

RESOLUTION NO. _____

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF OLYMPIA, WASHINGTON, DECLARING A CLIMATE EMERGENCY AND SUPPORT FOR THE MOBILIZATION OF COMMUNITY AND REGIONAL WIDE EFFORTS TO MITIGATE CLIMATE CHANGE IN ORDER TO PROVIDE FUTURE GENERATIONS A SAFE CLIMATE

WHEREAS, climate change has become an existential crisis posing one of the most serious threats to the earth’s survival and humanity’s existence; a crisis that intersects and compounds all other crises facing humanity and our earth; and

WHEREAS, global warming and climate change are increasing global temperatures more rapidly than previously anticipated, and current human activities and technologies are accelerating the pace of global temperature increase, which threatens our modern way of life; and

WHEREAS, in 2015, the City of Olympia joined 7,000 cities worldwide by becoming a member of the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy, a group of cities and partners committed to a global effort to reduce climate change through working toward a low-emission and climate-resilient future; and

WHEREAS, in April 2016, world leaders from 175 countries recognized the threat of climate change and the urgent need to combat that threat by adopting the Paris Climate Agreement and working to limit warming to no more than 2.0°C; and

WHEREAS, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) issued a special report on the impacts of global warming and the need to reduce global greenhouse gas emissions well before 2030 to hold warming to 1.5°C and avoid the most catastrophic impacts of climate change; and

WHEREAS, in 2018, the United States’ Fourth National Climate Assessment made clear that climate change will wreak havoc across the United States, and the current pace and scale of national climate action is not sufficient to avert substantial damage to the economy, environment, and human health over the coming decades; and

WHEREAS, our youth will inherit the legacy of our decisions on climate, and youth from diverse backgrounds are organizing locally and worldwide to demand and support climate justice and government action to mitigate the catastrophic impacts of the climate emergency and to restore a safe climate; and

WHEREAS, the City of Olympia cherishes its youth and recognizes that they are the key to our community’s prosperity and future. We have committed to engaging our youth in climate decisions made in Thurston County and the City, as well as including them in the vital work required to mitigate climate change in order to empower them to follow their dreams and live prosperously in the future; and

WHEREAS, bold action on climate change will strengthen the government-to-government relationships between the jurisdictions of the *Thurston Climate Mitigation Plan* and the indigenous tribes within

Thurston County, including the Squaxin Island, Nisqually, and Chehalis Tribes, who have stewarded this land since time immemorial, and who rely on their Treaty-protected resources, which are impacted by climate change, ocean acidification, and rising seas; and

WHEREAS, climate change will continue to make basic human necessities such as food, housing, healthcare, transportation, and energy more expensive and, along with a living wage, difficult to obtain, adding additional pressure to our region's affordability crisis and wealth inequality; and

WHEREAS, throughout the United States, communities of color, low-wage workers, and low and middle income communities have been on the frontline of longstanding environmental injustices and have historically borne the brunt of the fossil-fuel economy; and

WHEREAS, the direct and indirect impacts of climate change will disproportionately affect the region's communities least able to prepare for, cope with, and recover from them, such as communities of color, low-wage workers, immigrants, and other low-income communities; and

WHEREAS, because climate change poses such a threat to our community and economy, combatting it will require government agencies, businesses, and the entire community to take bold steps to reach our previously agreed upon regional carbon reduction goals and to build a healthy, resilient region in which everyone can thrive; and

WHEREAS, our Pacific Northwest Salmon and Orcas are dying at rates that threaten extinction from the warming of the oceans and rivers; our mountains are losing snow pack and glaciers from the warming of the earth; we are losing our forests to climate-induced increases in forest fires; our coastal cities face flooding from a potential six-foot rise in sea level; and all of those effects negatively impact our Washington State economy; and

WHEREAS, moving toward a climate-safe future requires full community participation, inclusion, and support, and recognition that the residents of the City of Olympia, particularly frontline communities, and community organizations, including communities of faith, youth, organized labor, business, academic institutions, homeowners' associations, and environmental, economic, racial, gender, family, and disability justice, indigenous, immigrant, and other such allies will be required; and

WHEREAS, the City of Olympia has joined the Thurston County jurisdictions of Tumwater, Lacey, and Thurston County in a cooperative effort to accelerate immediate and near-term regional climate mitigation and adaptation actions through our adopted climate mitigation and adaptation plans to reach our goals of reducing or eliminating greenhouse gas emissions; and

WHEREAS, people desire clean water, clean air, clean food and soil, public safety, good health, and to pass on to posterity a sustainable economy and healthy planet; and

WHEREAS, unchecked climate change will bring evermore drastic decline to the health and prosperity of future generations, particularly for the most vulnerable communities, and

WHEREAS, the City of Olympia accepted in 2021 a climate mitigation plan designed to address these problems, which must be implemented in a timely way to succeed;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Olympia City Council hereby declares a state of climate emergency, given that the climate crisis poses an urgent threat to the health and well-being of our City, region, state, country, and world, making climate change a current and imminent crisis which intersects with all other crises facing humanity and our planet. The Olympia City Council recognizes that mitigating climate change will require brisk action and long term commitment; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Olympia City Council asks businesses, non-profits, academia, large institutions, faith-based organizations, and residents to also rise to the challenge of this emergency by committing to help further the *Thurston County Climate Mitigation Plan* through partnership with local jurisdictions and other entities; mobilize resources, ingenuity, and community wisdom to tackle the existential threat of climate change to our community and world; and accept as an ultimate goal the restoration of a safer climate for future generations; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Olympia City Council shall develop and adopt a lens of climate change and climate equity for all City purposes, staff, and departments engaged in planning, zoning, permitting, budgeting, expenditures, ordinances, and all other City efforts, policies, and practices to further climate action efforts and our accepted regional climate mitigation plan.

PASSED BY THE OLYMPIA CITY COUNCIL this _____ day of _____ 2021.

MAYOR

ATTEST:

CITY CLERK

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Mark Barber

CITY ATTORNEY