

RESOLUTION NO. NS-29,462

RESOLUTION ENDORSING THE DECLARATION OF A CLIMATE EMERGENCY AND
REQUESTING REGIONAL COLLABORATION ON A 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, 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 track to warm the Earth a 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,

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"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 state 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, the purpose of which was to "bring together leaders from state and local governments, business, and citizens from around the world, to demonstrate how the tide has turned in the race against climate change, showcase climate action taking place around the world, and inspire deeper commitments from each other and from national governments," was held in San Francisco in September 2018; and

WHEREAS, in the City of Santa Cruz transportation contributes over half of our carbon emissions; and

WHEREAS, the City of Santa Cruz is particularly vulnerable to sea-level rise, salt water intrusion, wildfire and coastal erosion, exacerbated by extreme weather events with increased

flooding and increased temperatures causing evaporation on land; and

WHEREAS, we in the City of Santa Cruz can rise to the challenge of this great crisis with the active consultation, participation, and benefit of workers and disadvantaged communities, creating hundreds of well-paying local jobs, in building and installing renewable energy infrastructure, growing healthy plant-based food that stays in the community, restoring ecosystems, and retrofitting and redesigning our current environment, electric grid, and transportation systems; and

WHEREAS, both the 4th California Climate Change Assessment report, published August 27, 2018, and the IPCC report, published October 8, 2018, both stress that climate change is accelerating and urgent action is needed.

NOW BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, the City of Santa Cruz declares that an existential climate emergency threatens our cities, towns, region, state, nation, civilization, humanity and the natural world.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the City of Santa Cruz commits to consider revising its existing policy, priorities, processes, and distribution of resources to enable emergency climate action measures in the City.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the City of Santa Cruz commits to develop a Socially and Environmentally Responsible Governance Policy including an Environmentally Preferable Purchasing Policy to guide efficient, consistent and just action.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the City of Santa Cruz commits to reducing auto dependency through a robust Transportation Demand Management program, and other measures as appropriate.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the City of Santa Cruz commits to support both affordable housing and transit oriented development.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the City of Santa Cruz commits to funding an update to its Climate Action Plan, which sunsets in 2020, and consider ambitious but achievable goals, consistent with or exceeding state goals and objectives, integrated into a state of the art Climate and Energy Action Plan 2030.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the City of Santa Cruz commits to continue educating our residents about the climate emergency and working to catalyze a just emergency climate mobilization at the local, regional, 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 Santa Cruz underscores the need for full community participation and support, and recognizes that the residents of Santa Cruz, the University of California Santa Cruz, the Citizens Climate Lobby, Santa Cruz Climate Action Network, 350 Santa Cruz, Campaign for Sustainable Transportation and other community

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organizations will be integral to the emergency climate action mobilization effort.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the City of Santa Cruz commits to keeping the considerations of vulnerable communities central to all emergency climate action 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 Santa Cruz, 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 emergency climate action planning process, as appropriate.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the City of Santa Cruz endorses a just, countywide emergency climate action mobilization effort to reverse global warming to reduce drastically citywide greenhouse gas emissions and safely draw down carbon from the atmosphere as quickly as possible.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the City of Santa Cruz calls on the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission and other appropriate local agencies to participate in this regional emergency climate action mobilization effort.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the City of Santa Cruz calls for a regional just transition and emergency climate action 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 Santa Cruz and nearby Counties and especially all the mayors who have signed on to enact the Paris Agreement.

PASSED AND ADOPTED this 27th day of November, 2018 by the following vote:

AYES: Councilmembers Krohn, Mathews, Brown, Noroyan; Vice Mayor Watkins; Mayor Terrazas.

NOES: None.

ABSENT: Councilmember Chase.

DISQUALIFIED: None.

APPROVED: 

David Terrazas, Mayor

ATTEST: 

Bonnie Bush, City Clerk Administrator