

RESOLUTION OF THE DURHAM CITY COUNCIL SUPPORTING A TRANSITION TO RENEWABLE ENERGY AND CARBON NEUTRALITY

WHEREAS, climate change is real, and increasing levels of greenhouse gas emissions are having adverse effects on both the natural and built environments;

WHEREAS, these physical effects are expected to lead to water scarcity, food insecurity, increasing numbers of refugees, increased poverty, and mass extinctions of species; and

WHEREAS, low-income communities and communities of color in North Carolina and the United States are disproportionately exposed to hazardous pollutants released by fossil fuel burning that can lead to serious health problems such as cancer and asthma exacerbation; and

WHEREAS, clean, renewable energy is defined as energy derived from ongoing natural processes that rapidly replenish and is sustainably collected from renewable sources such as solar, wind, and geothermal. Other approaches may be included after being evaluated for sustainability and environmental justice implications. Energy efficiency will continue to be a critical part of our approach by minimizing the amount of energy used overall; and

WHEREAS, a Stanford University and University of California-Davis study concludes the United States energy supply could be based entirely on renewable energy by the year 2050 using current technologies and 80% renewable energy by 2030 while creating numerous jobs¹; and

WHEREAS, leading economists, policy experts, and business leaders conclude that transitioning to a clean energy economy would create millions of green jobs nationally, improve living standards, and boost economic growth; and

WHEREAS, Mayor Steve Schewel has committed Durham to the U.S. Conference of Mayors' Climate Agreement to significantly reduce carbon emissions in cities to combat climate change; and

WHEREAS, the City of Durham's Sustainability Report, Roadmap to Sustainability, Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory and Local Action Plan lays out goals across social, economic, and environmental impact areas and demonstrate alignment with steps required to transition to renewable energy; and

WHEREAS, in June 2018, the City Council adopted the Strategic Plan Goal 5 – "Sustainable Natural and Built Environment", which calls on the City to "guide equitable, efficient and environmentally sound investments in the City's built and green infrastructure assets"; and

WHEREAS, in October 2018, Governor Roy Cooper signed an executive order, "North Carolina's Commitment to Address Climate Change and Transition to a Clean Energy Economy", which states that North Carolina will honor the 2015 Paris Agreement goals and the state's commitment to the United States Climate Alliance, and requires the state to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions to 40% below 2005 levels by 2025; and

WHEREAS, as of January 2019, eleven cities and towns and seven counties in North Carolina, and more than 100 localities in the United States, have already resolved to transition to clean energy as proposed below.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF
THE CITY OF DURHAM THAT:**

SECTION 1: The City of Durham will develop an action plan by 2020 that communicates how to transition City operations to a supply of 80% renewable energy by 2030, achieve carbon neutrality in city operations by 2040, and reach 100% renewable energy sourcing by 2050.

Adoption of renewable energy is the critical element to achieve carbon neutrality. Transitioning from fossil fuel-powered operations to 100% clean, renewable energy is also vital to build a more resilient community, promote job creation and sustainable economic growth, and protect our local community and the Earth for current and future generations.

Under current realities, the City of Durham faces external policy and technological limitations on its ability to increase renewable energy as a share of consumption across relevant sectors. Making the transition to 80% renewable energy by 2030 and 100% renewable energy by 2050 will depend on federal and state policy changes not fully within the City of Durham's control.

As we take the necessary steps to enable to a renewable energy transition, Durham commits itself to a renewable energy transition, the City of Durham commits itself in its own operations, policies and guidelines to continuing its efforts towards clean energy, reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, and sustainability. These efforts include increasing energy efficiency in existing buildings, constructing new buildings to the highest standards of energy efficiency, increasing the use of renewable energy such as solar photovoltaics, and greening the City fleet by purchasing hybrid and electric vehicles where feasible.

The City of Durham firmly commits to achieving equity, affordability, and access for all members of the community in the transition to carbon neutrality and renewable energy. Furthermore, we commit to a transparent and inclusive process for planning and implementation, ensuring that the public has an opportunity to participate as the City of Durham develops and adopts a plan.

SECTION 2: The City of Durham will develop an actionable advocacy plan to petition the North Carolina General Assembly, Departments and Agencies of the Executive Branch of North Carolina, the United States Government, and utility and energy organizations serving the City, to affect policy, regulatory, and contract changes necessary to achieve a transition from fossil fuels to clean, renewable energy for all energy sectors by 2050. This includes advocating for a federal price on carbon, as outlined in H.R. 763, Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act, along with other policies that will facilitate the City of Durham in achieving 100% renewable energy.

SECTION 3: In addition to its plans for city operations, the City of Durham supports a transition to carbon neutrality and 100% clean, renewable energy community-wide by 2050. The City will advocate strongly for relevant policies to be adopted in coming years to enable this transition. In the short term, the City will encourage the development of clean energy and energy efficient infrastructure in the local residential and commercial sectors.

SECTION 4: The City Manager shall annually submit to the City Council a report setting forth the actions taken and progress made toward fulfilling the goals stated in this Resolution.

SECTION 5: This Resolution is effective upon passage and shall remain effective until repealed or amended by the City Council.

APPROVED BY
CITY COUNCIL

APR 1 2019

CITY CLERK

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D. Scurev", written over the printed title "CITY CLERK".