



**CORTE MADERA TOWN COUNCIL  
STAFF REPORT**

**REPORT DATE:** November 19, 2020  
**MEETING DATE:** December 1, 2020

**TO:** Honorable Mayor and Members of the Town Council  
**FROM:** Todd Cusimano, Town Manager *TC*  
**SUBJECT:** Consider Adoption of Resolution No. 43/2020 Declaring a Climate Emergency



**RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

Staff recommends that the Town Council adopt Resolution No. 43/2020, A Resolution of the Town Council of the Town of Corte Madera Declaring a Climate Emergency in Corte Madera. (Attachment 1)

**BACKGROUND/DISCUSSION:**

Since acceptance of our first Climate Action Plan in 2015 (formally adopted in 2018), the Town of Corte Madera has implemented a wide range of measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. These measures include but are not limited to: energy conservation, transportation infrastructure improvements, electric vehicle purchases, solid waste reduction measures, water and wastewater strategies and climate adaptation planning.

On November 18, 2020, the Town of Corte Madera Climate Action Committee recommended that the Town Council adopt a resolution declaring a climate emergency in Corte Madera.

Cities and organizations around the world, and locally within our county, have signed petitions and adopted resolutions supporting a declaration of climate emergency. Adoption of the attached draft resolution would endorse the declaration and reinforce the Town's commitment to reduce GHG emissions and to educate the community about the climate emergency. Local adoption may inspire other communities, states and the federal government to follow.

The declaration provides many reasons for the need for immediate action and references already-adopted GHG reduction goals from the Town CAP. The draft resolution commits to providing the community and Town Council with information and directing funds towards climate change mitigation work (see draft resolution).

The General Plan has many goals related to protection of all aspects of the Town's environment including Chapter 3 Resource Conservation and Sustainability, which includes policies and programs

that promote community sustainability and effective management of renewable and non-renewable natural resources through energy conservation, solid waste management and recycling, natural area resource conservation, and preservation of cultural and historic resources.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

Implementation of the draft resolution would be accomplished with existing, budgeted staff. The draft resolution directs staff to earmark specific funds for greenhouse gas reduction as well as climate change mitigation and adaptation measures. The amount is not specified and would be determined at each budget cycle.

**ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT:**

The activity is covered by the general rule that CEQA does not apply where it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity will have a significant effect on the environment (CEQA, Article 5, Section 15061(b)(3)).

**ATTACHMENTS:**

1. Draft Resolution No. 43/2020

**ATTACHMENT 1**

Draft Resolution No. 43/2020

**RESOLUTION NO. 43/2020**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF CORTE MADERA  
DECLARING A CLIMATE EMERGENCY**

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**WHEREAS**, the Town Council is devoted to protecting and promoting the health, safety, and welfare of its residents; and

**WHEREAS**, the Town General Plan and Climate Action Plan seek to improve, enhance, and preserve the environment and to promote the Town's long-term environmental sustainability and livability; and

**WHEREAS**, the Town Council agrees with the consensus among climate scientists that global climate and ecological crises are underway; and

**WHEREAS**, on September 10, 2018, the State of California's Governor Brown signed Executive Order B-55-18, which establishes a goal for California to achieve greenhouse gas net zero emissions by 2045 and after that sequestering more greenhouse gases than are being emitted and, on the same day, Senate Bill 100 was passed, which set a 100% clean electricity goal for the state by 2045; and

**WHEREAS**, in 2018, the 4th Annual National and California Climate Change Assessments warned that extreme weather and climate-related events in the United States are worsening, predicting increased droughts and heat waves in the western U.S. resulting in increased intensity and magnitude of wildfires, declined snowpack and water supply, increased flooding, impacted agriculture, as well as substantial damages to the economy and human health, unless greenhouse gas emissions are immediately and dramatically curbed; and

**WHEREAS**, global average temperatures are at their highest level since measurements commenced, and the trend is rising further; and

**WHEREAS**, the critical climate tipping points, as defined by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Fifth Assessment Report, that we are rapidly approaching must be avoided, as they will have cascading effects on the survival of our species; and

**WHEREAS**, common sense and morality indicate that humanity can no longer safely emit GHGs and must demand an emergency mobilization effort to rapidly reach zero emissions across all sectors to safely remove excess greenhouse gases from the atmosphere; to preserve and restore the Earth's biodiversity; to implement safety measures to protect all people and species from the consequences of abrupt warming in the near-term; and to cultivate a shift toward climate resiliency that prioritizes conservation, community, and independence from fossil fuels and other petroleum products; and

**WHEREAS**, the Town of Corte Madera has taken a number of important actions to reduce Greenhouse Gas emissions and enhance quality of life in our community including sustainable land use planning, adoption of green building requirements, adoption of its first Climate Action Plan in 2018, and securing 100% renewable energy with MCE Deep Green for town facilities in 2016; and

**WHEREAS**, the Town of Corte Madera is on the verge of adopting a revised and clarified Climate Action Plan; and

**WHEREAS**, on November 18, 2020, the Town Climate Action Committee held a public meeting to consider this resolution and recommended the Town Council adopt this resolution.

**NOW BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED**, the Town Council declares that a climate emergency threatens our town, region, state, nation, humanity and the natural world; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, the Town of Corte Madera affirms the need for the understanding, participation and collaboration of the broader Corte Madera community for all actions and initiatives the Town may adopt in response to the climate emergency and commits to providing outreach, information and education for Corte Madera residents, businesses, and Town staff on the urgency of climate responses, reduction of GHG emissions, the policies and strategies to advance sustainability and resilience; and to regularly assess its GHG reduction goals, actions and policies and provide progress reports and metrics at appropriate times; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, the Town Council directs the Town Manager to work with staff to include support by the Town of Corte Madera in concrete actions that are in concert with County of Marin and the State of California in their common goal to achieve greenhouse gas net zero emissions by 2045.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, the Town Council directs the Town Manager to work with staff to include consideration and prioritization of consistency with the Town’s Climate Action Plan, as amended or updated, in all relevant staff reports, just as it currently considers fiscal impact, General Plan consistency and the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA); and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, the Town Council directs the Town Manager to work with staff to earmark specific funds for greenhouse gas and climate change mitigation and adaptation measures; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, the Town of Corte Madera joins and will advocate for a nation-wide call for regional, national, and international climate emergency mobilization efforts at all levels of government to reverse global warming and the ecological crisis.

The foregoing Resolution was adopted at the regular meeting of the Corte Madera Town Council held on December 1, 2020 by the following vote:

- AYES:**
- NOES:**
- ABSENT:**
- ABSTAIN:**

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Eli Beckman, Mayor

ATTEST:

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Rebecca Vaughn, Town Clerk