

CITY ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE:

10.1 Adoption of the Ithaca Green New Deal - Resolution

By Alderperson Mohlenhoff: Seconded by Alderperson Brock

WHEREAS, the City of Ithaca Common Council has demonstrated its desire and commitment to be a leader in sustainability and social equity by passing resolutions to:

- Join the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (2001)
- Endorse the US Mayors' Climate Protection Agreement (2005)
- Adopt the Climate Smart Communities Pledge (2009)
- Adopt the City of Ithaca Energy Action Plan 2012-2016 (2013)
- Adopt Plan Ithaca, the City's Comprehensive Plan (2015), which features equity and sustainability as thread-through themes and contains the chapter Sustainable Energy, Water, & Food Systems

; and

WHEREAS, the October 2018 report entitled "Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5 C" by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and the November 2018 Fourth National Climate Assessment report found that human-caused climate change is causing an increase in extreme weather events that threaten human life, healthy communities, and critical infrastructure; and

WHEREAS, there is a clear emerging international consensus that to avoid the most severe impacts of a changing climate, we should work together to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius, which is even more ambitious than the previous target of 2 degrees; and

WHEREAS, to accomplish this, scientists say that the entire world needs to get to net-zero emissions by 2050, meaning the same amount of greenhouse gases would have to be absorbed as released into the atmosphere; and

WHEREAS, the United States should take a leading role in achieving that, but with active resistance at the federal level, it has fallen to the states, to local governments and to individual citizens to lead the way; and

WHEREAS, versions of a Green New Deal, which have been proposed at both the Federal and the State level, aim to address climate change and other societal problems like economic inequality and racial injustice; and

WHEREAS, local sustainability professionals, activists, and a growing youth climate movement have urged the City of Ithaca to show more leadership on these challenges; and

WHEREAS, the City has already taken several steps to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, including the following:

- Performed energy efficiency upgrades and installed rooftop solar energy systems at several locations. The Ithaca Area Waste Water Treatment Facility, recognized

by the U.S. DOE for its efforts, has improved the efficiency of its operations dramatically and offsets its energy needs on-site through the production and use of biogas;

- The City is actively working to upgrade its entire inventory of streetlights to LED technology, cutting greenhouse gas emissions 50-60% and slashing lighting costs even more dramatically;
- The City worked for years to develop a large scale solar array located at the Ithaca Tompkins airport, which would have generated enough clean electricity to power about one third of City government operations, with significant cost savings. Due to circumstances beyond the City's control, the project ultimately fell through;
- Since 2014, the City has shared a Sustainability Coordinator with the Town of Ithaca; The position is dedicated to reducing greenhouse gas emissions in government operations and the Ithaca community;
- In 2018 the City adopted the Ithaca Green Building Policy report, with the intention of enacting legislation in 2019, which is currently under development;
- The City installed five electric vehicle charging stations in three public parking garages and is an active partner in the EV Tompkins program, which aims to double the number of local EV drivers. The City is working on incorporating the first EV into its fleet;
- In collaboration with four other municipalities, the City developed a residential energy score program that would tap market forces to improve the energy efficiency of existing homes. New York State is now rolling out regional home energy score pilot programs in several locations across the state, including Ithaca, thanks in part to these efforts;
- The City enabled the innovative Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) financing program to offer long-term low-cost financing for energy efficiency and renewable energy projects in commercially-owned buildings. The City of Ithaca and Tompkins County were the first two upstate NY communities to offer this program

; and

WHEREAS, by adopting a Green New Deal for Ithaca, the City has the opportunity to build on existing momentum and be the most climate forward city in New York State; and

WHEREAS, there would be multiple benefits besides greenhouse gas reduction, including local job creation and improved community health; and

WHEREAS, the City of Ithaca acknowledges that to implement a Green New Deal will require support from New York State and the Federal government; and

WHEREAS, to be successfully implemented, the Ithaca Green New Deal must have the support of the City of Ithaca at all levels of government; and

WHEREAS, this support can be demonstrated at first by the City of Ithaca Common Council through the adoption of this resolution; and

WHEREAS, in accordance with the City of Ithaca Code §176-5C (26) “adoption of regulations, policies, procedures and local legislative decisions in connection with any action on this list”, this action does not require a City Environmental Quality Review (CEQR); now, therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the City of Ithaca adopts a goal to meet the electricity needs of City government operations with 100% renewable electricity by 2025; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That the City of Ithaca adopts a goal to reduce emissions from the City fleet of vehicles by 50% from the 2001 levels by 2025; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That the City of Ithaca hereby adopts a goal of achieving a carbon neutral city by 2030; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That the City of Ithaca endorses the following actions to achieve these goals:

- Create a climate action plan (CAP) in 2020 to provide details on how to achieve the Ithaca Green New Deal, and update the CAP regularly;
- Track and annually report on progress towards the goals listed above
- Adopt a Green Building Policy for new buildings in 2019;
- Adopt a Green Building Policy for existing buildings by 2021; and
- Assign additional staff as needed to implement the plan

; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That the Mayor and Common Council will work with department heads and city staff, members of appropriate boards and commissions, businesses, community groups, academic institutions, organizations, and other local governments to develop a comprehensive public input process to enable achievement of these goals; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That the City of Ithaca will ensure that the benefits of the Ithaca Green New Deal are shared among all of our local communities to reduce historical social and economic inequities; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That the City Clerk send copies of this resolution to United States Senators Chuck Schumer and Kirsten Gillibrand; United States Representatives Tom Reed and Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez; Governor Andrew Cuomo; Assemblywoman Barbara Lifton; State Senator Tom O’Mara, and all the other members of the Honorable New York State Congressional delegation.

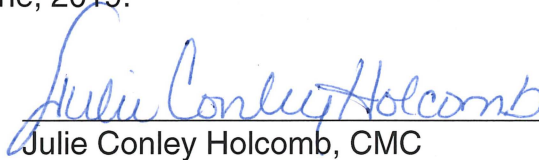
Carried Unanimously

**STATE OF NEW YORK
COUNTY OF TOMPKINS
CITY OF ITHACA**

SS:

I, Julie Conley Holcomb, City Clerk of the City of Ithaca, do hereby certify that the foregoing resolution is a true and exact copy of a resolution duly adopted by the Common Council of said City of Ithaca at a regular meeting held on the 5th day of June, 2019, and that the same is a complete copy of the whole of such resolution.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and the Corporate Seal of the City of Ithaca, this 17th day of June, 2019.



Julie Conley Holcomb, CMC
City Clerk
City of Ithaca, New York