



Memorandum

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
CC: Members of the Environment Board
From: Cara Pratt, Sustainability and Resilience Coordinator
CC: Kelley Gandurski, Interim City Manager
Subject: Resolution 32-R-22, Declaring a Climate Emergency and an Immediate Mobilization Effort to Restore Climate Stability
Date: April 25, 2022

Recommended Action:

Mayor Daniel Biss, Councilmember Eleanor Revelle, Councilmember Jonathan Nieuwsma, and the City of Evanston Environment Board recommend City Council Adoption of Resolution 32-R-22, Declaring a Climate Emergency and an Immediate Mobilization Effort to Restore Climate Stability.

Council Action:

For Action

Summary:

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), an intergovernmental body of the United Nations responsible for advancing knowledge on human-induced climate change, published its Sixth Assessment Report in March 2022. The report is a stark reminder of the narrowing window for action to prevent the worst effects of climate change. The key findings underline the urgency for climate action, focusing on equity and justice. Adequate funding, technology transfer, political commitment, and partnership were also named as essential components to more effective climate change adaptation and emissions reductions.

One possible political commitment to support Evanston's existing climate action and resilience efforts is the declaration of a "climate emergency." Worldwide, over 2,000 jurisdictions and local governments have formally declared a climate emergency. These jurisdictions cover more than 1 billion people. In Evanston, there was a significant youth-led movement to declare a climate emergency in late 2019, but those efforts were significantly delayed until now by the COVID-19 pandemic. The Evanston Environment Board, inspired by youth and with the support of elected officials and community groups representing thousands of Evanstonians, drafted the text of an Evanston-specific Resolution declaring a Climate Emergency and an Immediate Mobilization Effort to Restore Climate Stability.

Resolution 32-R-22 specifically mentions a renewed commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and achieve equitable adaptation and community resilience at speed and scale, with a focus on community partnerships. The Resolution calls for City Council to adopt implementation of the Climate Action and Resilience Plan (CARP) as a City Council goal, further committing to regularly reviewing progress and revising targets to reflect the most recent science, data, and best practices. In order to support that commitment, the Resolution calls for annual CARP Action Agendas, beginning with the 2022 CARP Action Agenda, a schedule of legislation and projects that support CARP Implementation. The Resolution further directs City staff to ensure that they prioritize decisions and actions that reduce greenhouse gas emissions over those that do not, including emissions from all residences, businesses, and other community buildings and activities as well as the City's own buildings and activities.

Attachments:

[32-R-22 Climate Emergency Resolution](#)

[2022 CARP Action Agenda](#)

[Community Support Memo](#)

32-R-22

A RESOLUTION

**DECLARING A CLIMATE EMERGENCY AND AN IMMEDIATE
MOBILIZATION EFFORT TO RESTORE CLIMATE STABILITY**

WHEREAS, the City of Evanston and communities across the State of Illinois are already experiencing the effects of global climate disruption; and

WHEREAS, trends in precipitation and temperature extremes are likely to continue unless there are ambitious actions to curb greenhouse gas emissions; and

WHEREAS, in October 2018, the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the largest collaborative and consensus-based effort among the world's scientific community, conservatively estimated that global net greenhouse gas emissions must reach net zero no later than 2050 in order to avoid a dangerous increase in global temperatures that result in long-lasting and/or catastrophic and irreversible climate impacts; and

WHEREAS, the IPCC warned on April 4, 2022, that "limiting warming to around 1.5°C (2.7°F) requires global greenhouse gas emissions to peak before 2025 at the latest, and be reduced by 43% by 2030," while methane must be reduced by a third, and that "even if we do this, it is almost inevitable that we will temporarily exceed this temperature threshold"; and

WHEREAS, the National Climate and Health Assessment of the U.S. Global Climate Change Research Program identified climate change as a significant threat to the health of the people of the United States; and

WHEREAS, the cost of climate change is increasing dramatically, with 20 weather/climate disaster events in the United States in 2021 resulting in losses exceeding \$1 billion each, compared with the 1980–2021 annual average of 7.4 events; and

WHEREAS, global warming is projected to cause the extinction of over one-third of Earth's animal and plant species by 2050 if current greenhouse gas emissions trajectories continue; and

