Minneapolis Climate Action Plan Kickoff Meeting: February 1, 2012
Climate Change Risks & Opportunities Feedback Exercise Responses

Over 100 people attended the Minneapolis Climate Action Plan kickoff meeting, held at the Minneapolis Central Library on February 1, 2012. At the end of the event, attendees were asked to answer two questions, using sticky notes they could place on the wall. The responses will be shared with members of Climate Action Plan working groups, who will draft recommendations for reducing community-wide emissions and waste.

The questions were:

- What do you think is the greatest risk posed by climate change to Minneapolis?
- What do you think is the greatest opportunity to address climate change in Minneapolis?

Included below are all the responses, transcribed from the sticky notes (verbatim in most cases). They have been organized into rough categories. Some may appear in more than one category.

Please visit www.minneapolismn.gov/sustainability/climate to learn more about the Climate Action Plan update process.

Buildings and Energy
Greatest risk:

- Don't let utilities off the hook: find ways to ensure Xcel provides more renewables (2014 Xcel refranchise opportunity)
- Population: more people = more energy use -- must be most efficient and use better, cleaner energy or we won't catch up
- Reducing energy and switching to less carbon based energy
- Interruption of electricity supply because of shut down of coal plants
- Lack of access to resources and capital for lower-to-mid income community members to afford changes in the personal built infrastructure (e.g. more fuel efficient vehicles or appliances and energy efficiency for homes)

Greatest opportunity:

- Help residents to voluntarily choose to become carbon neutral (reduce footprint, buy wind power, buy carbon offsets); have neighbors yards signs to say they are carbon neutral
- Each neighborhood having an anaerobic digester
- Solar panels on all south-facing roofs and flat roofs that are structurally sound (but people should still reduce energy use); close down coal/nuclear plants
- Amazing wind energy resources
- Increased energy efficiency of buildings in our city -- tighten the envelope, decrease our overall energy loads (low hanging fruit)

- Building energy efficiency and small scale renewable energy
- Increase clean renewable energy sources the city uses
- Changing the way we generate energy by negotiating a strong franchise agreement with Xcel Energy and Centerpoint Energy
- Building energy efficiency and lighting (lights left on for "safety" overnight and other lights left on issues)
- Minimize carbon emissions; creation of livable communities; increase greenery; energy efficient building; preserve and renovate buildings; allow for multi-modal transportation
- Energy efficiency (residential and commercial)
- Developing an economy based around distributed solar in the city
- Let's revamp the building codes for residential and then commercial buildings. By educating on the use of passive solar and air/heat exchange technologies, and proper insulation practices and materials, I know that our new buildings could consume far less energy (80%?). As we do this we gradually phase in tighter building codes. To my mind this is low-hanging fruit

Waste
Greatest risk:

- N/A

Greatest opportunity:

- Each neighborhood having an anaerobic digester
- Zero waste
- Can we get more recycling (hospitals, businesses) including organic waste collection/composting
- Encourage more biodegradable, disposable plates for restaurants, cafes, hospitals, etc. -- can you make biodiesel (and make money from it)? Using it for transportation?
- Methane has 70% more warming power than carbon dioxide and can impact climate change in decades, not centuries -- so banning land fills and increasing composting has to be an essential top priority
- Increase in residential and commercial composting

Transportation and Land Use
Greatest risk:

- Lack of access to resources and capital for lower-to-mid income community members to afford changes in the personal built infrastructure (e.g. more fuel efficient vehicles or appliances and energy efficiency for homes)

Greatest opportunity:

- Minneapolis was built as a walkable city: go back to walking as primary transport (e.g. Milwaukee Ave)
- Water transport & rail networks
- A car-free city with significantly more: frequent buses on bus only lanes; off-street bike paths and wider, safer bike lanes; need-based subsidized car transportation (eco-taxi) for seniors and those with special needs; Hourcar
- Encourage more biodegradable, disposable plates for restaurants, cafes, hospitals, etc. -- can you make biodiesel (and make money from it)? Using it for transportation?
- Learn to accept density at the neighborhood level, assuming it is designed with "green" components
- Make "Nice Ride" more available to all people: price it lower for less lengthy rental interval (e.g. consider $2.50 for 12 hours instead of $5.00 for 24 hours); find a way to allow cash use so those without credit cards can use it
- Massively expanding public transit and incentivizing its use
- Joint project/ability to address 2+ problems with 1 project. For example, stormwater mgmt & biking. See Portland, OR: extensive network of neighborhood greenways that include stormwater mgmt and traffic calming
- Consider the national/international renown that has come to MPLS in the bicycling community. High visibility achievements and innovative solutions coupled with seeking leadership can/should give the city confidence to aim high
- Greatest human impact to climate change is burning of fossil fuels. Therefore Minneapolis can improve public transit, bike trails and encourage carpooling/ride sharing
- Green jobs: located in MPLS, trained for in MPLS. Also, making the job itself green, meaning emphasis on low-energy use getting to/from the job (e.g. if job is creating energy efficient buildings, how to get to/from site most efficiently). In other words, we have to be green about going green -- deliver Peace Coffee by bike
- Minimize carbon emissions; creation of livable communities; increase greenery; energy efficient building; preserve and renovate buildings; allow for multi-modal transportation

Ecosystems, Water, and Agriculture
Greatest risk:

- Changes in local water quality of Mississippi River and other local waterways that shape and are shaped by our city
- Loss of the beautiful trees and plants
- Loss of the urban forest through storms and disease
- Food shortages
- 2010-2030: Economic loss from weather and crop failure; weather damage. 2030+: Climate refugees from southern US --> tremendous need placed on infrastructure. Also shifting climate species -- crops no longer tenable
- Disruption of commerce and water supply by massive flooding

