

FCSG Comments on the Fort Collins Draft Energy Policy

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The Fort Collins Sustainability Group has reviewed the [draft Fort Collins Energy Policy](#) dated April 9, 2015. We fully endorse the policy's vision, which is to "To support Fort Collins' social, environmental and economic health through clean energy systems and efficient end-use consumption, with a long term goal of transitioning to energy systems free of fossil fuels." We are pleased to see multiple references to the 2015 Climate Action Plan (CAP) in the draft Energy Policy, along with support for the goals in that plan, which are to reduce community-wide greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions 20% by 2020 and 80% by 2030 compared to 2005 levels, and to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050.

As shown on page 5 of the draft Energy Policy, electricity generation is the main source of Fort Collins' GHG emissions. We are pleased to see that the annual electric energy savings target will increase from 1.5% in 2015, up to 1.75% in 2016-17, 2% in 2018-19, and 2.5% by 2020. These are among the most ambitious electric energy savings goals in the country.

The electric energy savings target adopted for the period 2009-14 was 1.5% per year. We are curious about the actual results for that time period, and would like to see those referenced in the 2015 Energy Policy. The residents of Fort Collins have a right to expect accountability from their municipal utility.

The other main contributors to Fort Collins' GHG emissions are the fuels used for ground travel (primarily gasoline and diesel) and natural gas (used mainly to heat buildings). We would like to see annual savings goals for these fuels through 2020, similar to those established for electricity. These should also support the CAP goal for 2020 of 20% GHG emissions reductions compared to 2005.

The City already has a number of programs and policies in place that could be strengthened in order to achieve the new electric energy savings targets, as well as savings targets for transportation fuels and natural gas. Those include ClimateWise, on-bill financing of energy improvements, rebates for energy improvements, and the public transit system. We would like to see these programs and policies – plus recommendations for enhancing them – included in the section titled "Implementation Principles" on page 10 of the draft Energy Policy.

The "Implementation Principles" section does include a list of "local and regional energy partners." We believe that list should be expanded to include community organizations, such as the Community for Sustainable Energy, the Fort Collins Bike Co-op, the Fort Collins Community Action Network, and the Fort Collins Sustainability Group. Those organizations – and the city residents behind them - have contributed a great deal to the progress the City has already made in implementing forward-thinking energy policies and practices.

Finally, the "Local Economic Health" section on page 11 of the draft Energy Policy mentions entrepreneurial activity and outside capital, but does not mention the creation of socially productive, intellectually stimulating, and well-paying jobs as a likely benefit of the transition to a clean energy economy. We believe that the draft Energy Policy should emphasize this benefit, along with emphasizing the importance of creating a good example for other communities to follow in pursuing their own transitions to a clean energy economy.