CITY OF TAKOMA PARK, MARYLAND

RESOLUTION 2019-15

DECLARING A CLIMATE CHANGE EMERGENCY

WHEREAS, recent reports from the International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and the National Climate Assessment have made clear that we are in a global climate emergency, by documenting the extent, speed and acceleration of global climate change and planetary warming, and their dramatic effects on our Earth; and

WHEREAS, climate change is already inflicting and will continue to inflict substantial damages to our physical, social and economic well-being; and

WHEREAS, these damages, such as an increase in stormwater runoff and extreme weather, will continue to worsen without immediate significant action; and

WHEREAS, our own community is already feeling these climate impacts, such as more frequent, more intense rainfall and greater stormwater runoff; and

WHEREAS, communities most vulnerable to climate impacts, both in our own community and worldwide, tend to be the least prepared to manage and recover; and

WHEREAS, as part of the City’s commitment to working toward racial equity in all its actions, and the Council’s established priorities, in particular housing affordability, it is vital that City climate related actions thoroughly integrate these commitments; and

WHEREAS, a greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions inventory has identified residential and commercial buildings as the largest contributing sources in Takoma Park; and

WHEREAS, Takoma Park strives to be a leader in responding to the challenges of climate change and in reducing GHG emissions through our many local policies and actions; and

WHEREAS, the City is publicly committed to action on climate change through the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy, the Paris Climate Agreement and the Sierra Club 100% renewable energy pledge; and

WHEREAS, the City in Resolution 2018-9 (January 30, 2018) recently affirmed its commitment to aggressively implement its current Sustainable Energy Action Plan and related actions for all sectors of the City as its resources allow, and acknowledged and supported Montgomery County’s aspirational goals of 80% reduction in GHG emissions by 2027 and 100% reduction by 2035.
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT the City of Takoma Park joins with communities across the US and the world to declare that we are in a climate related emergency which threatens our community and others in our nation and worldwide, and which requires mobilizing more aggressive action on all our parts; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the City of Takoma Park calls on our county, state and federal governments to take more aggressive action on climate change mitigation, adaptation and resiliency to move rapidly toward net zero GHG emissions, and the City will continue to advocate at all levels of government for adoption of policies to achieve these goals; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the City of Takoma Park Sustainability Manager will accelerate an update of its Sustainable Energy Action Plan (Plan) and GHG inventory for all sectors of the City, to identify the most aggressive local actions its authorities and resources will allow, along with costs and benefits of these actions; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Plan update should identify what steps the City can take to move toward net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2035, including near term implementation steps and achievable interim goals and dates; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Plan should:

- Focus on dramatically improving efficiency of all our buildings (single family, multifamily, commercial and institutional), by far the largest sector of local GHG emissions, as well as a transition to renewably generated energy in electricity and heating/cooling, and new construction and renovation;

- Propose actions that integrate with other City Council priority goals, such as housing affordability and racial equity;

- Offer methods that consider equity, affordability, and access for all members of our community, especially renters and low income and energy-burdened residents;

- Consider opportunities for reducing GHG emissions in the transportation sector through local initiatives and collaboration region-wide;

- Include a transparent and inclusive public process to gather public input, increase community engagement, and ensure that community members and local businesses have opportunities to participate; and

- Examine leading policies around the country and build on them to propose nation-leading policies for our community; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the City Council seeks results of this planning effort and recommendations from the City Sustainability Manager on specific methods (as well as budget implications, and costs and savings for affected stakeholders) to accelerate the City’s sustainable energy action program by December 31, 2019; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the City of Takoma Park will address a strategy for local actions for climate adaptation and resiliency, with a focus on managing stormwater from increased rainfall in our region, as well as tree canopy, green space, and carbon capture and sequestration, as our authorities and resources will allow.
Adopted by the Council of the City of Takoma Park this 13th day of March, 2019.

Attest:

Jessie Carpenter, CMC
City Clerk