

FCSG Statement on the IGA Related to an On-Campus Stadium

Statement posted on March 16, 2015

The Fort Collins Sustainability Group (FCSG) was pleased to see that there are multiple references to “carbon” and “climate” in the agenda item summary for the intergovernmental agreement (IGA) related to Colorado State University’s (CSU’s) proposed on-campus stadium. However, we were disappointed to find that only one of these references is in the IGA itself, and that the IGA does not actually require CSU to take any action on reducing the climate impact of the new stadium.

Specifically, section 6 of the IGA states that “... CSU, as part of a larger university goal, seeks to pursue a carbon neutral standard.” That’s the sole reference to carbon – or any presumed climate impact – in the document. In contrast, sections 3, 4, and 5 of the IGA include numerous references to financial commitments agreed to by CSU, in the areas of stadium event management, neighborhood relationships, and infrastructure improvements.

The City must do better than this. Just two weeks ago, members of council unanimously approved a new climate action plan, which commits the City to reducing its greenhouse gas emissions 80% with respect to 2005 levels by 2030, and to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050. CSU needs to be an active partner in achieving these ambitious goals: conceptually, in practice, and as major financial underwriter. For CSU to say that it will merely “seek to pursue a carbon neutral standard” relative to the new stadium is disappointing and woefully inadequate.

We note that the carbon emissions associated with the production of stadium building materials alone is substantial. Based on a study conducted by the governments of South Africa and Norway for the 2010 World Cup, we estimate those emissions to be approximately 100,000 metric tons of carbon dioxide, which is equivalent to a little over 4% of Fort Collins’ community-wide emissions in all of 2013.

The FCSG would like to see CSU commit – not only conceptually, but in actuality - to achieving carbon neutrality in building and operating any new stadium, including both direct carbon emissions and emissions embodied in construction materials. This commitment should be detailed in the IGA, similar to the way CSU’s financial commitments for items like utility and street upgrades are detailed. We strongly urge council to make this change before considering approval of the IGA.