

A resolution to update the Spokane Sustainability Action Plan to plan for climate resilience, achieve 100 percent renewable energy for the City's community electricity supply by 2030, and meet or exceed City and State greenhouse reduction targets.

WHEREAS, the extraction and combustion of fossil fuels are significant sources of greenhouse gas emissions and major contributors to climate change and pollution; and

WHEREAS, local, regional and global economies are transitioning to low-carbon energy sources, and businesses are leaders in providing energy efficiency and renewable energy technologies and services; and

WHEREAS, the future of the fossil fuel industry is questionable given global action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions; and

WHEREAS, changes in Spokane's climate are already being felt; and

WHEREAS, scientists found that climate change poses a significant threat to Washington's economy and impacts that are likely to include longer and more intense wildfire seasons, diminished fish and wildlife habitat, changes in precipitation patterns that will affect agriculture and hydro-electric energy generation, and increased disease vectors and invasive species; and

WHEREAS, Spokane's climate future is expected to be characterized by hotter, drier summers with more high-heat days, earlier springs with rapid snowpack melt, and warmer winters with more intense rain events; and

WHEREAS, the entire community will be impacted by climate change, but communities that already face existing socioeconomic and health inequities will be most severely impacted by these risks; and

WHEREAS, for thousands of years, indigenous peoples have called home what we now recognize as Spokane. We must respect this as native land, and in doing so act as its caretakers; and

WHEREAS, federally recognized tribal governments have a distinctive legal and political status separate from other sovereigns. Spokane therefore, has a responsibility to consult with, at a minimum, federally recognized tribal governments and urban Native American communities; and

WHEREAS, Spokane's first priority for meeting energy needs is energy efficiency, and the City remains committed to acquiring at a minimum all cost-effective energy efficiency available with a particular focus on achieving energy efficiency in low-income housing; and

WHEREAS, the economic opportunities presented by a clean energy transition far outweigh the opportunities in expanding the fossil fuel economy; and

WHEREAS, the clean energy sector is one of the fastest-growing job areas of the U.S. economy and

WHEREAS, communities of color and low-income populations have been historically underserved by programs and investments and under-represented in decision making on climate policy; and

WHEREAS, cities and states are developing strategies to engage low-income populations and communities of color, minimize harms and hazards, and ensure economic, social, and environmental benefits are shared; and

WHEREAS, community-based development of environmental infrastructure, is an emerging and underutilized best practice for ensuring that economic, social, and environmental benefits are led and shared by low-income populations and communities of color and warrants further increased private capacity building investments in community facing organizations; and

WHEREAS, it is imperative that energy consumers and the utilities serving them take early action to reduce carbon emissions and shift to renewable energy; and

WHEREAS, achieving these goals will require action at all levels: individual, family, neighborhood, community, local, regional, state and federal governments, businesses and utilities; and

WHEREAS, "renewable energy" shall mean energy from wind power; solar; existing and low-impact hydroelectric; geothermal; waste-to-energy sourced almost entirely from non-fossil fuel based waste; biomass energy from (i) organic by-products of pulping and the wood manufacturing process, (ii) animal manure, (iii) forest or field residues, (iv) untreated wooden demolition or construction debris, (v) food waste and food processing residuals, and (vi) liquors derived from algae; hydrogen from non-fossil fuel sources; and gas captured from renewable sources like wastewater treatment facilities, landfill gas, dairies and others; and

WHEREAS, "renewable energy" specifically excludes energy derived from fossil fuels, nuclear, and biomass energy from (i) wood pieces that have been treated with chemical preservatives such as creosote, pentachlorophenol, or copper-chrome-arsenic and (ii) non-residual wood from standing trees energy derived from fossil fuels and nuclear; and

WHEREAS, any new forest biomass energy project requires special consideration to ensure that ecosystem health is not harmed, that the project does not result in increased life-cycle carbon emissions, and that air quality and fish habitat is not degraded; and

WHEREAS, renewable energy must also be sustainable, both in terms of the conservation of fish and wildlife habitat and in the promotion of human health and racial, environmental, and economic justice, and therefore reliance on existing hydroelectric power requires or has been

given special consideration to reduce negative ecological impacts to biological systems dependent on the affected watersheds; and

WHEREAS, access to the financial and environmental benefits of renewable energy must be shared equitably across all economic classes, and this can be achieved through such mechanisms as community-based development of renewable energy infrastructure, equitable pricing structures, community solar programs with low-income communities, and non-profit organization leadership; and

WHEREAS, the renewable energy economy presents opportunities for workers in manufacturing, construction, and service sector and it is essential that workers play a role in helping drive innovation towards cleaner energy economies while creating and maintaining family-sustaining jobs; and

