Mayor's plan would combat global warming

05:48 PM CST on Wednesday, February 7, 2007

By CLARA TUMA
KVUE News

Austin Mayor Will Wynn announced a major new plan Wednesday that he says would make Austin the leader in the fight against greenhouse gases.

KVUE News

Will Wynn, Austin mayor

The mayor said he just returned from a training session with former Vice President Al Gore, and he used slides from Gore's movie, "An Inconvenient Truth," in announcing a wide-ranging plan even he calls "challenging."

He said he believes global warming should be attacked on a local level.

"Ultimately, the problem is generated locally, by each of us in this room, as consumers, day in and day out, of energy, so we should do our part locally to solve the problem," Wynn said.

Wynn says the plan would:

- Power 100 percent of city facilities with renewable energy by 2012.

- Make the entire city fleet carbon-neutral by 2020.

- Require Austin Energy to meet 30 percent of all energy needs through renewable resources by 2020 and to achieve carbon neutrality on any new generation units.

- Make all new single-family homes zero net-energy capable by 2015.
-- Increase energy efficiency in all other new construction by 75 percent by 2015.

-- Require existing homes to be upgraded to be more energy efficient before they can be sold.

-- Develop a locally based "carbon footprint calculator" to let Austinites figure out how much energy they are using daily.

-- Promote carbon neutrality among visitors by allowing them to buy offset credits for the energy they used during their visit to Austin.

The plan will go before the Austin City Council next week.