



Legislation Text

File #: RES PH 19-416, **Version:** 1

Adopting the Climate Action and Resilience Plan.

WHEREAS, the United States is the only country in the world that is withdrawing from the Paris Climate Accord, leaving the burden of countering climate change to state and municipal governments, and that the commitments made in the Paris Accord do not go far enough to reduce emissions fast enough to avoid a global climate catastrophe; and

WHEREAS Mayor Carter and hundreds of other Mayors in the U.S. have signed on to the “We’re Still In” (the Paris Climate Accord) letter and committed to taking bold and accelerated action on the local level to do our part to reduce greenhouse gas emissions; and

WHEREAS, the greatest burden resulting from an inadequate response to our climate crisis will be carried by our youngest generation and all who follow; and

WHEREAS, climate change has not and will not impact everyone equally, and some communities, especially those of color and those that are under-resourced, are disproportionately affected by climate change and other environmental hazards; and

WHEREAS, the risks from an inadequate response are potentially devastating, and include economic and environmental disruptions-many of which are already being felt-such as more severe storms, longer and hotter heat waves, worsening flood and drought cycles, growing invasive species and insect problems, accelerated species extinction rates, rising sea levels, increased severity and frequency of wildfires, a dramatic increase of refugees from climate impacted lands, and-notably within the city of Saint Paul-a negative impact on Mississippi River ecosystems and wildlife wellbeing, as well as a substantial increase in invasive tree-boring species; and

WHEREAS, leading climate scientists have indicated that further delay in significantly reducing greenhouse gas emissions will rapidly push humanity past the point where disastrous consequences can be avoided; and

WHEREAS, the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy, signed by Mayor Chris Coleman, endorsed by the Saint Paul City Council, and reaffirmed by Mayor Melvin Carter, requires the City of Saint Paul to undertake a comprehensive greenhouse gas emissions inventory of the city and adopt a Climate Action Plan; and

WHEREAS, the City of Saint Paul adopted the building chapter of the Saint Paul Climate Action Plan entitled, *Saint Paul’s Path to Carbon Neutrality: Building Sector* in July 2018; and

WHEREAS, the City of Saint Paul is one of 25 US cities partnering with Bloomberg Philanthropies to advance climate action in 2019 and 2020; and

WHEREAS, local private sector partners such as Ecolab, River Centre/Xcel Energy Center, Macalester College, University of Saint Thomas, Xcel Energy, District Energy Saint Paul, Health Partners/Regions Hospital, 3M, and many, many others have made bold commitments to reduce their carbon footprints in the coming years; and

WHEREAS, the City of Saint Paul released the initial draft of the Climate Action and Resilience Plan in April 2019, and then proceeded to hold 5 community forums to engage members of our community in the plan, and CRO Russ Stark presented the plan at many District Councils and other meetings of community stakeholders, and the City received more than 70 public comments on the Plan via the City's website; and

WHEREAS, community feedback on the plan has been overwhelmingly positive and the majority of requested changes and additions have urged the City to make even greater and more specific plans and commitments; and

WHEREAS, Saint Paul, among other initiatives, already has District Energy St. Paul, North America's largest cogeneration district heating and cooling system, fueled primarily by renewable wood waste; is working to reduce energy use in buildings through Energize Saint Paul: Race to Reduce; just recently approved a Ford Site development where buildings will be 80% less carbon intensive than the 2005 baseline; gets its electricity primarily from Xcel Energy, which has committed to 80% carbon free electricity by 2030 and net zero carbon by 2050; has entered into contracts to purchase energy from community solar gardens that represent more than 25% of City electricity use; has begun to retrofit all light fixtures in the City buildings to LED via the \$5 million internal loan fund for Energy Efficiency; is partnering with HOURCAR, Minneapolis, and Xcel to build out a fleet of shared electric vehicle mobility hubs and offer EV carshare; is working to build out a network of safe bikeways and recently finalized a Pedestrian Plan for the City that will prioritize walking over other modes of travel; is working to implement the Gold Line, B Line, Rush Line, Riverview and other transitway investments that will boost frequency and quality of transit service, among other significant climate actions; and

WHEREAS, the Climate Action and Resilience Plan commits the City to new goals of reducing community-wide greenhouse gas emissions 50% by 2030 and down to net zero by 2050; and

WHEREAS, youth of Saint Paul have brought this Council a Youth Climate Report Card highlighting the gap between what we are doing today and actions that would be necessary to protect their future.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Saint Paul City Council hereby adopts the Climate Action and Resilience Plan, and commits to meeting the resilience and mitigation goals outlined in the Plan; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the implementation of these goals be equitable by ensuring that all communities, especially under-resourced communities and communities of color, enjoy the benefits of the City's climate related policies and actions, and that representatives from these communities be included in shaping the City's climate work through the creation of a Climate Justice Advisory Board; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that beginning in the first quarter of 2020 and every year thereafter, the City's Chief Resilience/Sustainability Officer will create an annual report and workplan outlining the previous year's Climate and Resilience work and the coming year's Climate and Resilience workplan, present the report to the City Council and publish the report on the City's website.