

## STAFF REPORT

**DATE:** November 20, 2019  
**TO:** Summit County Council  
**FROM:** Lisa Yoder, Sustainability Program Manager



**SUBJECT:** Review and possible adoption of Resolution 2019-29 Establishing Renewable Energy and Emissions Reduction Goals for Summit County

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*This staff report accompanies redlined amendments to Resolution 2017-16 ([Exhibit A](#)) that change the renewable energy target date from 2032 to 2030 so that Summit County can participate in the Community Renewable Energy program that was made possible, in part, by Summit County's involvement in the passage of HB411, The Community Renewable Energy Act (2019).*

**Goal of Work Session:** Review and approve Resolution 2019-29, A Resolution Establishing Renewable Energy and Emissions Reduction Goals for Summit County ([Exhibit B](#)).

## BACKGROUND

An extensive analysis of the impacts and benefits of a communitywide transition to net 100% renewable power was conducted by Summit County and neighboring municipalities in 2017. The Communities Renewable Energy Study concluded, "If communities replace standard-offer electricity service with 100% renewable energy, the costs for residents and business will be modestly higher. However, the benefits include dramatic reductions in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and criteria pollutant emissions, water savings, and economic development benefits to Utah." The report adds, "Benefits that were not quantified but are likely advantages offered by renewable electricity include maintaining stable electricity rates in the future and the hedge it provides against volatile natural gas prices."<sup>1</sup>

Provided with the results of the Communities Renewable Energy Study and driven by their commitment to environmental stewardship, Council approved and adopted Resolution 2017-16, A Resolution Establishing Renewable Energy and Emissions Reduction Goals for Summit County (Oct. 4, 2017). The Resolution states the following two goals:

1. Renewable Energy Goals: Summit County will implement strategies and policies to:
  - a. Transition to measured net 100% renewable electrical energy by 2032 for all of Summit County's government operations; goal includes 50% renewable electrical energy for Summit County government operations by 2025; and
  - b. Make renewable electrical energy obtainable, and adopted broadly, by all residents and businesses in Summit County by 2032.
  
2. Greenhouse Gas Emission Reduction Goals: Summit County will actively seek to:

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<sup>1</sup> Summit County, Communities Renewable Energy Study (April 25, 2017) Energy Strategies, LLC

- a. Reduce greenhouse gas emissions from County government operations by 80% below their 2016 level by 2040; and
- b. Implement strategies and policies to encourage the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions countywide by 80% below their 2014 level by 2050.

These goals, along with Council's input, have guided staff to collaborate with numerous stakeholders, policy makers, regulators and electric utility representatives to develop a pathway that will allow renewable electrical energy to be obtainable, and adopted broadly, by all residents and businesses in Utah communities by 2030. That collaboration resulted in the passage of HB-411, the Community Renewable Energy Act during the 2019 General Session.

In order to participate in the Community Renewable Energy program, Utah Code Section 54-17-903(2)(a) requires adoption of a resolution no later than December 31, 2019, that states a goal of achieving an amount equivalent to 100% of the annual electric energy supply for participating customers from a renewable energy resource by 2030.

To date, Cottonwood Heights, Holladay, Oakley, Kamas, Kearns, Moab, Park City, and Salt Lake City and Salt Lake County have passed resolutions to pursue renewable energy for their communities. The city of Francis is considering adopting a resolution Nov. 14. Staff has provided information to other cities upon request.

A simple amendment to Summit County's Resolution 2017-16 that changes the target date from 2032 to 2030 will allow Summit County to continue taking steps toward providing residents and businesses with a choice of standard offer electricity and renewable electrical energy.

#### **NEXT STEPS**

Following adoption of the Resolution 2019-29 several decision points remain for Council to continue to evaluate participation in the Community Renewable Energy Program:

1. Enter into an agreement with a qualified utility to pay for the costs of:
  - (a) third-party expenses to the Division of Public Utilities and the Public Service Commission for expertise and assistance with activities associated with initial approval of the community renewable energy program; and
  - (b) providing notice to the county's customers;
  - (c) determining the obligation for the payment of any termination charges if not paid by a participating customer and not included in participating customer rates; and
  - (d) identifying the replaced asset cost.
2. Obtain commission approval for the community renewable energy program.
3. Adopt a local ordinance within 90 days after the date of the commission order approving the Community Renewable Energy Program that establishes participation in the program consistent with the terms of the agreement entered into with the qualified utility and that comply with any other terms or conditions required by the commission.

#### **EXPECTED OUTCOMES**

If Summit County enters into an agreement with a qualified utility to pay the costs to pursue net 100% renewable energy for the community without impacting non-participating customers; and

If the Commission approves the Community Renewable Energy Program; and

If Summit County adopts an Ordinance to make renewable energy available to all Rocky Mountain Power customers within Summit County's jurisdiction, then...

