

City of Missoula Resolution 8329

Missoula County Resolution 2019-035

Missoula County Resolution

A joint resolution of the City of Missoula and Missoula County to formally commit to take the necessary steps to power the community with 100% clean electricity by 2030 for the Missoula urban area.

WHEREAS, there is overwhelming scientific consensus that climate change is human-induced and primarily caused by our extensive release of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere; and

WHEREAS, this scientific consensus was recently supported by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change in its 2018 Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5°C, which states that allowing the Earth to continue to warm from its current human-driven 1°C above pre-industrial levels to 1.5 °C would cause widespread impacts on ecosystem and human health, and that global net human-caused emissions of carbon dioxide (CO₂) would need to fall by 45% from 2010 levels by 2030 in order to keep the worst effects from being realized; and

WHEREAS, the Fourth National Climate Assessment issued by thirteen federal agencies was released in Fall 2018 and predicts significant detrimental effects of climate change on our economy, environment, and public health if serious, transformational, and rapid action is not taken; and

WHEREAS, the 2017 Montana Climate Assessment determined that for Northwest Montana, including Missoula County, climate change is projected to cause increased annual temperatures, hotter summers, reduced low-elevation snowpack, earlier spring snowmelt, and more frequent and intense droughts, wildfires, and wildfire smoke, with deleterious impacts to ecosystems, human health, and the economy, and that these impacts will be more severe if global greenhouse gas emissions are not reduced sharply in the near future; and

WHEREAS, although resiliency planning is crucial, adaptation alone will not be enough to escape the effects of climate change, including negative ramifications on both human health and the economy, which will be most detrimental to low-income populations, marginalized communities, and future generations, obligating our current leaders to act swiftly and decisively to mitigate those effects; and

WHEREAS, reducing CO₂ emissions sufficiently to avoid the worst impacts of climate change will necessitate a worldwide transition away from fossil fuels, not only in the electricity sector but also in the transportation and thermal energy sectors, and will likely require electrification of a large portion of these sectors; and

WHEREAS, the current electricity mix for the Missoula area is approximately 60% clean, leaving approximately 40% that is fossil fuel-based, and we must transition this fossil fuel-based electricity to cleaner forms to do our part; and

WHEREAS, in December 2015, nearly every country in the world united in support of the Paris Climate Agreement, which aims to hold global temperature rise well below 2°C; yet our federal government has since requested withdrawal, refusing to acknowledge the urgency of climate change and necessitating action at the state and local levels; and

WHEREAS, according to Sierra Club's Ready for 100 campaign, 109 cities, 11 counties, and 3 states and districts have already committed to or have achieved clean energy transitions even in the face of federal inaction; and

WHEREAS, the City of Missoula and Missoula County have already committed to climate actions, and this resolution will contribute to the success of these commitments:

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1. The City of Missoula's Conservation and Climate Action Plan for municipal operations (2013);
2. Missoula's Community Climate Smart Action Plan (2015);
3. The City and County Growth Policies, both of which include goals to reduce our contribution to climate change while also preparing for the impacts of climate change on our communities (City Our Missoula Growth Policy 2015, County Growth Policy 2016);
4. Missoula County's Climate Action Resolution, which establishes a goal of carbon neutrality in county government operations by the year 2035 (2019);
5. Climate Ready Communities: Building Resiliency in Missoula County, a stakeholder-driven climate resiliency planning project led jointly by Missoula County, the City of Missoula, and Climate Smart Missoula (2018-19); and
6. Myriad other related efforts not described herein; and

WHEREAS, Climate Smart Missoula, the City of Missoula and Missoula County have researched, developed, and vetted these issues over the course of the past year, producing Missoula's 100% Clean Electricity Options Report¹ that specifically:

1. Establishes a goal of 100% clean electricity for the Missoula area (defined as the City of Missoula and the surrounding Urban Development Area);
2. Describes a suite of options for achieving 100% clean electricity;
3. Takes into account our current electricity consumption and resource profile (mix of fossil fuels and clean electricity) in order to determine how much new clean electricity is needed;
4. Envisions that the goal will be achieved in part by new solar and wind energy projects, some of which will be located within the Missoula urban area and others elsewhere in the state of Montana;
5. Envisions an acceleration of energy efficiency and conservation efforts to reduce our overall demand for electricity;
6. Acknowledges that clean electricity options and technologies are dramatically declining in cost, especially utility-scale solar and wind, which now produce cheaper electricity than coal and natural gas on a levelized cost basis;
7. Assumes continued cost decreases in energy storage and other emerging technologies; and
8. Necessitates cooperation with NorthWestern Energy and Missoula Electric Cooperative; and

WHEREAS, a joint city-county commitment to 100% clean electricity would demonstrate a prioritization of climate action that would encourage movement and progress at all levels of government and among area businesses, non-profit organizations, educational institutions, faith communities, and individuals; and

WHEREAS, a joint city-county commitment to 100% clean electricity would create a wide range of

¹ <https://www.missoulaclimate.org/100-percent.html>

employment opportunities and foster job growth in the expanding fields of solar, wind, and energy efficiency; and

WHEREAS, new clean electricity will be developed and deployed in ways that are sensitive to impacts on wildlife, fish, ecosystems and public health; and

WHEREAS, a joint City-County commitment would demonstrate to NorthWestern Energy and Missoula Electric Cooperative the public's demand for renewable electricity within their ratepayer base; and

WHEREAS, a joint City-County commitment would encourage the Montana Consumer Counsel and the Montana Public Service Commission to consider Missoula's goals as they carry out their mandate to protect the public interest; and

WHEREAS, Missoulians have come together to set meaningful goals, envisioning an electricity transition in which all citizens have the opportunity to participate in building a safe and resilient future, and our example will aid and inspire other communities across Montana to follow suit.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the City of Missoula and Missoula County formally commit to take the necessary steps to power the community with 100% clean electricity by 2030 for the Missoula urban area via the suite of options described in Missoula's 100% Clean Electricity Options Report; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this 100% goal is designed to shift to clean electricity the proportion of Missoula's electricity that is presently fossil-fuel based (approximately 40%); and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the path to 100% clean electricity will be conducted expeditiously and will require the periodic measuring of progress towards clearly defined goals, performance measures, and benchmarks, including an interim goal of 80% by 2025; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this transition will assure that benefits are equitably available to and will not disproportionately burden marginalized groups or populations in our community including low-income populations, Native peoples, and people of color; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this work will move forward in a manner that reduces barriers to participation, encourages ownership of a shared community vision, and allows adequate representation of and space for strongly impacted populations in the planning and implementation process; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that funds shall be allocated in subsequent fiscal year budgets to enable and advance this clean electricity transition; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that 100% clean electricity is just a start, and implementation of this goal should take into account the ultimate need to transition our entire energy system, including transportation and thermal energy, away from fossil fuels.

Passed and adopted this 8th day of April 2019.

**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
MISSOULA COUNTY, MONTANA**

/s/ Nicole Rowley

Nicole Rowley, Chair

/s/ Josh Slotnick

Josh Slotnick, Commissioner

/s/ David Strohmaier

David Strohmaier, Commissioner

/s/ Tyler Gernant

Tyler Gernant
Clerk & Recorder/Treasurer

City of Missoula, Montana

/s/ John Engen

John Engen, Mayor

Martha L. Rehbein

Martha L. Rehbein
Legislative Services Director/City Clerk

(S E A L)