**Recommendations to Reduce Oldenburg’s Carbon Footprint**

Members of Oldenburg Renewable Energy Commission, a completely volunteer study group commissioned by the Oldenburg Town Council in September, 2018, to facilitate the town’s transition to renewable energy during the 2020 decade, make the following recommendations based on the formal greenhouse gas emissions report. These recommendations are offered in two timelines.

IMMEDIATE ACTIONS, OR FIRST STEPS

1-Focus on energy efficiency as a first step in reducing energy use—this will reduce some GHG emissions. All residents, businesses and institutions will be encouraged to have an energy audit made of their buildings to determine sources of energy loss and ways to remediate such loss. OREC will offer workshops in 2020 about tools and resources that are available to facilitate such action.

2-Invite Oldenburg residents to calculate their own carbon footprints to determine ways to conserve energy use. Study energy efficiency tips provided by their utility company and other resources. Find such information on OREC’s webpage at <https://www.oldenburgindiana.org/orec>.

3-Increase recycling efforts wherever possible and encourage businesses and institutions in town to lead the way to cut back on single-use plastic. Encourage groups that plan public events in Oldenburg to do the same. Individuals can do their part to use sustainable packaging wherever possible.

4-Plant native trees on your land and encourage friends and relatives to do the same. Take care of trees already growing and keep the natural beauty of Oldenburg intact.

5-In the transportation sector, cut back on unplanned driving trips and do more car-pooling to work or school. (When bicycle and/or walking trails are available, use these for short trips between Oldenburg and Batesville.)

6-Take an active role in monitoring state policy development to promote renewable energy resources and elect state officials who will support such policies. When the electric vehicle transition speeds up in the late 2020’s, there will be an increase demand for electricity. If utility companies do not add increased amounts of renewable energy, such as wind, solar and biomass, to their portfolios while decreasing fossil fuel use to generate the electricity we purchase, greenhouse gas emissions will increase instead of decrease even if we do our part to generate our own electricity.

7-Oldenburg Town Council approve a similar inventory to be conducted for government operations to explore ways that services offered by OTC generate additional greenhouse gas emissions. OREC members are willing to conduct this study with support from ICLEI. Continued membership in ICLEI would facilitate this new inventory and would offer resources for OREC to plan for lower emissions and monitor such action to reach the goal of cutting in half the town’s total CO₂e by 2030.

LONG RANGE EFFORTS

1-Help to promote Oldenburg pride and lead the way to attract more people to visit Oldenburg and to make their home here by **promoting this town as the Village of Renewable Energy** by working to cut in half our CO₂e total by the year 2030.

HOW? OREC will offer educational programs in 2020 & 2021 to present possibilities to reach such a goal. OREC will take a second GHG emissions inventory in five years to determine progress and monitor progress as needed.

SOME POSSIBILITIES TO REACH THE GOAL OF 50% REDUCTION IN CO₂E BY 2030:

2-Install solar panels on your home and/or business to decrease your own carbon footprint as well as your electric bills. Arrange for solar bus tours of homes in the area that use solar energy to learn about the savings to the environment and to your pocketbook. (OREC will offer information sessions in 2021.)

3-Investigate if community-solar energy can happen in Oldenburg and do some joint exploration toward this end. (OREC to explain possibilities in an educational event in 2021).

4-Consider purchasing an electric vehicle or hybrid electric vehicle in the near future for personal and/or business use. (OREC will sponsor several info sessions in 2020.)

5-Invite businesses, institutions and local government to consider joint planning for EV charging stations for the town to support the transition to electric vehicles and to draw new homeowners and tourists to Oldenburg. (OREC will facilitate such joint planning.)

6-Help Oldenburg realize a trail system between Batesville and Oldenburg that could increase foot and bicycle traffic and cut back on passenger vehicle use for short trips between the two towns. (See goal in Comprehensive Plan.)

Copied from “Greenhouse Gas Emissions Report to Oldenburg Town Council,” pp. 8-9.