

RESOLUTIONS OF THE CITY OF HELENA, MONTANA

RESOLUTION NO. _____

A RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING A GOAL OF 100% CLEAN, RENEWABLE ELECTRICITY FOR THE HELENA COMMUNITY BY 2030

WHEREAS, there is overwhelming scientific consensus that climate change is human-induced and primarily caused by our extensive release of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere;

WHEREAS, this scientific consensus was recently supported by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change in its 2018 Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5°C, which states that allowing the Earth to continue to warm from its current human-driven 1°C above pre-industrial levels to 1.5 °C would cause widespread impacts on ecosystem and human health, and that global net human-caused emissions of carbon dioxide (CO₂) would need to fall by 45% from 2010 levels by 2030 in order to keep the worst effects from being realized;

WHEREAS, the Fourth National Climate Assessment issued by thirteen federal agencies was released in Fall 2018 and predicts significant detrimental effects of climate change on our economy, environment, and public health if serious, transformational, and rapid action is not taken;

WHEREAS, the 2017 Montana Climate Assessment determined that

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for Central Montana, including the City of Helena, climate change is projected to cause increased annual temperatures, hotter summers, reduced low-elevation snowpack, earlier spring snowmelt, and more frequent and intense droughts, wildfires, and wildfire smoke, with deleterious impacts to ecosystems, human health, and the economy, and that these impacts will be more severe if global greenhouse gas emissions are not reduced sharply in the near future;

WHEREAS, although resiliency planning is crucial, adaptation alone will not be enough to escape the effects of climate change, including negative ramifications on both human health and the economy, which will be most detrimental to low-income populations, marginalized communities, and future generations, obligating our current leaders to act swiftly and decisively to mitigate those effects;

WHEREAS, reducing CO₂ emissions sufficiently to avoid the worst impacts of climate change will necessitate a worldwide transition away from fossil fuels, not only in the electricity sector but also in the transportation and thermal energy sectors, and will likely require electrification of a large

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portion of these sectors;

WHEREAS, the current electricity mix for the Helena community is approximately 39% fossil fuel-based, and it is in our future's best interest to transition this fossil fuel-based electricity to carbon-free forms to do our part;

WHEREAS, in December 2015, nearly every country in the world united in support of the Paris Climate Agreement, which aims to hold global temperature rise well below 2°C;

WHEREAS, more than 150 cities have already established similar goals for carbon-free energy transitions even in the face of federal inaction;

WHEREAS, more than 1,000 mayors, including in Helena, have joined the U.S. Conference of Mayors' Climate Protection Agreement, vowing to reduce carbon emissions in their cities below 1990 levels, in line with the Kyoto Protocol;

WHEREAS, the City of Helena has already committed to climate actions, and this resolution will contribute to the success of these commitments.

1. Creation of the Helena Climate Change Task Force (Resolution 19530, December 3, 2007).
2. The City of Helena's 2011 Growth Policy (Resolution 19828, May 9, 2011).

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3. City of Helena's affirmation of continued efforts to combat climate change and support the Paris Climate Agreement. (Resolution 20347, June 26, 2017).
4. Creation of a Citizens Conservation Board (Resolution 20375, August 7, 2017).
5. Other related efforts not described herein;

WHEREAS, a City goal of 100% clean, renewable electricity would demonstrate a prioritization of climate action that would encourage movement and progress at all levels of government and among area businesses, non-profit organizations, educational institutions, faith communities, and individuals;

WHEREAS, a City goal of 100% clean, renewable electricity would create a wide range of employment opportunities and foster job growth in the expanding fields of solar, wind, and energy efficiency;

WHEREAS, new sources of clean, renewable electricity will be developed and deployed in ways that are sensitive to impacts on wildlife, fish, ecosystems and public health;

WHEREAS, a City goal would demonstrate to private utilities the public's demand for renewable electricity within their ratepayer base;

WHEREAS, a City goal would encourage the Montana Consumer

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Counsel, the Montana Public Service Commission and the State of Montana as a whole, to consider Helena's vision as they carry out their mandate to protect the public interest; and

WHEREAS, Helenans have come together to set meaningful goals, envisioning an electricity transition in which all citizens have the opportunity to participate in building a safe and resilient future, and our example will aid and inspire other communities across Montana to follow suit.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF HELENA, MONTANA;

Section 1. The City of Helena formally commits to take the necessary steps, within its control, to power the community with 100% clean, renewable electricity by 2030, using current and future technological and scientific advances.

Section 2. This 100% goal is designed to shift to clean, renewable electricity the proportion of Helena's electricity that is presently fossil-fuel based.

Section 3. The path to 100% clean, renewable electricity will be conducted expeditiously and will require the periodic

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measuring of progress towards clearly defined goals, including an interim goal of 80% by 2025. Metrics for measuring progress could be created in consultation with the Helena Citizen Conservation Advisory Board.

Section 4. Strategies for reaching the goal include, but are not limited to, the following: advocating that the incumbent utility procure additional renewable energy resources to serve its customers, investing in renewable energy and energy efficiency projects at City-owned properties, incentivizing broad-based community participation through expansion and improvement of the City's zero-interest loan program, securing an Energy Corps member, and other approaches and mechanisms consistent with this resolution.

Section 5. This transition will assure that benefits are equitably available to and will not disproportionately burden marginalized groups or populations in our community including low-income populations, Native peoples, and people of color.

Section 6. This work will move forward in a manner that reduces barriers to participation, encourages ownership of a shared community vision, and allows adequate representation

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of and space for strongly impacted populations in the planning and implementation process.

Section 7. Resources shall be allocated in subsequent fiscal year budgets to enable and advance this transition to a clean, renewable electricity future.

PASSED AND EFFECTIVE BY THE COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF HELENA, MONTANA, THIS 24TH DAY OF FEBRUARY, 2020.

MAYOR

ATTEST:

CLERK OF THE COMMISSION