***Summit County will achieve a huge milestone for residents and businesses: provide residents and businesses with the power to choose the type of power they want: renewable energy or standard utility-provided electricity.***

#### **CO-BENEFITS**

The Communities Renewable Energy Study<sup>2</sup> revealed the “co-benefits derived by Summit County choosing 100% renewable energy by 2032 include avoided CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, avoided SO<sub>2</sub> and NO<sub>x</sub> emissions, avoided water use, and economic impacts. Please refer to the study for a complete discussion of the co-benefits.

#### **SUMMARY**

Summit County participated in a ground-breaking collaboration with an electric utility, multiple stakeholders and the Utah State Legislature to provide a pathway for all residents and businesses in Summit County to easily obtain renewable energy and participate in the global energy transformation. A rapid transition to renewable energy is critical to help mitigate the most harmful impacts of climate change.

#### **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Approve Resolution 2019-29 as required to participate in the Community Renewable Energy program and take the next step toward providing net 100% renewable electrical energy to residents and businesses of Summit County by 2030.

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<sup>2</sup> Summit County, Communities Renewable Energy Study (April 25, 2017) Energy Strategies, LLC

EXHIBIT A

RESOLUTION # 2019-

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**A RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING RENEWABLE ENERGY AND EMISSIONS  
REDUCTION GOALS FOR SUMMIT COUNTY**

**WHEREAS**, Summit County is responsible to promote the public health, safety, and welfare of its residents, including access to clean air, clean water and a livable environment: and

**WHEREAS**, energy resources we utilize as a local government and community significantly impact public health, safety, and welfare, including the economic and social well-being of current and future residents: and

**WHEREAS**, there is unequivocal scientific consensus that human activity is significantly responsible for the continuing acceleration of a warming global climate, especially the combustion of fossil fuels that create greenhouse gases.

**WHEREAS**, Summit County is already feeling the local effects of a warming climate that threaten our environment, economy, and our residents' health, safety, welfare and overall quality of life, such as: shorter and warmer winters; wider variations in precipitation and snow pack; reduced stream flow and uncertainty about future water supplies; devastation to our forests as a result of drought, pests, and wild fires; and invasive species, disease vectors and other climate-related disruptions; and

**WHEREAS**, fossil-fuel based electricity generation cause about 30% of all greenhouse gas emissions in the incorporated and unincorporated areas of Summit County; and

**WHEREAS**, combustion of fossil fuels used in the transportation sector (air, rail, on-road and off-road vehicles) cause about 47% of all greenhouse gas emissions in the incorporated and unincorporated areas of Summit County; and

**WHEREAS**, because long-term consequences of energy derived from fossil-fuels will be devastating to Summit County and its agricultural, tourist and recreation-based economies and quality of life, it is critical that energy consumers and the utilities serving them work actively to reduce greenhouse gas emissions; and

**WHEREAS**, transforming our electrical energy supply to 100% renewable sources by 2030 is possible by combining renewable power generation with energy efficiency, energy storage, demand management; and

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**WHEREAS**, enhanced transit and transportation systems to reduce reliance on single occupancy vehicles, and transition to vehicles powered by alternative fuel sources is essential to reduce emissions attributable to the transportation sector; and

**WHEREAS**, in addition to mitigating climate impacts, such actions will provide a range of other community benefits including improved air quality, enhanced public health, increased

EXHIBIT A

national and energy security, local energy-efficiency and renewable energy related jobs, reduced reliance on finite resources, and myriad other positive outcomes; and

**WHEREAS**, Summit County is committed to transitioning from fossil-fuel energy sources in collaboration with like-minded regional cities and counties that have committed to pursue strategies and policies to promote and facilitate clean energy and carbon reduction actions and policies to curb climate change; and

**WHEREAS**, achieving Summit County’s climate goals will require the participation of individuals, governments, businesses and utilities; and Summit County recognizes the need to promote public awareness and education to its citizens concerning the environmental, health, economic, and societal benefits of pursuing a broad range of strategic measures including reducing reliance on and use of fossil-fuels, transitioning to clean energy sources to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and stop climate change; and

**WHEREAS**, access to the financial and environmental benefits of energy efficiency and renewable energy must be shared equitably across all economic classes; Summit County needs to seek strategies and equitable cost structures that protect low-income members of the community; and

**WHEREAS**, Summit County adopted a county-wide climate action plan in July 2015, which charts a course of collective actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the County; and

**WHEREAS**, Summit County continues to implement the strategies outlined in the County’s Climate Action Plan and to take other measures to support the Summit County Council’s environmental stewardship strategic goal to reduce the County’s contributions to greenhouse gas emissions and climate change; and

**WHEREAS**, in 2017, the Summit County Council reaffirmed environmental stewardship as one of its strategic effects.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the County Council of Summit County, Utah, that:

1. Renewable Energy Goals: Summit County will implement strategies and policies to:
  - a. Transition to measured net 100% renewable electrical energy by 2030 for all of Summit County’s government operations; goal includes 50% renewable electrical energy for Summit County government operations by 2025; and
  - b. Achieve an amount equivalent to 100% of the annual electric energy supply for participating customers from a renewable energy resource by 2030.Progress on these transitions, strategies and policies will be published biannually commencing in the first quarter of 2018.
2. Greenhouse Gas Emission Reduction Goals: Summit County will actively seek to:
  - a. Reduce greenhouse gas emissions from County government operations by 80% below their 2016 level by 2040; and
  - b. Implement strategies and policies to encourage the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions countywide by 80% below their 2014 level by 2050.

