



DATE: January 12, 2021

TO: Mayor and Members of the City Council

FROM: Councilmember Jack Shu

SUBJECT: PRESENTATION OF PROPOSED CLIMATE EMERGENCY RESOLUTION,
DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION TO SEEK REVIEW BY CITY STAFF
AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION

Background

In 2018, the City adopted a Climate Action Plan (“CAP”) with a policy goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by at least 53 percent by 2035. The City has taken affirmative steps to implement the CAP, including joining the regional Community Choice Energy Program through San Diego Power and establishing an Environmental Sustainability Commission.

Proposal

The proposal is for the City Council to consider the adoption of a Resolution declaring a climate emergency. The proposed Draft Resolution presented with this memorandum includes actions such as updating existing plans, policies, and resources, providing education and outreach to the community, and collaborating with government agencies to advance the City’s climate action policies. I am requesting the City Council provide an opportunity for the Environmental Sustainability Commission and staff to review the proposed Resolution, make appropriate changes, and provide a recommendation to the City Council for formal adoption at a future meeting.

Thank you for your consideration.

Attachment:

A. Proposed Draft Climate Emergency City Council Resolution

RESOLUTION NO. 2021-

RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LA MESA,
CALIFORNIA DECLARING A CLIMATE EMERGENCY AND DIRECTING
THE CITY TO TAKE ACCELERATED AND COMPREHENSIVE ACTION
TO ADDRESS THE CLIMATE CRISIS

WHEREAS, climate change is an urgent unfolding crisis that presents a serious threat to human existence;

WHEREAS, the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change issued a special report on the impact of global warming and the need to reduce global greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by approximately forty-five percent by 2030, achieve 'net-zero' emissions by 2050, and achieve and maintain net-negative emissions after that to hold atmospheric warming to 1.5 °C and avoid the most catastrophic impacts of climate change;

WHEREAS, to stay within 1.5 °C, cities and nations throughout the world will need to significantly reduce their per capita emissions by 2030 or earlier;

WHEREAS, in recognition of the commitments necessary to address the scale and scope of the climate crisis, Governor Jerry Brown issued Executive Order B-55-18 ordering the State of California to achieve net-zero emissions as soon as possible, and no later than 2045, and achieve and maintain net-negative emissions thereafter. Governor Gavin Newsom has issued Executive Order N-79-20 requiring 100% of in-state auto sales to be zero-emission vehicles;

WHEREAS, the number of weather disasters causing over \$1B in damage in the US in the years 2016-2018 were twice the long-term average due to increased exposure, vulnerability, and frequency of perilous weather attributed to climate change;

WHEREAS, California is already feeling the impacts of climate change. Due to increased drought, heat, and extended extreme conditions, the wildfire season in California is now continuous and year-round. The 2018 season burned over 2 million acres and cost over \$3.5 billion. The 2020 season has been the most deadly and destructive in history, with over 9,600 wildfires scorching over 4 million acres, burning over 10,400 buildings, causing 31 deaths, and creating the first 'gigafire' in the State's history,

WHEREAS, climate change will increasingly make basic human necessities more expensive and difficult to obtain;

WHEREAS, vulnerable communities have historically borne the brunt of long standing environmental injustice, including fossil-fuel created degradation, and it is acknowledged that these communities must actively participate in the planning, decision

making, and implementation of climate action and must benefit equally from a just transition to a sustainable and equitable economy;

WHEREAS, efforts to control climate change will have many "co-benefits", such as cleaner air and water, improved health, local employment, cost savings for households, businesses, and the City, and the creation of a stronger and more resilient community;

WHEREAS, the City of La Mesa took a decisive leadership role in 2018 with the adoption of the Climate Action Plan, implementation of which is estimated will result in citywide GHG emissions reductions of at least 53 percent by 2035;

WHEREAS, the Climate Action Plan provides a roadmap for La Mesa to achieve the vision of becoming an engaged community that promotes environmental stewardship, economic vitality, and social equity to create a sustainable and thriving future for all;

WHEREAS, the City of La Mesa has already taken steps to lower GHG emissions by adopting the Climate Action Plan and participating in a regional Community Choice Energy program (San Diego Community Power) to achieve the goal of 100 percent renewable electricity citywide, and it is acknowledged that more work will be needed to achieve net-zero emissions and address the magnitude of the climate emergency; and

WHEREAS, the Environmental Sustainability Commission has been established to advise the Mayor and City Council on policies and projects, including lowering GHG emissions, implementing the Climate Action Plan, energy efficiency, environmental justice, and coordination with stakeholder groups.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the City Council of the City of La Mesa, as follows:

1. The City of La Mesa declares that an existential climate emergency threatens our cities, towns, region, state, nation, civilization, humanity and the natural world.
2. The City of La Mesa, with the participation of its Departments and Commissions, commits to update existing plans, policies, and distribution of resources as determined necessary to recognize the emergency climate situation such that climate impacts are considered in decision making.
3. The City of La Mesa commits to ensure environmental, economic, and social justice in its climate actions by actively seeking input from all community stakeholders, including those from vulnerable communities and encouraging such communities to actively participate in order to advocate directly for their needs.

4. The City of La Mesa, in order to ensure a just transition, will invite and encourage our community, labor, business, environmental justice, economic justice, and racial justice organizations to actively participate in all climate action planning processes, as appropriate.
5. The City of La Mesa, with reasonable measurements and planning, commits to reducing automobile dependency and increase transit, bike and pedestrian modes of transportation with a goal to reduce the overall Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT).
6. The City of La Mesa, in order to meet its goals for 2035 on a prorated annual basis, commits to updating its Climate Action Plan with new strategies and goals when timely and propitious, and prioritizing the implementation of its strategies, as resources allow.
7. The City of La Mesa commits to educating its residents about the climate emergency and working to catalyze a just climate mobilization effort at the local, regional, state, national, and global levels to protect our residents, people and life throughout the world as well as explaining the "co-benefits" of addressing this crisis.
8. The City of La Mesa commits to actively work with local, regional, state, and federal organizations such as neighboring cities, the San Diego Association of Governments, Metropolitan Transit System, California Air Resources Board, and the Environmental Protection Agency as well as the business community or other local organizations to address this crisis.
9. The City of La Mesa commits to working with local school districts, colleges, and universities to bring attention to its students about the severity of the climate crisis, the potential impacts on them and their lives, and the opportunities for them to take action, since they will be most affected.
10. The City of La Mesa underscores the need for full community participation, support, and partnership, and recognizes that collaboration with the residents of La Mesa, along with local and regional communities of academia, faith, climate science, environmental innovation, climate advocacy, civic engagement, and nonprofits, will be integral to climate action mobilization efforts.
11. The City of La Mesa endorses a just, countywide emergency climate action mobilization effort as well as regional, state and federal actions to reverse global warming to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and safely draw down carbon from the atmosphere as quickly as possible.

PASSED AND ADOPTED at a Regular meeting of the City Council of the City of La Mesa, California, held the ___ day of _____, 2021, by the following vote, to wit:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

CERTIFICATE OF THE CITY CLERK

I, MEGAN WEIGELMAN, City Clerk of the City of La Mesa, California, do hereby certify the foregoing to be a true and exact copy of Resolution No. 2021-___, duly passed and adopted by the City Council of said City on the date and by the vote therein recited.

MEGAN WEIGELMAN, CMC, City Clerk

(SEAL OF CITY)

DRAFT