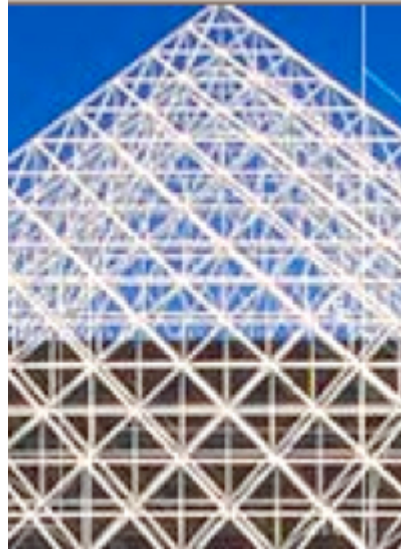




Written by [Kelly Holt](#) on March 21, 2011

## Edmond Oklahoma Dumps Agenda 21

Person by person, town by town, county by county, opposition to ICLEI (ICLEI-Local Governments for Sustainability USA) and its Agenda 21 message is growing. Edmond, Oklahoma is following the example of municipalities around the nation as they formally discontinue participation in ICLEI and local efforts toward “sustainability.” The city sent a letter to ICLEI withdrawing its membership.



ICLEI, established in 1990, acts as a vehicle through which to deliver its Agenda 21, which followed in 1992. The city of Edmond has been an ICLEI member since 2009, and like many communities, decided to join in order to utilize data-calculating and -converting software used to determine energy savings, emissions, and technology effectiveness. But the city began to see that membership has a dark side. [Govern Edmond Locally](#) (GEL), a grassroots effort whose mission statement is to “restore Constitutional governance at the local level in Edmond, OK,” opposed the city’s involvement in ICLEI and was instrumental in persuading the city to reverse its decision. In an interview with *The New American*, Robert Semands, spokesman for GEL, recounted the story of Edmond’s participation in ICLEI.

After a press release announcing that a public forum would be held in December called “Sustainability in Edmond,” Semands and other concerned residents learned the meeting agenda would be anything but a public forum. What was planned was not a public forum-style meeting, but a scenario of dividing the attendees into small groups to discuss various sustainability issues, depriving those attendees of the forum by which to make their opposition known. GEL began contacting Edmondites about the hidden well, agenda, of Agenda 21 and ICLEI, and a large number of citizens showed up at the meeting to oppose the measure. It was so large a turn-out that the facilitators were unprepared and slightly disarmed. It turns out that people living in Edmond are almost universally opposed to having anything to do with the U.N. in their city.

Semands said:

GEL and other opponents called the leaders on the disingenuous nature of their action in saying



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the meeting would be one thing, when in fact it was planned to be another. Another meeting was planned in January, but wasn't held till March 7. We made use of that time to educate Edmondites about the true nature of ICLEI and Agenda 21. Once they learned and understood it, they realized they needed to oppose it.

*The Edmond Sun* reported that Edmondites were rightly concerned that participation in ICLEI would [dismantle their property rights](#), but that ICLEI officials denied any truth to that belief. ICLEI Deputy Executive Director K.C. Boyce said,

Here in the U.S. it doesn't have any sort of foundation or even a touch stone value. What we do and the resources and tools we develop — the support we provide — is based on the conditions here in the U.S. and doesn't have anything to do with Agenda 21.

When Semands questioned Shannon Enze, the city's Community Development Block Grant Coordinator, she also denied knowing of any connection between Agenda 21 and the U.N., saying that the only reason the city signed up with the program was to have access to its sustainability software. Semands pointed out that the original decision was made without proper vetting, and that city officials didn't know what they were really getting into.

But GEL intends to inform them what they're really getting into. The group's next effort will be to educate Edmondites that the devil is in the details. When signing up as a dues-paying member of ICLEI, a city agrees to place itself under the jurisdiction of the ICLEI charter, which Semands says, "...is a Marxist document. We contend that it is impossible to serve the U.S. Constitution and also promote a U.N. collectivist agenda, and our lawmakers have pledged their oaths to the nation's Constitution, and to our state constitution."

And GEL can back up its claims of the U.N. connection. GEL issues its easy-to-do and easy-to-understand ["3-Click Challenge"](#) to help educate people. In just three mouse-clicks, available on its website, GEL connects the dots between Agenda 21 and the U.N.

City Manager Larry Stevens summed up the feelings of many Edmond residents:

The benefits of the City's membership are significantly outweighed by the negative perceptions of ICLEI that we have heard from people in our community, both in last Monday's public comment forum and from the last couple of months in general... The City continues its focus on our sustainability mission statement of strongly supporting good stewardship of Edmond's resources whether fiscal, natural, or human and will promote our quality of life by employing principles which support this stewardship.

Semands noted that local members of The John Birch Society had substantial influence in opposing the efforts in Edmond, and that local involvement is critical. "When it's in your own back yard, it's time to go to work."

And author Tom DeWeese, president of the American Policy Center, authored [How to Fight Back Against Sustainable Development](#), outlining effective ways to oppose Agenda 21.

The Sooner State has led the way in opposing many harmful policies, and many believe other cities will look to Edmond and GEL as a good example in opposing Agenda 21.



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