

RESOLUTION NO. 2019-0465

Adopted by the Sacramento City Council

December 10, 2019

Declaring a Climate Emergency and Proposing Mobilization Efforts to Restore a Safe Climate Background

- A. Human activities have warmed the Earth to a point that threatens climate stability, and climate change has already set in motion catastrophic changes to the Earth's systems, including fresh water scarcity and droughts, floods, extreme weather events and increased heat, wildfires, accelerated ice mass loss that will result in sea-level rise, and species extinction.
- B. Critical tipping points must be avoided, as they will have cascading feedback effects that are predicted to cause an increasingly uncontrollable climate emergency that includes a devastating burden to the global economy and could lead to a "hothouse" earth. With current greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions levels, nine tipping points have been identified as already active in 2019 and it is unknown how soon their thresholds may be exceeded.¹¹
- C. In November 2019, 11,000 scientists across 153 nations endorsed a report in the journal *BioScience* that warns of "untold suffering" and states, "We declare clearly and unequivocally that planet Earth is facing a climate emergency." The article also states, "To secure a sustainable future, we must change how we live. [This] entails major transformations in the ways our global society functions and interacts with natural ecosystems... [and] "the climate crisis has arrived and is accelerating faster than most scientists expected. It is more severe than anticipated, threatening natural ecosystems and the fate of humanity."
- D. In 2019, California and the Sacramento region are seeing the continued impacts of hotter temperatures and altered weather patterns with extreme wildfires resulting in hundreds of thousands of people evacuated during the extended wildfire season. The turmoil is exacerbated by multiple, extended public safety power outages affecting two million people served by investor-owned utilities, putting at risk those whose health depends upon access to power and causing millions of dollars in losses for households and businesses.

¹ Climate Tipping Points Too Risky To Bet Against, Nature, November 27, 2019

- E. On September 10, 2018, the State of California's Governor Brown issued an executive order establishing a 2045 statewide target to achieve carbon neutrality, and on the same day, Senate Bill 100 was passed to set a 100% clean electricity goal for the state by 2045.
- F. In 2018, the 4th Annual National Climate Assessment and California's 4th Climate Change Assessment warned that extreme weather and climate-related events in the United States are worsening, predicted increased drought cycles and heat waves in the western U.S. with a resulting three-fold increase in intensity and magnitude of wildfires, declining water supply and snow pack, increased flooding, impacted agriculture, as well as substantial damages to the U.S. economy and human health, unless GHG emissions are curbed.
- G. In 2015, leaders from 195 nations signed the Paris Climate Agreement at the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to address these threats by limiting destabilizing activities; however, a 2018 Special Report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) concludes that failure to implement these plans has resulted in an increase in global temperature that at the current rate will exceed the goal set by the Paris Climate Agreement by 2030.
- H. Low-income communities, communities of color, the young, the disabled, the elderly and indigenous communities have suffered the gravest consequences of climate change, and remediation of these impacts requires the active consultation and protection of vulnerable and historically exploited populations.
- I. Common sense and morality indicate that humanity can no longer safely emit GHGs and must demand an emergency mobilization effort to rapidly reach zero GHG emissions across all sectors to end GHG emissions and safely remove excess carbon from the atmosphere; to preserve and restore the Earth's biodiversity; to implement safety measures to protect all people and species from the consequences of abrupt warming in the near term; and to cultivate a shift toward climate resiliency that prioritizes conservation, community, and independence from fossil fuels.
- J. The Climate Emergency Movement is a global network of people dedicated to engaging the public and government agencies to prevent climate and ecological catastrophe to call for an emergency response to climate change and ecological destruction.
- K. In 2007, the City of Sacramento signed the United States Conference of Mayors Climate Protection Agreement to reduce carbon emissions consistent with the Kyoto Protocol international agreement, in addition to adopting the Sustainability Master Plan to guide future operational and policy decisions and create a more sustainable community.

- L. In 2010, the City adopted the Phase 1 Climate Action Plan for Internal Operations (IO-CAP) to reduce GHG emissions from the City's municipal operations; the City completed updates to the IO-CAP in 2016, identifying the City's attainment of a 24 percent reduction in municipal GHG emissions below 2005 levels, exceeding the adopted 2020 target for a 22 percent reduction.
- M. In 2012, the City adopted the Phase 2 Climate Action Plan for community-wide activities, committing to a 15 percent reduction below 2005 community-wide GHG emissions levels by 2020, and striving towards ongoing post-2020 reductions.
- N. In 2015, the City adopted the 2035 General Plan Update, which affirmed the City's GHG reduction targets, reiterating 2020 targets, and committing to achieve a 49 percent reduction below baseline 2005 levels by 2035, and an 83 percent by 2050.
- O. In 2016, the City became a signatory to the "Under2 MOU" coalition, reiterating the City's climate targets and committing to work with other states, regions, and cities to achieve these GHG reductions.
- P. In 2018, Mayor Darrell Steinberg and West Sacramento Mayor Christopher Cabaldon convened the Mayors' Commission on Climate Change calling for the establishment of goals and priority areas of action to achieve net zero greenhouse gas emissions, "Carbon Zero," by 2045.
- Q. The City's 2040 General Plan Update was initiated in late 2018, includes an update to the City's Climate Action Plan that will include revised GHG reduction targets and strategies to achieve them, based on community outreach, technical analysis, and recommendations from the Mayors' Commission on Climate Change.
- R. The City of Sacramento has implemented a number of important actions to reduce GHG emissions and enhance quality of life in our community, including long-term commitments to active transportation options; supporting public transit; renewable energy; energy efficiency programs; sustainable land use planning; 'green' management of public facilities, parks and open spaces; adoption of zero-emission vehicle technologies; acquisition of alternative and zero-emission fuels for City fleets; water efficiency and conservation; and partnerships with community-based partners for inclusive programs.
- S. Local communities have the insight, drive, capacity and capital to work for environmental justice, and fully understand that collaborative efforts across social and city borders can build transformative networks to combat climate change in our region.
- T. The City's goal is to eliminate greenhouse gas emissions to the greatest extent physically possible, to remove or sequester greenhouse gases to balance any

