

To: Chair Kurth, Transportation Committee members, and Planning Department Staff
From: Michael Allen
Date: March 19, 2024
Subject: Climate City – a joint role for the Transportation Committee and Planning Commission

Two years ago I wrote the members of the Florence Planning Commission, to ask them to take a lead role in making our city a climate city. As an example of how it could be done, I described how the Planning Commission for San Anselmo, California was instrumental in moving their town forward with regards to climate change. It is my hope that you work with our Planning Commission to follow their example and rise to the occasion.

What drew me to San Anselmo was information provided me by fellow members of Elders Climate Action. They told me that this small town in Marin County, about twenty miles north of San Francisco, was one of hundreds of towns and cities across the country that passed a resolution to declare a climate emergency.

What further impressed me was the powerful statement made by the staff of the Planning Commission in presenting the resolution to the Town Council. The resolution to Declare a Climate Emergency was unanimously passed by the Council on February 11, 2020.

As a local example of cooperation, EMAC worked closely with the Planning Commission to update the Vegetation codes for the city. It was done collaboratively and resulted in codes that protect our city's trees and vegetation. In making this important update both entities and the City Council made a powerful statement that it's important to take actions that impact climate change.

Please carefully read the staff report, climate action plan and climate emergency declaration in the links below. It should inspire you to do your part to work with the Planning Commission and Planning Department staff to finally address climate change in a comprehensive way..

Respectfully,

Michael Allen

Florence Climate Emergency Campaign, founder
Elders Climate Action-Oregon Chapter, co-leader

See staff report in the attachment and at: https://sananselmo-ca.granicus.com/MetaViewer.php?view_id=1&clip_id=400&meta_id=65658

Link to San Anselmo Draft Climate Emergency Resolution:
https://sananselmo-ca.granicus.com/MetaViewer.php?view_id=1&clip_id=400&meta_id=65659

Link to article "San Anselmo council declares climate emergency"
<https://www.marinij.com/2020/02/14/san-anselmo-council-declares-climate-emergency/>

Attachment: Town of San Anselmo Staff Report

TOWN OF SAN ANSELMO
STAFF REPORT
January 29, 2020

TO: Town Council
FROM: Elise Semonian, Planning Director
SUBJECT: Resolution Declaring Climate Emergency

RECOMMENDATION

That Town Council adopt “A Resolution of the Town Council of the Town of San Anselmo Declaring a Climate and Ecological Emergency in San Anselmo” (Attachment 1).

BACKGROUND

The Town of San Anselmo first adopted a Climate Action Plan (CAP) in 2011 and has taken many actions to address global climate change as described in the [Climate Action Plan 2030](#). The CAP includes aggressive goals for reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.

On January 27, 2020, the Town Sustainability Commission recommended that the Town Council adopt Attachment 1, a resolution declaring a climate and ecological emergency in San Anselmo.

Cities and organizations around the world have signed petitions and adopted resolutions supporting a declaration of climate emergency. Adoption of the attached draft resolution would endorse the declaration and reinforce the Town’s commitment to reduce GHG emissions and to educate the community about the climate emergency. Local adoption may inspire other communities, states and the federal government to follow.

The declaration provides many reasons for the need for immediate action and references already-adopted GHG reduction goals from the Town CAP. The draft resolution commits to providing the community and Town Council with information and directing funds towards climate change mitigation.

The draft resolution would be consistent with the Town General Plan and relates to a Town Council Work Plan category for “Environmental Action”. The General Plan was last comprehensively updated in 1988, just before activism related to climate change began. However, the General Plan has many goals related to protection of all aspects of the Town’s environment. The General Plan was amended in 2019 to include a goal, “To work toward more widespread use of electric vehicles to lower greenhouse gas emissions from transportation.

FISCAL IMPACT

Implementation of the draft resolution would be accomplished with existing, budgeted staff. The draft resolution directs staff to earmark specific funds for greenhouse gas and climate change mitigation for the fiscal year 2020-2021 and all subsequent years in which atmospheric carbon and carbon equivalents are in excess of 350 parts per million, the amount considered “safe” by climate experts. The amount is not specified and would be determined at each budget cycle.

Respectfully submitted,
Elise Semonian