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Sent: Tuesday, September 6, 2022 8:33 PM
To: ZZ Council Members; ZZ City Clerk External
Cc: Reynolds, Mitch
Subject: Please pass the climate emergency resolution

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Dear Council Members,

I am emailing again to encourage you to pass the climate emergency resolution. It will confirm the commitment you made in 2019 to draw down our community's carbon emissions. Now that more information is available and we see that damaging consequences of climate breakdown are happening faster than predicted, it's important to strengthen that pledge and prepare city residents to take the action steps that are coming soon in the climate action plan.

As you know, the climate crisis is caused, for the most part, by burning fossil fuels. Deforestation and agriculture are also contributors. We will not reduce greenhouse gas emissions if we do not curb and, eventually, eliminate most fossil fuel use. This resolution identifies the problem and our determination to fix it.

To be sure, little La Crosse is but one small dot on the global map of places where actions must be taken. That is both frightening and motivating. We all have to act. But, we can do our part just as we hope and expect others do theirs. It is important to join the global effort to declare a climate emergency (climateemergencydeclaration.org/climate-emergency-declarations-cover-15-million-citizens/) and the community-level efforts to find better ways to live our lives without jeopardizing the future of most life on Earth. (www.brookes.ac.uk/about-brookes/news/researchers-agree--the-world-can-reach-a-100--renewable-energy-system-by-or-before-2050/)

This resolution officially recognizes the crisis is an emergency. It is a test of going from words to actions. Actions are coming in the climate action plan (the draft is out now as you know). And the actions will mean changing how we do some things. But, in an emergency, you don't ask, "How can I keep doing everything exactly the same and hope that the emergency get fixed?" Rather, you ask, "How can I change what I am doing to help the emergency get fixed?" As many studies point out, the changes, in the end, will not only reduce greenhouse gas emissions, but will often also make life less expensive, cleaner, less polluted, more equitable, and more healthy.

This leads to the reason I am emailing again. I am inviting you to attend the upcoming National Drive Electric Week event on Saturday, September 25 from 1 to 4 p.m. at the Copeland Park Oktoberfest shelter. There will be several owners of electric cars and e-bikes there to answer questions along with groups like RENEW Wisconsin, Xcel Energy, and Sierra Club giving information about electric vehicles. <https://driveelectricweek.org/event?eventid=3360>

Since some are concerned about the transition to electric vehicles, here are a few facts about electric vehicles, affordability, and equity in transportation

- While prices recently rose because of global gas price spikes, there are still many affordable used EVs available online* and, starting next year, there will be several new EV models available for under \$30,000 (insideevs.com/reviews/344001/compare-evs/)
- A 2019 Consumer Reports study confirmed that the cost to own and operate an electric car is about half the cost for a comparable gas-powered car (<https://www.consumerreports.org/hybrids-evs/evs-offer-big-savings-over-traditional-gas-powered-cars/>)
- The State of Wisconsin 2022 Clean Energy Plan, quoting the 2016 COWS report on in-state renewable energy production, notes that, most of the \$14 plus billion Wisconsin spends on energy is sent out of state.

Transitioning to renewable, in-state produced, clean electricity not only retains those dollars but provides many new business and job opportunities. osce.wi.gov/Documents/SOW-CleanEnergyPlan2022.pdf)

- Because of much lower fuel and maintenance costs, an electric car is actually more affordable for families with modest incomes than a gas-powered car, especially if equity incentives are offered to help them afford the vehicles;
- For those who can't or don't drive private cars, a robust electric public transportation system can equalize access;
- E-Bikes are outselling electric cars (<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2022-01-21/u-s-e-bike-sales-outpaced-electric-cars-in-2021>) and many families are finding they are able to replace a second car with an electric bike. Some communities are accelerating the switch by offering e-bike incentives (<https://denverite.com/2022/06/28/denver-ebike-rebate-program/>)

Again, I encourage you to pass the climate emergency resolution and attend the September 25 electric vehicle event.

Thank you for listening.

Cathy Van Maren