WHEREAS, local, state, tribal and federal government should adjust their laws and spending to encourage investment in energy efficiency, rooftop solar, low income community solar and should demand control technologies offer the opportunity to redistribute resources address poverty, stimulate new economic activity, and lift up those most impacted by high energy costs; and

WHEREAS the benefits of affordability programs can ease the energy burden on low-income households, fostering equality as a percent of household incomes and preventing disconnections, and thus mitigate the impacts of price spikes and the cost of implementing renewable programs; and

WHEREAS, improving transit service to be less costly, readily accessible to all, use clean fuels, and especially available to low-income neighborhoods, will bring not only significant greenhouse gas reductions but also improve access to employment opportunities; and

WHEREAS, new fossil fuel electric generation infrastructure that increases reliance on fossil fuel generation adversely impacts a renewable energy powered future and can create financial risk to customers through potential stranded assets; and

WHEREAS, energy conservation is critical to reducing fossil fuel demand, and increasing green infrastructure such as urban tree canopy, green streets, green roofs and other natural resource focused strategies are effective strategies to reduce energy consumption, urban heat island impacts and address disparities in the impacts of climate change on vulnerable communities; and

WHEREAS, the transportation sector accounts for a significant percent of greenhouse gas emissions in our community, and significant reductions in emissions from transportation are essential to achieving our climate-protection goals; and

WHEREAS, electrifying car, truck, and bus fleets will bring environmental and economic benefits to local residents, including lower cost transportation options for low income households; and

WHEREAS, Spokane supports (see SMC 15.05.050) accelerating the transition to electric vehicles and the use of electric vehicles to help manage the electrical grid, integrate generation from renewable resources, and improve electric system efficiency and flexibility; and

WHEREAS, local educational institutions (high schools, community colleges, universities), community-based job training programs, apprenticeship programs, and on-the-job training providers are well situated to train the professionals who will design, implement, install, retrofit, and maintain the renewable energy infrastructure of the future; and

WHEREAS, equitably distributed solar energy paired with energy storage will improve disaster resilience in our communities; and

WHEREAS, youth and future generations will be more significantly impacted by climate disruption than those currently in positions of power. We must recognize that youth will inherit the effects of the bad decisions of the past, have the most to lose from a lack of action in the present, and will spend their lives leading the transition to a truly green and sustainable economy.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the City of Spokane (hereafter referred to as “Spokane” or “City”) will develop as part of an updated Sustainability Action Plan a Climate Action Plan to achieve 100 percent renewable energy for the City’s community electricity supply by 2030 (as outlined in the Sustainability Action Plan), plan for climate resilience, meet or exceed City and State greenhouse reduction targets, and do its part to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to levels necessary to secure climate stability; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, Spokane will shall form a permanent Sustainability Action Commission that may include but is not limited to members of the City sustainability committee, local tribes, energy utility representatives, business and technology leaders, communities of color, low-income residents, youth representatives, environmental advocates, and City staff to help the city achieve these goals with special attention on addressing environmental, social, and economic inequities; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Sustainability Action Commission will be charged with updating the 2009 Spokane Sustainability Action Plan to include a Climate Action Plan outlining how Spokane will plan for climate resilience, achieve City and State mandated greenhouse gas emission reductions, and support the goal of 100 percent renewable electricity by 2030; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Sustainability Action Commission will be charged with updating the Climate Action Plan at least every five years; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that all municipal departments of the City of Spokane will be tasked to propose code or policy changes for Council consideration that advance the policies set forth in this Resolution; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Sustainability Action Commission shall undertake a financial assessment of the economic impacts or City of Spokane budgetary impacts of any proposed code or policy changes to advance the goals set forth in this resolution; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the City should work with energy utilities to reduce coal and other fossil fuels in Spokane's community electricity supply;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, Spokane will advocate and submit appropriate written comments to appropriate bodies in support of the sustainability goals of this resolution, including the Washington State Legislature, Federal agencies, and the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission; and

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BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the City should work with energy utilities to reduce coal and other fossil fuels in Spokane's community electricity supply;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Spokane commits to expanding green infrastructure strategies to reduce energy demand, and limit the impacts of climate change in vulnerable communities; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, Spokane will work with Spokane Regional Transit Council, Spokane Transit Authority, and county and regional governments to advocate for a transition to electric fleet and other renewable energy-powered public transit options as soon as practicable; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the City will provide a progress report on the 100 percent renewable electricity goal and greenhouse gas emission targets every 3 years and a comprehensive report that includes emission reductions to date and the status of reaching the established targets every 5 years. If the 5 year comprehensive report indicates that the city is not reaching the goals set in this resolution, the City will conduct an analysis of possible actions to get back on track and update the Sustainability Action Plan to reflect the necessary actions to achieve the next benchmark.

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