

Brian Romer

#334667 | April 23, 2024

Testimony to on the **Sustainability & Climate Commission, Ordinance Draft**

My name is Brian Romer. I serve on the Community Involvement Committee for both the City of Portland and Multnomah County. The views expressed here are my own and not reflective of either Committee. I fully support forming the Sustainability & Climate Commission and want to see it approved and put in place immediately. Academic and scientific communities have successfully shown that the planet is warming due to human activities, Influencing the intensity and frequency of extreme environmental events such as forest fires, heat waves, floods, droughts, and storms. As the Department of Defense reported, the warming climate is a “threat multiplier,” aggravating the existing problems in society. Here in Portland, we’ve seen firsthand how such extreme events due have negatively impacts; 1) how we think and act towards others, increasing social tensions, crime, and violence 2) increasing health and energy costs for residents and businesses, and 3) making wildfire seasons and winter storms longer, costlier, and more lethal. Forming the Sustainability & Climate Commission will help address this predicament by developing and implementing critical social, economic, and environmental justice initiatives. The Commission utilizes a thoughtful and well-researched decision-making process, engages with a wide variety of stakeholders, and prioritizes the most impacted communities. Successfully implemented and supported by City Council, the Commission will help: 1) create jobs and new economic opportunities, 2) draw--and keep--talented people and businesses to Portland, 3) improve our children’s health and wellbeing, and 4) give us the tools we need to respond to future severe weather events more proactively. Many Portland communities rank environmental issues high on their list priorities. As the impacts of a rapidly heating world are increasingly felt in Portland, City Council must immediately approve the Sustainability & Climate Commission, sending a strong message of support not only to the people of our city, but to our state, country, and the world as well.

Testimony is presented without formatting.

Doug Klotz

#334679 | April 24, 2024

Testimony to on the **Sustainability & Climate Commission, Ordinance Draft**

I recognize that a lot of effort, staff and volunteer time went into the creation of the SCC. Many areas of concern that are affected by Climate Change are addressed. What I don't see is what I thought was basic: There is little to no mention of reducing carbon emissions! Portland cannot save the planet, but I am disappointed. Yes, the Climate Emergency Workplan has the carbon reduction goals, but little on how to achieve them. Since 40% of Portland emissions are from Transportation, one action that could help in a number of areas is allowing more dense housing development in many of our inner, high opportunity neighborhoods, such as the "Inner Eastside for All" plan that Portland: Neighbors Welcome is proposing. Compact development reduces Transportation carbon emissions, as it leads to more walking, biking and transit use. In addition, multifamily housing saves heating/ac energy, and higher housing density supports more local businesses, with more customers in close proximity. Ironically, such land use decisions will remain under Planning Commission's purview, but, given the makeup of the proposed CSC, the PC does seem the better choice for those decisions.

Testimony is presented without formatting.

Jennifer Kain

#334681 | April 24, 2024

Testimony to on the **Sustainability & Climate Commission, Ordinance Draft**

Dear Portland City Council and Mayor Wheeler, Thank you for proposing an ordinance to create a Sustainability & Climate Commission (SCC). Mitigating and reversing climate change in an equitable way is imperative and I would like to see the City of Portland prioritize climate, environmental justice, and sustainability across all Portland's bureaus, service areas, and programs. I urge you to pass this important ordinance . The SCC will be composed of 20 people from Portland with expertise in: Buildings and homes, Climate resiliency, Energy and renewable, Environmental justice and equity, Urban forest, natural systems, and carbon management, Urban form and transportation, and Waste prevention, recycling, and solid waste, as well as 4 youth representatives. Liaisons from City bureaus and service areas will also be involved in this commission, which will be housed under the City Administrator under the direction of the Chief Sustainability Officer. This placement is excellent so that those engaged in different climate and sustainability projects across City structures can effectively collaborate and communicate. I am hopeful that the SCC can help Portland achieve the important climate and sustainability goals we have already decided upon as a City, such as the Climate Action Plan and Climate Emergency Workplan, so that we can meet our essential emissions reductions goals. I look forward to your approval of this ordinance and the creation of the SCC. Portland has passed five Climate Action Plans since the year 2000, but implementation has been minimal; a strong Sustainability & Climate Commission can provide the expertise and focused attention to ensure implementation. The Climate Emergency Workplan (CEW) is in process but has only achieved 2% emissions reductions since 2020, when the goal is a 50% reduction in emissions by 2030. The SCC (led by strong climate and sustainability focused leadership) can bring together the staff of various bureaus and service areas, agencies, and levels of government to work together to more effectively implement the CEW. The Critical Energy Infrastructure (CEI) Hub endangers Portland every day due to the risk of fuel tank leakage into the air, water, or soil, rail transport of toxic and/or explosive materials through Portland neighborhoods, and as a major hazard in the event of a large Cascadia earthquake. This is not even to mention the risks and harms related to climate change due to the greenhouse gas emissions enabled by the fuels moving through the CEI hub. The SCC can work with Portland City Council and City employees to reduce and eliminate the toxic materials allowed to be stored and transported through the CEI Hub and to transition Portland's economy toward a just and sustainable future, without "greenwashed" false solutions. The City has struggled to create an effective and ecologically sound natural resources plan that can help protect our region's waterways and ecological health; the SCC can help bring a workable plan forward that will provide needed ecosystem services, enhancing public and

ecological health, and ensuring justice and equity are at the heart of the plan, with the feedback of communities that have borne the burden of past harms and should also be the first to benefit. Addressing equity concerns is key to climate justice. In the new governmental structure, we will need the four officers hired for equity, sustainability, engagement, and communications to collaborate well to ensure positive community engagement and that public concerns to protect the environment and climate are translated into effective policy and implementation. Acknowledging past harms and moving towards a just transition is critical to Portland's climate resiliency and adaptation so past inequalities are not just recreated in a "green" economy. I am thankful for the leadership at Portland City recognizing the need to address climate, environmental & equity concerns and the critical, time-sensitive nature of effectively addressing these issues in the next iteration of Portland City government. May collaboration, transparency & accountability to the public be the way forward from the shadows of Portland's past. Thank you, Jennifer Cho Kain

