

**A RESOLUTION TO DECLARE A CLIMATE EMERGENCY AND BEGIN AN EMERGENCY MOBILIZATION EFFORT TO HELP RESTORE A SAFE CLIMATE BY IMPLEMENTING THE TOWN'S CLIMATE ACTION AND RESPONSE PLAN (2021-04-07/R-11)**

WHEREAS, world leaders have recognized the urgent need to combat climate change by signing the Paris Agreement, agreeing to keep global warming "below 2°C above pre-industrial levels," and pursuing "efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C"; and

WHEREAS, on June 12, 2017, the Town Council adopted a resolution to proportionally uphold the commitment made by the United States in the Paris Agreement by reducing emissions by 26-28% by 2025; and

WHEREAS, the loss of life and damage caused by current global warming demonstrates that the Earth is already too hot for safety and has resulted in the increased frequency and intensity of wildfires, floods, sea level rise, disease, drought, and extreme weather; and

WHEREAS, according to the United Nations' Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty, a 1.5°C increase in global temperature could expose 500 million people to water poverty, 36 million people to food insecurity because of lower crop yields, and 4.5 billion people to heat waves; and

WHEREAS, in October 2018, the United Nations released a special report which projected that limiting warming to even a 1.5°C target this century will require an unprecedented transformation of every sector of the global economy by 2030; and

WHEREAS, the United States of America and other industrialized countries have disproportionately contributed to climate change and accordingly bear an extraordinary responsibility in rapidly solving this crisis; and

WHEREAS, scientists have warned that we are currently overshooting our ecological limits and potentially driving the sixth mass extinction of species that could devastate much of life on Earth for millennia, and pose as great a risk to humanity as climate change, according to the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services; and

WHEREAS, restoring a safe and stable climate requires an emergency climate mobilization on a scale not seen since World War II in order to: (1) reach zero greenhouse gas ("GHG") emissions across all sectors of the economy, (2) rapidly and safely drawdown and remove all excess carbon from the atmosphere until safe, pre-industrial climate conditions are restored, and (3) implement measures to protect all people and species from the consequences of an abrupt climate breakdown; and

WHEREAS, such necessary measures to restore a safe climate include: (1) a rapid and just phase-out of fossil fuels; (2) ending GHG emissions as quickly as possible to establish a zero-emissions economy; (3) a widespread effort to safely drawdown excess carbon from the atmosphere; and (4) a full transition to a regenerative agriculture system; and (5) widespread conservation and restoration of ecosystems; and

WHEREAS, justice requires that frontline and marginalized communities actively participate in the planning and implementation of this climate mobilization effort and equally benefit from the transition to a climate-safe economy; and

WHEREAS, the scope and scale of action necessary to stabilize the climate and biosphere will require unprecedented levels of public awareness, engagement, and deliberation to develop and implement effective, just, and equitable policies to address the climate emergency; and

WHEREAS, at present, the Town does not currently have the local legislative authority to phase out fossil fuel production, power generation, or use within the Town as a whole; and

WHEREAS, in 2018, and in partnership with other Triangle area cities and counties, the Town completed its first Resilience Assessment, helping the Town plan for greater resilience by identifying risks and vulnerabilities related to climate stressors like increased rainfall and extreme temperatures; and

WHEREAS, on September 25, 2019, Town Council adopted a resolution to be a 100% clean, renewable energy community by 2050 and to create a Climate Action and Response Plan to begin transitioning to this new clean energy goal; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Chapel Hill's draft Climate Action and Response Plan outlines a several of the Town's actions to date, as well as a series of action categories and steps that can be taken to (1) continue reducing the GHG emissions that cause climate change and (2) help us adapt and build resilience to address the impacts of our changing climate; and

WHEREAS, this plan puts us on a path to address the greatest challenge of our time, and Chapel Hill will be a leader this effort; and

