



Have Your Local Government Pass a Peak Oil Resolution

A Guide for Relocalizing our Communities

The Relocalization Network

Peak Oil Resolution • synopsis and roles

Synopsis

A Peak Oil Resolution is a formal declaration by a government entity that identifies Peak Oil as a pressing problem, and establishes steps to address and respond to it. Getting your local government to pass a Peak Oil Resolution creates an important context for future policy decisions, possibly guiding the jurisdiction on planning and zoning, transportation, and investments in infrastructure. It also draws community attention to the issue, encouraging individuals and businesses to consider the ways Peak Oil may impact their interests.

Roles

Coordinator

Researchers

Writers

Elected Official and Staff

Time Frame

2 to 4 months

Tools

Phone, email, computer.



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Peak Oil Resolution • project outline

Project Outline

There are many different approaches to passing a Peak Oil Resolution or other form of legislation. The approach you choose is dependent on your allies, the size of your community, council member personalities, the way your government is run, the people working to get it passed and existing relevant policies. Cities in the U.S. and Canada started passing Peak Oil Resolutions in 2005, and in most cases there has been a citizen group involved that shared responsibilities with City elected officials and their staff for passing the resolution.

- 1. Develop a Resolution.** In most local governments, you will need support from at least one local elected official to get a resolution considered by the local governing body. To recruit an elected official to sponsor a Peak Oil Resolution, it's advisable to have a Resolution already written to demonstrate the seriousness of your effort. Review the Resolutions that have already been passed by local governments (visit www.relocalize.net for an up-to-date list) and borrow ideas that will work well for your community.

The key components of a Peak Oil Resolution are the problem statements (the "whereas" statements) and the action statements (the "be it resolved" statements). Problem Statements should touch on both general and local issues. For example:

"Whereas, Petroleum accounts for approximately forty percent of the United States' energy consumption and over ninety percent of its liquid fuel needs for transportation of oil;" (Bloomington, Indiana)

"Whereas, Portland residents and businesses are not currently aware of the full implications of an impending decline and will greatly benefit from an objective source of information on this topic;" (Portland, Oregon)

Action statements will depend on what your local government is willing to commit to, so you will need to work these out with the official you recruit to sponsor the Resolution. For example, the Portland's resolution established a task force with clear goals to assess vulnerabilities and make recommendations to City Council, whereas Bloomington's resolution supported adoption of the global Oil Depletion Protocol and urged federal and state action. As you develop this language, consider framing it in reference to supporting issues like energy vulnerabilities, climate change, the local economy, and other issues.

- 2. Recruit an elected official.** To recruit an elected official to sponsor a Peak Oil Resolution, you will need to give a convincing argument for why Peak Oil is a pertinent issue for local government, and why a Resolution is a good idea. You may even need to introduce and explain Peak Oil, as the term is still unfamiliar to many people.

You will bolster your case for a Peak Oil Resolution by presenting it in the context of previous government actions, so research any policies your local government may already have regarding energy, as well as related sustainability issues like global warming. This will also give you an idea of potential collaborators and people who may already be open to discussing a resolution. Also be sure to give examples of the Peak Oil Resolutions that other cities have passed (see www.relocalize.net for an up-to-date list).



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Peak Oil Resolution • resources

2. Finalize the resolution and get it passed. Once you have a sponsor for your Resolution, you should work with that person and his or her staff to refine the language and to build support among other elected officials. You should also be building support in the community through presentations, film screenings and public forums. Bear in mind that to get the Resolution passed, the sponsor may feel the need to change some of the language or cut back on action items, so be prepared to present a convincing case for the items you feel are most important.

When the Resolution is passed, work with your sponsor to inform the media so that the community is made aware of this important new policy. Stay involved with your sponsor to ensure that the staff and agencies follow up on action items, and watch for further opportunities to cultivate awareness about Peak Oil and Relocalization among local government officials and staff.

Resources

The Relocalization Network - www.relocalize.net



Photo Credit: David Sund (front cover / back cover)



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Get Involved

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