

August 31, 2021
City Council Sustainability Workshop
Written Comments

Anonymous (NEST, Climate Reality Chicago)

Our current development, transportation, waste disposal, and energy generation practices are unsustainable; the Sustainable Naperville 2036 report provides solutions and realistic goals to create a sustainable community. Every new building constructed without regards to energy efficiency, on-site energy generation, and future electrification needs is one that will have to be retrofitted in the future. We cannot afford to keep kicking the can down the road. Ignoring future needs creates inequities. Financial hardships will occur when building occupants will have to pay for energy supplied completely by the grid because they lack the opportunity to offset their energy needs with on-site generation. Buildings that cannot meet the future standard will become undesirable, as we have already experienced with properties that are at high risk for flooding. Studies have proven that for every dollar spent building to higher standards initially, \$6 is saved in future retrofits. The City is not well positioned to be eligible for state and federal funding for electric vehicle charging stations. A plan must be created to show how the City of Naperville would utilize these monies to benefit the residents and transients. The City's proximity to Interstates 55 and 88 allow for travelers to access the City's businesses while charging their vehicles. Should surrounding communities capitalize on these funding opportunities, the City will miss out on retail tax revenue. Electric vehicle sales are forecast to increase greatly as major automakers have committed to transitioning their offerings across all vehicle categories, including pickup trucks. Waste disposal must become circular. The landfill is full of items that will take hundreds to thousands of years to decompose and organic material creating greenhouse gases. We throw away valuable nutrients in food waste that could be recaptured and applied to keep our soils healthy. Plastics, paper, glass, and metals have the ability to be reused and recycled, ending the need to continually source the raw materials. Mining and burning coal to create electricity is polluting our air and water. We must require our provider transition to renewable sources that have a smaller carbon footprint. Advancements in technology are coming and the City should be in a position to embrace them. We cannot ignore the impacts of extreme weather on the City of Naperville's infrastructure and public health. No one is immune from the impacts of extreme heat and heavy precipitation. The City has an opportunity to replace aging infrastructure with resilient roads, bridges, and pipes. Lastly, I commend the NEST volunteers for sharing their wealth of knowledge and expertise. I recognize Jodi Trendler for her leadership efforts to create the Sustainable Naperville 2036 report which saved the City of Naperville nearly \$500,000 in consultant fees. We must do better. We can do better. Let's start now.

Duncan Hughes

Good evening. I am Duncan Hughes. I reside at 916 Royal Blackheath Court, Naperville, and have been involved in the NEST effort under discussion here. In addition to endorsing the Sustainable Naperville 2036 report produced by NEST, I urge the City to advance beyond the report's general recommendations concerning energy without delay. Arguably, the greatest environmental concern facing our planet derives from greenhouse gas emissions and the resultant increase in global warming. Naperville through its municipal electric utility is a prime contributor to greenhouse gas emissions. CO₂ generated by electricity purveyed by Naperville Electric Utility amounts to more than 1,000,000 tons per year. The City must take positive steps NOW to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from its electricity. Several steps should be aggressively pursued by the City. 1. Acknowledge the urgency of reducing GHG emissions generally, Naperville's disproportionate contribution to the problem, and a commitment to

terminate burning of fossil fuel for its own electricity. 2. Assume a leadership role to convert Illinois Municipal Electric Agency to renewable energy as expeditiously as possible. Naperville is the largest of IMEA's 32 constituents – representing 45% by population and 35% of power consumed. 3. Right now federal and state levels of government seem poised to enact legislation and funds to accelerate conversion away from fossil fuels. The City should take action at every opportunity to support and endorse others' efforts to achieve this conversion. 4. Devise and implement a plan to reduce its fossil-fuel-generated electricity according to an aggressive schedule that attains 100% renewable energy before 2035. 5. Acknowledge that conversion to renewable energy with appropriate urgency will require significant expenditures of resources -- public and private. 6. Revise Naperville electricity charges to cover 100% of costs: generation and distribution costs as well as greenhouse gas emissions costs. This formula could increase electricity metering charges by 50%. Apply additional revenues thus realized to accelerate transition to renewable energy sources. We who are NEU customers need to accept the total cost of our electricity. The City should make certain that we do so. Thank you.

