TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND
CITY COUNCIL
FROM: Toni J. Taber, CMC
City Clerk

SUBJECT: SEE BELOW
DATE: July 28, 2017

SUBJECT: RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF PARIS AGREEMENT ON CLIMATE
CHANGE

RECOMMENDATION: As recommended by the Rules and Open Government Committee on
June 21, 2017, 1) Adopt the attached resolution supporting the principles of the Paris Agreement on
Climate Change, and 2) As directed by Council in December 2015, staff should return with a GHG-
reduction target for San Jose, as part of the Environmental Sustainability Plan, that is in alignment
with the 2 degrees Celsius goal of the Paris Agreement.
TO: RULES COMMITTEE  
FROM: Mayor Sam Liccardo  
SUBJECT: RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF PARIS AGREEMENT ON CLIMATE CHANGE  
DATE: June 14, 2017

RECOMMENDATION

1) Adopt the attached resolution supporting the principles of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change.

2) As directed by Council in December 2015, staff should return with a GHG-reduction target for San Jose, as part of the Environmental Sustainability Plan, that is in alignment with the 2 degrees Celsius goal of the Paris Agreement.

BACKGROUND

In December 2015, 195 countries, including the United States, vowed to address climate change in an agreement reached in Paris. On June 1, 2017 the Federal Administration announced the United States’ withdrawal from the Paris Agreement on Climate Change -- a stark signal to the world that our Country will be disengaging on critical climate change issues at the federal level. Thankfully -- through the Climate Mayors’ effort of over 290 cities representing over 60 million people in the United States – cities have stepped in to a leadership role by supporting the principles of the Paris Agreement. In San José, through our Green Vision, General Plan sustainability goals, recent launch of San Jose Clean Energy, and development of our Environmental Sustainability Plan we have committed, and will continue to commit, to climate leadership.

Climate change is widely recognized by government, business and academic leaders as a worldwide threat with the potential to harm our economy, safety, public health, and quality of life. With the passage of this resolution supporting the principles of the Paris Agreement, San José joins a chorus of cities in the United States that are raising their collective voice on climate change issues. Local governments play a critical role in accelerating the transition to a clean energy economy and shifting towards a low carbon future. With passage of this resolution, we commit to science, and to remaining engaged on climate change – one of the pressing issues of our generation.
PARIS AGREEMENT RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the City of San José desires to protect and enhance the quality of life for all those who live, work, learn and play in our community, as well as for our children and grandchildren; and

WHEREAS, there is scientific consensus regarding the reality of climate change and the recognition that human activity, especially the combustion of fossil fuels that create greenhouse gases, is an important driver of climate change; and

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

WHEREAS, many local, regional, and global economies are prioritizing efficiency and transitioning to low-carbon energy sources; and

WHEREAS, actions that reduce climate pollution also have potential to improve air quality, public health, energy security, social equity, our local natural environment, and quality of life for our residents; and

WHEREAS, taking steps to leverage our region’s innovation to create new products and services can attract jobs and economic development opportunities to our community and increase our long-term economic competitiveness and wealth; and

WHEREAS, the City of San José has demonstrated a legacy of leadership against the threat of climate change; and

WHEREAS, several drivers of climate pollution such as the production and use of energy in buildings and transportation can be influenced by local governments and the collective action of communities around the world; and

WHEREAS, the City of San José adopted a “Green Vision” outlining goals the City has committed to pursuing in partnership with our community; and

WHEREAS, the City of San José has already taken a variety of important actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and enhance quality of life in our community, including the formation of San José Clean Energy, General Plan sustainability goals, Prospect Silicon Valley, Smart City Initiative, Property Assessed Clean Energy Financing, Silicon Valley Energy Watch, expedited residential solar permitting, LED streetlight deployment, the Bay Area Bike Share Program, and others; and

WHEREAS, the City of San José is in the process of creating an Environmental Sustainability and Climate Action Plan; and

WHEREAS, we are joined in taking action on climate change by a global coalition of cities, state 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; and

WHEREAS, more than two hundred and ninety (290) mayors representing more than 60 million Americans have recently re-affirmed their cities’ commitments to climate action; and

WHEREAS, the City of San José actively collaborates with other local governments throughout our region, state, nation, and the world to learn from each other and identify win-win opportunities to take action on climate change while creating measurable benefits in our communities; and

WHEREAS, 195 countries, including the United States, vowed to address climate change in agreements reached in Paris in December 2015 (the “Paris Agreement”); and

WHEREAS, President Donald Trump’s announcement seeking to withdraw the United States of America from the Paris Agreement undermines this critical global effort to confront one of the greatest challenges facing our community and communities across the planet we all share; and

WHEREAS, the reality of climate change has not been affected by recent political announcements; and

WHEREAS, the absence of federal leadership only increases the importance of local leadership in avoiding the most dangerous and costly effects of climate change; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT

RESOLVED that the City of San José re-affirms its commitment to taking action to reduce climate pollution in alignment with the Paris Agreement’s 2 degrees Celsius goal; and it

FURTHER RESOLVED that the City of San José continues to support the principles of the Paris Agreement and the participation of the United States of America as a party to the Paris Agreement; and it

FURTHER RESOLVED that the City of San José will continue to stand with cities and other public and private sector partners throughout the world to advance action in accordance with the goals outlined in the Paris Agreement; and it

FURTHER RESOLVED that the City of San José will take new steps through its Environmental Sustainability and Climate Action Plan to curb greenhouse gas emissions.