of buying Tribal Wind Power.
- Review status of ICLEI commitment (Cities for Climate Protection Agreement) and US Conference of Mayors Resolution that the city has adopted and obtain an update on our progress. Coordinate our efforts (and possible membership in ICLEI) with Alachua County government.

### **Implementation Opportunities in the Community**

- Look at the city's lighting standards for buildings and streetlights and review them for energy efficiency. Should the standards be improved?
- Review our "fast track" permitting system for Green Buildings and see if it can be improved. Make sure it is user-friendly for all types of projects, including renovations.
- Make sure our requirements for solar permitting are encouraging use of that option, including use of solar pool heaters.
- Look at encouraging those with large, industrial facilities and appropriate roofs and other conditions to install solar arrays.

- Hold a "Summit" of energy innovation and environmental protection businesses and professionals in Gainesville and encourage their suggestions.
- Complete our urban trail system (esp. the Sixth Street Trail) and promote its use to reduce car trips.
- Hold a summit with the hotel industry to encourage use of fluorescent light bulbs, reducing hot water temperatures, and implementing other energy efficiency measures.
- Research the "Healthcare Without Harm" organization that focuses on greening hospitals, in association with Shands, North Florida Regional Medical Center, and the Veterans Administration.

### **Outreach to Our Citizens and Public Education**

- Develop (revive) a "Green Business" program to recognize businesses taking a leadership role in energy efficiency, climate protection and other environmental stewardship initiatives. (See the City of Austin's Green Leaf Award and Green Tree Award).
- Hold an annual awards program for businesses most deserving of recognition, and publicize winners.
- Get children involved. Have an art or essay competition on energy efficiency or climate change, and publicize winners. Consider appointing children (around 7<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> grade) to some city advisory boards. Consider appointing a "Junior City Commission."
- Establish a Climate Task Force for the city made up of respected leaders in business, the scientific community and the environmental community to convene for a limited timeframe to make specific recommendations (Similar to the Air Quality Commission).
- Consider holding a "Greening Gainesville" film festival at the Plaza and showing films and shorts on environmental topics, including HBO's "Too Hot to Handle," and the film ICLEI produced for the Sundance Channel. (Both are approved for showing for public education).
- Run these or other programs on Channel 12.
- List those businesses that have done energy efficiency retrofits on our city and/or GRU websites.
- Establish a feature on our website that allows people to input how many fluorescent bulbs they have installed, and tally the total pounds of CO2 reduced and the energy saved city-wide.
- Consider having a feature on our website that allows citizens to sign a "personal commitment" to reduce energy use. (See Salt Lake City's website).
- Review our recycling programs (both residential and commercial) and benchmark ourselves against other cities (some say they are now recycling nearly 70% of their wastestreams, including construction and demolition waste). Make suggestions on how we can continue to improve our recycling participation.
- Engage faith leaders and congregations on conservation and climate change issues.

## **Outreach to Sister Governments and Agencies**

- Contact our Sister Cities to find out what they are doing regarding global warming, and to share what we are doing.
- Work with the League of Cities, League of Mayors and Association of Counties to offer sessions on energy efficiency and climate change at upcoming annual meetings. Ultimately work toward a "Florida Summit on Energy Efficiency and Climate Change" to be held here in Gainesville.
- Suggest use of LEED certification (or similar) for library, county, and school board buildings and renovations.
- Hold an energy efficiency challenge with Tallahassee to see who can save the most energy and money (Mayor John Marks has already expressed tentative agreement for this and suggested we send a formal proposal).
- Contact Austin Energy to be sure we are signed up for the Plug in Partners Program (to encourage development of electric hybrid automobiles) not only for GRU but also for the City.
- Distribute information on what we are doing at League of Cities, Association of Counties, League of Mayors, etc.
- Look into state and federal policies on transferable energy efficiency tax credits and lobby to have them apply to public power organizations.