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Adam Heroux

#334690 | April 24, 2024

Testimony to on the **Sustainability & Climate Commission, Ordinance Draft**

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350PDX
3625 N. Mississippi Avenue
Portland, OR 97227
350pdx.org

April 24, 2024

Re: Support ordinance to create Sustainability & Climate Commission

Dear Mayor Wheeler and Portland City Council,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on behalf of 350PDX, a grassroots-based climate justice organization with a network of thousands of people in and around Portland who care about building a healthy and sustainable climate through justice and equitable means.

I am writing in support of the ordinance to create a Sustainability & Climate Commission (SCC; amend code chapter 3.33). I'm very excited to see this commission proposed and I look forward to it coming into existence next year. Placing the SCC in the city administrator's office under the direction of the chief sustainability officer is exactly where this commission needs to be located in the new city organizational structure. A commission comprised of 20 volunteers including subject area experts and youth, as well as liaisons from relevant City bureaus and service areas, will offer a good combination of expertise and awareness of community concerns. The work the SCC is tasked with doing will be useful for bringing together key staff and stakeholders to be able to coordinate and collaborate more effectively toward the City's climate and sustainability goals. That said, **this is a large undertaking that will need strong support from the mayor, the city administrator, cooperation from each bureau and service area, and the ability to direct funding toward achieving these goals.** With strong support from City leadership, the SCC can help us move past the following challenges around meeting our climate and sustainability targets.

While Portland has created many strong plans to address climate change and reduce emissions (including five Climate Action Plans since the year 2000 and a 2020 Climate Emergency Workplan that has only made incremental progress), it is more difficult to orchestrate implementation. This is largely due to a lack of funding dedicated to meeting climate and sustainability goals. The new Sustainability & Climate Commission can provide the expertise and focused attention to ensure implementation, but it will also need to be able to participate in budget conversations: **SCC members will need to be at the table as preliminary budgets are being discussed in order to help consider creative and cost-saving solutions that will also be sustainable.** Our City's economy will not be able to remain strong as our climate becomes less bearable: we must do everything in our power to mitigate and reverse climate change. **Pre-emptive, climate-friendly action is less expensive than reacting to climate tipping points.**

The SCC will also need to be able to **hold the City accountable for decisions it has made in the past or that it is considering that endanger public and ecological health and disrupt the climate.**

Building the climate justice movement.



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For example, the Critical Energy Infrastructure (CEI) hub endangers Portland every day due to the risk of tank leakage into the air, water, or soil, rail transport of toxic and/or explosive materials through Portland neighborhoods, and as a major hazard in the event of a large Cascadia earthquake. This is not even to mention the risks and harms related to climate change due to the greenhouse gas emissions enabled by the fuels moving through the CEI hub. The SCC can work with Portland City Council and City employees to reduce and eliminate the toxic materials allowed to be stored and transported through the CEI hub and to transition Portland's economy toward a just and sustainable future. This needs to include rejection of "renewable fuels" or "biofuels" that emit greenhouse gases, and therefore are false "solutions."

The City has struggled to create an effective and ecologically sound natural resources plan that can help protect our region's waterways and ecological health. The SCC can help bring a workable plan forward that will provide needed ecosystem services, enhancing public and ecological health, and ensuring justice and equity are at the heart of the plan, with the feedback of communities that have borne the burden of past harms and should also be the first to benefit.

Addressing equity concerns is key to climate justice. In the new governmental structure, we will need the four officers hired for equity, sustainability, engagement, and communications to collaborate well to ensure positive community engagement and that public concerns to protect the environment and climate in an equitable manner are translated into effective policy and implementation. Acknowledging past harms and moving towards a just transition is critical to Portland's climate resiliency and adaptation so past inequalities are not just recreated in a "green" economy.

Please support this ordinance for the creation of a Sustainability & Climate Commission. Although there are still details to be worked out as far as how this commission will achieve all the goals under its purview, it is an exciting step in the direction of a more collaborative and holistic approach to addressing Portland's climate and sustainability goals than is possible in the current government structure. I look forward to seeing this commission formed in 2025.

Sincerely,

Cherice Bock, PhD, Climate Policy Manager

Building the climate justice movement.

Cherice Bock

#334698 | April 26, 2024

Testimony to on the **Sustainability & Climate Commission, Ordinance Draft**

See attached comment.

Testimony is presented without formatting.

Portland City Council Meeting
Wednesday, April 24, 2024 - 2:00 p.m.
Verbal Testimony

	Agenda Item	Name
1	338	Brian Romer
2	338	Damon Motz-Storey
3	338	Jorge Sanchez Bautista
4	338	Jenny O'Connor
5	338	Cherice Bock