

ENDORISING THE DECLARATION OF A CLIMATE EMERGENCY FOR THE CITY OF FLAGSTAFF, AND REQUESTING REGIONAL COLLABORATION ON AN EQUITABLE TRANSITION AND URGENT MOBILIZATION EFFORT TO RESTORE A SAFE CLIMATE:

WHEREAS, Flagstaff has committed to meeting the Paris Agreement goals, as defined by the United Nations, and stated in the Flagstaff Climate Action and Adaptation Plan (CAAP). This agreement pledged to maintain average future warming “well below 3.6°F above pre-industrial levels” and to “pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase to 2.7°F;” and (1)

WHEREAS, global warming of approximately 1.8°F is already threatening or causing detrimental effects on Earth’s human, physical, biological, and hydrological systems as attested by increased and intensifying wildfires, floods, rising seas, diseases, prolonged droughts, extreme weather events, loss of biodiversity, and climate refugees; and (2,3)

WHEREAS, Flagstaff has experienced the predicted clear warming trend since 1995, with higher temperatures and fewer cold days per year, contributing to an overall drying trend. As a result, Flagstaff and our region face significant risks of reduced water availability, more wildfire, drought, and flooding, snowpack loss, and widespread forest loss. Recent models forecast average temperature increase in Flagstaff of 9.4°F by 2080, creating a climate similar to that experienced currently in Show Low, Arizona. Average models indicate a likelihood of 25 days each summer with maximum daily high temperatures over 105°F; and (4, 5, 6)

WHEREAS, the warming we are currently experiencing results disproportionately from historical US emissions. Due to the overall time that CO2 and other greenhouse gasses remain in the atmosphere, the observed warming trend will continue to progress through the century. Therefore, reductions today would promote the well-being of the Flagstaff Community in future years; and

WHEREAS, it is well researched that certain groups of people will disproportionately feel the impacts of climate change due to a greater overall vulnerability. As stated in the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report: “The socially and economically disadvantaged and the marginalized are disproportionately affected by the impacts of climate change and extreme events;” and (7)

WHEREAS, Flagstaff communities, especially those that are more vulnerable or disadvantaged in and around Flagstaff, have already begun to face these impacts as a result of the climate crisis; and

WHEREAS, the City of Flagstaff recognizes that it must address climate change in a manner that prioritizes those most impacted and ensures that the costs and benefits of climate adaptation and mitigation are equitably distributed; and

WHEREAS, through analysis of Coconino County Assessor’s records, a survey of residents in the fire/flood impact area, and the perceived value of both endangered species habitat and human life, it is estimated that the total impact of the Schultz Fire is between \$133 million and \$147 million. It has been well researched that a changing climate was a factor in exacerbating the fire; and (8)

WHEREAS, the costs of not tackling climate change will lead to increased costs in the future; and

WHEREAS, the unique threat that climate change poses presents multiple opportunities for the City of Flagstaff to benefit through swift actions. By declaring a climate emergency, we recognize the severity of the issue, while at the same time can begin to solve the challenges presented by climate change locally; and

WHEREAS, with proper investment, the City of Flagstaff can be a leader in addressing climate change issues and at the same time invest in the mitigation and adaptation strategies outlined in Flagstaff's existing CAAP; and

WHEREAS, a fair shift to an economy that is ecologically sustainable, equitable, and just for all its members is a necessary step for the City of Flagstaff in the effort to address the climate emergency; and

WHEREAS, rapid mobilization is required to meet the target of a 15% reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, and a 30% reduction of emissions by 2030, for an end goal of 80% reduction of greenhouse emissions by 2050, as outlined in the City of Flagstaff's CAAP. An even greater mobilization is required to reach zero greenhouse gas emissions as recommended in the IPCC 1.5 report; and (9)

WHEREAS, the City of Flagstaff's CAAP was ambitious at the time of its approval, and the community put forth tremendous effort to create a plan promoting equity, sustainability, and climate consciousness. Recent data and forecasts indicate that making investments today limit global warming to 2.7 F instead of 3.6 F, which is necessary in order to avoid significant future costs to society; and (10, 11)

WHEREAS, such efforts and economic shifts to address the region's threats to climate change may provide opportunities to bridge gaps in social inequities and public health through techniques such as interagency collaborations, community health education, development of climate change indicators, and community capacity and engagement building; and (12, 13)

WHEREAS, the City of Flagstaff can act as both a state and global leader by converting to an ecologically, socially, and economically regenerative economy with the urgency that this emergency demands; and

WHEREAS, in November of 2018 the City of Flagstaff adopted a CAAP that included input from citizens of the community and addressed carbon offset strategies, carbon neutral buildings, livable neighborhoods, renewable energy, local agriculture, zero waste, and transportation; however, the necessary aggressive actions have been limited by budget constraints; and

WHEREAS, the United Nations November 2019 Emissions Gap Report finds that countries collectively failed to stop the growth in emissions, meaning that deeper and faster cuts are now required. In order to stay on track to meeting the Paris agreement goals, the UN calls for immediate and aggressive action to achieve carbon neutrality by 2030; and (11)

WHEREAS, an emergency declaration would further support and elevate the City of Flagstaff's CAAP(2018) into policy-maker decisions to address the region specific threats of climate change as presented by the City of Flagstaff's Vulnerability Assessment (2018), National Climate Assessment Volume II (2018), Assessment of Climate Change in the Southwest (2013), as well addressing threats and issues found within IPCC Fifth Assessment Report (2014) and the United Nations Emissions Gap Report (2019).

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL, THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE CITY OF FLAGSTAFF:

Section 1. The City of Flagstaff declares that a climate emergency threatens our city, region, state, nation, civilization, humanity and the natural world, and recognizes the need for an exponential increase in its ambition to combat climate change, so that it meets or exceeds the current recommendations of the foremost climate scientists working around the world.

Section 2. The City of Flagstaff commits to its own city-wide transition and climate emergency mobilization effort, utilizing Flagstaff's CAAP as the foundational framework in recognition of accelerating climate changes.

Section 3. The City of Flagstaff commits to provide education to residents, youth, and the broader community about the current climate emergency by inspiring action through events and training.

Section 4. The City of Flagstaff underscores the need for full community participation, and recognizes that the residents of Flagstaff, and community organizations and other such allies will be integral to and in the leadership of the mobilization effort.

Section 5. The City of Flagstaff commits to keeping the concerns of vulnerable communities central to all transition and climate emergency mobilization efforts and to facilitate the active participation of such communities.

Section 6. The City of Flagstaff joins a nationwide call for a regional collaborative effort, in full partnership with surrounding Tribal nations and traditional agricultural communities, at all levels of government, to consider adaptation and mitigation in relation to climate change.

Section 7. The City of Flagstaff will revise the goals outlined in the CAAP to be in alignment with the United Nations' November 2019 Emissions Gap Report, while maintaining equal emphasis on adaptation, mitigation, and equity, by advancing the goals of the CAAP to achieve carbon neutrality by 2030.

Section 8. The City of Flagstaff calls on the State of Arizona, the United States of America, and all governments and peoples worldwide to initiate a transition and climate emergency mobilization effort to prevent additional contributors to climate change while ensuring that the City of Flagstaff benefits both socially and economically in this transition.

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