

**CITY OF FALCON HEIGHTS
COUNCIL RESOLUTION**

January 11, 2023

No. 23-04

**RESOLUTION DECLARING A CLIMATE CRISIS AND THE
COMMITMENT OF FALCON HEIGHTS TO TAKE ACTION**

WHEREAS, the climate crisis is not only a future issue — it is affecting us here and now in Falcon Heights. Our city has recently experienced numerous climate change related impacts including a record June heatwave, dangerous air quality from drought-fueled forest fires, and water restrictions from the same drought. In fact, [the ten warmest and wettest years ever recorded in Minnesota have all occurred since 1998](#). Impacts like warming surface waters are leading to a significant loss of fish habitats in our lakes as well as increasing the risk of harmful algae blooms, and our forests are changing as native northern species are strained by warming temperatures; and

WHEREAS, extreme weather will bring greater challenges to the local infrastructure of Falcon Heights, imposing escalating economic burdens on our residents and businesses; crops are stressed by cycles of drought and floods, home insurance rates are rapidly rising, costing homeowners [an extra \\$1000 on average in 2015 compared to rates in 1998](#), and faster warming winters are leading to new pests as well as shorter winter recreation seasons; and

WHEREAS, the greatest burden from an inadequate response to the climate crisis is most immediately experienced by historically marginalized or underserved communities, due to the lasting impact of segregation, the close proximity to pollution sources, and the lack of resources to deal with such challenges; and

WHEREAS, the failure to act will lead to the inheritance of these hardships to the youngest generation, including the children and grandchildren of Falcon Heights; and

WHEREAS, the bipartisan Next Generation Energy Act, passed by the Minnesota State Legislature and signed by then-Governor Tim Pawlenty in 2007, committed our state to achieving an 80% reduction in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 2050 and with interim goals of 15% and 30% below 2005 GHG emissions levels by 2015 and 2025, respectively, with cities being key drivers of achieving these goals; Minnesota did not meet the 2015 target and is not on track to reach our future targets; and

WHEREAS, world leaders from 175 countries, including the United States, following the guidance of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, recognized the threat of climate change and the urgent need to combat it by signing the 2015 Paris Agreement, agreeing to “pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5 degrees Celsius”, which would require emissions to be halved by 2030 and reaching net-zero or net negative carbon emissions by 2050; and

WHEREAS, due primarily to human activities we have already reached a temperature increase of nearly [1.19 degrees Celsius \(nearly 2.14 degrees Fahrenheit\) as compared to pre-industrial times](#) and the death and destruction already wrought by this level of global warming demonstrates that the Earth is already too hot for safety and justice, as attested by increased and intensifying wildfires, floods, rising seas, diseases, droughts, and extreme weather; and

WHEREAS, a transition to a clean energy economy, if not carefully planned, would have a disruptive economic and social impact for many in our community while a well-planned transition may provide expanded job opportunities for local residents, improve local air quality, quality of life, and provide economic stability; and

WHEREAS, to focus attention on the need for rapid action to address climate change, 2,012 jurisdictions in 34 nations have already declared climate emergencies, including 19 cities across Minnesota, led by Duluth, Minneapolis, and Saint Louis Park, and report that acting together, connecting to a larger statewide effort is empowering; and

WHEREAS, climate action planning is currently underway in Ramsey County, the MET Council, the University of Minnesota, including the portion of the campus in Falcon Heights, and by many other units of local government in the Twin Cities; and

WHEREAS, Falcon Heights has long been a leading City in adopting environmental policies and projects, such as becoming a GreenStep City in 2009, putting a 40kw solar panel on City Hall in 2012, establishing a bike and pedestrian path on Fairview Avenue, creating a community garden, adopting a nature plant ordinance, replacing street lighting with efficient LEDs and more; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the City of Falcon Heights declares that the climate crisis threatens our city, region, state, nation, humanity, and the natural world. The City commits to working for a just transition and climate mobilization effort by moving forward to consider a City Climate Action Plan (CAP) with input from the residents, businesses and non-profit entities in our community and in coordination with the partners that are also working on developing or implementing climate action plans in our community.

LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED the city will utilize the 2040 Comprehensive Plan, Resiliency Plan, and any other pre-created resources to act as a foundation for the CAP. The city

may employ professional planning consultation and shall garner community input and involvement in the development of the CAP. The Environment Commission will review further action in support of the climate action plan and report to the council through the council liaison.

Moved by:

Approved by: _____

Randall C. Gustafson
Mayor

GUSTAFSON _____ In Favor
LEEHY
MEYER _____ Against
WASSENBERG
WEHYEE

Attested by: _____

Jack Linehan
City Administrator