

## **FCSG Statement on Climate Action Plan and On-Bill Financing**

At its work session on October 28<sup>th</sup>, the Fort Collins City Council considered two items likely to have a significant impact on community-wide greenhouse gas emissions for years to come. The first item addressed strategies for the City's updated Climate Action Plan. The second addressed potential improvements to Fort Collins Utilities' On-bill Financing program.

A 23 member Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) has been working with City Staff, the Rocky Mountain Institute, and the Brendle Group since June of this year to develop strategies that would reduce community-wide greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions 20% below 2005 levels by 2020, 80% below 2005 by 2030, and 100% below 2005 by 2050 (carbon neutrality). Two members of the Fort Collins Sustainability Group (FCSG) serve on the CAC: one as our principal representative, another as an alternate. We fully support the efforts of the CAC to find a reasonable path toward an 80% reduction in community GHG emissions by 2030 and carbon neutrality by 2050.

We note that the annual GHG emissions reductions required from the present to meet the 2020 goal are significantly lower than the annual GHG emissions reductions required after 2020 to meet the 2030 goal. This stepped-up requirement for the period 2020 to 2030 is shown graphically on the first page of Attachment 1 to the Climate Action Plan Work Session Item. This path to the 2030 goal would put more GHGs into the atmosphere than a straight-line decrease from the present to the 2030 goal.

We believe that it would be better to plan for a straight-line decrease in GHG emissions to the 2030 goal, both because overall emissions would be lower and because steady progress – as opposed to accelerated progress after 2020 – is more likely to allow us to meet the 2030 target. We urged Council to direct the CAC to develop strategies that would take our community along this straight-line emissions reduction path to 2030. Council members Cuniff and Overbeck expressed support for this position during the work session on October 28<sup>th</sup>. A majority of council members have advocated for speedy action on reducing greenhouse gas emissions over the past year.

One promising strategy for achieving rapid GHG emissions reduction is an aggressive campaign to promote increased energy efficiency and the use of renewable technologies in the existing stock of residential buildings. A set of upgrades to the current on-bill financing pilot program was proposed by Fort Collins Utilities in the second work session item. These upgrades include improved loan terms and access to the program for both rental property owners and small businesses. We support these changes, and encouraged Council to direct Fort Collins Utilities to plan for implementing those changes in the first quarter of 2015. Council members asked the Utilities Department to continue moving forward with the proposed upgrades to the on-bill financing program, and referred the issue of loan terms to the City's Finance Committee during the work session.