

A RESOLUTION BY THE DEKALB COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

A RESOLUTION OF THE DEKALB COUNTY GOVERNING AUTHORITY TO ADOPT A VISION AND TRANSITION PLAN OF 100% CLEAN ENERGY AND CLEAN TRANSPORTATION POWERING THE COUNTY'S NEEDS BY 2050.

WHEREAS, the DeKalb County and Metro-Atlanta region, ranks 48th out of the 50 most populous metro-areas in solar photovoltaic installations according to the "Shining Cities Report 2020" by Environment America; and

WHEREAS, Renewable energy represents an enormous economic opportunity for DeKalb County to create jobs in an ever emerging industry, increase economic security and expand prosperity for local residents, reduce air pollution and associated public health risks, reduce the strain on water resources, and save consumers money; and

WHEREAS, Solar jobs growth has nearly doubled in the metro-Atlanta region in the last decade, and nearly 1 million Americans are working near- or full-time in the energy efficiency, solar, wind, and alternative vehicles sectors, almost five times the current employment in the fossil fuel electric industry, which includes coal, gas, and oil workers; and

WHEREAS, over one hundred and eighty U.S. cities & counties, including San Diego, Salt Lake County and Chicago, have already adopted ambitious 100% clean energy goals, and six U.S. cities including Aspen, CO, Burlington, VT, Greensburg, KS, Kodiak Island, AK, and Rockport, MO have already hit their targets to generate 100% of the energy used community-wide from clean, non-polluting and renewable sources; and

WHEREAS, there is scientific consensus regarding the reality of climate change and the connection between the combustion of fossil fuels and the degradation and loss of forests that create greenhouse gases and the warming of the planet; and

WHEREAS, according to the UN Panel on Climate Change, society must reduce total CO₂ emissions 45 percent by 2030 and must secure carbon neutrality by 2050 to limit global temperature rise to 1.5 degrees celsius, thereby decreasing the likelihood of catastrophic change undermining economic, natural, and social systems; and

WHEREAS, the 26th UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties meets October 31st - November 12, 2021, to accelerate action towards the goals of the Paris Agreement and the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, working to secure a brighter future for our children and future generations around the world; and

WHEREAS, President Biden's administration has set a goal of carbon neutrality by 2050 across the entire American economy, and DeKalb County voters overwhelmingly supported this President and his vision in the 2020 election; and

WHEREAS, “renewable energy” includes energy derived from wind, solar, geothermal, and wave technology sources. These sources of energy have significant public health co-benefits associated that can help address pressing environmental justice challenges in sensitive communities in DeKalb County and around the country; and

WHEREAS, rooftop solar, low-income community solar, energy efficiency, and demand control technologies offer the opportunity to equitably distribute resources, address poverty, stimulate new economic activity in DeKalb County, and lift up those most impacted by high energy costs; and

WHEREAS, access to the financial and environmental benefits of renewable energy must be shared equitably across all economic classes, and this can be achieved through such mechanisms as community-based development of renewable energy infrastructure, equitable pricing structures, community solar programs with low-income communities, and non-profit organization leadership; and

WHEREAS, distributed solar energy paired with energy storage is an important strategy to build disaster resilience into our communities, and will assist with disaster recovery. Ensuring equitable distribution of these resources is imperative to adequately prepare for disasters, particularly those exacerbated by climate change; and

WHEREAS, Georgia Power Company has made great progress in bringing solar and wind resources into the electric generation mix since 2010 but the overall percentage of these resources in the generation mix remains less than 3%; and whose parent company Southern Co. has made a net-zero by 2050 vision statement across their companies portfolio, and

NOW, THEREFORE, BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF DEKALB COUNTY, GEORGIA, HEREBY RESOLVES

Section 1

Clean Energy Goal

DeKalb County establishes the following renewable energy goals for both county run facilities and for the County at large:

- i. One Hundred Percent (100%) renewable energy for county electricity use by 2035 including at least 50% renewable energy by 2025; and
- ii. One Hundred Percent (100%) renewable energy for DeKalb County community-wide electricity supply by 2045; and
- iii. One Hundred Percent (100%) renewable energy in all energy-use sectors including transportation by 2050..

