



CITY COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

Meeting Date: July 15, 2021

From: Adrienne Etherton, Sustainability Manager

Subject: Climate Emergency Declaration – Resolution No. 2021-62

Community Goal/Result: Ecological Sustainability

Purpose

To declare that the climate crisis is an urgent threat requiring emergency action, proclaim the City's commitment to continued Climate Action, and establish future emissions reduction goals.

Recommendation

Approve Resolution No. 2021-62 "Declaring a Climate Emergency and Initiating Immediate and Accelerated Action to Address the Climate Crisis and Limit Global Warming to 1.5 Degrees Celsius".

Background

In 2015, Brisbane adopted a Climate Action Plan (CAP) with a goal of reducing local greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions 15% by 2020. In 2018, staff began work on a potential CAP update for 2030. Climate Action Plans include setting a reduction target, forecasting emissions for a "Business as Usual" scenario, and selecting measures to reduce emissions along with estimating their impact to reach the target. The reduction goal is typically a percent reduction in gross emissions from a community's baseline year, i.e. 20% below the 2005 baseline by 2020, or 50% by 2030. The most recent GHG inventory (2017 calendar year, completed in 2020) showed an estimated 20.3% reduction, beating our previous goal and indicating the need for new targets.

The Brisbane Baylands development is poised to roughly double the size of the City, which poses challenges for the method typically used in Climate Action Planning. No other California jurisdiction, to our knowledge or that of consulted authorities, has grown at such a rate during the "Climate Action Planning era." Moving forward with a Climate Action Plan that either fails to consider the growth at the Baylands or that includes emissions projections that do not align with those in the Baylands EIR could expose the City to legal risk.

Staff consulted experts from the Baylands EIR consultants, Bay Area Air Quality Management District, and the Governor's Office of Planning and Research; none were able to recommend an approach to a CAP update before completing the Baylands EIR, so the update was put on hold. Meanwhile, staff and the Open Space and Ecology Committee have continued to implement CAP measures under the 2015 plan, to work with County staff and consultants to inventory our past GHG emissions, and to bring forward new programs and policies to drive down emissions.

In recent years, a number of agencies have adopted Climate Emergency Declarations to emphasize the severity of the climate crisis and the need to take action at the pace and scale commensurate with an emergency. Declarations also commonly emphasize environmental justice, green jobs, and social equity, issues that have increasingly become recognized as crucial elements of the necessary transition to just, climate

resilient communities. Locally, the County of San Mateo and Cities of Oakland, San Francisco, and Menlo Park have adopted Climate Emergency Declarations.

Discussion

Adopting a Climate Emergency Declaration in Brisbane will declare the City's commitment to climate action and environmental justice, and establish high-level goals despite the lack of an updated Climate Action Plan. While it does not fulfill all the needs of a CAP or provide estimates of GHG reductions, it can provide many benefits in terms of City messaging, frameworks for future programs and policies, and targets to work towards.

In addition, it is conceivable that funding sources or other programmatic opportunities could require established climate reduction targets or plans to be eligible. Both the state budget and legislation being discussed in Washington include large sums for climate and environmental actions. Our hope is that a Climate Emergency Declaration would cover any such eligibility requirements while avoiding legal challenges.

The proposed resolution was developed by staff and the Open Space and Ecology Committee's Climate Action Plan subcommittee, and was modeled on those passed by the County of San Mateo and the City of San Francisco. Current state targets include 40% GHG reductions below 1990 levels by 2030, which is roughly equivalent to 50% reduction below 2005 levels (the City's baseline inventory) by 2030, and carbon neutrality by 2045. The suggested "stretch goals" of 66% reduction by 2030 and carbon neutrality by 2040 show leadership by being more ambitious than minimums required by the state, but we believe they are realistically achievable with the focused effort and resources the resolution's language indicates.

OSEC discussed the draft resolution at their May meeting and unanimously recommended its consideration by the City Council. Subsequently, the OSEC Council Liaisons and CAP Subcommittee met and recommended minor edits that have been incorporated.

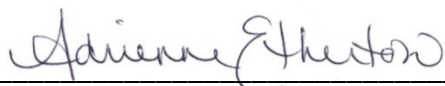
Fiscal Impact

There is no impact from adopting the Climate Emergency Declaration. The resolution proposes unspecified future funds and staff resources to climate change mitigation and adaptation.


Measure of Success: The City adopts a Climate Emergency Declaration.

