

WC CLIMATE EMERGENCY RESOLUTION (CER) DRAFT, 3-5-2021

AS STEWARDS OF THE CITY OF WALNUT CREEK, WE HEREBY ENDORSE THIS CLIMATE EMERGENCY DECLARATION WHICH CALLS ON THE COUNCIL, STAFF, BUSINESSES, AND RESIDENTS TO JOIN TOGETHER TO MORE URGENTLY ACCELERATE ACTIONS TO ADDRESS THE CLIMATE CRISIS.

WHEREAS, by declaring a Climate Emergency, Walnut Creek will join over 1,400 communities, including many in the Bay Area, that have made declarations that commit to urgently reduce GHG emissions and accelerate action on climate change; and

WHEREAS, according to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), increasing emissions of greenhouse gases (GHG) will cause global temperatures to rise 1.5 degrees Celsius by as early as 2030, presenting risks to health, livelihoods, food security, water supply, air quality, and economic security; and

WHEREAS, more than 70 health organizations -- including the American Medical Association and the American Public Health Association -- declared climate change to be a health emergency and issued a call to action for government, business, and civil society to recognize climate change as a health emergency; and

WHEREAS, the consequences of climate change pose risks to life, safety and critical infrastructure in Walnut Creek and throughout the world, and threaten physical, social, and economic well-being; and

WHEREAS, there is a need for a resilient and green recovery after the COVID-19 pandemic, and Walnut Creek's capacity to act depends on our ability to work together on the economic recovery and climate change; and

WHEREAS, the City of Walnut Creek has already taken a number of actions to address climate change, including adopting and implementing the 2012 Climate Action Plan which is now being updated and expanded to become a Sustainability Action Plan (SAP) due at the end of 2021 with a focus on actions through 2030. The City has opted up all city facilities to MCE's 100% renewable energy plan; increased the number of free EV charging stations; provided two electric trolley routes as free, equitable public transportation; increased the energy efficiency of city buildings; started to electrify the traffic enforcement fleet; converted some of the city maintenance vehicles from diesel to biofuel; provided organic waste recycling in some city facilities; provided more water refill stations throughout the city; banned retail styrofoam use; banned retail single-use plastic

bags; partially banned plastic straws; championed the Cleaner Contra Costa Challenge; and educated the public about many discounts and rebates available for EVs, rooftop solar and storage, increasing residential energy efficiency and more. The City of Walnut Creek is therefore positioned to play a prominent role in moving our community, county and region toward a greener, more sustainable, less carbon-intensive future; and

WHEREAS, there are actions the City can take before the Sustainability Action Plan (SAP) is adopted and implemented and can respond with the urgency appropriate for the climate crisis; and

WHEREAS, the County of Contra Costa has declared a Climate Emergency and has called on local and regional partners to join together to address climate change; and

WHEREAS, the City of Walnut Creek can build on its history of encouraging citizen support through Community Service Day, the Police Chief's Advisory Board, and other partnerships with local organizations and the business community; and that there are a large number of citizens ready now to contribute their knowledge, experience, and resources.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of Walnut Creek declares that a Climate Emergency threatens the long-term economic and social well-being, health, natural beauty, biodiversity, safety, and security of the city, and that urgent action by government, business, and residents is needed to immediately address this emergency.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City directs all permitted projects to include climate impact as a critical consideration just as financial impact is now considered.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Council directs staff to coordinate with community volunteers to facilitate certain environmental initiatives, after approval by the Council, which are immediately actionable. These initiatives can help to mobilize the community, take advantage of programs already successful in our or other cities, reduce greenhouse gases, and improve air quality and our quality of life. These initiatives may use city funds or may take advantage of grants, donations, and other resources.

The following climate action initiatives have been vetted and recommended by local environmental groups for further consideration and action:

1. Plant climate appropriate trees in City open spaces and parks, with the goal of planting 500 trees annually for the next 10 years;
2. Phase out the use of gas-powered leaf blowers for all City operations;
3. Expand the City's Idle-Free "zones" to apply to the entire city;
4. Increase the number of households and businesses that move to 100% renewable energy sources; and
5. Promote the display of eco-educational art on and in both City and commercial properties.

Passed and adopted by the Walnut Creek City Council on \_\_\_\_\_, 2021 by the following vote:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSTAIN:

ABSENT: