

CITY OF RACINE
RESOLUTION: CLIMATE CHANGE

WHEREAS, consensus exists among the world's leading climate scientists that global warming caused by emissions of greenhouse gases from human activities is among the most significant problems facing the world today; and

WHEREAS, documented impacts of global warming include but are not limited to increased occurrences of extreme weather events, adverse impacts on ecosystems, demographic patterns, and impact on public health and vulnerable populations; and

WHEREAS, climate change has been widely recognized by government, business, and academic leaders as a worldwide threat with the potential to harm public safety, public health, local and global economies, and quality of life.

WHEREAS, climate change poses specific risks to Racine, including more frequent and severe extreme weather events, including flooding, heat waves, and droughts, which threaten community health and safety and create economic burdens for residents; and

WHEREAS, 195 countries vowed to address climate change in the Paris Climate Accord adopted on December 12, 2015; and

WHEREAS, more than 400 cities have committed to achieving the goals set forth in the Paris Climate Accord; and

WHEREAS, the Paris Climate Accord resulted in a commitment from almost every nation to take action and enact programs to limit global temperature increase to less than two degrees Celsius, with an expectation that this goal would be reduced to 1.5 degrees in the future; and

WHEREAS, climate change has been identified as a priority for the United States Military, as outlined in DoD Directive 4715.21, "Climate Change Adaptation and Resilience," effective January 14, 2016, that identifies the national security risks associated with climate change; and

WHEREAS, urban municipal governments can have an impact on greenhouse gas emissions through responsible land use planning, transportation systems, construction practices, and building energy and water use, and through the many daily operations they carry out to provide vital services to residents and visitors.

WHEREAS, improving energy efficiency and resilience in the face of potential disruptions in energy production can attract jobs and economic development opportunities to the City of Racine, and enhance the City's long-term economic competitiveness and wealth;

WHEREAS, actions that reduce the combustion of fossil fuels and the release of greenhouse gases in the City of Racine, including prioritizing efficiency and transitioning to low-carbon energy sources, have the potential to improve air quality, public health, energy security, social equity, local natural environments, and quality of life for all residents; and

WHEREAS; the City of Racine is joined in taking action on climate change by a coalition of cities, counties, states, and national governments and community and private sector leaders who recognize the importance and potential of these actions to protect and enhance the well-being of current and future generations.

WHEREAS, it is incumbent upon the City of Racine to take significant steps to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and enhance the quality of life in the community, including the development of the environmentally-responsible planning, a commitment to renewable energy and energy-efficiency, enhanced deployment of bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure to build community sustainability and resilience; and

NOW THEREFORE, THE CITY OF RACINE COMMON COUNCIL

RESOLVE, that the City of Racine declares its commitment to reducing its contribution to climate change and joins other U.S. cities in the Mayors' National Climate Action Agenda network in adopting and supporting the goals of the Paris Climate Accord adopted on December 12, 2015;

FURTHER RESOLVE, the City of Racine commits to exploring the potential benefits of reducing greenhouse gas emissions to create jobs, reduce energy costs, and secure the well-being of the planet for the posterity of future generations.

FURTHER RESOLVE, the City of Racine through its Mayor, Common Council, and staff develop an action plan to a) determine current energy consumption by the City of Racine; and b) make use of its annual budget, capital budget, ordinances and other means to achieve carbon consumption reductions to 1990 levels.

FURTHER RESOLVE, the City of Racine supports setting a similar goal community-wide, recognizing that achieving a community-wide goal cannot be done by City government alone and will require leadership and commitment from businesses, community institutions, utilities, and neighboring municipalities and the County of Racine;

FURTHER RESOLVE, that the City of Racine urges other municipalities in Wisconsin and the United States to join with it in its commitment to address climate change and support the principles of the Paris Climate Accord.