



STAFF REPORT

City Council
Meeting Date: 12/10/2019
Staff Report Number: 19-269-CC

Regular Business: **Adopt Resolution No. 6535 endorsing the declaration of a climate emergency that demands accelerated actions on the climate crisis and requests regional collaboration to address climate change**

Recommendation

Staff recommends that the City Council adopt Resolution No. 6535 endorsing the declaration of a climate emergency that demands accelerated actions on the climate crisis and requests regional collaboration to address climate change.

Policy Issues

This action is consistent with the City's Climate Action Plan (CAP) that was approved by City Council in 2009 and is updated regularly. The City Council adopted a greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction target of 27 percent by 2020 from 2005 levels, and as reinforced in the general plan, the City aims to be a leader in efforts to address climate change.

Background

To celebrate Earth Day 2019, April 22, the City Council adopted Resolution No. 6493 reaffirming the City's commitment to tackle climate change at a local level.

Analysis

There is an urgency to address climate change as the latest United Nation's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) reports there is only 10 years left to mitigate the severest climate change impacts. Menlo Park would directly experience many of these impacts that include power shut-offs due to increased wildfires, sea level rise in the Belle Haven neighborhood, and water shortages as a result of extended droughts. Many cities are signing a Climate Emergency Resolution as an act of solidarity and leadership to address climate change in the next 10 years. There are also many other benefits to addressing climate change, such as cleaner air, healthier modes of travel, and reduced costs to operate buildings and vehicles.

The resolution:

1. Declares a climate emergency that threatens the economic and social well-being, health and safety, and security of the City of Menlo Park.
2. Commits the City to educating residents about the climate emergency and working to catalyze accelerated climate action at the local, state, national, and global levels to provide maximum protection for Menlo Park residents as well as all the people and species of the world.
3. Includes health, socio-economic and racial equity considerations in policymaking and climate

solutions at all levels and across all sectors as the consequences of climate change have significant impacts on all Menlo Park residents, but especially the young, the elderly, low income or communities of color, and other vulnerable populations.

4. Joins the nationwide call for regional accelerated climate collaborative action focused on transforming the region, enacting policies that dramatically reduce heat-trapping emissions, and rapidly catalyzing climate action at all levels of government to restore a safe climate.
5. Commits to the completion of the City's Climate Action Plan 2.0 that will include measurable climate-related goals and actions to attain carbon neutrality in advance of the State of California's 2045 goal.

The county of San Mateo, City and county of San Francisco, county of Santa Clara, other Bay area cities, including Berkeley, Alameda, Richmond, Santa Cruz, Hayward, and Oakland, and over 1,000 national, international and local jurisdictions have adopted similar declarations that are committed to reducing GHG emissions and planning for climate change.

The attached resolution aligns with the current strategies and goals in the CAP, and provides similar goals for the city to aspire toward in implementing the plan. It does not require any financial or time commitment from the City. The strategies outlined in the attached resolution would need City Council approval before implementation. This is the same process for how strategies in the CAP are approved that involve behavior, policy or infrastructure changes.

Impact on City Resources

The attached resolution does not require any City resources to implement.

Environmental Review

This action is not a project within the meaning of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines §§ 15378 and 15061(b)(3) as the signing of this resolution will not result in any direct or indirect physical change in the environment.

Public Notice

Public notification was achieved by posting the agenda, with the agenda items being listed, at least 72 hours prior to the meeting.

Attachments

- A. Climate Emergency Resolution 6535

Report prepared by:
Nick Pegueros, Assistant City Manager
Rebecca L. Lucky, Sustainability Manager

RESOLUTION NO. 6535**RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF MENLO PARK
ENDORING THE DECLARATION OF A CLIMATE EMERGENCY THAT
DEMANDS ACCELERATED ACTIONS ON THE CLIMATE CRISIS AND
REQUESTS REGIONAL COLLABORATION TO ADDRESS CLIMATE CHANGE**

WHEREAS, in April 2016 world leaders from 175 countries recognized the threat of climate change and the urgent need to combat it by signing the Paris Agreement, agreeing to keep warming "well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels" and to "pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C"; and

WHEREAS, rising global temperatures will cause sea levels in San Mateo County, which includes Menlo Park, to rise (up to six feet or more by 2100 under certain scenarios), contribute to increasingly extreme weather including intense rainfall, storms and heat events, and heighten risk of large wildfires; and

WHEREAS, climate change impacts will be most acutely felt by children, the elderly, those with preexisting physical and mental health conditions, low income or communities of color, and residents with unstable economic or housing situations; and

WHEREAS, the United States of America has disproportionately contributed to the climate and ecological crises and has repeatedly obstructed global efforts to transition toward a sustainable economy, and thus bears an extraordinary responsibility to rapidly solve these crises; and

WHEREAS, the City of Menlo Park has taken actions to address climate change and reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, including: adoption of a Climate Action Plan; automatic enrollment in Peninsula Clean Energy electricity service; adoption of the Community Zero Waste Plan; Reach Codes that require building electrification; and

WHEREAS, the current pace of climate actions may still fall short of reducing the projected harm to people and places and accelerated actions need to be taken to reduce our GHG emissions and implement solutions to prepare and protect our communities; and

WHEREAS, by declaring a climate emergency, the City of Menlo Park will join the County of San Mateo, City and County of San Francisco, County of Santa Clara, other Bay area cities, including Berkeley, Alameda, Richmond, Santa Cruz, Hayward, and Oakland, and over 1,000 national, international and local jurisdictions with similar declarations that are committed to reducing GHG emissions and planning for climate change; and

WHEREAS, the City of Menlo Park can act as a leader by both converting to an ecologically, socially and economically regenerative economy, and join the County of San Mateo in its call to other local jurisdictions and agencies to also approve a Climate Emergency Declaration to create a unified voice around climate change and to strengthen the call for state and federal actions and funds to address the economic, social, public health, and national security threats posed by the climate crisis.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the City of Menlo Park, acting by and through its City Council, having considered and been fully advised in the matter and good cause appearing therefore do hereby:

1. Declare a climate emergency that threatens the economic and social well-being, health and safety, and security of the City of Menlo Park.
2. Commit to educating the City's residents about the climate emergency and working to catalyze accelerated climate action at the local, state, national, and global levels to provide maximum protection for Menlo Park residents as well as all the people and species of the world.
3. Understand health, socio-economic and racial equity considerations should be included in policymaking and climate solutions at all levels and across all sectors as the consequences of climate change have significant impacts on all Menlo Park residents, but especially the young, the elderly, low income or communities of color, and other vulnerable populations.
4. Join the nation-wide call for regional accelerated climate collaborative action focused on transforming the region, enacting policies that dramatically reduce heat-trapping emissions, and rapidly catalyzing climate action at all levels of government to restore a safe climate.
5. Commit to the completion of the City's Climate Action Plan 2.0 that will include measurable climate-related goals and actions to attain carbon neutrality in advance of the State of California's 2045 goal.

I, Judi A. Herren, City Clerk of Menlo Park, do hereby certify that the above and foregoing City Council Resolution was duly and regularly passed and adopted at a meeting by said City Council on the tenth day of December, 2019, by the following votes:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

ABSTAIN:

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the Official Seal of said City on this tenth day of December, 2019.

Judi A. Herren, City Clerk