



REPORT to the MAYOR and MEMBERS of the CITY COUNCIL
From the CITY MANAGER

DATE: February 23, 2021

SUBJECT: Adoption of a 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

ISSUING DEPT.: City Manager's Office

SUMMARY:

Issue:

Should the City of La Mesa adopt a Resolution declaring a climate emergency directing the City to take accelerated and comprehensive action to address the climate crisis?

Recommendation:

Staff recommends that the City Council adopt the Resolution declaring a climate emergency directing the City of take accelerated and comprehensive action to address the climate crisis.

Fiscal Impact:

There is no direct fiscal impact associated with the staff recommendation

City's Strategic Goals:

- Continue to improve high quality municipal services
- Enhanced recreation and quality of life opportunities

Climate Action Plan Reduction Strategy:

The recommended action is in alignment with and in broad support of advancing the City's Climate Action Plan ("CAP") measures and key actions.

Environmental Review:

This project is categorically exempt from the environmental review process under Section 15301 Class 1(b) of Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations.

BACKGROUND:

In March 2018, City Council adopted the CAP, which provides a roadmap to reduce community-wide greenhouse gas (“GHG”) emissions by 53% by 2035 from the 2010 baseline year. The 2018 CAP represents a bold and important step in acknowledging global climate change and its effects on the City and identifies detailed measures and key actions which the City will implement to reduce our community’s impact on climate change.

Declaring a climate emergency is an action taken by governments and institutions to acknowledge that humanity is in a climate emergency. Many jurisdictions are signing a Climate Emergency Resolution as an act of solidarity and leadership to address climate change in the next 10 years. The first declaration was made in December 2016 in Australia, and since then over 1,870 local governments in 28 countries have made climate emergency declarations, including over 130 in the United States.

Jurisdictions in California that made climate emergency declarations include the Cities of Los Angeles, Oakland, Sacramento, Santa Cruz, Santa Barbara, San Jose, the City and County of San Francisco, as well as the Counties of San Mateo, Sonoma, and Santa Barbara. Locally the Cities of San Diego, Del Mar, and Solana Beach have recently taken actions to declare a climate emergency.

DISCUSSION:

On January 12, 2021, Councilmember Shu initiated an item recommending the City Council pass a Resolution declaring a climate emergency. After initial City Council input and questions, City Council directed staff, the Environmental Sustainability Commission, and other Commissions as recommended by the City Manager, to review the proposed Climate Emergency Resolution to provide recommendations for edits to the Resolution. An ad hoc subcommittee, comprised of Councilmember Shu and Councilmember Baber, reviewed the recommendations from commissions and staff and prepare a final draft of the Climate Emergency Resolution for Council approval at a future meeting.

The City Manager recommended that in addition to the Environmental Sustainability Commission, that the Planning Commission and the Mobility Commission review and provide feedback to the draft Resolution. City staff presented the draft Resolution at the January 20, 2021 Planning Commission meeting, January 25, 2021, Environmental Sustainability Commission meeting, and the February 3, 2021, Mobility Commission meeting.

City staff collected Commissioner edits and comments and presented them to the ad hoc subcommittee on February 10, 2021. The draft Climate Emergency Resolution aligns with the current CAP and supports existing goals and measures. Should Council approve the Resolution, such action would be consistent with its previous actions to support climate protection.

CONCLUSION:

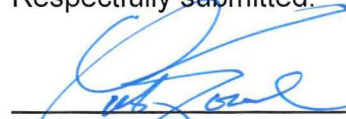
Staff recommends the City Council adopt the resolution declaring a climate emergency directing the City of take accelerated and comprehensive action to address the climate crisis.

Reviewed by:



Gregory P. Humora
City Manager

Respectfully submitted:



Carlo Tomaino
Assistant City Manager



Hilary Ego
Environmental Program Manager

Attachments: A. 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, total and per capita, by approximately forty-five percent from 2010 levels 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, in January 2021 the San Diego County Board of Supervisors committed to reduce carbon emissions to zero within 15 years;

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 experiencing the impacts of climate change. Due to increased average temperatures and changed precipitation patterns the wildfire season in California is now continuous and year-round. The 2018 season burned over 2 million acres (8,000 square kilometers) 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 (16,000 square kilometers), 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 below 2010 levels 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 energy 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 implementing the Climate Action Plan, lowering GHG emissions, energy efficiency, environmental justice, and coordination with stakeholder groups.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT AND IT IS HEREBY 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, zoning ordinances, 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 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.
4. 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.
5. 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.

6. 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).
7. 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 and prioritizing the implementation of its strategies.
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, California Energy Commission, Caltrans, 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 23th day of February 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)