



# City of San Antonio

## Agenda Memorandum

**File Number:**17-3844

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**Agenda Item Number:** 22.

**Agenda Date:** 6/22/2017

**In Control:** City Council A Session

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**DEPARTMENT:** Office of Sustainability

**DEPARTMENT HEAD:** Douglas Melnick, Chief Sustainability Officer

**COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED:** All

### **SUBJECT:**

A Resolution of the City of San Antonio in support of the Paris Agreement

### **SUMMARY:**

Mayor-Elect Nirenberg requested on June 12, 2017, to have the City of San Antonio consider a resolution in support of the Paris Agreement adopted on December 12, 2015 and the Mayor's National Climate Action Agenda (MNCAA) Statement. The MNCAA statement supports the "Paris Climate Agreement" goals that address greenhouse gas emissions mitigation.

### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

In late 2015, then-President Barack Obama signed onto the Paris Climate Agreement Under the agreement, every country submitted a voluntary plan to reduce greenhouse gases and meet regularly to review their progress.

On June 1, 2017, President Donald Trump announced the United States' withdraw from the Paris Climate Agreement. Subsequently, the Mayor's National Climate Action Agenda (MNCAA) disbursed emails to U.S. mayors asking them to sign on to the MNCAA Statement in support of Paris Climate Accord. Currently 298 mayors have signed the Statement. The MNCAA, founded in 2015 by Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti, former Houston Mayor Annise Parker and former Philadelphia Mayor Michael Nutter, strives to commit U.S. mayors to collaborate together to strengthen local efforts for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and to support efforts for binding federal and international level policymaking.

The Paris Climate Action Agreement is a pledge within the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) to address greenhouse gas emissions mitigation, adaptation and finance starting in the year 2020. The content of the agreement was negotiated by representatives of 196 parties at the 21st Conference of Parties of the UNFCCC in Paris and adopted by consensus on December 12, 2015. As of June 2017, 195 UNFCC members have signed the agreement, 148 have ratified it. Participation in the agreement is voluntary and non-binding. The Paris Climate Agreement has provisions for each country to determine their climate mitigation plans and self-report its own contributions. There is no mechanism to mandate a country to establish a greenhouse gas reduction target.

The MNCAA's Statement substantiates that the Paris Climate Agreement resulted in a commitment from almost every nation to take action and enact programs to limit global temperature increase to less than two degrees Celsius, with an expectation that this goal would be reduced to 1.5 degrees in the future. Consensus exists among the world's leading climate scientists that global warming is caused by emissions of greenhouse gases originating from human activities and is among the most significant problems facing the world today. Documented impacts of global warming include but are not limited to increased occurrences of extreme weather events (e.g. droughts and floods), adverse impacts on ecosystems, demographic patterns and economic value chains. U.S cities response to climate change provides a climate-compatible future that empowers communities an opportunity to access first-mover advantage in the range of products, services, knowledge and skills.

Upon City Council approval to be a signatory on the Statement, the City of San Antonio will commit to reducing greenhouse gas emissions by:

- 1) Joining other U.S. cities in the Climate Mayor's Network in adopting and supporting the goals of the Paris Agreement; and
- 2) Committing to exploring the potential benefits and cost of adopting policies and programs that promote the long-term goal of greenhouse gas emissions reduction while maximizing economic and social co-benefits of such action.

## **ISSUE:**

Office of Sustainability is requesting City Council approval of a resolution in support of the Paris Agreement and the Mayor's National Climate Action Agenda Statement supporting the "Paris Climate Agreement" goals that addresses greenhouse gas emissions mitigation, adaptation and finance starting in the year 2020.

The adoption of this resolution is consistent with the goals of the SA Tomorrow Sustainability Plan, adopted by City Council in August 2016, for the City to "Lead by Example" by developing a Climate Action Plan, including a study of future San Antonio-specific climate projections.

The SA Tomorrow Sustainability Plan, includes numerous strategies related to resilience and climate and has three resilient-related appendices: the Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory, Climate Vulnerability Assessment, and a Climate Trends and Projections Analysis.

## **ALTERNATIVES:**

Alternatives to approving the MNCAA statement in support of the Paris Climate Agreement, as presented, would be to approve the resolution with changes in the provisions of the resolution, or to postpone or deny

approval. Postponement or failure to approve the resolution request will not directly impact City operations.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

This legislation poses no direct fiscal impact to operations.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

City staff recommends approval of a resolution in support of the Paris Agreement and the Mayor's National Climate Action Agenda Statement supporting the "Paris Climate Agreement" goals that addresses greenhouse gas emissions mitigation.