

## MEMO

**DATE:** March 5, 2019

**TO:** City Council

**FROM:** City Council Legislative Subcommittee (Dan Carson, Lucas Frerichs)

**SUBJECT:** Resolution Declaring a Climate Emergency and Proposing Mobilization Efforts to Restore a Safe Climate

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### **Recommendation**

Approve the attached Resolution, declaring a climate emergency and proposing a regional mobilization effort to restore a safe climate.

### **Fiscal Impact**

There is no immediate fiscal impact, however the resolution calls for city action on a Climate Action and Adaptation Plan Update and other policy responses to climate change, which may have fiscal impacts at a later date. The resolution also calls for maximum efforts to implement carbon reduction actions by 2030, and accelerate the existing 2050 net carbon neutrality goal for the Davis community to a 2040 target.

### **City Council Goals**

- Pursue environmental sustainability
- Drive a diverse and resilient economy
- Ensure a safe, healthy, equitable community

### **Background and Analysis**

In December 2018, a group of Davis citizens, led by Lynne Nittler and Lorenzo Kristov, began to work on a locally crafted resolution, as promoted by the Climate Mobilization Movement. Additional participants included Chris Granger, Robin Kozloff, Elizabeth Lasensky, Greg Miller, Steve Nyholm and Denise Peach.

Following coordination with Chris Brown, a statewide leader of the Climate Mobilization Movement, the group crafted a draft resolution specifically for Davis, using similar resolutions from other California cities as a guide. At a meeting on January 27, 2019, City Council members on the legislative subcommittee, Lucas Frerichs and Dan Carson, and city staff member Kerry Loux, met with the group to discuss the draft resolution. Following edits recommended at this meeting and subsequent coordination, the final proposed resolution has the support of the City Council legislative subcommittee.

The Climate Mobilization Movement is a global network of people in North America, Europe and Australia dedicated to engaging the public and government agencies to prevent climate and

ecological catastrophe by asking for a response to climate change and ecological destruction as an emergency.

According to the website, the cities of Oakland, Berkeley, Chico, Los Angeles and Santa Cruz, among others in California, have adopted Climate Emergency and Mobilization Resolutions. Sacramento and West Sacramento are working on their resolutions presently.

Because cities have often been the source of national progress, from minimum wage to civil rights, the mobilization group is targeting cities as leaders of emergency climate mobilization, and subsequently pushing for state and national mobilization. Goals and strategic priorities of the Climate Mobilization Movement include the following:

1. Pass declarations of Climate Mobilization with aggressive commitments to reach zero emissions and begin carbon drawdown at emergency speed (10 years or less).
2. Develop and implement mobilization policy locally.
3. Cities act as advocates for emergency Climate Mobilization to the public, to other cities, and at state and national levels.

There have been significant recent climate events that have impacted California and our Sacramento/Yolo communities in a direct manner. Scientific evidence shows that climate change is continuing to occur in California and is having significant, measurable impacts on the state and its people. An increasingly troubling story of accelerating rates of warming, record-breaking events, and species responses that have the potential to cause ecosystem disruptions has emerged. These include, but are not limited to the following:

1. **High heat days, deteriorated air quality and public health impacts.** Extreme heat days are increasing significantly, especially in the Central Valley. Hotter temperatures lead to more smog, which can damage lungs, increase childhood asthma, and cause respiratory/heart disease and death. “Certain segments of the population are at greater risk, including the elderly, infants, persons with chronic heart or lung disease, people who can’t afford air conditioning, and those who work outdoors”, according to California Attorney General Xavier Becerra’s office.
2. **Lasting droughts.** From 2011-2017, California experienced severe water shortage. This extended period of water emergency triggered state regulatory actions and local water conservation mandates.
3. **Sierra forest tree mortality.** The United States Forest Service survey released February 2019 found that more than 147 million trees have died across 9.7 million acres of federal, state, local and private lands in California since the drought began in 2010, greatly increasing wildfire risk. Even though the six-year drought officially ended with the 2016-2017 winter season, 2017-2018 precipitation levels were below average and slowed the recovery of the state’s surviving tree forests.
4. **Increased number and intensity of wildfires.** The October 2017 Northern California wildfires, including the Tubbs fire, caused more than \$9.4 billion in damage, destroyed

over 8,900 structures in Santa Rosa, displaced many people, killed 44 and injured another 192. In 2018, just a month after several devastating fires including the destructive Carr fire in Redding which killed 3 firemen and 2 civilians and destroyed 1,604 structures, the Camp fire - the deadliest and most destructive wildfire in state history - left 88 dead and took an unimaginable toll on public health, public safety, air, water, health, taxpayer funded services, and economic base. The entire town of Paradise was displaced, making some residents into climate refugees as well as impacting 'receiving cities'. The fire destroyed 18,806 structures, and crippled the extended region, including Davis, with severely unhealthy air quality for weeks after.