- Water (includes all aspects: water vapor, water quality, precipitation, drought, etc.)
- Urban runoff, erosion, flash floods

Greatest opportunity:

- Excellent growing seasons (water capture, edible forest gardens)
- Educating the public about the earth system upon which they depend, and how their individual action/inactions impact it
- Current social climate (pro-eco climate) provides an opportunity for MN to brand itself as a steward of the Mississippi River and of the Midwestern ecosystem; build in-state pride, attract cool people to live here

Public Health
Greatest risk:

- Increased death and difficulty living on this planet
- Suggesting increased bike usage and energy use reductions will have impact on reducing tick-borne disease on par with improved treatment and vaccinations
- Health concerns
- Food shortages
- Warmer winters, more frequent freeze-thaw cycle in relation to infrastructure maintenance costs -- these rising costs will likely draw funds from equally important resources (health, etc.)
- Economic impact from cleaning up climate related emergencies (droughts, heat waves, tornadoes, floods) and the health care costs associated with such emergencies
- Survival and quality of life/stability of economy/end of nature
- Impact to our economy, our health and our way of life

Greatest opportunity:

- That public schools and all public and private agencies and institutions in the state have in place an action plan/respond mechanism (like fire drills, etc.) when severe weather, food shortage, power outages occur
- Game plan for those who suffer from heat stress
- Health risks
- To engage public in real need to decrease emissions because of threats to health and build their personal and community resilience to deal with changes already before us

General and Miscellaneous
Greatest risk:

- Increased death and difficulty living on this planet

- Lack of infrastructure, from city to state level, to create awareness on the reality of climate change, its effects and implications on public health, agriculture, etc.; and to educate the public, and create equitable access to information and response actions to marginalized communities, non-English speaking community members, and people with various abilities/disabilities
- Vicious cycle: distaste for MN climate (storms, tornadoes, bugs, heat) --> departure of people who can get jobs elsewhere --> decreased revenue --> less climate intervention --> back to beginning
- Burn up/chaos
- Inadequate community preparedness and enormous consequences for community. We need a resilience plan
- Nothing done to slow effect of climate change in region --> results in a non livable community
- Death, famine, war, and pestilence (and I'm an atheist)
- What she said ^^^. Death, famine, war, and pestilence. Funny, I'm an atheist too
- That the public at large will resist the reality of the occurrence of climate change and thus will resist participation in combating the effects of climate change
- Apathy
- Access to information/knowledge of the impacts of user behavior
- Lack or loss of funding to continue or grow the work
- Disruption of commerce and water supply by massive flooding
- Heat wave
- Scared of cost of doing sustainable actions, or citizen concern over cost
- Increased heat days
- Water (includes all aspects: water vapor, water quality, precipitation, drought, etc.)
- Population: more people = more energy use -- must be most efficient and use better, cleaner energy or we won't catch up
- Economic impact from cleaning up climate related emergencies (droughts, heat waves, tornadoes, floods) and the health care costs associated with such emergencies
- Spineless policy makers
- Loss of competitive position among peer cities in a globalizing world -- not being a leader does not just mean standing still. Complacency and inertia is not an option
- Impacts of extreme weather events on population and infrastructure (is this part of your plan?)
- Reducing energy and switching to less carbon based energy
- Survival and quality of life/stability of economy/end of nature
- Impact to our economy, our health and our way of life
- Not acting due to politics or budget
- Urban runoff, erosion, flash floods
- Extreme weather events
- Interruption of electricity supply because of shut down of coal plants

- Lack of access to resources and capital for lower-to-mid income community members to afford changes in the personal built infrastructure (e.g. more fuel efficient vehicles or appliances and energy efficiency for homes)

Greatest opportunity:

- Create structured finance (climate finance) for public finance of public services
- Opportunity for our people to become community again, to know each other, to eat healthy, to learn that life isn't about disposable crap, but to enjoy life
- Schools teaching basic skills (growing food, mending/making clothes, stewardship)
- Awareness of climate change and effects by all community members regardless of any perceived obstacles
- That public schools and all public and private agencies and institutions in the state have in place an action plan/respond mechanism (like fire drills, etc.) when severe weather, food shortage, power outages occur
- While funding lasts, push communication to all people, the use of media, weathermen, engagement of rich and poor communities because it will impact us all
- Offer specific actions for players within the community to work towards a common goal
- Implementation of some strategies can reduce City operating costs and help tight budgets
- Reduce the politics in climate change
- People are really thinking and planning, or starting to
- We have good leadership and community support
- Political will, community interest, and measurements systems
- Great, energetic people
- To engage public in real need to decrease emissions because of threats to health and build their personal and community resilience to deal with changes already before us
- Opportunity to create a roadmap for a resilient, 21st century city
- Open discussion on positive and negative impacts of possible city recommendations
- Bring lots of groups together towards the same goal (governmental, community, environmental, etc.)
- Increase clean renewable energy sources the city uses
- To lead the nation/region and become further recognized as a region that people will want to locate to; must publicize greatly all the great advances that are being made; work closely with Greater MSP
- Community involvement and increased interaction among residents
- Actually implementing aggressive strategies towards curbing climate change and GHG emissions
- To build neighborhood teams to work together and solve the CC

- It's time for us to be proactive and mindful about education. We can work with the legislature to require that climate change be taught in our science curriculum and that the social impact of this change be addressed as well. I've often heard the question asked, "What should we be teaching to prepare students for success in this century?" It seems to me that this understanding is crucial to our long term survival

Document updated February 10, 2012.