

Goal 6 Air, Water, and Land Resources Quality

□ Section 1, Air Resources Quality

BACKGROUND

Statewide Planning Goal 6: Air, Water and Land Resources Quality

“To maintain and improve the quality of the air, water and land resources of the state.”

Statewide Planning Goal 6 requires communities to develop plans and implementing measures so that waste and process discharges from existing and future development do not threaten to violate, nor violate, applicable state or federal environmental statutes, rules and standards. With respect to the air, water and land resources of the applicable air sheds and river basins described or included in state environmental quality statutes, rules, standards and implementation plans, such discharges shall not 1) exceed the carrying capacity of such resources, considering long range needs; 2) degrade such resources; or, 3) threaten the availability of such resources.

Air pollution is both a regional and local problem. Lake Oswego and the rest of the Portland Metropolitan Region are part of the Willamette Valley air-shed which is influenced by the topography and climate of the Willamette Valley basin and the concentration of human activities in the metro area which emit air contaminants. Air pollutants which affect Lake Oswego and the rest of the Metropolitan area originate from three broad categories: 1) point sources which emit large volumes of pollutants from specific locations such as industrial sites; 2) area sources which discharge small levels of pollutants from numerous sites, such as woodstoves, garden equipment, solvents and backyard burning; and, 3) mobile sources, which are predominately automobiles.

Under the authority of the Federal Clean Air Act, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has established national ambient air quality standards for six classes of pollutants: ozone, carbon monoxide, nitrogen oxides, sulfur dioxide, fine particulate matter and lead. The Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) is responsible for monitoring and enforcing these standards and is also responsible for monitoring and regulating pollutants which are either known or probable human carcinogens. DEQ has a coordinated review system to enable local jurisdictions to review air discharge permits to determine compliance with local plans and ordinances.

The Willamette Valley is prone to prolonged periods of poor ventilation because physical and climatic conditions retard the dispersal of air pollutants. The Coast Range and Cascade Mountains confine air movement, and westerly winds are not generally strong enough to disperse pollution eastward. In the winter, surface cold air creates temperature inversions that reduce air mixing near ground level, resulting in high concentrations of carbon monoxide. Pollution problems also occur in the summer and early fall when winds are light and variable, coinciding with high concentrations of suspended particulates and ozone.

Goal 6 Air, Water, and Land Resources Quality

□ Section 1, Air Resources Quality

The air-shed in the Portland Metropolitan Region is a finite resource. Air pollution is growing in the region due to increased vehicle use, growing industrial activity, and increases in the number of area sources associated with a growing population. The region was designated by DEQ in 1991 as not meeting Federal Clean Air Act standards for ground level ozone and carbon monoxide. These pollutants are produced primarily by automobile emissions. Unless increasing air pollution is brought under control within the next five to ten years, mandated control programs will be enforced by the Department of Environmental Quality. In addition to environmental well-being, uncontrolled air pollution would significantly impact the region's economy.

The region's existing and future anticipated air quality problems are being addressed in the following ways.

- Planning for the regional transportation system is required by DEQ to conform to air quality standards. Prior to the construction of new roads, the impacts that additional automobile travel will have on the regional air-shed's "emission's budget" must be evaluated. Mass transit alternative travel modes are being promoted to reduce congestion and dependency on the private automobile.
- Mandatory motor vehicle emission tests are required for all automobiles less than twenty years old.
- The Oregon Transportation Planning Rule (OAR 660-12) requires vehicle miles traveled (VMT) to be maintained to the year 2005 and reduced by 10% by 2015. Also, jurisdictions are obliged to amend land use regulations to encourage alternative transportation modes; such as bicycling, walking and transit by November, 1993.
- The 1992-93 Oregon Legislature adopted legislation which enacted ORS 468 A.363 which will implement the following:
 - a. Emission standards for the sale of new gasoline powered lawn and garden equipment;
 - b. Improvements in the Portland area vehicle inspection program including more extensive testing and expanded boundaries;
 - c. Maximum parking space limits for new construction to result in a reduction of less vehicle trips;
 - d. Elimination of the 20 year old vehicle rolling emissions exception;
 - e. Bicycle, pedestrian and transit friendly land use patterns; and,
 - f. A mandatory employer trip reduction program whereby employers with more than fifty employees would be required to submit plans for reducing commute trips.

