

Boulder mayor Susan Osborne invited to Paris sustainability conference

City leader is the only U.S. representative at multinational meeting on 'green' growth

By **Heath Urie** Camera Staff Writer
Boulder Daily Camera

Posted:

Who's going:

Boulder Mayor Susan Osborne

Melbourne, Australia, Lord Mayor Robert Doyle

Toronto Mayor David Miller

Copenhagen, Denmark, Mayor Frank Jensen

Helsinki, Finland, Deputy Mayor Pekka Sauri

Bordeaux, France, Mayor Alain Juppé

Nantes, France, Mayor Jean-Marc Ayrault

Paris Maire Bertrand Delanoë

Jakarta, Indonesia, Gov. Fauzi Bowo

Ma'alot-Tarshiha, Israel, Mayor Shlomo Bohbot

Rome Provincial President Nicola Zingaretti

Yokohama, Japan, Mayor Fumiko Hayashi

Tuxtla Gutierrez, Mexico, Mayor Jaime Valls Esponda

Warsaw, Poland, Deputy Mayor Jaroslaw Kochaniak

Malmö, Sweden, Mayor Ilmar

When a coalition of mayors from 15 countries across the globe gathers in Paris later this month to discuss sustainable growth, the mayor of Boulder will have a seat at the table.

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development -- an international policy group established in 1961 that today represents 31 developed nations -- has invited Boulder Mayor Susan Osborne to attend the May 25 "Urban Roundtable for Mayors and Ministers," alongside leaders from cities including Paris, Rome, Toronto, Warsaw, Poland, and Copenhagen, Denmark.

The event is being billed as an international meeting of the minds about how cities can contribute to financially and environmentally sustainable growth.

Osborne is the only mayor invited from the United States. She said cities are on the front lines when it comes to creating and testing environmental programs.

"A lot of what happens, happens at the local level," Osborne said. "We're the real laboratory."

Boulder was selected to participate in the closed-door seminar based on its carbon tax, participation as Xcel Energy's first "Smart Grid" city and the community's general commitment to reducing its impact on the planet, Osborne said.

"Nowhere else have citizens voted to tax themselves to work on this climate action program," she said. "We seem to be able to try things."

Osborne will give a five-minute presentation to the group about what Boulder has achieved through its Climate Action Plan, ClimateSmart loans and other programs aimed at reducing the city's carbon emissions. She'll also moderate one of the broader discussions, which will take place in both English and French, a language Osborne speaks fluently.

The conference is paying for Osborne's travel and other expenses in the form of a stipend worth up to 2,000 euros.

In addition to learning about how other cities practice sustainability, Osborne said the three-day conference will give Boulder another chance to shine on the international stage.

In addition to the mayors' meeting, the conference is expected to draw government ministers from 12 countries and CEOs from major corporations, like Oracle Corp., and the European Investment Bank.

"There are times when we take a lot of grief for who we are," Osborne said. "I want our town to be proud about the stature that we have not just nationally, but even

Reepalu

Geneva Mayor Sandrine Salerno

Dar es Salaam, Tanzania,
Mayor Adam Kimbisa

beyond that."

Sam Mamet, executive director of the Colorado Municipal League, said Boulder is the perfect and deserving choice to represent the United States at the conference.

"Any time any city can be put on the international stage among your peers from around the world, it's an incredible honor," he said. "It speaks volumes about the efforts of Boulder and its place on the international stage."

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