Section 2

Energy Energy Efficiency First

Priority will be given the lowest cost measures to meet energy needs including weatherization, cogeneration, district heating and cooling, decentralized electricity generation and smart grids/microgrids, the use of industrial waste heat, building controls, automated lighting, solar-powered hot water heaters and programs that create an energy-saving culture in DeKalb County.

Section 3

Equity and Justice

DeKalb County will create structured mechanisms to include low-income citizens in the benefits to be derived including creating quality careers adhering to local source hiring, a just transition for workers displaced by fossil fuel reduction, equitable access through ownership and benefits to new opportunity for historically marginalized communities, and affordable clean energy options.

Section 4

Open, Inclusive, Transparent Planning Process

The public will have an opportunity and be encouraged to participate in the process for planning and implementation of this transition plan.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the County opposes any rollback of climate policy at the federal level and affirms its ongoing commitment to the goals of the Paris Climate Agreement and the County's responsibility to meet its proportionate greenhouse gas reductions for the United States under the Paris Climate Agreement; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, a renewable energy transition is an opportunity to redress historical inequities in our community and must be just. This means, in part, prioritizing the resources to train and hire people from within communities of color and women that have traditionally been underrepresented in renewable energy, energy efficiency, and the workforce needed to implement a successful renewable energy transition; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that priority will be given to the lowest cost measures to meet energy needs including efficiency, weatherization, cogeneration, district heating and cooling, decentralized electricity generation and smart grids/microgrids, the use of industrial waste heat, building controls, automated lighting, solar-powered hot water heaters, electric heat pumps, and programs that create an energy-saving culture in DeKalb County.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the County shall prioritize direct investments of renewable resources over the purchase of unbundled Renewable Energy Credits (RECs), and any RECs purchased must be from projects built during or after [year resolution is adopted], and the County with the intention of reducing the reliance on RECs during the transition to 100 percent renewable resources over time;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, DeKalb County will create structured mechanisms to include low-income citizens in the benefits to be derived, including creating quality careers adhering to local source hiring, a just transition for workers displaced by fossil fuel reduction, equitable

access through ownership and benefits to new opportunities for historically marginalized communities, and affordable clean energy options.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the County will seek to partner with energy utilities and community-based organizations to measure energy cost-burden, adopt policies that reduce the cost-burden for low-income customers, and make incentives available to foster equality in energy burdens as a percent of household incomes; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the County will participate in related regulatory proceedings and State legislation to advocate for rules and policies that support DeKalb County's energy goals; including intervening in the 2022 Integrated Resource Plan at the Georgia Public Service Commission and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the County will work with the Georgia Power Company and the Georgia Public Service Commission to accelerate the transition to renewable energy and minimize dependence on fossil fuels, including but not limited to, participating in regulatory proceedings to express County preferences for clean energy goals and opposition to any new fossil fuel, woody biomass, or nuclear power project; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the County seeks to collaborate with surrounding communities to share best practices on planning and implementation and seek partnerships on implementation pathways where beneficial for both parties; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, by December 1st 2022 the DeKalb County CEO will develop a plan for the County to achieve these goals that will include interim milestones, budget estimates, equity metrics, estimated financial impacts, financing mechanisms, and the percentage of clean energy that shall be generated locally; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the County will implement a robust outreach and engagement effort for both planning and implementation that will include, but is not limited to, communities of color, immigrant and refugee communities, low-income residents, youth representatives, environmental advocates, County staff representatives, utility providers, and neighborhood associations, as conduits of outreach to help the County achieve these renewable electricity goals with special attention on addressing environmental, social, and economic inequities; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, by December 1st 2022 the COO and Fleet Management Department, in cooperation with the Operations Committee and the Green Policy Committee, will develop a plan for DeKalb County fleet operations to achieve, zero-emission fleet vehicles by 2035, that includes interim milestones, budget estimates, equity metrics, and estimated financial impacts,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, up to \$250,000 in funds from the General Fund budget shall be available for third-party expertise required to develop a plan for the County to achieve goals of 100% renewable energy and transportation; and,

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that this resolution is effective immediately upon approval.

