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Resolution Recommending Staff Resourcing for Community Energy Efficiency

At its February 2014 meeting, the Ann Arbor Energy Commission unanimously passed the following resolution originally drafted by the Environmental Commission, and subsequently passed by both Environmental Commission and Planning Commission, to provide resources for community-scale energy efficiency and the implementation of the Ann Arbor Climate Action Plan.

Requested by: Energy Commission
Drafted by: Environmental Commission

Whereas, The City of Ann Arbor has a longstanding commitment to energy conservation and efficiency, dating back to 1981 planning;

Whereas, The City of Ann Arbor recognizes the serious threat that climate change poses to the local environment, to our economy, and to our residents' long-term security, livelihoods, and quality of life;

Whereas, on December 17, 2012, The Ann Arbor City Council adopted the Ann Arbor Climate Action Plan (Resolution R-12-572) which identifies steps to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions to meet current short-term goals, and to set mid- and long-range targets for emissions reductions into the future;

Whereas, although the City of Ann Arbor has facilitated a number and type of non-motorized transportation options including bicycling and walking, more remains to be done to lower consumption of petroleum in our transportation sector and associated emissions;

Whereas, achieving the Climate Action Plan's adopted targets clearly requires active

participation from businesses and residents;

Whereas, the estimated \$250,000,000 our community spends per year on natural gas and electricity generated from primarily out-of-state carbon sources, leaves our local economy and produces GHG emissions;

Whereas, investing in energy efficiency in buildings has a direct economic benefit in the manufacturing and research and development sectors, and on the creation of service and installation jobs; indirect benefits that come from utility savings (energy audits in the Ann Arbor area demonstrate that 10 to 30 percent savings are achievable within a ten year ROI) produce a multiplier effect that increases investment in local goods and services;

Whereas, in 2011, Ann Arbor introduced a PACE program to help our community reach targets to reduce energy used by buildings and GHG emissions while stimulating economic development, improving property values and creating jobs. The first PACE bond was a \$540,000 direct investment in the local economy, purchased by a local bank, and helped four local businesses make energy improvements that will save \$50,000 and 325 metric tons of GHG emissions per year for a period that exceeds the ten-year assessment;

Whereas, more than 50% of Ann Arbor's housing units are rental properties whose residents, on average, have lower incomes than Ann Arbor's property owners. Energy efficiency improvements on these properties not only lower GHG emissions, but they counter the broadly regressive nature of energy costs that force low-income residents to pay a much larger proportion of their income on energy, while also providing more comfortable and affordable housing;

Whereas, the City of Ann Arbor has a real opportunity to provide a service to its residents and businesses to increase energy efficiency and reap associated benefits;

Whereas, City staff currently lacks the resources to properly and meaningfully expand PACE or to launch or oversee other energy efficiency and conservation programs that provide significant, wide-ranging economic and environmental benefit;

Whereas, City of Ann Arbor wishes to promote energy efficiency and conservation programs that support our local economy, reduce GHG emissions and the negative health effects associated with them, improve our property values and secure our standard of living and quality of life;

Whereas, The City Energy Office prior to February 2012 had two staff members working full-time;

Resolved, City of Ann Arbor Energy Commission recommends that the Ann Arbor City Council direct the City Administrator to restore the second position as an FTE (full time equivalent) to create and implement additional community energy efficiency, conservation, and renewable energy programs that further the Climate Action Plan's adopted targets, reduce our community GHG emissions, provide economic benefit to our community and help to preserve our quality of life.