WHEREAS, according to the 2021 Assessment of the Impacts of Climate Change in Illinois: (1) over the past 120 years, the average daily temperature in Illinois has increased by 1–2°F in most areas, mean precipitation has increased by 5–20%, and the number of 2-inch rain days has increased by 40%; (2) the climate of Illinois is expected to continue changing over this century, with significant impacts on water resources, agriculture, human health, and the health of plants and animals; (3) projected changes include warming of 4–9°F, with large increases in extreme high temperatures and increasingly severe summer droughts; (4) the risk of severe heat-related illnesses, such as heat stroke, will increase; (5) Illinois is expected to see an overall increase in precipitation, with increases in both heavy rains and the length of dry spells; (6) increased intensities of rainfall events are expected to exacerbate stresses on aging urban drainage systems and increase the incidence of combined sewer outflows (CSOs), which affect water quality of streams, rivers, and Lake Michigan; (7) heavy precipitation events will cause more flooding and increased risk of waterborne infectious diseases, mold exposure, injuries, and emotional distress; (8) rising temperatures and increasing precipitation are already creating conditions that permit

mosquitoes and ticks to survive in previously unsuitable locations; the biting season will become longer, and the risk of vector-borne diseases will increase; (9) levels of mold, pollen, and ozone pollution are expected to increase, and the pollen season will lengthen, resulting in more severe respiratory allergies and more frequent asthma attacks; (10) those with already high rates of chronic disease, poor housing, and barriers to accessing health care and clean air are expected to experience more severe health impacts from climate change than the population of Illinois overall; and

WHEREAS, lakefront erosion is being accelerated by a combination of warming temperatures, increased precipitation, and extreme storms;

WHEREAS, climate change has significant impacts on all community members, but disproportionately impacts those who are most vulnerable, in particular those who are currently living in poverty with high rates of chronic disease, poor housing, barriers to healthcare access, unhealthy community design, and polluted air (13.3% of Evanston's population), the young (20.2%), and the elderly (15.6%); and

WHEREAS, the climate crisis is contributing to a mental health crisis among youth, 60% of whom report that they suffer from climate anxiety; and

WHEREAS, the City of Evanston has a history of climate action and a track record of making consistent reductions in carbon emissions, beginning in 2006 when Mayor Lorraine Morton signed the U.S. Mayors' Climate Protection Agreement, followed by the 2008 Evanston Climate Action Plan and the 2018 Climate Action & Resilience Plan (CARP), which calls for 80% reduction in emissions by 2035 and carbon neutrality by 2050; and

WHEREAS, climate emergency declarations have been adopted in 2,071

jurisdictions in 38 countries, representing over 1 billion people; and

WHEREAS, a January 2021 United Nations survey of 1.2 million people in 50 countries found that 64% of respondents said that climate change is an emergency; and

WHEREAS, the City of Evanston recognizes and acknowledges that the impacts of climate change pose a life-altering threat to our city and the region, now and increasingly in the future, as well as the state, our nation, and all life on the planet,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF EVANSTON, COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS:

SECTION 1: The City Council hereby adopts the foregoing recitals as its findings, as if fully set forth herein.

SECTION 2: The City of Evanston declares a climate emergency and joins the global climate mobilization effort to stabilize Earth's atmosphere, slow and halt global temperature increases, and reverse global warming, to ensure a just transition and a sustainable, resilient, and healthy future for generations to come.

SECTION 3: The City of Evanston adopts this Climate Emergency Resolution as a declaration of our renewed commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and achieve equitable adaptation and community resilience at speed and scale.

SECTION 4: The City of Evanston recognizes that community partnerships that are diverse, inclusive, and promote equity are essential to support environmental, economic, and racial justice, and commits to working with all partners to ensure that efforts respect all community members.

SECTION 5: The City of Evanston commits to working with community partners to educate residents and businesses about the climate emergency and the necessity of collaborative action to implement solutions and to catalyze a just transition at the local, regional, and state levels.

SECTION 6: The City Council adopts implementation of the Climate Action & Resilience Plan (CARP) as a City Council goal, and commits to regularly reviewing progress and revising targets to reflect the most recent science, data, and best practices.

SECTION 7: The City Council commits to developing and implementing annual CARP Action Agendas, beginning with the 2022 CARP Action Agenda attached hereto as Exhibit A.

SECTION 8: The City Manager shall designate a staff member to coordinate implementation of the Climate Action & Resilience Plan (CARP) and report to City Council, the Environment Board, and Evanston residents on not less than a semi-annual basis; reports shall show progress made in achieving CARP goals and shall identify additional actions, policies, and programs that the City of Evanston can undertake to reduce and adapt to the impacts of a changing climate and to meet CARP goals; and

SECTION 9: The City Council directs City staff to ensure that they prioritize decisions and actions that reduce greenhouse gas emissions over those that do not, including emissions from all residences, businesses, and other community buildings and activities as well as the City's own buildings and activities.

SECTION 10: That this Resolution 32-R-22 shall be in full force and effect from and after its passage and approval in the manner provided by law.

