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**MAYOR DALEY, BUSINESS, FOUNDATION, GOVERNMENT LEADERS
ANNOUNCE COMPREHENSIVE CLIMATE ACTION PLAN**

Mayor Richard M. Daley today was joined by leaders from business and the not-for-profit sectors, state and local government officials and residents to unveil the Chicago Climate Action Plan, a comprehensive and detailed strategy to help lower greenhouse gas emissions and address climate change. The plan builds on the many efforts the City has already implemented to make Chicago the most environmentally friendly city in the nation.

In a news conference held at the Shedd Aquarium, the Mayor stressed that the effort will require an enormous amount of hard work and cooperation and the commitment of not only government but also every individual, business and institution in the city.

"This is an ambitious plan that contains many important ideas that will ensure Chicago continues to distinguish itself as an environmental role model for the rest of the nation," Daley said.

"We can continue to lead by example and the Chicago Climate Action Plan is the next step. We can't solve the world's climate change problem in Chicago, but we can do our part. We have a shared responsibility to protect our planet," he said.

Under the plan, which was developed by a Task Force convened by Daley in 2007 and co-chaired by Adele Simmons, President of Global Philanthropy Partnership, and Sadhu Johnston, the City's Chief Environmental Officer, the City will work to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to 25 percent below 1990 levels (1990 levels are the recommended baseline according to the Kyoto Protocol).

Other cities have set similar goals, but Chicago's plan is the first to both identify emission sources and anticipated impacts, and propose ideas that specifically respond to that research.

“This is a challenge, but the benchmark goal is both far enough in the future to allow sufficient time to make substantive changes and close enough to see benefits in our daily lives. Thankfully, during this tough economy there is some funding already committed from private resources to help pay for parts of this plan, but not nearly enough.” Daley said.

“Over the next few years we’ll be depending on the commitment and collective action of individuals, businesses and others to do their part.

“And, of course, it will very important for Springfield and the federal government in Washington, D.C. to do their part and provide greater resources for public transportation, building improvements, research on new technologies and other measures,” he said.

But, this is about more than cleaning up our environment, the Mayor said.

“At the same time, when we make these improvements we’re greening our economy for the future and creating the jobs of tomorrow,” Daley said.

“The benefits of the plan go beyond improving the environment, which is a critical goal in and of itself. The actions that have the greatest impact will save companies and residents money, enhance our quality of life and position the city and its residents for future prosperity,” he said.

The Chicago Climate Action Plan outlines a roadmap of 29 actions that might be taken for mitigating greenhouse gas in four areas: buildings; transportation; energy; and waste pollution. Experts identified these sources are being responsible for the vast majority of greenhouse gas emissions in Chicago. The Plan also identifies nine actions that could help the city adapt to the changes already occurring.

Because the Chicago Climate Action Plan takes a long-term approach, it will be evaluated over time to determine where these actions should be modified or revised. This flexible approach allows for the accommodation of new technologies, new laws and new opportunities as they evolve.

Daley gave three examples of ideas included in the plan that the City will be moving forward with right away:

- A “Green Office Challenge” that will spur high rise office buildings to save energy, increase recycling and water efficiency and reduce paper.
- An updated Chicago Energy Efficiency Building Code, which will bring our current code up to international standards and be easier to understand.

- And innovative ways to help property owners save money by making their buildings more energy efficient.

Among the other steps proposed in the plan and that the city is considering are:

- Large scale solar energy installations at City facilities.
- New partnerships to make it easier for residents and businesses to take greater advantage of public transportation and save money.
- The construction of four publicly accessible alternative fueling stations.
- Implementation of key components of the Chicago 2015 Bike Plan.
- A communications and outreach plan to engage all residents and businesses in the Chicago Climate Action Plan.

But other important steps are much simpler and within the reach of each individual. They save money and they protect the environment, Daley said.

These are things such as:

- Driving less and walking more
- Using more energy-efficient light bulbs
- Turning down the thermostat a few degrees in winter or up a few degrees in summer.
- Insulating and weatherizing your home.
- Turning off appliances and computers when they're not in use, and
- Planting trees and shrubs around your home to reduce temperatures.

The Chicago Climate Action Plan builds on the City's existing programs and successes. For almost twenty years, Daley and the City of Chicago have led the nation with innovative initiatives to make Chicago the most environmentally friendly city in the nation.

This includes planting more than a half million trees, mandating the construction of environmentally friendly buildings and installing roof top gardens on city owned buildings.

Chicago also boasts more Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design-certified (LEED) buildings than any other city and has more than four million square feet of green roof projects either completed or underway.

Over the past two years alone, the City and its partners distributed more than one million energy-saving compact fluorescent light bulbs to residents. The City passed a comprehensive storm water management ordinance.

Having a comprehensive climate action plan in place will enable the City to take advantage of new funding sources as they arise, as well as existing state and federal dollars, loans, grants and private contributions, the Mayor said.

The City is also working with the private sector to increase market-based opportunities and with federal and state governments to leverage additional dollars to achieve the goals of the Chicago Climate Action Plan, he said.

As part of the Chicago Climate Action Plan, the City launched a new Web site www.chicagoclimateaction.org where individuals and businesses can learn about climate change, what they can do in their daily lives to reduce emissions, and what the City is doing to protect and preserve the environment.

“In Chicago we have long appreciated that cities are no longer the enemies of the natural environment; rather they’re leading the way in preserving and protecting it,” Daley said.

“Since I have been mayor, my goal has been to make Chicago a shining example of how a large city can live in harmony with its environment and as a result, be a better place for all its residents. I am confident that if we address the climate change challenge together, with creativity and boldness, then our city will continue to lead the world in designing a path to a more secure future,” he said.

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