

# Agenda Report

September 18, 2006

**TO:** City Council

**FROM:** Cynthia J. Kurtz  
City Manager

**SUBJECT:** MODIFY THE ROLE OF THE UTILITY ADVISORY COMMISSION INTO AN ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COMMISSION ADVISING THE CITY COUNCIL ON ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAMS CITYWIDE

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

It is recommended that the City Council:

1. Authorize the creation and establishment of a commission of the city to be known as the Environmental Advisory Commission in place of the Utility Advisory Commission; and
2. Direct the City Attorney to prepare an ordinance to amend the Pasadena Municipal Code to:
  - a. Create and establish a commission of the city to be known as the "Environmental Advisory Commission;"
  - b. Require that members of the Environmental Advisory Commission have qualifications that include: experience in at least one of the Urban Environmental Accords thematic areas or have professional experience in the environmental field; and
  - c. Adopt the purpose and function of the Environmental Advisory Commission as recommended in the agenda report.

**BACKGROUND:**

To advance the City's leadership role in addressing urban environmental matters, the Municipal Services Committee, at its meeting on August 16, 2006, recommended the replacement of the Utility Advisory Commission (UAC) with an Environmental Advisory Commission.

The UAC was formed in 1987 to advise the City Council on policy matters relating to the operation of the City's water and power utilities, including environmental issues specific to water and power. During the last 20 years, however, environmental policies affecting the City have become more complex and require the focus of a policy advisory body with a broader environmental

emphasis that will address a variety of environmental issues impacting the City. These include many items related to water and power, but go well beyond these two areas into the seven thematic areas of the Urban Environmental Accords (UEA) (Attachment 1).

The City's environmental efforts began in 1994 when the former Office of Environmental Affairs developed the City's Environmental Charter (Attachment 2). The charter was published in the City's conservation resource guide and calls for the City to be an environmental advocate and a leader in environmental compliance and protection. Recent actions in support of creating a sustainable future include the adoption of the Green Building Practices Ordinance in March 2006 that requires the design and construction of new buildings to be environmentally sound. In addition, the City Council is considering the endorsement of the United Nations Green Cities Declaration and UEA, a set of 21 actions for cities to take as first steps in addressing urban sustainability and providing a clean, healthy and safe environment for all members of society.

#### Commission Purpose and Function

The proposed Environmental Advisory Commission would advise the City Council and make policy recommendations in support of the goals and objectives of the City's Environmental Charter and advise the City Council on the seven thematic areas of the United Nations UEA:

1. Energy (renewable, efficiency, climate change);
2. Waste Reduction (zero waste, manufacturer and consumer responsibility);
3. Urban Design (green building, urban planning, revitalization);
4. Urban Nature (parks, habitat restoration, wildlife);
5. Transportation (public transportation, clean vehicles, reducing congestion);
6. Environmental Health (toxic reduction, healthy food systems, clean air); and
7. Water (access and efficiency, conservation, reduction).

Though several thematic areas are currently under the purview of other existing commissions, the Environmental Advisory Commission will consult and cooperate with other commissions and public agencies in carrying out their responsibilities and functions. In addition, the Commission would:

1. provide comment on the City's annual report demonstrating its progress and compliance to the adopted UEA Action Plan;

2. conduct outreach and education to the public, small businesses and industry regarding environmental concerns; and,
3. conduct any other activities directed by the City Council.

As an advisory group, the functions of the Environmental Advisory Commission will exclude oversight on daily administrative and operational activities of the City and issues not specifically assigned to the Commission, unless requested by the City Council. Environmental policies this Commission will advise on will relate to different city departments: Fire, Public Health, Planning and Development, Public Works, Transportation, Water and Power, and others as appropriate.

#### Environmental Advisory Commission Membership

Similar to other established commissions, it is proposed that the Environmental Advisory Commission be comprised of nine members who will be appointed as follows:

1. Each of the seven council members and the mayor will nominate one member for a total of eight members.
2. The mayor will nominate the remaining one member from persons recommended by the seven council members.
3. All appointments will be subject to ratification by the City Council.

