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Portland City Council Approves Community Workforce Agreement To Support Equity And Workforce Goals For Clean Energy Works Portland

Portland, Ore – Today, the Portland City Council signed a Community Workforce Agreement that will lead to the creation of thousands of high-quality, family-supporting jobs for qualified, historically underrepresented contractors and workers in the clean-energy economy. The City and Clean Energy Works Portland stakeholders—including public, private, nonprofit, community, and labor institutions—collaborated to create this unprecedented agreement, establishing a set of sustainable contracting standards and community benefits.

In the near term, Clean Energy Works Portland is embarking on a pilot project phase during which approximately 500 Portland area homes will receive energy audits and be retrofitted by the summer of 2010. Measures include weatherization, space and water heating – delivered through on-bill repayment. After the 500-home pilot phase, the City of Portland will significantly scale up Clean Energy Works in an effort to retrofit the estimated 100,000 qualifying homes over the next several years. In the coming decade, this could result in as many as 10,000 local jobs.

The City of Portland partnered with Green For All—an organization that advises local leaders nationwide to develop stronger clean energy jobs programs—to create the community workforce agreement for the home energy retrofit pilot program. This initiative will leverage federal recovery dollars to reduce carbon emissions, lower utility bills, and create jobs. Going forward, Green For All will utilize their national expertise to support and guide the effort to bring the pilot project to scale.

“In Oregon, a state with one of the highest unemployment rates in the country, this program stands to provide a scalable national model by leveraging federal recovery dollars to put people back to work and achieve significant carbon reductions,” said Portland Mayor Sam Adams. “In partnership with Green For All, we have the ability to promote social equity in a measurable way, providing an opportunity for under-employed youth and adults to gain career training in the

sustainable building industry, and ensure that Portland stays at the forefront of the green economy.”

“Green For All is proud to partner with the City of Portland to build a more diverse and robust local clean-energy economy ripe with broad access and opportunity,” said Phaedra Ellis-Lamkins, CEO of Green For All. “The Community Workforce Agreement is a model of good public policy and sound business sense which will benefit all of Portland’s communities.”

The Community Workforce Agreement calls for creating contracting, subcontracting, training and employment policies that will ensure high-quality work, safe conditions for workers and building residents, and articulated strategies for establishing career pathways as well as on-ramps to jobs and economic opportunities for low-income and other historically underserved populations. A unique feature of the Community Workforce Agreement is the establishment of a stakeholder Evaluation and Implementation Committee, who will join the City and Energy Trust in executing the key elements of the pilot and making recommendations for the scale-up.

“Energy Trust embraces this opportunity to collaborate in building a robust and inclusive green economy here in Portland and beyond,” said Margie Harris, Executive Director. “We share the vision of a clean energy workforce that fully reflects the diversity of our citizenry.”

"The City of Portland's innovative effort to deliver affordable home energy upgrades will provide more than just energy savings; through the Community Workforce Agreement developed by a coalition of stakeholders it has the opportunity to provide a host of community benefits as well. From articulated green career pathways, to identified hiring and contracting goals for communities of color and women, to community involvement in the pilot implementation and evaluation, the Community Workforce Agreement creates an equitable approach to reaching Portland's energy saving goals while strengthening Portland's communities."

John Gardner, Executive Director, Construction Apprentice and Workforce Solutions (CAWS)

“This project demonstrates the City’s and Energy Trust’s commitment to the human element in sustainability and economic development – they realize that if the community gains, everybody gains. OTI looks forward to working with all of the agreement partners on the implementation and to our pre-apprenticeship program graduates going to work in the weatherization field.”

Connie Ashbrook, Executive Director, Oregon Tradeswomen, Inc.

"The Laborers' Union works every day to help build Portland and create quality, family-supporting construction careers," said Greg Held, Business Manager, Oregon and Southern Idaho District Council of Laborers. “The Clean Energy Works Portland project seeks to do just this, while having a positive impact on our environment. Our Union is very excited to be partnering with the City of Portland, community-based organizations, and contractors who all share these values and are willing to lead the way in sustainable job creation."