**Deleted:** 2032

**Deleted:** Make renewable electrical energy obtainable, and adopted broadly, by all residents and businesses in Summit County by 2032.

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The county operations emissions reductions will be measured against the 2016 county operations emissions inventory and published annually. Countywide emissions reductions will be measured against the 2014 community emissions baseline inventory, including emissions from energy use and transportation. Updated countywide greenhouse gas emissions inventories will be measured and published at least every five years commencing in the first quarter of 2020.

3. **Biennial Renewable Energy Enhancements and Emissions Reductions Plans.** In furtherance of Summit County's renewable energy promotion and carbon emissions reduction goals, on a biannual basis, Summit County staff will provide the Summit County Council with an updated renewable energy plan and a greenhouse gas reduction plan that will each contain proposed strategies to continue moving toward such goals during the ensuing two-year period, which will include (a) the proposed strategies to be implemented during such two-year period, (b) costs to be incurred by Summit County to implement such strategies, (c) costs that will be borne by Summit County residents if such strategies are implemented, and (d) the net greenhouse gas reductions that will be achieved by each such strategies.
4. **Emphasis on Energy Efficiency.** Summit County's initial preference for reducing greenhouse gases related to carbon based energy sources will be strategies and policies to increase energy efficiency. Accordingly, Summit County will pursue policies to increase energy efficiency in the public and private sectors through changes in Summit County's development codes, retrofits of existing buildings, incentives with respect to new developments and remodels, and exploring incentives, bulk purchasing programs and other means of assisting low-income households with achieving energy efficiency gains.
5. **Transportation Changes.** The transportation sector accounts for a significant portion of greenhouse gas emissions in Summit County, and it is essential to implement transit and transportation alternatives that address those emissions in order to achieve Summit County's climate goals.

Accordingly, Summit County will continue to enhance the efficiency of Summit County's public transit services. Improvements to transit services will include enhancing parking at transit centers or major transit stops to provide increased access, as well as implementing strategies such as micro-transit, to connect neighborhoods and areas underserved by transit.

Summit County will also prioritize infrastructure that promotes safe walking and bicycling to encourage active modes of transportation that have health benefits.

Summit County will seek to convert at least 50% of Summit County on-road passenger fleet vehicles (sedans, SUVs, light duty pick-up trucks, vans, etc.) to alternative fuel, hybrid, and electric vehicles by 2022. Summit County will provide the electric vehicle recharging infrastructure at County facilities as required to charge electric fleet vehicles.

Summit County will also work with major employers in Summit County to seek their cooperation to incentivize their employees to use public transit, van shares and carpools.

EXHIBIT A

6. Community Design. Emphasis shall be given to the form and location of future development in Summit County. General Plans and Development Codes shall focus new growth towards compact in-fill within existing developed areas where sustainable infrastructure, multi-modal transportation, walkability, and the preservation of the natural environment can be better achieved.
7. Utility Collaboration. Summit County will collaborate with the current electric public utility, Rocky Mountain Power, to find means to accelerate the transition of electrical energy supplied to Summit County from renewable sources and minimize dependence on carbon-based fuels and to establish Summit County's preference for renewable energy projects.
8. Legislative Collaboration. Summit County will build relationships with regional partners and municipalities, and other counties that share similar energy efficiency and greenhouse gas reduction goals to seek opportunities to work with the Utah Legislature on measures to facilitate progress on the energy initiatives outlined in this resolution.
9. Triannual Review. The Summit County Council will review these requirements every three years to determine if climate changes, new technologies or other events require that these terms need to be modified.

APPROVED AND ADOPTED this \_\_\_\_ day of November, 2019.

**Deleted:** October

**Deleted:** 2017

ATTEST:

SUMMIT COUNTY COUNCIL  
SUMMIT COUNTY, UTAH

\_\_\_\_\_  
Kent Jones  
County Clerk

\_\_\_\_\_  
Roger Armstrong  
Council Chair

**Deleted:** Christopher F. Robinson

**RESOLUTION # 2019-29**

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SUMMIT COUNTY, UTAH

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Kent Jones  
County Clerk

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Roger Armstrong  
Council Chair