WHEREAS, the Town has a history of environmental leadership and must accelerate its efforts to create an ecologically regenerative local economy that is socially, racially, and economically just. The Town must accomplish this task at emergency speed, through broad community mobilization and by advocating for the regional, national, and international efforts needed to reverse global warming and our current ecological crisis; and

WHEREAS low-income communities and communities of color in Chapel Hill have historically faced unfair levels of displacement, violence, discrimination, and governmental apathy and underfunding; currently face unequal access to suitable housing, education, health services, and healthy food; and are projected to be more heavily impacted by the effects of climate change due to a lack of the funding and resources necessary for stability and resiliency.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the Town of Chapel Hill that the Council:

1. Declares that a climate and ecological emergency threatens our Town, region, state, nation, civilization, humanity, and the natural world; and
2. Recognizes that there is a global climate emergency which demands a massive-scale mobilization to halt, reverse, and address its consequences and causes; and
3. Supports the passage of legislation that would initiate a national emergency-speed mobilization to reverse global warming and the ecological crisis described in this Resolution, which could include, but not be limited to bills like H.Con.Res.52 and S.Con.Res.22, a carbon fee and dividend policy, cap and trade policy, or other similar comprehensive GHG emission reduction policies; and
4. Commits to call other North Carolina municipalities, the State of North Carolina, the United States Congress, the President of the United States, and all governments and people worldwide to declare a climate emergency and cooperatively initiate a climate mobilization to reverse global warming and the ecological crisis, and provide maximum protection for all people and species of the world; and

5. Supports the delivery of this resolution to all relevant State and Federal agencies and elected representatives representing constituents within the Town along with a request that all necessary support and assistance needed to effectuate this resolution be provided as soon as possible; and
6. Authorizes the Town Manager and staff to share this resolution and to support (or oppose), on behalf of the Town, legislative, administrative or other actions that can help (or hinder) the Town in its efforts to reach our climate action goals; and
7. Commits the Town to an equitable and just town-wide mobilization effort to do our part to reverse global warming that, if met with all necessary financial and regulatory assistance and authorization from State and Federal authorities, would net-zero GHG emissions as quickly as possible and no later than 2050. Further, the Town commits to more deeply incorporate sustainability considerations into its departmental decision making and programs; and
8. Establishes, through the adoption of the Climate Action and Response Plan, updated overall GHG emissions reduction goals and recommits to regularly evaluate these goals for additional adaptation and resilience strategies in preparation for intensifying local climate impacts; and
9. Continues to recognize that the full participation, inclusion, support, and leadership of community organizations, faith communities, youth, labor organizations, academic institutions, indigenous groups, and racial, gender, family, immigrant and disability justice organizations and other allies are integral to an equitable response and mobilization effort; and
10. Recognizes the need for ongoing public engagement throughout the town and to implement the adopted Climate Action and Response Plan, perform annual reviews and continue updating the plan to achieve the Town's renewable energy and GHG reduction goals. This outreach must ensure the voices of frontline and historically marginalized communities are included and that engagement results in real benefits. This input will be incorporated into the Town's implementation of projects and programs, as well as future updates to the plan; and
11. Acknowledges the strategic value of the recently adopted Charting Our Future land use initiative and the current update to the Land Use Management Ordinance (LUMO) for developing land use patterns and development regulations that can reduce GHG emissions and build resilience; and
12. Commits to identifying options for funding the implementation of the adopted Climate Action and Response Plan, starting with the upcoming Fiscal Year 2021-22 budget cycle; and
13. Requests of staff, through the Town's Capital Improvement Plan ("CIP") and budget process, the identification of projects and funding needed to help achieve the goals of the adopted Climate Action and Response Plan, as well as areas with insufficient funding; and
14. Commits to working with business, land development, transportation, and other private sectors to identify and incentivize effective ways to reduce GHG emissions and meet the goals established in the adopted Climate Action and Response Plan.

This the 7<sup>th</sup> day of April, 2021.