

# ENERGY PLAN COMMISSION

## ANNUAL SUMMARY – 2020

The Energy Planning Commission was created a little over a year ago in November of 2019. The commission's mandate was described to us by the Mayor of Duluth, Emily Larson to advise and recommend methods to help the city meet its aggressive Carbon reduction goals of 80% by 2050. Since the inception the committee has created and adopted its bylaws and seen the hiring of the Duluth Chief Sustainability officer, Mindy Granley.

Since the beginning of the EPC the commissioner have strived to better understand the energy needs and uses of the city. Alex Jackson, the city energy coordinator, has explained the city's greenhouse gas inventories, the energy usages of the city buildings as well as the city's water production and distribution infrastructure. We have also had several invited guests speak to us about building standards, the steam distribution system and well as from community energy activists on climate change, energy inequality and energy efficiency programs.

The committee is excited for the work that is to come over the next year. We will work to assist the city in adopt energy efficient building standards, a climate action work plan and the addition of new renewable energy production within the city limits. A more detailed list of the commission's work and plans for 2021 are broken out below.

# Detailed list of the Energy Planning Commission's Activities for 2020.

## Adopted Bylaws in June 2020

### Reviewed metrics the city uses to track progress

- GreenStep Cities - GreenCorps Kaija presentation
  - GHG inventory – clarifications and updates into ClearPath recommended
    - Projects to reduce GHG emissions
      - Examples:
        - Ariel lift bridge lighting updates – reduction by 73,000 kWh per year – savings of 10,000 dollars per year for the City
        - Upgrading outdoor lighting and 7 community center hockey rinks- 162,000 kWh per year- 128 kW in peak demand
        - MN-Dot EV preliminary application for a grant – selected to move to full grant proposal. Purchase 4 to 5 electric or electric-plugin vehicles. Leading with the fire department (providing in kind money)
        - VW money for level 2 chargers
- **Focus on City buildings as pathway for energy savings**
  - Briefed on energy/building projects from 2019 by Energy Coordinator. This revealed need for consistent standard for retrofits and building renovations.
  - Guest speaker: learned about building codes and efforts in other MN cities, from CEE (Megan Hoye)
    - Passed resolution for Duluth to work on energy internal standard
  - Staff recommended starting with an energy policy for city-funded projects, after researching policies around State.
    - Research revealed the need to base Duluth internal standard on an existing framework, such as B3 and/or ASHRAE green standards. The staff time/costs for various platforms are being researched now (cost for B3 review, or to access ASHRAE documents). This effort will need buy in from various departments.
- **Community connections**
  - EPC was briefed on **Duluth Citizens' Climate Action Plan** for individual action
    - We are aware that this is an avenue many residents are engaged in that attend EPC meetings and provide feedback to us.
  - Based on utility section information and resident requests, EPC requested to learn more about steam utility, scheduled Jan 2021

### **EPC is happy to see:**

- Energy Coordinator projects and progress to reduce energy use and carbon. Practical uses of the city's Energy Fund and impact on projects, like the Aerial Lift Bridge lighting project.
- Sustainability Officer work to leverage external resources for projects and pilot programs. Their efforts to coordinate future climate action work between City Departments.
- City's Construction Projects Supervisor nominated for a climate adaptation award, reflecting their efforts to incorporate climate mitigation and adaptation into decision making.
- Joined ICLIE- have a more standardized way of calculating emissions
- Renewed interest in Green Step Cities

### **EPC desires to see in future:**

- Adoption of sustainable buildings policy that will shift City building/renovation projects to meet a higher energy efficiency standard.
- We recommend that the city continue to support statewide action to raise energy efficiency standards in buildings.
- A climate action work plan created that prioritizes energy work for the City of Duluth
- Continued efforts to encourage renewable energy production within City limits.
- For greenhouse gas emission data to be obtained through an accepted GHG-protocol system (following IPCC guidelines) and for clear and concise annual summaries of emissions to be hosted on the City's sustainability website.