



TO: Elizabeth A. Pauli, City Manager
FROM: James G. Parvey, P.E., Division Manager OEPS
Michael P. Slevin III, P.E., Environmental Services Director
COPY: City Council, City Clerk
SUBJECT: Resolution - Strengthen the City's Commitment to Decarbonization - April 20, 2021
DATE: April 7, 2021

SUMMARY AND PURPOSE:

A resolution relating to reducing the City's municipal carbon footprint by restricting the use of natural gas and new fossil fuel for existing City buildings and future City capital investments, encouraging other local jurisdictions to do the same, and assessing impacts for imposing the same restrictions on new commercial and residential construction.

COUNCIL SPONSORS:

Mayor Victoria Woodards, Council Member Beale, and Council Member Walker

BACKGROUND:

The City Council adopted Resolution 40509 in 2019, referred to as the Climate Emergency Resolution, which declared climate change an emergency and set a goal of achieving carbon neutrality of City operations by 2050. Resolution 40509 also urges the City to lead by example. Adoption of a decarbonization policy demonstrates leadership in addressing the challenges of climate change. Climate change affects all our residents but especially our low income and minority community members. Reducing the City's carbon pollution reduces health impacts and economic burdens on our vulnerable communities. Viable alternatives to fossil fuels do exist and it is the responsibility of the City to lead by example in using and promoting such energy sources. We must seize the opportunities to purchase and build low carbon assets.

The resolution advances the 2019 Climate Emergency Resolution by reducing the City's carbon footprint. It does this by:

- 1) Excluding natural gas and fossil fuels from new City buildings and renovations;
- 2) Conducting an inventory of City-owned buildings and analyzing the feasibility of retrofitting the buildings to low-emissions sources;
- 3) Developing a plan to retrofit City-owned parking facilities and buildings with electric vehicle (EV) charging stations;
- 4) Encouraging other jurisdictions to adopt similar policies; and
- 5) Conducting an impact assessment to require non-fossil fuel sourced heating, lighting, and power in new commercial and residential construction.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT/ CUSTOMER RESEARCH:

The Sustainable Tacoma Commission sent a letter to the Infrastructure, Planning and Sustainability Committee on October 26, 2020 requesting this legislation. The Commission spent months learning about the issue and in the draft resolution are asking for further research and stakeholder input into potential positive and negative impacts of decarbonizing new community buildings.



2025 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

Equity and Accessibility:

Vulnerable, underrepresented, and historically oppressed communities in the City of Tacoma, including low-income households, and those with pre-existing medical conditions, along with Black, Indigenous, and People of Color communities, are disproportionately harmed by indoor pollution (including from gas stoves), outdoor air pollution, and climate change due to less access to healthcare and other resources to mitigate this impact. Reducing carbon emissions and other air pollutants is good for everyone’s health, but especially frontline community members.

Livability: *Equity Index Score:* Moderate Opportunity

Improve health outcomes and reduce disparities, in alignment with the community health needs assessment and CHIP, for all Tacoma residents

Explain how your legislation will affect the selected indicator(s).

If adopted, this resolution will limit new carbon emissions from City facilities and fleet. It will also research impacts on new clean energy community buildings options, both for indoor and outdoor pollution.

ALTERNATIVES:

Alternative(s)	Positive Impact(s)	Negative Impact(s)
1. No action	Greater choice in capital investments	If fossil fuel infrastructure is procured, it locks in pollution and associated costs for decades
2. Adopt some of the recommended proposals	Progress on carbon reduction goals	Not as much progress as needed to achieve long-term carbon reduction goals

EVALUATION AND FOLLOW UP:

The Office of Environmental Policy and Sustainability prepares a Greenhouse Gas Inventory every four years. Reductions in carbon pollution will be monitored in that inventory. In addition, fossil fuel is monitored through City purchases - this will provide a more frequent reference to the effectiveness of this resolution. An impact assessment report will be developed as required by this resolution deadline and delivered to Council.

STAFF/SPONSOR RECOMMENDATION:

The Environmental Services Department’s Office of Environmental Policy and Sustainability recommends that Council adopt the attached resolution based on the Sustainable Tacoma Commission’s October 26, 2020 letter. The resolution requires prudent and achievable action to address the Council-declared Climate Emergency. These actions are important but modest steps towards reaching the City’s carbon reduction goals. The policy described in the resolution would go into effect January 1, 2022.



FISCAL IMPACT:

Three items have a fiscal impact in the proposed resolution totaling \$130,000.

- 1) An inventory of City-owned facilities that use fossil fuels and an evaluation on the feasibility of retrofitting existing buildings to low-emission sources by 2030 totals approximately \$40,000.
- 2) A plan to retrofit each City owned parking facility and building with EV charging stations by 2030 totals approximately \$40,000.
- 3) An impact assessment to require non-fossil fuel sourced heating, lighting, and power in new commercial and residential development in the City totals approximately \$50,000.

The resolution does not allocate funds for future projects. Funding and feasibility will be determined in normal budgeting processes and future project feasibility will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

Fund Number & Name	COST OBJECT (CC/WBS/ORDER)	Cost Element	Total Amount
1. 5800 Environmental Services	598400	5310100	\$130,000
TOTAL			\$130,000

What Funding is being used to support the expense?

5800-ES Env Svcs

Are the expenditures and revenues planned and budgeted in this biennium’s current budget?

NO, PLEASE EXPLAIN BELOW

This resolution does not create new immediate expenditures but prompts staff to request funding during the 2021-2022 mid-biennium budget development process and through a Council-sponsored Council Contingency Fund request. The resolution provides guidance on requirements of new capital projects. Those fiscal impacts are evaluated at the time those capital projects are adopted.

Are there financial costs or other impacts of not implementing the legislation?

YES

Will the legislation have an ongoing/recurring fiscal impact?

YES

Will the legislation change the City’s FTE/personnel counts?

No

ATTACHMENTS:

- Resolution
- Fiscal Note