

RESOLUTION NO. 19-

**RESOLUTION ENDORSING THE DECLARATION OF A CLIMATE EMERGENCY
AND REQUESTING REGIONAL COLLABORATION ON AN IMMEDIATE
MOBILIZATION EFFORT TO RESTORE A SAFE CLIMATE**

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, more than 40 mayors in the greater San Francisco Bay Area have committed to adopt, honor, and uphold the Paris Agreement, noting, “We will intensify efforts to meet each of our cities’ current climate goals, push for new action to meet the 1.5 degrees Celsius target, and work together to create a 21st century clean energy economy . . . The world cannot wait—and neither will we”; and,

WHEREAS, according to the National Centers for Environmental Information, in 2017 “the U.S. was impacted by 16 separate billion-dollar disaster events, tying 2011 for the record number of billion-dollar disasters for an entire calendar year,” with a cumulative cost of \$309.5 billion, shattering the previous U.S. annual record cost of \$219.2 billion in 2005 due to hurricanes; and,

WHEREAS, severe rainfall in February 2017 across northern and central California resulted in at least five deaths and an estimated \$1.5 billion in damage, including to the Oroville Dam spillway, causing a multi-day evacuation of 188,000 residents, and to the city of San Jose, flooding neighborhoods and forcing 14,000 residents out of their homes; and,

WHEREAS, the October 2017 Northern California wildfires caused more than \$9.4 billion in damage, destroying over 8,900 structures, displacing many people, killing 44, and injuring another 192; and,

WHEREAS, climate change-fueled droughts, famines, and diseases have already killed millions of people in the global southern hemisphere, and displaced millions more; and,

WHEREAS, indigenous and low-income communities and communities of color in the United States and abroad have suffered the gravest consequences of global warming; and,

WHEREAS, the death and destruction already wrought by global warming of approximately 1°C demonstrate that the Earth is already too hot for safety and justice for the world’s most vulnerable people; and

WHEREAS, according to the latest climate projections, humanity is on to warm the Earth at sustained average of 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels as soon as 2026; and

WHEREAS, it is projected that sustained warming of 1.5°C could cause a long-term, “continuous thaw” of the Arctic permafrost, which could turn the tundra from a net carbon sink into a source in the 2020s; and,

WHEREAS, it is estimated that the Greenland Ice Sheet is likely to completely collapse at 1.6°C of sustained warming, which NASA scientists have concluded would lead to 23 feet of sea-level rise, billions of climate refugees, and a “global-scale catastrophe”; and,

WHEREAS, tipping points such as those stated above must be avoided, as they will have feedback effects causing further and increasingly uncontrollable climate change and costs; and,

WHEREAS, according to the Ecological Footprint, it is estimated that humanity currently uses the equivalent of 1.7 Earths per year in resource consumption and waste disposal; and,

WHEREAS, it is estimated that if the world consumed as the average American consumes, humanity would need the equivalent of 4.97 Earths per year in resource consumption and waste disposal; and,

WHEREAS, climate change is driving species extinction rates today 1,000 times higher than the natural rate, with a predicted 65 percent decline in vertebrate populations by 2020 and up to 37 percent of all plant and animal species by 2050; and,

WHEREAS, it is an act of unspeakable injustice and cruelty to knowingly subject our fellow humans now and in the future to societal disintegration, food and clean water shortages, economic collapse, and early death on an increasingly uninhabitable planet; and,

WHEREAS, common sense and morality indicate that humanity must seek to draw down the excess carbon from the atmosphere in order to restore a safe level of greenhouse gas concentrations and global average temperatures; and,

WHEREAS, corrective and preventive action requires mobilization on a scale not seen since World War II; and,

WHEREAS, justice requires that those that have contributed the most to this global climate and ecological cataclysm must carry a commensurate burden in reversing it; and,

WHEREAS, the Global Climate Action Summit, brought “together leaders from state and local governments, business, and citizens from around the world demonstrating how the tide has turned in the race against climate change, showcasing climate action taking place around the world, and inspiring deeper commitments from each other and from national governments,” held in San Francisco in September 2018; and,

WHEREAS, in Benicia, transportation contributes nearly half of our carbon emissions; and,

WHEREAS, Benicia is particularly vulnerable to sea-level rise, storm surge, and coastal erosion, exacerbated by extreme weather events with increased flooding and increased temperatures causing evaporation on land; and,

WHEREAS, we in Benicia can rise to the challenge of this great crisis with the active consultation, participation, and benefit of workers, businesses and residents, creating well-paying local jobs in building and installing renewable energy infrastructure, growing and supporting healthy plant-based food grown in the community and county, restoring ecosystems, and retrofitting and redesigning our current environment, electric grid, and transportation systems;

NOW BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, the City of Benicia declares that an existential climate emergency threatens our city, region, state, nation, civilization, humanity and the natural world and that time is of the essence.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the City of Benicia endorses a just, citywide emergency mobilization effort to reverse global warming, affirming city policy and priorities, and appropriate financial and regulatory assistance from the County of Solano and State and Federal authorities, to end citywide greenhouse gas emissions and safely draw down carbon from the atmosphere as quickly as possible.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the City of Benicia commits to promoting a walkable city that includes parking policies that promote “park once” transit and shared on demand trips to reduce vehicle miles traveled by employees and residents and to embrace a robust mobility program.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the City of Benicia commits to seeking development of housing for infill lots, repurposed lots and promote ADUs and fair renters’ policies and commit to timely processing of housing projects.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the City of Benicia commits to developing a just emergency mobilization implementation plan and updating its Climate Action Plan and goals to reflect a 100% reduction in community-wide greenhouse gas emissions, with the vision of becoming a carbon sink, by or before 2030.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the City of Benicia recommits to educating our residents about the climate emergency and working to catalyze a just emergency climate mobilization at the local, state, national, and global levels to protect our residents as well as all the people and species of the world.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the City of Benicia underscores the need for full community participation and support, and recognizes that the residents of Benicia, Sustainable Solano, Good Neighbor Steering Committee, and other community organizations will be integral to the mobilization effort.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the City of Benicia commits to keeping the considerations of vulnerable communities central to all climate emergency mobilization planning

processes and to inviting and encouraging such communities to actively participate in order to advocate directly for their needs;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the City of Benicia, in order to ensure a just transition, will consult with community, labor, environmental justice, economic justice, and racial justice organizations at every step of the climate emergency mobilization process.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the City of Benicia calls on the Solano Transportation Agency, SolTrans, and other appropriate local agencies to participate in this regional emergency just mobilization effort.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the City of Benicia calls for a regional just transition and climate emergency mobilization collaborative effort, inviting concerned residents, youth, faith, labor, business, environmental, economic, racial and social justice organizations as well as other community groups, and all elected officials in and from Solano County and nearby Counties, especially all the mayors.

On motion of Council Member _____, seconded by Council Member _____, the above Resolution was adopted by the City Council of the City of Benicia at a regular meeting of said Council held on the _____ day of _____, 2019 by the following vote:

Ayes:

Noes:

Absent:

Elizabeth Patterson, Mayor

Attest:

Lisa Wolfe, City Clerk

Date