

From: [Diane Meisenhelter](#)
To: [Council Clerk – Testimony](#)
Subject: testimony on Climate Emergency Progress Report
Date: Wednesday, July 28, 2021 12:56:59 PM

To: City Council

Re: Testimony on Climate Emergency Progress Report

Portland, Oregon, over the past year, has experienced the Climate Emergency in dramatic and tragic ways—including heat dome deaths and unprecedented fire seasons. The City is at risk of continued catastrophes from expanded fossil fuel infrastructures and uncontrolled GHG emissions rise. We agree with the Report’s emphasis on frontline communities’ vulnerabilities and the need for community involvement in policy development (we also encourage transparency and public education through published minutes and recordings of the Youth Summit, Climate Justice Initiative, Build/Shift workshops and the like). We look forward to promised decarbonization measures designed to reduce emissions. We need to see more concrete, measurable steps of 8 - 10% annual GHG emissions reductions, given scientists’ warnings about how much more rapidly global climate chaos is becoming evident and the unknown multiplier effects of tipping points and feedback loops. We no longer have the luxury of incrementalist planning without major courageous actions taken **annually within this decade**. Unfortunately a lot of the “progress” listed here are measures that **might** be implemented sometime in the future.

We appreciate that the City is looking for additional funding for responding to the Climate Emergency. General Fund priorities may need to change in order to avoid the future costs of dealing with catastrophes (train derailments and explosions, extreme weather events, etc.). The Report lacks any mention of Zenith Energy and the CEI Hub, including ongoing air pollution, risks of catastrophic accidents, and climate effects from burning tar sands and shale oil. The City promises to “advance initiatives led by the community” yet over 9,000 petition signatories, countless letters and phone calls, including from BIPOC organizations such as Portland NAACP, on denying the LUCS to Zenith have not resulted in a positive City response to something so central to many of the goals in this Report (non-expansion of fossil fuel infrastructure, decreased emissions, protecting communities from pollution and disaster, protecting endangered species). The City’s measures presented in this Report will in no way offset the huge climate costs of continuing Zenith operations.

While there is an emphasis on increasing EV charging stations and its own fleet, the City needs to play a much larger role in transportation-- pushing for the electrification of City busses and a moratorium on diesel busses which lock in fossil fuel consumption for decades. The proposed I-5 corridor widening must be strongly opposed. Climate leaders don’t widen freeways.

We are concerned about the lack of data on actual green house emission changes in the past year. There must be a “whole of government” approach, auditing carbon emissions and setting concrete goals for **all** city departments. Very relevant to the GHG emissions load of the city, for example, are: the airport, the Port of Portland, the police department and federal agent actions, industrial zones and big polluters. What about carbon dioxide equivalent taxes or other incentives for polluter compliance? How will the City make decisions weighing the “internal cost of carbon” going forward? Where is the City’s money invested? What monies should be divested from institutions fostering fossil fuels and reinvested elsewhere. Are we looking at other cities for best practices, such as Berkeley banning natural gas hookups on new construction?

Given heat dome deaths, extreme weather events, early fire season, the Portland Mercury report on

earthquakes and the CEI hub as well as flood potentials, the City needs more specifics and resources in terms of preparations for disaster relief, resilience, and recovery, but **more importantly** you must RIGHT NOW do all within your power to take bold courageous actions, such as stopping Zenith, to **prevent** actual disasters and lessen the root causes contributing to climate disasters in the first place. Otherwise, it really is like Council fiddling while Oregon burns.

Submitted by Extinction Rebellion PDX

From: [Kristin Edmark](#)
To: [Council Clerk – Testimony](#)
Subject: Climate Emergency Progress Report
Date: Wednesday, July 28, 2021 12:57:00 PM

My name is Kristin Edmark. My daughter-in-law's family lost a beloved home in the Oregon fires last summer. Climate is personal to more and more of us. Thank you for the chance to comment on Climate Emergency Progress Report.

The enormous "Elephant in the Room" not addressed in the Climate Emergency Progress Report is **Zenith Energy**. The only reference in the report I could find is: "**Clean industry leadership**. Reduce carbon emissions from Portland's industrial and institutional emitters, the largest source of emitters in the city." Instead, Zenith Energy has been allowed to expand. Yes, the facility releases hazardous chemicals to nearby neighborhoods. My son and family live in the nearby Overlook neighborhood. The risk of urban derailment is real. An earthquake rupturing the storage tanks would be a serious long-term disaster to the Willamette/Columbia wildlife.

Portland's Zenith storage and trans loading facility is part of the increasing fossil fuel infrastructure warming the planet. It makes no sense whatsoever to address the climate emergency without addressing **Portland's role promoting large and expanding amounts of fossil fuel burning**. Allowing Zenith Energy to continue to operate makes the report a farce. The greenhouse gas reductions in the report are dwarfed by the greenhouse gas emissions for which Portland is responsible by allowing Zenith to continue to operate. Renewable diesel also is burned to emit greenhouse gas and such facilities are notorious for transitioning to drilled oil sources once built and unsuccessful financially.

The climate crisis is real. It is impossible to make a meaningful Climate Emergency Progress Report while allowing the huge greenhouse gas promoter which is Zenith Energy.

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