



**CITY OF BOULDER
CITY COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM**

MEETING DATE: June 23, 2019

AGENDA TITLE: Consideration of a motion to adopt Resolution 1260 endorsing the declaration of a climate emergency and reaffirming Boulder's commitment to climate action

PRESENTERS

Mayor Suzanne Jones

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

At the July 16, 2019 City Council meeting, council unanimously requested a resolution be drafted for the July 23, 2019 City Council meeting declaring a climate emergency. A resolution has been developed for council's consideration and is included as **Attachment A**.

Suggested Motion Language:

Staff requests council consideration of this matter and action in the form of the following motion:

Motion to adopt Resolution 1260 endorsing the declaration of a climate emergency and reaffirming Boulder's commitment to climate action

ATTACHMENTS

- A. Proposed City Council Resolution 1260

RESOLUTION 1260

A RESOLUTION ENDORSING THE DECLARATION OF A CLIMATE EMERGENCY AND REAFFIRMING BOULDER'S COMMITMENT TO CLIMATE ACTION.

THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BOULDER, COLORADO, FINDS AND RECITES THAT:

WHEREAS, on April 22, 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,” which is in itself not safe for humanity; and

WHEREAS, on October 8, 2018, the United Nations released a special report which projected that limiting warming to the unsafe 1.5°C target this century will require an unprecedented transformation of every sector of the global economy over the next 12 years; and

WHEREAS, in 2018, the 4th Annual National Climate Assessment was released and illustrates the massive threat that climate change poses to the American economy, our environment and climate stability, and underscores the need for immediate action to address a climate emergency at all levels of government; and

WHEREAS, the increased and intensifying wildfires, floods, rising seas, diseases, droughts and extreme weather brought on by climate change demonstrate that the Earth is too hot to be a safe environment; and

WHEREAS, humanity can no longer safely emit greenhouse gasses 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, equity, community, and independence from fossil fuels; and

WHEREAS, building a society that is resilient to the current, expected, and potential effects of climate change will protect health, lives, ecosystems, and economies, and such resilience efforts will have positive impact even when the most dramatic potential consequences of climate change are taken into account; and

WHEREAS, justice means that climate resilience efforts must simultaneously address the specific experiences, vulnerabilities and needs of marginalized communities within and outside of our jurisdiction, and these members of our community must be centered, included and supported in actively engaging in climate resilience planning, policy, and actions; and

WHEREAS, addressing climate change equitably requires transition from fossil fuels to emissions-free, renewable energy that is ecologically sustainable for all people, especially those most impacted by climate change today and those who will be most impacted in the future; and

WHEREAS, the City of Boulder is joined in acting on climate change by a global coalition of city, state and national governments and community and private sector leaders who recently declared or officially acknowledged the existence of a global climate emergency and recognize the importance of actions to protect and enhance the well-being of current and future generations; and

WHEREAS, the City of Boulder has demonstrated a legacy of leadership to reduce the threat of climate change, launching its first formal climate action efforts in 2002. Since that time, the city has been at the forefront of innovation in working to reduce climate impacts: adopting the country's first tax dedicated to addressing climate change, developing a national model for delivering energy efficiency services, enacting the country's most stringent energy code for new buildings; jointly filing a lawsuit against two fossil-fuel companies to seek compensation for the costs of adapting to climate change impacts, signing on to a 15-state coalition opposing the repeal of the Clean Power Plan; and

WHEREAS, in recent years, the city has integrated climate action strategies within relevant planning efforts, such as the Transportation Master Plan and the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan. The city has developed better tools for analyzing and tracking progress and has taken a number of important actions to reduce greenhouse emissions and enhance quality of life including setting aggressive emission reduction and renewable energy targets and implementing a Climate Resilience Strategy; and

WHEREAS, the City of Boulder is an epicenter for climate change research, home to renowned research facilities; and

WHEREAS, the City of Boulder is currently engaged in an effort to update its Climate Commitment with a Climate Mobilization Action Plan, which will be developed through a community-wide, "all hands on deck" effort, in order to meet the city's 2030 goals in a way that recognizes the urgency of the climate crisis, and that seeks to address equity and resilience; and

WHEREAS, as a reflection of its strong commitment to combat climate change, the City of Boulder was chosen as the location for the first Field Hearing of the U.S. Select Committee on the Climate Crisis' to discuss critical state and local efforts to combat the climate crisis; and

WHEREAS, the City of Boulder firmly believes that Boulder 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.

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BOULDER,
COLORADO, THAT:

1. The City of Boulder hereby declares that a climate emergency threatens our city, our region, our state, our nation, civilization, humanity and the natural world and reaffirms its commitment to local climate action;
2. The City of Boulder commits to a citywide climate mobilization action effort in support of a global effort to address climate change, and immediately prioritizes efforts to safely draw down carbon from the atmosphere and accelerate adaptation and resilience strategies in preparation for intensifying climate impacts;
3. The City of Boulder re-commits to ensuring that the City's actions remain in alignment with the most current scientific findings regarding climate change;
4. The City of Boulder will update its current Climate Commitment and implement more ambitious but achievable goals consistent with or exceeding state goals and objectives, integrated into a new 2030 Climate Mobilization Action Plan;
5. The City of Boulder underscores the need for full community participation and inclusion in and support for the Climate Mobilization Action Plan and recognizes that the residents of Boulder, along with community organizations that work with our faith, youth, labor, and business, academic , homeowner, environmental, economic, racial, gender, family, disability justice, indigenous, immigrant and women's rights communities, among others, will be integral to and in the leadership of the mobilization effort;
6. The City of Boulder commits to take immediate actions to safeguard against the current, inevitable and potential consequences of climate change and to invite the full participation of all communities in climate resilience efforts, including those most vulnerable to the effects of climate change;
7. The City of Boulder commits to keeping the concerns of vulnerable communities central to all just transition and climate emergency mobilization planning processes and to inviting and encouraging such communities to actively participate in order to advocate directly for their needs;
8. The City of Boulder commits to educating our residents about the climate emergency and organizing and advocating for a just transition and climate emergency mobilization effort at the local, regional, state, national, and global levels to provide maximum protection for our residents as well as all the people and species of the world;
9. The City of Boulder commits to calling on higher levels of government to provide all necessary financial and regulatory assistance in support of its efforts to end citywide greenhouse gas emissions as quickly as possible and no later than 2030;

10. The City of Boulder calls on the State of Colorado, the United States Federal Government, and all governments and peoples worldwide to initiate an immediate social and economic mobilization to reverse global warming and ecological overshoot that restores near pre-industrial global average temperatures and greenhouse gas concentrations, immediately halts the development of all new fossil fuel infrastructure, rapidly phases out the use of fossil fuels and the technologies which rely upon them, ends greenhouse gas emissions as quickly as possible, initiates an effort to safely draw down the excess carbon from the atmosphere, transitions to regenerative agriculture, ends the sixth mass extinction of species, protects and expands workers' right to organize, creates and guarantees high-quality, high-paying jobs with comprehensive benefits for all those who will be impacted by this emergency response; and
11. That the City Manager is directed to send a copy of this resolution to the city's congressional delegation.

APPROVED this 23rd day of July, 2019.

Suzanne Jones
Mayor

ATTEST:

Lynnette Beck
City Clerk