“I believe the Community Workforce Agreement is a very good first step. It is a good program for the homeowners, contractors and employees involved. I believe we have the ability not only to create new green jobs, but to have the workforce reflect the faces we see in the Portland metropolitan area,” said Maurice Rahming, President, National Association of Minority Contractors of Oregon, and President of O'Neill Electric Inc.

“With this program, the City of Portland further cements its position as a leader in sustainability, while making it affordable for residents to embrace energy efficiency,” says Berenice Lopez-

Dorsey, a stakeholder in the Community Workforce Agreement, and owner and president of Portland-based Home Energy Life Performance Group, Inc. "As a local, certified Minority & Women owned small business, now we have the opportunity to add green jobs, grow our businesses, and improve our community."

"The Pacific Northwest Regional Council of Carpenters strongly supports Clean Energy Works Portland because it will provide pathways to good paying family wage careers," said Doug Tweedy, Executive Secretary Treasurer. "Clean Energy Works will engage the Community while providing green jobs through it's Community Workforce Agreement, reducing our carbon footprint and opening doors to disadvantaged and underrepresented communities. We are proud to be associated with this effort and are committed to it's success."

Clean Energy Works is deeply committed to taking the lessons learned and sharing them widely with state, regional and national partners such as the Clean Economy Network, Climate Solutions, Portland+Oregon Sustainability Institute and others as they look at ways to broaden and scale this work with other public policy stakeholders.

About Clean Energy Works Portland

Clean Energy Works Portland is an innovative effort, led by Mayor Sam Adams and the City of Portland Bureau of Planning and Sustainability, to deliver affordable home energy upgrades to homeowners in Portland through new opportunities like on-bill repayment. Clean Energy Works supports the City's goal of reducing carbon emissions 80 percent by 2050 by helping residents save energy, reduce carbon emissions, improve home comfort and home values -- while creating thousands of new family-supporting green jobs and career training opportunities for historically disadvantaged Portland-area residents. Find more information at www.cleanenergyworksportland.org.

About the Community Workforce Agreement

This agreement marks the City's successful collaboration between a broad base of community stakeholders to help ensure equity for women, people of color, and other historically disadvantaged or underrepresented groups in the implementation of Clean Energy Works Portland. Community stakeholders include: Change to Win, Coalition for a Livable Future, Construction Apprentice and Workforce Solutions, Eco Tech LLC, Evening Trades Apprenticeship Preparation, Home Energy Life Performance Group, Inc., Irvington Covenant Community Development Corporation, Metropolitan Alliance for Common Good, Metropolitan Contractor Improvement Partnership, National Association of Minority Contractors of Oregon, NAYA Family Center, Neil Kelly Corp., O'Neill Electric Inc., Oregon Action, Oregon AFL-CIO, Oregon and Southern Idaho District Council of Laborers, Oregon and Southern Idaho Laborers-Employers Training Trust Oregon Apollo Alliance, Oregon Tradeswomen, Pacific Northwest Carpenters Institute, Pacific Northwest Regional Council of Carpenters, Portland Development Commission, Portland YouthBuilders, Sustainable Solutions Unlimited, Urban League of Portland and Verde.

These new community stakeholders join the existing pilot members, that include City of Portland, Multnomah County, Green For All, WorkSystems Inc., Energy Trust of Oregon, Shorebank Enterprise Cascadia, NW Natural, Pacific Power and Portland General Electric.

View the agreement, photos from the Council hearing and signing, and a video message from Green For All at www.cleanenergyworksportland.org.

About the City of Portland Bureau of Planning and Sustainability

The Portland Bureau of Planning and Sustainability (BPS) promotes integrated land use planning and development based on sustainability principles and practices. BPS also develops and implements policies and programs that provide environmental, economic and social benefits to residents, businesses and government, which strengthen Portland's position as an international model of sustainable practices and commerce. www.portlandonline.com/bps

About Green For All (www.greenforall.org)

Green For All is a national organization dedicated to improving the lives of all Americans through a clean energy economy. The organization works in collaboration with the business, government, labor, and grassroots communities to create and implement programs that increase quality jobs and opportunities in green industry – all while holding the most vulnerable people at the center of its agenda.

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