



March 25, 2009

Dear Stakeholder:

In 2005, I joined 140 mayors in identifying environmental sustainability as a critical factor for American cities. We signed the Climate Protection Agreement charging ourselves with implementing sustainability plans based on best global practices and reducing emissions seven percent by 2012.

With the generous support of the Kendeda Fund, last year my administration launched a parallel effort both inside and outside Atlanta city government: The Office of Sustainability is reforming city government operations, while Sustainable Atlanta, a private-sector team of consultants led by former Atlanta COO Lynnette Young, is developing public policy recommendations for sustainability improvements throughout the city.

Last week, the City of Atlanta released the first-ever report on greenhouse gases emitted by Atlanta city government. Also known as the "carbon footprint," the green house gas emissions were calculated with the help of a student-faculty team from the Georgia Institute of Technology. While the report reveals that the city's greenhouse gas emissions in 2007 came to 540 thousand metric tonnes, having conducted an inventory and committed to reducing emissions makes the City of Atlanta a leader in the state and region and well ahead of federal action on climate change. Knowing our carbon footprint provides a baseline to measure progress in Atlanta's sustainability efforts.

In the last year, sustainable practices being implemented in City Hall have generated a 20 percent drop in electricity use, with a forecast of more than \$135,000 in annual savings in operations. Part of this usage reduction is due to an awareness campaign dubbed "Power to Change," which encourages employees to make small behavioral changes that can make a large impact in energy savings over time. Also, buildings are being retrofitted with more efficient lighting, heating and air-conditioning controls are being reprogrammed, and the transition from incandescent traffic lights to LED traffic lights is reducing electricity use and costs.

Led by Director Mandy Schmitt, Atlanta's Office of Sustainability is directing the creation and improvement of programs that are reducing the city's greenhouse gas emissions, such as teleworking and compressed work week programs. Since 2008, Atlanta has made a deliberate effort to engage all city employees in greening operations and reducing cost through energy and water conservation, recycling, and commute alternatives.

The next step is to develop the Atlanta Climate Action Plan which will be the blueprint to guide all city departments so that all current and new initiatives are aligned with achieving the 2012 goal. Near-term objectives, which we are committed to achieve by the end of 2009 include:

1. 10 percent drop in energy use in general fund facilities through low/no-cost conservation measures yielding \$300,000 to \$500,000 in annual savings
2. Five percent drop in water use in general fund facilities
3. At least two renewable energy demonstration projects
4. Three percent drop in fossil fuels used by municipal fleet yielding \$267,000 in annual savings
5. 10 percent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions in general fund facilities

Determining Atlanta's municipal carbon footprint coincides with the release of the inaugural sustainability report for Atlanta. Produced by Sustainable Atlanta, the report compiles readily available data to create benchmarks for measuring Atlanta's sustainability efforts. The report also provides best practices, context, proposed strategies and action in the areas of water; energy and climate change; parks and greenspace; and recycling and materials management.

In closing, I ask you to join the City of Atlanta and participate in **Earth Hour. On Saturday, March 28, 2009**, we will be joining individuals, businesses, and other government entities around the world in turning off all non-essential lights from **8:30 – 9:30 p.m.** local time in a bold statement in support for action on climate change. The goal of the event is to raise awareness of climate change and demonstrate how by doing one small thing---like turning off the lights---we can all make a positive impact in fighting climate change. I am proud to report that over 500 major landmark buildings in Atlanta will be going dark in honor of the event. More information about Earth Hour can be found at [www.EarthHourUS.org](http://www.EarthHourUS.org).

Sincerely,

Shirley Franklin

To download the municipal carbon footprint report, please visit [www.atlantaga.gov](http://www.atlantaga.gov). For the Sustainable Atlanta's annual report, please visit [www.sustainableatlanta.org](http://www.sustainableatlanta.org).