#### Environmental Advisory Commission Member Qualifications

Members of the Environmental Advisory Commission shall be city residents and should have experience in at least one of the environmental thematic areas, which are proposed for review by this commission or have professional experience in the environmental field.

The Pasadena Municipal Code sets forth for other advisory commissions requirements related to attendance, election of officers, rules and regulations, annual report and disclosure requirements. Similar provisions would be appropriate for the Environmental Advisory Commission.

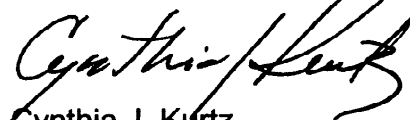
#### Staff Support

Water and Power Department staff will provide the administrative services to the Environmental Advisory Commission, such as agenda preparation and dissemination, and recording the minutes. The information and reports needed by the commission to carry out its responsibilities will be developed by various city department(s) based on the focus of the commission's activities.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

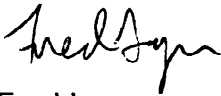
There would be no direct fiscal impact as a result of creating the proposed Environmental Advisory Commission in lieu of the existing UAC.

Respectfully submitted,



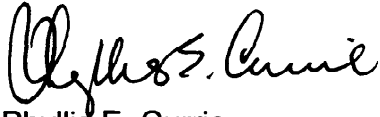
Cynthia J. Kurtz  
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# Urban Environmental Accords

Signed on the occasion of United Nations Environment Programme World Environment Day  
June 5th, 2005 in San Francisco, California

## GREEN CITIES DECLARATION

**RECOGNIZING** for the first time in history, the majority of the planet's population now lives in cities and that continued urbanization will result in one million people moving to cities each week, thus creating a new set of environmental challenges and opportunities; and

**BELIEVING** that as Mayors of cities around the globe, we have a unique opportunity to provide leadership to develop truly sustainable urban centers based on culturally and economically appropriate local actions; and

**RECALLING** that in 1945 the leaders of 50 nations gathered in San Francisco to develop and sign the Charter of the United Nations; and

**ACKNOWLEDGING** the importance of the obligations and spirit of the 1972 Stockholm Conference on the Human Environment, the 1992 Rio Earth Summit (UNCED), the 1996 Istanbul Conference on Human Settlements, the 2000 Millennium Development Goals, and the 2002 Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development, we see the Urban Environmental Accords described below as a synergistic extension of the efforts to advance sustainability, foster vibrant economies, promote social equity, and protect the planet's natural systems.

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED,** today on World Environment Day 2005 in San Francisco, we the signatory Mayors have come together to write a new chapter in the history of global cooperation. We commit to promote this collaborative platform and to build an ecologically sustainable, economically dynamic, and socially equitable future for our urban citizens; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that we call to action our fellow Mayors around the world to sign the Urban Environmental Accords and collaborate with us to implement the Accords; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that by signing these Urban Environmental Accords, we commit to encourage our City governments to adopt these Accords and commit our best efforts to achieve the Actions stated within. By implementing the Urban Environmental Accords, we aim to realize the right to a clean, healthy, and safe environment for all members of our society.

## IMPLEMENTATION & RECOGNITION

**THE 21 ACTIONS** that comprise the Urban Environmental Accords are organized by urban themes. They are proven first steps toward environmental sustainability. However, to achieve long-term sustainability, cities will have to progressively improve performance in all thematic areas.

Implementing the Urban Environmental Accords will require an open, transparent, and participatory dialogue between government, community groups, businesses, academic institutions, and other key partners. Accords implementation will benefit where decisions are made on the basis of a careful assessment of available alternatives using the best available science.

The call to action set forth in the Accords will most often result in cost savings as a result of diminished resource consumption and improvements in the health and general well-being of city residents. Implementation of the Accords can leverage each city's purchasing power to promote and even require responsible environmental, labor and human rights practices from vendors.