Goal 6 Air, Water, and Land Resources Quality

□ Section 1, Air Resources Quality

Summary of Major Issues

The following are some of the issues and changed circumstances and conditions which were considered in the update of this element of the Comprehensive Plan.

- The Portland Metropolitan Region was declared a non-attainment area for ground level ozone and carbon monoxide in 1991.
- Anticipated growth in population and traffic is expected to cause the region to exceed the ozone standard after the mid 1990's unless further measures are taken to reduce emissions.
- Air quality is a complex regional problem which must be addressed by the region's governments, business community and individual citizens.
- The Oregon Legislature adopted a number of specific measures to reduce air pollution in the region.

GOALS, POLICIES AND RECOMMENDED ACTION MEASURES

GOAL

Reduce air pollution and improve air quality in Lake Oswego and the Portland Metropolitan Area.

POLICIES

1. Cooperate with federal, state and regional agencies to meet the air quality standards of the Federal Clean Air Act.
2. Ensure commercial and industrial developments comply with all required state and federal air quality regulations and mitigate the impacts of air pollution through design and abatement measures.
3. Preserve and enhance the City's open space and natural resources to sustain their positive contribution to air quality.

Goal 6 Air, Water, and Land Resources Quality

□ Section 1, Air Resources Quality

4. Increase the opportunity to use alternative transportation as a means to reduce air pollution by:
 - a. Requiring safe and comfortable pedestrian and bicycle pathways as part of all new street construction projects, where feasible;
 - b. Ensuring new street projects accommodate existing and future transit requirements;
 - c. Requiring the design of new development to be supportive of pedestrian, transit and bicycle users;
 - d. Requiring payment of a systems development charge to be applied to the City's pedestrian and bicycle path system;
 - e. Providing appropriate pedestrian and bicycle facilities as part of new park projects; and,
 - f. Maintaining an ongoing program to build and maintain pedestrian and bicycle paths.
5. Encourage land use patterns which, while reducing dependency on the automobile, are also compatible with existing neighborhoods.
6. Reduce air pollution associated with municipal operations.
7. Reduce congestion and delay on major streets to lessen localized pollution impacts of automobile travel through methods such as signal timing, access management, intersection improvements, etc.

RECOMMENDED ACTION MEASURES

- i. Reduce the local effects of air pollution by requiring commercial and industrial development to undertake measures such as:
 - a. Locating discharge sources where impacts can be minimized;
 - b. Utilizing state of the art abatement equipment and processing technology; and,
 - c. Planting trees and other plant materials on the development site.
- ii. Ensure that industrial and commercial development with the potential for air pollution is reviewed by the Department of Environmental Quality to determine impacts on local and regional air quality.
- iii. Implement measures to reduce air pollution associated with City operations, such as utilizing lesser or non-polluting fuels in city vehicles, replacing chlorinated fluorocarbons in air conditioners and limiting the application of chemicals as part of grounds maintenance activities.

Goal 6 Air, Water, and Land Resources Quality

□ Section 1, Air Resources Quality

- iv. Work with Metro and DEQ to provide information on regional air shed characteristics and air quality regulations to new and expanding industry.
- v. Promote public education to communicate ways that individual action can reduce air pollution, such as limiting use of automobiles, wood burning stoves and fireplaces, outboard motors and gasoline powered lawn and garden equipment.
- vi. Reduce air pollution by decreasing the need for vehicle trips through:
 - a. Promoting pedestrian, bike and transit friendly land uses, including high density mixed use developments that are compatible with existing neighborhoods;
 - b. Implementing the Oregon Transportation Planning Rule;
 - c. Establishing limits on the number of new parking spaces within commercial and industrial zones;
 - d. Providing opportunities to utilize alternative transportation modes; and,
 - e. Encouraging employers, including the City of Lake Oswego, to implement programs to reduce single occupant trips to and from work.
- vii. Encourage the preservation and planting of trees to improve air quality.

Goal 6 Air, Water, and Land Resources Quality

Section 1, Air Resources Quality

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