Developing a “Green Fleet” Policy

Go Green, Save Green

Why should we adopt a “green fleet” policy?

**Savings:** You can reduce your fuel and maintenance budgets through actions implemented as part of a green fleet policy.

**Economy:** N.C. used 17.4 thousand gallons of gasoline per day in 2012, the majority of which was imported from overseas (US Energy Information Administration). Supporting fuel diversity buffers us from supply disruptions and price spikes caused by natural disasters and political instability in other parts of the world. By producing biofuels and other petroleum alternatives we keep fuel dollars circulating in our state, enhancing economic development.

**Environment:** Petroleum burned for transportation is responsible for 1/3 of greenhouse gas emissions in N.C. It is also a significant source of nitrogen oxides (the major precursor to ground level ozone problems), carbon monoxide, and particulate matter.

**Health:** In N.C. 24 counties do not meet National Ambient Air Quality standards due to poor air quality, putting the health of more than 1/3 of North Carolinians at risk. In urban areas, vehicle emissions can be the single greatest source of air pollutants.

How do we adopt a “green fleet” policy?

**Option 1 (top down):** Pass a City/County wide ordinance, or enact an executive order, that codifies the “green fleet” process and delegates specific responsibilities within local government.

**Option 2 (bottom up):** Establish internal departmental or agency fleet policies, which are clear and carry sufficiency weight with departmental or agency heads.

**Option 3 (hybrid):** Pass a resolution that serves as enabling legislation for establishing a “green fleet” policy, and then work out the details of that policy at the departmental or agency level.

What does a “green fleet” policy look like?

A policy may address ways to reduce fuel use and emissions through actions and technologies such as low carbon fuels, idle reduction, carpooling, vehicle “right-sizing”, driver education programs, and fuel and vehicle management programs that enable detailed tracking of use and expenditures.
Green Fleet Resolution Template

WHEREAS, the City of ________ is committed to cost savings measures to reduce the energy consumption of its fleet;
WHEREAS, the City of ________ is committed to reducing our dependence on imported oil;
WHEREAS, the City of ________ recognizes that energy use associated with the operation of its vehicles exacerbates local air quality problems and results in greenhouse gas emissions that contribute to global climate change; and
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED that the City of ________ will develop a “green fleet” plan which includes an inventory of fleet vehicles, establishment of clear goals for reducing energy use and emissions from fleet activities, and action steps to achieve stated goals.

Green Fleet Ordinance Template

Section 1: Establish the basis for the ordinance. *Why is this policy needed? Discuss air quality issues, climate change, fuel use, etc.*

Section 2: Define important terms within the policy. *Use this section to explain any confusing fleet or fuel terminology such as vehicle weight classes or what is considered an alternative fuel or efficient vehicles.*

Section 3: Establish a procedure to conduct a fleet inventory. *It is important to establish a baseline of fleet characteristics to use as a measuring stick.*

Section 4: Set goals you want the “green fleet” policy to achieve. *These goals should be quantifiable, such as percent reduction in use or emissions by a target year.*

Section 5: Outline strategies. *You will use these to achieve your goal; examples include right-sizing vehicles, purchasing alternative fuel vehicles, reducing fleet travel.*

Section 6: Monitor and enforce policy. *Departments need to document their progress. One method of doing this is establishing a green fleet review committee to receive reports, track progress, provide feedback, and highlight successes.*

Additional resources and templates can be found at:

- www.cleanaircounts.org/content/Green%20Fleet%20Policy%20Ordinance.pdf
- www.garfieldcleanenergy.org/trans-fleets-policies.html
- www.usmayors.org/climateprotection/revised/
- www.cleantransportation.org

Green Fleet activity and planning support in NC:

- **Triangle Clean Cities Coalition** (Triangle area, 9 counties), Lacey Jane Wolfe 919-558-2705
- **Centralina Clean Fuels Coalition** (Charlotte area, 9 counties), Jason Wager 704-348-2707
- **Land-of-Sky Clean Vehicle Coalition** (Asheville area, 8 counties), Bill Eaker 828-251-6622

Areas not covered in a Clean Cities Coalition (Upper Coastal Plain, Kerr-Tar region, Triad, etc.), Anne Tazewell 919-513-7831

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Who in N.C. already has a policy?

- Asheville, NC
- Washington, NC
- Chapel Hill, NC
- Durham, NC
- Orange County, NC