Between now and the World Environment Day 2012, cities shall work to implement as many of the 21 Actions as possible. The ability of cities to enact local environmental laws and policies differs greatly. However, the success of the Accords will ultimately be judged on the basis of actions taken. Therefore, the Accords can be implemented through programs and activities even where cities lack the requisite legislative authority to adopt laws.

The goal is for cities to pick three actions to adopt each year. In order to recognize the progress of cities to implement the Accords, a *City Green Star Program* shall be created.

At the end of the seven years a city that has implemented:

- 19 - 21 Actions shall be recognized as a *5 Star City*
- 15 - 18 Actions shall be recognized as a *4 Star City*
- 12 - 17 Actions shall be recognized as a *3 Star City*
- 8 - 11 Actions shall be recognized as a *2 Star City*

### ENERGY

*Renewable Energy · Energy Efficiency · Climate Change*

### WASTE REDUCTION

*Zero Waste · Manufacturer Responsibility · Consumer Responsibility*

### URBAN DESIGN

*Green Building · Urban Planning · Slums*

### URBAN NATURE

*Parks · Habitat Restoration · Wildlife*

### TRANSPORTATION

*Public Transportation · Clean Vehicles · Reducing Congestion*

### ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

*Toxics Reduction · Healthy Food Systems · Clean Air*

### WATER

*Water Access & Efficiency · Source Water Conservation · Waste Water Reduction*

#### ENERGY

*Action 1* Adopt and implement a policy to increase the use of renewable energy to meet ten per cent of the city's peak electric load within seven years.

*Action 2* Adopt and implement a policy to reduce the city's peak electric load by ten per cent within seven years through energy efficiency, shifting the timing of energy demands, and conservation measures.

*Action 3* Adopt a citywide greenhouse gas reduction plan that reduces the jurisdiction's emissions by twenty-five per cent by 2030, and which includes a system for accounting and auditing greenhouse gas emissions.

#### WASTE REDUCTION

*Action 4* Establish a policy to achieve zero waste to landfills and incinerators by 2040.

*Action 5* Adopt a citywide law that reduces the use of a disposable, toxic, or non-renewable product category by at least fifty percent in seven years.

*Action 6* Implement "user-friendly" recycling and composting programs, with the goal of reducing by twenty per cent per capita solid waste disposal to landfill and incineration in seven years.

#### URBAN DESIGN

*Action 7* Adopt a policy that mandates a green building rating system standard that applies to all new municipal buildings.

*Action 8* Adopt urban planning principles and practices that advance higher density, mixed use, walkable, bikeable and disabled-accessible neighborhoods which coordinate land use and transportation with open space systems for recreation and ecological restoration.

*Action 9* Adopt a policy or implement a program that creates environmentally beneficial jobs in slums and/or low-income neighborhoods.

#### URBAN NATURE

*Action 10* Ensure that there is an accessible public park or recreational open space within half-a-kilometer of every city resident by 2015.

*Action 11* Conduct an inventory of existing canopy coverage in the city; and, then establish a goal based on ecological and community considerations to plant and maintain canopy coverage in not less than fifty per cent of all available sidewalk planting sites.

*Action 12* Pass legislation that protects critical habitat corridors and other key habitat characteristics (e.g. water features, food-bearing plants, shelter for wildlife, use of native species, etc.) from unsustainable development.

#### TRANSPORTATION

*Action 13* Develop and implement a policy which expands affordable public transportation coverage to within half-a-kilometer of all city residents in ten years.

*Action 14* Pass a law or implement a program that eliminates leaded gasoline (where it is still used); phases down sulfur levels in diesel and gasoline fuels, concurrent with using advanced emission controls on all buses, taxis, and public fleets to reduce particulate matter and smog-forming emissions from those fleets by fifty per cent in seven years.

*Action 15* Implement a policy to reduce the percentage of commute trips by single occupancy vehicles by ten per cent in seven years.

#### ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

*Action 16* Every year, identify one product, chemical, or compound that is used within the city that represents the greatest risk to human health and adopt a law and provide incentives to reduce or eliminate its use by the municipal government.

*Action 17* Promote the public health and environmental benefits of supporting locally grown organic foods. Ensure that twenty per cent of all city facilities (including schools) serve locally grown and organic food within seven years.

*Action 18* Establish an Air Quality Index (AQI) to measure the level of air pollution and set the goal of reducing by ten per cent in seven years the number of days categorized in the AQI range as "unhealthy" or "hazardous."

#### WATER

*Action 19* Develop policies to increase adequate access to safe drinking water, aiming at access for all by 2015. For cities with potable water consumption greater than two liters per capita per day, adopt and implement policies to reduce consumption by ten per cent by 2015.

*Action 20* Protect the ecological integrity of the city's primary drinking water sources (i.e., aquifers, rivers, lakes, wetlands and associated ecosystems).

*Action 21* Adopt municipal wastewater management guidelines and reduce the volume of untreated wastewater discharges by ten per cent in seven years through the expanded use of recycled water and the implementation of a sustainable urban watershed planning process that includes participants of all affected communities and is based on sound economic, social, and environmental principles.

## **CITY OF PASADENA ENVIRONMENTAL CHARTER**

- *The City of Pasadena elects to be an environmental advocate and a leader in environmental compliance and protection. The City shall cultivate superior environmental standards that will provide for sustainable municipal development.*
- *The City recognizes that growth and opportunity cannot be conducted at the expense of environmental protection and enhancement, and that growth and environmental stewardship are intimately related.*
- *The City believes that the implementation of an environmental ethic need not interfere with economic development, and that practicing such environmental ethic can ultimately be expected to enhance economic affairs and provide for responsible, farsighted development.*
- *The City believes that the protection of the urban and natural environments is a social responsibility and a fundamental obligation of a democratic government, and that an ecologically impoverished and polluted environment adversely impacts human health.*
- *The City is striving to become a model for environmental excellence and a prevailing force in environmental protection. To accomplish these goals, the City shall establish policies that will incorporate environmental responsibility into its daily management of urban and industrial growth, education, energy and water use, air quality, transportation, waste reduction, economic development, and open space and natural habitats.*



# OBA, Inc.

*Share the Earth, Challenge a Child*

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September 12, 2006

Pasadena City Council  
117 E. Colorado Blvd 6<sup>th</sup> floor  
Pasadena, CA. 91109

Dear Councilmember:

What intelligent insight you and other council members are demonstrating by creating an environmental commission; as has been suggested by experts in the field, there is nothing more pressing than the careful maintenance of the environment that sustains our quality of life. I would also add that the key to a long term sustainable environment depends on the education of the next generation – today's youth.

A well appointed environmental commission can truly make the City of Pasadena a place folks come to for the "good life" and healthy living, and contrary to popular belief, a city where businesses will want to come. Just look at what Portland Oregon, and Santa Monica have become, much of it because of their environmental policies.

If it is indeed true, I am concerned about Altadena residents not being considered for a seat on the commission. I think this would be a great mistake for several reasons. The first being that environmental problems don't stay within city boundaries and what the City of Pasadena experiences will most likely be experienced by Altadena. It takes a collaborative effort to resolve environmental issues. Exclusion is the adversary of collaboration. The second reason I feel excluding Altadena from the commission would be a mistake is because of the extensive pool of environmental expertise that lives in Altadena. From scientists to professors of environmental science, Altadena is a rich resource pool for adding to an environmental commission.

In 1994 when I wrote the recently adopted City of Pasadena's Environmental Charter, I was told by many people, including the mayor at that time, that it was not the right time for such a proclamation. The time has come. Now is the time for an inclusive environmental commission.

Thank you for making this city such a wonderful place to live.

Respectfully yours,

Charles Thomas Jr.  
Executive Director

CITY CLERK  
CITY OF PASADENA

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