



Legislation Text

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RESOLUTION DECLARING A CLIMATE EMERGENCY IN DULUTH, MINNESOTA.

BY COUNCILORS SIPRESS, RANDORF, ANDERSON AND FORSMAN:

WHEREAS, in April 2016 world leaders from 175 countries, including the United States, recognized the threat of climate change and the urgent need to combat it by signing the Paris Agreement, agreeing to “pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5 degrees Celsius;”

WHEREAS, recent scientific research indicates that to achieve the goal of limiting temperature increase to 1.5 degrees Celsius, carbon emissions must be halved by 2030 and in each successive decade;

WHEREAS, the climate crisis poses a grave threat to human communities both globally and locally;

WHEREAS, climate change has direct impacts on public health, safety, and general welfare of residents, as outlined in the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency’s 2017 Population Vulnerability Assessment and Climate Adaptation Framework, attached as Exhibit A, and St. Louis county’s 2020 Multi-hazard Mitigation Plan, attached as Exhibit B;

WHEREAS, the impacts of the climate crisis are already being felt in Duluth and in Northeastern Minnesota;

WHEREAS, a transition to a clean energy economy, if not carefully planned, would have a disruptive impact on the livelihoods of many in our community while a well-planned transition may provide expanded job opportunities for local residents;

WHEREAS, at least fourteen nations, over one hundred U.S. municipalities and counties, and the entire European Union have declared climate emergencies in order to focus attention on the need for rapid action to address climate change;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the city of Duluth declares that a climate emergency threatens our city, region, state, nation, humanity and the natural world.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the city of Duluth commits to working for a just transition and climate emergency mobilization effort by accelerating our work to exceed our existing commitment to reduce the city’s emissions 80 percent by 2050, as declared in the America’s Pledge on Climate Change in June 2017 and affirmed through leadership in the Climate Mayors network.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Duluth city council requests that the city administration develop a Climate Action Work Plan to be presented to council not later than December 31, 2021, that identifies targeted strategies for decreasing greenhouse gas emissions (climate mitigation) and for becoming more resilient in preparation for a changing climate (climate adaptation), for both city government operations and in the wider community.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Climate Action Work Plan should support the foundational sustainability elements identified in the Imagine Duluth 2035 Comprehensive Plan in energy and conservation, housing, transportation, land use, open space, and economic development and should address actions to:

- Reduce energy consumption through efficiency in buildings;
- Increase efficiency and resiliency in city utilities;
- Support low-carbon transportation options;
- Support renewable energy development;
- Improve stormwater management;
- Reduce solid waste;
- Reduce disparities in public health;
- Seek sustainability opportunities that support economic growth; and
- Identify carbon sequestration opportunities.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Duluth city council requests that the Climate Action Work Plan

prioritize the following:

- Energy efficiency, conservation, and renewable energy production;
- Stormwater management to adapt to increased precipitation and future flooding, including the use of green infrastructure; and
- The needs of vulnerable communities, as identified in the Duluth Climate Vulnerability Assessment developed at the initiative of the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Duluth city council requests that the city administration provide an annual report to a city council committee of the whole meeting summarizing actions taken and progress made to achieve the goals set forth in the Climate Action Work Plan.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the city should seek available state, federal, philanthropic, and private funding for this effort, along with creating collaboration and alliances with other cities and organizations that have declared climate goals and climate action plans to more quickly advance climate mitigation and adaptation actions.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE: The purpose of this resolution is to declare a climate emergency and to request that the city administration develop a Climate Action Work Plan and present the Climate Action Work Plan to the council by December 31, 2021. The climate action work plan should prioritize energy efficiency, conservation, and renewable energy; stormwater management; and the needs of vulnerable communities.