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# News Release

## **WASHTENAW COUNTY TESTS POTENTIAL FOR WIND ENERGY**

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Ann Arbor, Michigan - March 5, 2007** Collaborating with the City of Ann Arbor and the University of Michigan, Washtenaw County is moving forward to develop wind energy as one of the possible answers to escalating economic and environmental costs of using fossil fuels.

The **Washtenaw County Board of Commissioners** passed a resolution in April, 2006, directing the Department of Planning and Environment to test the wind resources in the County and examine the feasibility of providing wind-generated electricity for county residents and businesses. Under this mandate, the Department has undertaken a project to test Washtenaw County's wind resources. The testing will bring in data for small and large wind turbine economic feasibility, and provide investment grade information to residents, businesses and energy providers.

The working partnership developed among the County, the **City of Ann Arbor** and faculty from the **University of Michigan** has hired North Coast Wind & Power consultants to assist the project team. During the first phase of testing, one to three 70 – 100 meter meteorological towers will be erected at strategic locations around the County to study the characteristics of the wind resource for a period of 12-18 months. Professor Gerald Keeler of the University of Michigan Department of Atmospheric, Oceanic and Space Sciences will be teaching a class that will help collect and analyze the data. The first tower is scheduled to go up in late spring of 2007.

Depending on the results of the wind study, a second phase of the project will mean actual facilitation of wind power in County. Wind generation facilities could include wind farm scale projects with larger utility-scale turbines to generate power and distribute it through the electrical grid energy all the way to small-scale, on-site wind turbines that help to power individual homes, businesses and farms.

"I think that today it's incumbent on the Board of Commissioners, and really on any political body, to take the issues of environmental change and economic impact very seriously. This testing will give us the necessary information to help us look forward with ideas and hope for reducing our dependence on fossil fuels in the future," said Board Chair Jeff Irwin.

Any development is dependent on the results of the wind study. At this point, the County is not committed to any particular form of wind development. For further information, visit [www.ewashtenaw.org/wind](http://www.ewashtenaw.org/wind) or e-mail Joshua Long, [longj@ewashtenaw.org](mailto:longj@ewashtenaw.org)

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