physically unavoidable GHG emissions, and ultimately to sequester more GHG than emitted, thereby decreasing atmospheric GHG concentrations and ultimately restoring a climate as similar as possible to the one that fostered the development of civilization.

**BASED ON THE FACTS SET FORTH IN THE BACKGROUND, THE CITY COUNCIL
RESOLVES AS FOLLOWS:**

- Section 1. The City Council of the City of Sacramento declares that we face an existential Climate Emergency that threatens our city, region, state, nation, humanity and the natural world; and
- Section 2. The City of Sacramento commits to building on existing climate commitments and to taking significant action to sustain and accelerate municipal and community carbon elimination in the short term, with maximum feasible efforts to implement emergency-speed carbon reduction actions towards eliminating emissions by 2030 as much as possible, recognizing that such a goal can only be reached through collaboration with regional partners as well as appropriate financial and regulatory assistance from state and federal authorities.
- Section 3. The City will consider the just transition as defined by the C40 organization as a framework for a fair shift to a carbon-free economy that is ecologically sustainable, equitable, and inclusive for all residents. The City of Sacramento recognizes community environmental justice, economic justice, and racial justice organizations and activists as partners in the Climate Emergency Mobilization collaborative effort. These partners will be kept apprised of plans, actions, and results, and be invited to provide input on drafts that will result in changes to decisions and actions if appropriate and convincing evidence and experience is provided.
- Section 4. The 2040 General Plan Update and Climate Action Plan shall present the City's approach to achieve carbon neutrality by 2045 and emergency actions needed towards emissions elimination by 2030, building on recommendations and analysis from the Mayor's Commission on Climate Change, significant community outreach by City staff, and mitigation measures incorporated from climate experts, community members, and financial advisors; and
- Section 5. As part of the Climate Action Plan development, City staff shall evaluate the resources needed to attain carbon neutrality by 2045 and emergency actions needed towards emissions elimination by 2030. Where existing funding or resources do not support the level of action needed, City staff shall identify gaps and provide recommendations to the City Manager and City Council.

- Section 6. The City of Sacramento affirms the need for the understanding, participation, and support of the entire Sacramento community for this declaration and for all actions and initiatives the City may adopt in response to the Climate Emergency. Implementation of the City's climate efforts shall include the engagement of community-based and grass-roots organizations and inclusive economic development partners, with a focus on low-income and disadvantaged communities, youth, and environmental justice.
- Section 7. The City shall continue to support and amplify local climate mitigation and adaptation efforts and the work of local agencies and partners, including the Sacramento Municipal Utility District (SMUD), the Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District (AQMD), the Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG), and other regional agencies and associations as well as the region's environmental member organizations. The City will support the development of community-based climate emergency plans and programs with local agencies and partners and with representation of those most affected by climate impacts.
- Section 8. The City of Sacramento affirms the need for the understanding, participation and support of the entire Sacramento community for all actions and initiatives the City may adopt in response to the climate emergency. The City therefore commits to support outreach, information and education for Sacramento residents and City staff on the urgency of climate responses, reduction of GHG emissions, and the policies and strategies to advance sustainability and resilience. The City further commits to assess its GHG reduction goals, actions and policies and provide annual progress reports and metrics.
- Section 9. The City of Sacramento will create city administrative review and assessment processes to incorporate consideration of GHG reduction impacts/effects for all significant proposed policies, programs or actions approved by City Council.
- Section 10. The City of Sacramento will continue to advocate for and join in climate mobilization efforts at the local, state, national, and global levels and support emergency mobilization efforts to mitigate climate change, end GHG emissions, and support investments in carbon sequestration to safely draw down carbon from the atmosphere.

Adopted by the City of Sacramento City Council on December 10, 2019, by the following vote:

Ayes: Members Ashby, Carr, Guerra, Hansen, Harris, Jennings, Schenirer, Warren and Mayor Steinberg

Noes: None

Abstain: None

Absent: None

Attest: **Mindy Cuppy** Digitally signed by Mindy Cuppy
Date: 2020.01.02 09:25:24 -08'00'
Mindy Cuppy, City Clerk

The presence of an electronic signature certifies that the foregoing is a true and correct copy as approved by the Sacramento City Council.