

**CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NOVATO
RESOLUTION NO. 2020-072**

**RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NOVATO
DECLARING A CLIMATE EMERGENCY**

WHEREAS, human activities have warmed the Earth to a point that threatens climate stability, and climate change has already set in motion catastrophic changes to the Earth's systems, including fresh water and food scarcity, droughts, floods, extreme heat, wildfires, severe weather events, species extinction, invasive species and insect problems, human and environmental pathogens, ice mass loss and rising sea levels, and a dramatic increase in refugees from climate impacted communities; and

WHEREAS, the City of Novato recognizes and affirms the rights of Indigenous Peoples, and how their knowledge, cultures and traditional practices contribute to sustainable and equitable development and proper management of the environment to preserve their culture and protect traditional lifeways; and

WHEREAS, 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 critical tipping points must be avoided; and

WHEREAS, an inadequate response to our climate emergency will threaten human life, healthy communities, and critical infrastructure due to increased economic and environmental disruptions; and

WHEREAS, in order to avoid irreversible, catastrophic climate change impacts, the City of Novato cannot only focus on reducing emissions but must also dramatically increase and enable meaningful carbon sequestration while preparing the community now for significant climate impacts; and

WHEREAS, efforts to control climate change will have many other beneficial effects, such as cleaner air and water; employment closer to home; cost savings for households and City services, and increased community resilience; and

WHEREAS, in April 2016 world leaders recognized the urgent need to combat climate change it by signing the Paris Agreement, agreeing to keep global warming "well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels" and to "pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C"; and

WHEREAS, in September 2018, Governor Brown signed Executive Order B-55-18 establishing a 2045 statewide target to achieve carbon neutrality, and on the same day, Senate Bill 100 was passed, which sets a 100% clean electricity goal for the state by 2045; and

WHEREAS, the October 2018 special report of the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) projected that curtailing warming to 1.5°C to reduce the risks to health, livelihoods, food security, water supply, human security, economic growth and plant and animal life this century, will require an unprecedented transformation of every sector of the global economy by 2030; and

WHEREAS, in 2018, the 4th Annual National Climate Assessment and California’s 4th Climate Change Assessment warned that extreme weather and climate-related events in the United States (U.S.) are worsening, predicting increased drought cycles and heat waves in the western U.S. with a resulting three-fold increase in intensity and magnitude of wildfires, declined water supply and snow pack, increased flooding, impacted agriculture, as well as substantial damages to the U.S. economy and human health, unless GHG emissions are curbed; and

WHEREAS, in September 2020, Governor Newsom issued Executive Order N-79-20 establishing “a goal of the State that 100 percent of in-state sales of new passenger cars and trucks will be zero-emission by 2035. It shall be a further goal of the State that 100 percent of medium- and heavy-duty vehicles in the State be zero-emission by 2045 for all operations where feasible and by 2035 for drayage trucks. It shall be further a goal of the State to transition to 100 percent zero-emission off-road vehicles and equipment by 2035 where feasible”; and

WHEREAS, low-income communities, communities of color, the young, the disabled, the elderly and indigenous communities are found to have suffered the gravest consequences of climate change to date, and remediation of these impacts requires the active consultation and protection of vulnerable and historically exploited populations; and

WHEREAS, young people 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, common sense and morality indicate that humanity can no longer safely emit GHGs and must demand an emergency mobilization effort to rapidly reach zero emissions across all sectors to safely remove excess carbon from the atmosphere; to preserve and restore the Earth’s biodiversity; to implement safety measures to protect all people and species from the consequences of abrupt warming in the near term; and to cultivate a shift toward climate resiliency that prioritizes conservation, community, and independence from fossil fuels; and

WHEREAS, the City of Novato has demonstrated leadership in climate change advocacy and has taken a number of important actions to reduce GHG emissions including sustainable land use planning, adoption of green building standards, establishing a Construction & Demolition debris recycling requirement of at least 50%, eliminating use of glyphosate and reducing use of other pesticides, insecticides, fungicides, herbicides and rodenticides in Novato, phasing in the purchase of electric vehicles for city use and securing 100% renewable energy with MCE Deep Green for all city facilities in 2017; and

WHEREAS, the City of Novato adopted a Climate Change Action Plan in 2009 (the first in Marin County), which established a greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction target of 15% below 2005 levels by the year 2020, consistent with the State’s direction to local governments in the Assembly Bill (AB) 32 Scoping Plan, and 40% below 2005 levels by 2035; and

WHEREAS, the City of Novato General 2035 Plan seeks to improve, enhance, and preserve the environment and to promote the City’s long-term environmental sustainability and livability; and

WHEREAS, by implementing local and State actions identified in the Novato General Plan 2035, the City of Novato will reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 30 percent below 2005 emission levels by year 2020 which exceeds the City and State's targets; and, will reduce emissions by 48 percent below 2005 emission levels, which exceeds the City of Novato's target for 2035; and

WHEREAS, the Novato City Council recognizes its vital role in protecting our quality of life and has an interest in identifying additional actions that result in further reduction of GHG emissions and environmental protection efforts that are achievable and go beyond our stated goals to protect and promote the health, safety, welfare and well-being of Novato residents and businesses.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the City of Novato hereby declares that we face an existential Climate Emergency that threatens the quality of life in our community along with our city, region, state, nation, civilization, humanity, the natural world, and all life on Earth; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the City of Novato hereby joins a nationwide call for a community, regional, national, and international Just Transition and climate emergency mobilization at all levels of government to restore a safe climate and healthy environment, and will partner with local, regional, and State agencies to consider implementing actions to reverse global warming and the ecological crisis; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the City of Novato will elevate climate issues in its goal-setting process; give precedence to climate mitigation and adaptation when evaluating policies and purchases, planning for projects, and allocating resources; and will seek financial resources to support these efforts; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the City of Novato recognizes that the full participation, inclusion, support, and leadership of community organizations, faith communities, youth, labor organizations, academic institutions, indigenous groups, and racial, gender, family, immigrant and disability justice and organizations and other allies are integral to the climate emergency response and mobilization efforts; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the City of Novato affirms the need for the understanding, participation, and support of the entire Novato community for all actions and initiatives the City may adopt in response to the climate emergency; the City therefore commits to providing outreach, information, and education for residents, businesses and City staff on the urgency of climate responses, reduction of GHG emissions, the policies and strategies to advance sustainability and resilience; and to regularly assess its GHG reduction goals, actions and policies and provide progress reports and metrics annually; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the City of Novato commits to keeping the considerations of disadvantaged communities central to the climate emergency mobilization planning processes, and to invite and encourage these communities to directly advocate for their specific needs and equity in the environmental justice process; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the City of Novato and the Novato City Council commits to a city-wide just transition and climate emergency mobilization strategy and will identify and implement, to the extent feasible, additional actions to be included in our Strategic Plan that will protect and enhance our environment and quality of life in our community while achieving a higher reduction in greenhouse gas emissions and environmental protection; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the City of Novato and the Novato City Council will continue to advocate for and join in a climate mobilization at the local, state, national, and global levels in supporting emergency efforts to mitigate climate change.

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I HEREBY CERTIFY that the foregoing resolution was duly and regularly adopted by the City Council of the City of Novato, Marin County, California, at a meeting thereof, held on the 10th day of November, 2020, by the following vote, to wit:

AYES: Councilmembers Lucan, Peele, Wernick, Eklund, Athas
NOES: Councilmembers
ABSTAIN: Councilmembers
ABSENT: Councilmembers



City Clerk of the City of Novato

Approved as to form:



City Attorney of the City of Novato