Marilyn L Schweitzer

I wish to offer my gratitude to the volunteers of N.E.S.T. who devoted their time and expertise over the last 2 years in the development of the Sustainable Naperville 2036 Report. Their report gives an excellent basis for the over 80 objectives and strategies of their 15 year vision. It is understandably difficult to reduce these community wide objectives and strategies into the short term goals being presented at the August 31, 2021 Sustainability Workshop. The 3 action items are only an initial commitment towards a truly Sustainable Naperville community. This is a groundbreaking, not a ribbon cutting. With that I hope Council moves forward with this commitment, but will never lose track of the ultimate goal. As a community, we must ever vigilant in addressing climate change so that future generations may prosper as those have before them. I encourage everyone to peruse the complete N.E.S.T. Sustainable Naperville 2036 Report available at <https://www.sustainnaperville.org/2036>. Reading the executive summary, introduction and first couple pages of each subsequent chapter is not a difficult read and will give an excellent overview into the complexities of the 15 year vision.

Statement from Nicor Gas, David L. Surina, Regional Manager, Community Affairs

City of Naperville Sustainability Workshop, August 31, 2021

As the state's largest natural gas distributor, Nicor Gas delivers the comfort and convenience of natural gas safely and reliably to 2.2 million customers in more than 650 communities throughout northern Illinois. Nicor Gas, headquartered in Naperville, is very interested in supporting the Naperville Environment and Sustainability Task Force and in partnering with the City to achieve its sustainability goals.

At Nicor Gas, we believe natural gas is an important part of our nation's effective transition to a clean energy future. We are committed to leading the industry in reducing the environmental impact of natural gas usage, including minimizing methane emissions across the natural gas supply chain.

Through our investments in pipeline and infrastructure modernization, we've reduced our annual operational GHG emissions by nearly 65% over a ten-year period. A net-zero future is possible. That's why Nicor Gas is fueling forward with a goal of becoming methane emissions from our operations by 2030. Additionally, we empower our customers to reduce their carbon footprint through comprehensive energy efficiency programs and other offerings.

We are also committed to protecting the environment and earlier this year announced an ambitious sustainability initiative to support the conservation of 10,000 acres of open land within our service area.

How we can support your sustainability goals?

The first objective is to continue to support energy efficiency. Nicor Gas continues to implement a comprehensive Energy Efficiency Program for our customers. Customers have saved more than 168 million therms and reduced CO₂ emissions by more than 893,000 metric tons through the Nicor Gas Energy Efficiency Program, which is the equivalent to the emissions generated by nearly 200,000 passenger vehicles in a single year. In the past ten years, nearly 900,000 customers have participated in the program.

Secondly, we believe that clean, safe, reliable and affordable clean energy is the foundation for the future. We are developing Renewable Natural Gas or RNG for use as an alternative fuel in our system. As a part of Nicor Gas' Renewable Gas Interconnection Pilot the company aims to encourage the development of renewable natural gas production facilities within Nicor Gas' service territory. The pilot will allow the company to determine how RNG can be efficiently integrated into its natural gas distribution system for customers.

Renewable natural gas is a sustainable and alternative fuel produced from naturally occurring methane that is captured primarily from landfill, agricultural, wastewater plants and food waste sites. RNG facilities capture this methane and repurpose it making it into an energy source that looks and acts like geologic natural gas but is considered carbon-neutral at its points of use. This reduces emissions from existing waste streams while providing a clean and local fuel.

In addition to RNG, we are researching hydrogen. Hydrogen is a clean fuel that can easily store and deliver usable energy and is produced by splitting water molecules or splitting natural gas molecules. This fuel source can be used in the industrial, transportation and electric sectors.

We are also working on The Nicor Gas Smart Neighborhood Project. The Nicor Gas Smart Neighborhood will be the first of its kind integrating natural gas technology with renewables and will demonstrate how natural gas can be combined with rooftop solar to lower carbon emissions and help low-income communities access net zero ready buildings.

In closing, due to the abundance, affordability and the relative carbon footprint of natural gas along with our extensive distribution system and developing renewable energy sources, we believe Nicor Gas is already playing a meaningful role in the transition to clean energy and a net zero future in northern Illinois, and poised to support ensuring a sustainable future for our customers and communities.