Attest:

Stephanie Mendoza, City Clerk

Adopted: _____, 2022

Daniel Biss, Mayor

Approved as to form:

Nicholas E. Cummings, Corporation
Counsel

EXHIBIT A

Exhibit A

2022 CARP Action Agenda

CARP Focus Area	Proposed Action	Target date
Municipal Operations	Endorse aggressive zero emissions strategies (ZES) for municipal operations.	Done March 28
	Provide sufficient funds for ongoing ZES implementation in 2023 budget .	December
	Issue Request for Proposals for the City of Evanston Fleet Electrification and Rightsizing Roadmap	May
	Issue Request for Proposals for Rooftop Solar Installation and Power Purchase Agreement at Robert Crown Community Center	June
Building Efficiency	Adopt ICC Model Code (Building, Residential, Fire, Mechanical, Fuel Gas, Property Maintenance, National Electric) and Illinois Code (Plumbing, Accessibility, Elevator).	April
	Adopt 2021 Illinois Energy Conservation Code and update Green Building Ordinance. Include amendments to support bird-friendly construction and increased EV deployment.	November
Renewable Energy	Adopt Appendix AT Solar-Ready Provisions as part of Residential Code adoption. Adopt Appendix C, Solar-Ready Zone, as part of commercial provisions of 2021 Illinois Energy Conservation Code.	November
	Develop Accessible Solar Program for low-income residential solar installations (\$500,000 in Federal FY22 appropriations bill)	August
Transportation & Mobility	Approve staff request for Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity funds for Chicago Avenue multi-modal corridor improvements. (23-R-22)	Done March 28
	Adopt amendment to Illinois Conservation Code to support increased EV deployment.	November
Zero Waste	Approve Commercial Franchise Agreement, setting the stage for implementation of requirements such as universal recycling.	July
	Provide textile recycling option for residential units.	April 25
	Determine mechanism for reducing use of single-use bags.	September
Urban Canopy & Green Space	Update tree preservation ordinance to expand protection of private trees.	November
Green Infrastructure	Hydraulic and hydrologic study is underway as foundation for development of updated Stormwater Master Plan in line with CARP goals.	December

Health Impacts of Extreme Heat		
Resilience Regulations & Vulnerable Populations	Allocate ARPA funds to support phased lead pipe replacement	March and late 2022
	Determine funding source, develop RFP, and retain consultant for the first year of a two-year environmental equity investigation.	December
	Determine funding level and allocate ARPA funds to support the One Stop Shop Affordable Housing Retrofit Program	June
Emergency Preparedness & Management		
Education, Outreach, & Community Networks	Adopt resolution declaring Climate Emergency.	April 25
	Determine funding source and develop a dashboard for tracking and reporting status of CARP implementation.	October
Implementation, Accountability, & Partnerships	Assure adequate funding for CARP implementation in 2023 budget.	December
	Assure that CARP is adequately addressed in the strategic and comprehensive plans to be developed beginning in 2022.	April–December

April 2022

A call for Evanston City Council to declare a climate emergency

We, the undersigned, urge members of the Evanston City Council to join hundreds of other cities and towns worldwide in **Declaring a Climate Emergency**.

Why now?

We recognize that City staff have begun implementing parts of the Climate Action & Resilience Plan (CARP) adopted by City Council in 2018. But achieving the goals of that plan requires renewed commitment, adequate resources, and far more aggressive action than we've seen so far. Meanwhile, the climate forecast grows ever more dire. As UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres said earlier this year, the latest reports from the IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) are "a damning indictment of failed climate leadership."

What will a climate emergency resolution accomplish?

The proposed resolution will demonstrate to the Evanston community, to City staff, and to neighboring communities that City leaders recognize that climate change is an ever-worsening crisis that requires aggressive and unrelenting action and an investment that matches the scale of the threat it poses.

Beyond the resolution

We further urge that City Council

- hold the City Manager responsible for implementing CARP, including requesting adequate resources to ensure that CARP goals are achieved on schedule, that the Office of Sustainability is adequately staffed and funded, and that the entire Evanston community is engaged in the process of implementation;
- require that every staff report include a section on "Carbon/Climate Impact" that describes how actions and decisions will reduce greenhouse gas emissions within the City, and estimates the amount by which they will do so; and a section on "Climate Equity Impact" that describes how the approval of an action or decision will or will not promote climate resiliency, environmental equity, and inclusiveness.

We trust that you — as our community leaders who respect science, value equity, and are devoted to our collective economic, social, and environmental well-being — will once again demonstrate Evanston's leadership in adopting the resolution that will come before City Council on April 25 as a declaration of renewed commitment to forward-looking action.

Evanston Environment Board
Environmental Justice Evanston
Citizens' Greener Evanston
E-Town Sunrise
District 65 Climate Action Team
League of Women Voters of Evanston

Evanston Environmental Association
Democratic Party of Evanston Climate Action Team
Citizens Climate Lobby
The Climate Reality Project: Chicago Metro Chapter
350.org Chicago Chapter
Beth Emet Dayenu Circle