

TO: Outreach Workgroup, Task Force on Climate and Economic Equity and  
Supervisor Supreme Moore Omokunde, Workgroup Coordinator  
FROM: Linda Frank, Milwaukee Equity & Climate Alliance  
DATE: 1/10/20  
RE: Climate Emergency Declaration – Review and Comments on Template

At the meeting on December 9, 2019, the Task Force members expressed strong interest in recommending a Climate Emergency Declaration by the City and County, an action that has been taken by 69 other US jurisdictions and by many others around the world. I was asked to follow up on this recommendation with the Outreach Workgroup.

In recommending this declaration, we follow the imperative identified by author and superb climate change interpreter, Naomi Klein, and young Swedish activist, Greta Thunberg, to “close the gap between what we know about the urgency of the climate crisis and how we behave. The first stage is to *name the emergency, because only once we are on emergency footing will we find the capacity to do what is required*”. Importantly, the declaration brings a clear message to the community that this crisis involves everyone, and everyone’s engagement is needed.

Here is the link for a Local Government template, as previously filed with this Taskforce:

**Climate Emergency Resolution Template**

<https://www.theclimatemobilization.org/green-new-deal-climate-emergency-resolution>

**RESOLUTION ENDORSING THE DECLARATION OF A CLIMATE EMERGENCY AND EMERGENCY MOBILIZATION EFFORT TO RESTORE A SAFE CLIMATE**

It is instructive to review the set of THEREFORE clauses in the template and consider how they apply to our effort in Milwaukee. Before going through the clauses, I offer this summary of their contents:

- Commits to mobilizing on the City/County GHG reduction goals, as well as on carbon draw down, and adaptation and resilience strategies, with City/County financial and regulatory support
- Calls on higher levels of government for assistance
- Commits to educating our residents on climate emergency and just transition
- Commits to immediate actions on climate resilience
- Emphasizes full community participation and identifies types of stakeholders
- Concerns of vulnerable communities are central
- Regional collaboration to be pursued
- Calls on the State, the Fed and all governments to conduct emergency mobilization
- Creation of Climate Emergency Mobilization Department

- All-staff education meetings to be conducted
- All Department directors to report back with GHG reduction plans
- Existing general plan/community plan to be identified for update
- Existing hazard mitigation programs to be brought to bear
- All Common Council/Board resolutions to include GHG impact statements
- Federal Legislative Priorities to include support for Green New Deal

Here is a copy of the THEREFORE section of the template, with edits/comments:

## NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED,

[CITY/COUNTY] declares that a climate emergency threatens our city, region, state, nation, civilization, humanity and the natural world;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** [CITY/COUNTY] commits to a **Community-wide** just transition and climate emergency mobilization effort to reverse global warming, which, with appropriate financial and regulatory assistance from [CITY, COUNTY], State and Federal authorities, reduces **Community-wide** greenhouse gas emissions by 45% by 2030 and achieves carbon neutrality as quickly as possible and no later than 2050, immediately initiates an effort to safely draw down carbon from the atmosphere, accelerates adaptation and resilience strategies in preparation for intensifying climate impacts, and simultaneously reduces racial and income inequality in our community;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** [CITY/COUNTY] commits to calling on higher levels of government to provide all necessary financial and regulatory assistance in support of its efforts to end reduce greenhouse gas emissions as quickly as possible, to draw down greenhouse gases, and to accelerate adaptation and resilience strategies;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** [CITY/COUNTY] 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;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** [CITY/COUNTY] commits to take immediate actions to safeguard against the inevitable and potential consequences of climate change through climate resilience efforts at the local, regional, state, national, and global levels, and to invite the full participation of all communities in climate resilience efforts, including those communities most vulnerable to the effects of climate change;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** [CITY/COUNTY] commits to coordinating its mobilization to restore a safe climate with its initiatives to increase climate resilience, in ways that

best use available physical and economic resources and the energies and efforts of [CITY/COUNTY]'s staff, residents, advocates, and allies;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, [CITY/COUNTY] underscores the need for full community participation, inclusion, and support, and recognizes that the residents of [CITY/COUNTY] and community organizations, faith, youth, labor, business, academic institutions, homeowners' associations, and environmental, economic, racial, gender, family and disability justice and indigenous, immigrant and women's rights organizations, land conservancies, and other such allies who will be integral to and in the leadership of the mobilization effort;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, [CITY/COUNTY] 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;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, [CITY/COUNTY] commits to organizing a regional just transition and climate emergency mobilization collaborative effort focused on transforming our region and rapidly catalyzing a mobilization at all levels of government to restore a safe climate;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, [CITY/COUNTY] calls on the State of [STATE], 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, and creates and guarantees high-quality, high-paying jobs with comprehensive benefits for all those who will be impacted by this emergency response;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, the [CITY/COUNTY] Council directs the [OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE ANALYSIS] to work with the [OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATION AND PERSONNEL] to report back within 60 days on the establishment of a Climate Emergency Mobilization Department that would serve as a hub for organizing this social and economic mobilization effort and with all necessary powers to plan and coordinate all of the [CITY'S/COUNTY'S] climate and resilience responses, including emergency climate mitigation, resilience, adaptation, engagement, education, advocacy, and research and development programs, beginning with a robust climate emergency public education and stakeholder outreach process that includes [EXISTING SUSTAINABILITY STAFF, IF ANY], biologists, ecologists and climate scientists, social and environmental justice advocates, local labor unions and union federations, local Non-Governmental Organizations, neighborhood councils, homeowners' associations, and business groups;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, the [CITY/COUNTY] Council directs that an all-staff meeting be held to educate [CITY/COUNTY] staff on the latest climate science and the emergency mobilization needed in response within two weeks of the date of this resolution;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, the [CITY/COUNTY] Council directs all [CITY/COUNTY] Departments, proprietaries, and commissions to report back within 30 days of the date of the all-staff meeting referenced above on maximum emergency reductions in greenhouse gas emissions from their operations feasible by the end of 2030;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, the [CITY/COUNTY] Council directs the [DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING] to report back on opportunities for radical greenhouse gas and co-pollutant emissions reductions and greenhouse gas drawdown opportunities through updates to the [CITY/COUNTY GENERAL PLAN] and [COMMUNITY PLAN], including metrics that prioritize climate-adaptive land use planning;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, the [CITY/COUNTY] Council directs the [CITY/COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER] and [EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT] to report back on opportunities and funding to address climate and environmental emergencies and mitigation through existing hazard mitigation programs;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, the [CITY/COUNTY] Council directs the [CITY/COUNTY CLERK] to work with the [EXISTING SUSTAINABILITY STAFF, IF ANY] to include greenhouse gas and co-pollutant impact statements and greenhouse gas and co-pollutant reduction and greenhouse gas drawdown statements in all relevant Council motions, much as it currently includes fiscal impact statements;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, with the concurrence of the Mayor, [CITY/COUNTY] hereby includes in its 2021 and 2022 Federal Legislative Priorities support for A Green New Deal to respond to the climate emergency and related legislation; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, in furtherance of this resolution, the [CITY/COUNTY] shall submit a certified copy of this resolution to [NAME FEDERAL, STATE, REGIONAL, COUNTY ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES, RELEVANT AGENCIES] and request that all relevant support and assistance in effectuating this resolution be provided.