5. **Severe rainfall and resulting floods, mudslides.** In February 2017, rainfall across northern and central California resulted in at least 5 deaths and an estimated \$1.5 billion in damage, including damage to the Oroville Dam spillway, causing a multi-day evacuation of 188,000 residents, some of whom were temporarily placed at the Yolo County Fairgrounds.

#### Additional context and research related to climate change

The following background documents and research are available for more information:

- Information about [The Climate Mobilization](http://www.theclimatemobilization.org/) network can be found at [www.theclimatemobilization.org/](http://www.theclimatemobilization.org/).
- Indicators of climate change in California can be found at <https://oehha.ca.gov/climate-change/report/2018-report-indicators-climate-change-california>.
- In 2018, the **4<sup>th</sup> Annual National Climate Assessment** <https://nca2018.globalchange.gov/> and **California's 4<sup>th</sup> Climate Change Assessment** <http://www.climateassessment.ca.gov/> warned that extreme weather and climate-related events in the U.S. are worsening, predicting increased drought cycles and heat waves in the Western U.S. with a resulting three-fold increase in intensity and magnitude of wildfires, declined water supply, impacted agriculture, eroded beaches from sea level rise, declined snow pack, increased flooding, as well as substantial damages to the U.S. economy and human health, unless greenhouse gas emissions are curbed.
- The 2018 **Special Report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)** provides information on the impacts of global warming of 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels and related global greenhouse gas emission pathways, in the context of strengthening the global response to the threat of climate change, sustainable development, and efforts to eradicate poverty <https://www.ipcc.ch/sr15/>.
- The World Scientists' *Warning to Humanity: A Second Notice (2017)* calls for a drastic change in how ecological resources are managed, and includes 15,364 scientist signatories from 184 countries, <http://scientistswarning.forestry.oregonstate.edu/additional-signatories> William J. R., et

*al. BioScience, 67 (12), 1026–1028 <https://doi.org/10.1093/biosci/bix125>; Alliance of World Scientists. (2018). Additional Signatories.*

- The **Paris Climate Agreement** was signed by 195 nations at the 2015 United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. The agreement text can be found at [https://unfccc.int/files/meetings/paris\\_nov\\_2015/application/pdf/paris\\_agreement\\_english\\_.pdf](https://unfccc.int/files/meetings/paris_nov_2015/application/pdf/paris_agreement_english_.pdf)
- Information on critical tipping points can be found at *Hausfather, Z. (2018). Analysis: How much ‘carbon budget’ is left to limit global warming to 1.5C? Carbon Brief. <https://www.carbonbrief.org/analysis-how-much-carbon-budget-is-left-to-limit-global-warming-to-1-5c>. The article notes that these tipping points can have cascading feedback effects that are predicted to cause an increasingly uncontrollable climate emergency. With current greenhouse gas emission levels these tipping points could be passed as soon as 2050.*

### **Attachments**

1. Resolution

**RESOLUTION NO. 19- ----, SERIES 2019**

**RESOLUTION OF THE COUNCIL DECLARING A CLIMATE EMERGENCY AND  
PROPOSING MOBILIZATION EFFORTS TO RESTORE A SAFE CLIMATE**

WHEREAS, 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, accelerating ice mass loss that will result in sea-level rise, and species extinction; and

WHEREAS, 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 with current greenhouse gas (GHG) emission levels these tipping points could be passed as soon as 2050; and

WHEREAS, 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, which sets a 100% clean electricity goal for the state by 2045; and

WHEREAS, 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, predicting increased drought cycles and heat waves in the western U.S. with a resulting three-fold increase in intensity and magnitude of wildfires, declined 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; and

WHEREAS, since 2017, over 21,000 scientists from 184 countries have signed a "Second Warning to Humanity" calling for a drastic change in how ecological resources are managed; and

WHEREAS, in 2015, global 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 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, according to the 2018 Special Report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC); and

WHEREAS, 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; and

WHEREAS, common sense and morality indicate that humanity can no longer safely emit GHGs and must demand an emergency mobilization effort to rapidly reach zero emissions across all sectors to 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; and

WHEREAS, the Climate Mobilization Movement is a global network of people in North America, Europe and Australia dedicated to engaging the public and government agencies to prevent climate and ecological catastrophe by asking for a response to climate change and ecological destruction as an emergency; and

WHEREAS, the City of Davis has demonstrated leadership in climate change advocacy, including a July 11, 2017 Resolution Reaffirming its Commitment to Taking Action to Reduce Climate Pollution Consistent with the Davis Climate Action and Adaptation Plan (CAAP) and in Alignment with the Paris Climate Agreement; an April 18, 2006 Resolution Endorsing the US Mayor's Climate Protection Agreement; and a September 29, 1999 Resolution to Participate in the Cities for Climate Protection Campaign; and

WHEREAS, the City of Davis, on November 18, 2008, adopted local GHG emission reduction targets with a goal of being a net carbon neutral community by 2050, substantively ahead of state and federal targets at the time, and in 2010, adopted the Davis CAAP to reduce GHG emissions; create green jobs; and prepare for the impacts of climate change on public health, infrastructure, the economy, ecosystems, and public spaces in our community; and

WHEREAS, the City of Davis has taken a number of important actions to reduce GHG emissions and enhance quality of life in our community, including long-term commitments to alternative transportation options; advanced energy efficiency building standards; sustainable land use planning; 'green' management of public facilities, parks and open spaces; partnerships with Cool Davis and other community-based organizations for outreach and engagement; proactive collaboration with regional partners for groundwater, surface water and other resources; and establishing Valley Clean Energy (VCE), a regional community choice energy provider offering cost competitive, local renewable choices for electricity provision; and

WHEREAS, it is the firm belief of the City Council that Davis and the surrounding communities have the insight, drive, capacity and capital to work for environmental justice, and fully understand that when we work together across social and city borders, we can build transformative networks to combat climate change in our region.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** by the City Council of City of Davis that we face an existential Climate Emergency that threatens our city, region, state, nation, civilization, humanity and the natural world; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the City of Davis commits to taking significant action to move toward net municipal and community carbon neutrality in the short term, with maximum efforts to implement carbon reduction actions by 2030; and accelerate the existing 2050 Davis carbon neutrality goal to a 2040 target; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the City of Davis and City Council will engage with the Natural Resources Commission and other commissions; community-based partner organizations including Cool Davis and Valley Climate Action Center; Sacramento Area Council of Governments, Capital Region Climate Readiness Collaborative and other regional agencies; and leverage the resources of the University of California, Davis to accelerate a robust update to the Davis CAAP and integration with the City's updated General Plan; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the City of Davis will pursue efforts via the local community choice aggregator, Valley Clean Energy, to supply clean electricity that is 100% renewable and increasingly locally sourced for municipal, residential, commercial and business, and other non-residential uses; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the City of Davis affirms the need for the understanding, participation and support of the entire Davis community for all actions and initiatives the City may adopt in response to the climate emergency; the City therefore commits to providing outreach, information and education for Davis residents and City staff on the urgency of climate responses, reduction of GHG emissions, the policies and strategies to advance sustainability and resilience; and to regularly assess its GHG reduction goals, actions and policies and provide progress reports and metrics annually; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the City of Davis will explore 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; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the City of Davis recognizes community environmental justice and commits to keeping the considerations of disadvantaged communities central to the climate emergency mobilization planning processes, and to invite and encourage these communities to directly advocate for their specific needs and equity in the environmental justice process; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, The City of Davis will advocate for and join in a climate mobilization at the local, state, national, and global levels and support emergency mobilization efforts to mitigate climate change and;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, The City of Davis will advocate for implementing aggressive state and federal policies to eliminate GHG emissions, such as in **transportation**—improving fuel efficiency of personal and commercial vehicles, encouraging active transportation (bicycling, walking and public transit) and moving toward completely electrified transportation systems; in the **built environment**—adopting energy efficiency standards for appliances and products, moving toward zero net energy standards for new and retrofitted construction, requiring provision of 100% renewable clean energy, reducing heat pollution impacts and providing shade; and in **consumption**— addressing water management and conservation, sustainable food and agricultural issues, waste reduction, managing our forests, urban areas, natural and working lands to sequester carbon, and engaging in GHG reduction implementation policies related to other emerging standards and technologies.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the City Council of the City of Davis on this 5th day of March, 2019 by the following vote:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

Brett Lee  
Mayor

ATTEST:  
Zoe S. Mirabile, CMC  
City Clerk