Attachments

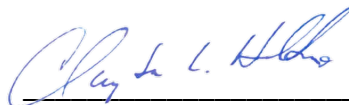
1. Climate Emergency Declaration



Prepared by: Adrienne Etherton, Sustainability Manager



Randy Breault, Public Works Director



Clay Holstine, City Manager

RESOLUTION NO. 2021-62

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BRISBANE DECLARING A CLIMATE EMERGENCY AND INITIATING IMMEDIATE AND ACCELERATED ACTION TO ADDRESS THE CLIMATE CRISIS AND LIMIT GLOBAL WARMING TO 1.5 DEGREES CELSIUS

WHEREAS, Climate change is an urgent unfolding crisis that presents a serious threat to global stability and human existence, as well as the environment and survival of countless species; and

WHEREAS, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) issued a special report on the impacts of global warming and the need to substantially reduce global greenhouse gas emissions well before 2030 to hold warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius to avoid the most catastrophic impacts of climate change; and

WHEREAS, according to the IPCC, increasing greenhouse gases (GHG) are on track to raise global temperatures 2.5 - 3 degrees Celsius; and

WHEREAS, in 2018, the United States' Fourth National Climate Assessment made clear that climate change will wreak havoc across the United States, and that the current pace and scale of national climate action is not sufficient to avert substantial damage to the economy, environment, and human health over the coming decades; and

WHEREAS, Brisbane, like the Bay Area and the state of California, is already suffering impacts of climate change in the form of droughts, air pollution, extreme heat, lowland flooding, wildfires and stagnating smoke, and these impacts will grow more severe if global greenhouse gas emissions are not significantly reduced; and

WHEREAS, climate change will continue to make basic human necessities such as food, housing, healthcare, transportation and energy more expensive and, along with inadequate wages, add additional pressure to the Bay Area's crises of affordability and wealth inequality; and

WHEREAS, the burden of environmental injustices and the fossil-fuel economy have fallen on people unequally, and the direct and indirect impacts of climate change will disproportionately affect communities least able to prepare for, cope with, and recover from them; and

WHEREAS, climate change will have adverse effects on biodiversity, endangered species populations, and the fragmented habitat that exists within the urban envelope and throughout the Bay Area including San Bruno Mountain; and

WHEREAS, to stay within 1.5 degrees Celsius, all cities throughout the USA will need to significantly reduce their aggregate and per capita emissions by 2030, and as a city with a long history of environmental stewardship, Brisbane chooses to lead by example; and

WHEREAS, the current pace of climate actions needs to be accelerated to address the projected harm to people and places, and urgent actions need be taken to reduce our GHG emissions and implement solutions to prepare and protect communities; and

WHEREAS, the City of Brisbane chooses to leverage the post-pandemic recovery as an opportunity to grow in a new direction that relies less on pollution and fossil-fuels and embraces equity, efficiency, and renewable resources.

NOW, THEREFORE, THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BRISBANE RESOLVES AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. To declare a climate emergency that threatens the economic and social well-being, health and safety, and security of the City of Brisbane and its residents.

Section 2. The City commits to completing a Climate Action Plan that will include climate-related goals and actions, with aspirational goals of 66% GHG reduction below the 2005 baseline by 2030 and carbon neutrality by 2040.

Section 3. The City of Brisbane commits to reducing the transportation emissions which account for a majority of community emissions by fostering safe, accessible, equitable,

intelligent, and clean multimodal travel options, infrastructure, and community connectivity.

Section 4. The City of Brisbane will coordinate its climate efforts with the County of San Mateo and the other 19 cities in the County, and other regional partners like Peninsula Clean Energy, to rapidly eliminate greenhouse gas emissions from fossil fuels and other sources.

Section 5. Health, socio-economic and racial equity considerations shall be included in local climate mitigation and adaptation planning, policy, and program delivery, ensuring a just transition for all people.

Section 5. Any legislation or projects started through the climate emergency process should pay living wages, which may be accomplished through mechanisms such as requiring the payment of prevailing wage, creation of employment contracts through collective bargaining, hiring unionized employees, and/or requiring a Project Labor Agreement. Such legislation or projects should also encourage career opportunities, including training and retraining, and investments in working-class, low-income communities, and communities of color historically and disproportionately impacted by pollution, high unemployment, poverty and environmental injustice.

Section 6. The City will coordinate climate efforts that increase resilience, including the resiliency of City operations and facilities, adaptive measures, infrastructure modernization, and economic security, and 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.

Section 7. The City of Brisbane will continue to educate residents about the seriousness of climate change, invest in climate solutions, and address the current and future impacts of climate change.

Section 8. The Brisbane City Council will develop high priority strategies to achieve deep emission reductions at emergency speed.

Section 9. The City Council directs staff to report annually to the Council, starting in April 2022, on progress towards meeting resiliency goals and achieving carbon neutrality.

Section 10. To meet the City of Brisbane's ambitious greenhouse gas emission reduction targets, the City Council urges all staff, committees and commissions to review procedures, programs and the General Plan, recommend updates or new policies, and take into account the effect these policies will have on marginalized communities.

Section 11. The Brisbane City Council will work with the Committees, Commissions, residents and staff to develop a budget that enables urgent climate action, avoids further investment of public dollars in fossil-fuel reliant infrastructure when there are clean energy alternatives, supports public sector employees, and ensures a climate resilient future for all Brisbane residents.

Karen Cunningham, Mayor

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PASSED AND ADOPTED at a regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Brisbane held on the fifteenth day of July 2021, by the following vote:

AYES:
NOES:
ABSENT:
ABSTAIN:

ATTEST:

Ingrid Padilla, City Clerk