RESOLUTION NO. 11159 (2020 SERIES)

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO, CALIFORNIA, APPROVING THE CLIMATE ACTION PLAN FOR COMMUNITY RECOVERY AND ASSOCIATED CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSION THRESHOLDS AND GUIDANCE INCLUDING A NEGATIVE DECLARATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW (EID 0275-2020)

WHEREAS, greenhouse gas accumulation in the atmosphere as the result of human activity is the primary cause of the global climate crisis; and

WHEREAS, in California alone, the initial impacts of climate change have resulted in unprecedented disasters with tremendous human, economic, and environmental costs; and

WHEREAS, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change estimates that global emissions need to be reduced by 45 percent from 2010 levels by 2030, and 100 percent by 2050 to prevent global catastrophe; and

WHEREAS, the State of California enacted Senate Bill (SB) 32 to require greenhouse gas emissions to be reduced to 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030 and Governor Brown issued Executive Order B-55-18 establishing a statewide target of carbon neutrality by 2045; and

WHEREAS, City of San Luis Obispo residents and businesses have repeatedly identified climate action as a top community priority; and

WHEREAS, the City of San Luis Obispo City Council has directed staff to evaluate strategies and options to achieve community-wide carbon neutrality by 2035; and

WHEREAS, the COVID-19 Pandemic has created a public health and economic disasters; and

WHEREAS, a low carbon, sustainability-oriented approach to economic development is widely believed to be a path forward for resiliency and community recovery; and

WHEREAS, low greenhouse gas emissions, resilience and equity are required for communities to thrive in the 21st century; and

WHEREAS, the City of San Luis Obispo City Council first adopted a Climate Action Plan (CAP) in 2012; and
WHEREAS, the City has adopted a Major City Goal in response to the climate crises to continue to update and implement the Climate Action Plan for carbon neutrality, including preservation and enhancement of our open space and urban forest and planning for resilience; and

WHEREAS, a 2020 update to the Climate Action Plan has been prepared and titled, Climate Action Plan for Community Recovery, that establishes a community-wide goal of carbon neutrality by 2035, adopts sector specific goals, and provides foundational actions to establish a trajectory towards achieving those goals; and

WHEREAS, lead agencies may analyze and mitigate the significant effects of GHG emissions at a programmatic level, such as in a general plan, a long range development plan, or a separate plan to reduce GHG emissions as authorized in State CEQA Guidelines (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 15000 et seq.), section 15183.5(a); and

WHEREAS, public agencies may choose to analyze and mitigate significant GHG emissions in a plan for the reduction of GHG emissions and such a plan may be used in a cumulative impacts analysis (State CEQA Guidelines, §15183(b)); and

WHEREAS, section 15183(b)(1) of the State CEQA Guidelines states that a plan for the reduction of GHG should: a) Quantify GHG emissions, both existing and projected over a specified time period, resulting from activities within a specified area; b) Establish a level, based on substantial evidence, below which the contribution to greenhouse gas emissions from activities covered by the plan would not be cumulatively considerable; c) Identify and analyze the greenhouse gas emissions resulting from specific actions or categories of actions anticipated within the geographic area; d) Specify measures or a group of measures, including performance standards, that substantial evidence demonstrates, if implemented on a project-by-project basis, would collectively achieve the specified emissions level; e) Establish a mechanism to monitor the plan’s progress toward achieving the level and to require amendment if the plan is not achieving specified levels; f) Be adopted in a public process following environmental review; and

WHEREAS, the Climate Action Plan for Community Recovery is a Qualified GHG Emissions Reduction Plan to reduce GHG emissions within its jurisdictional boundary to meet and exceed state targets consistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15183.5 for year 2030, and includes a California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions Thresholds and Guidance; and

WHEREAS, the CEQA GHG Emissions Threshold and Guidance includes a GHG Checklist that provides that plans and projects that are consistent with the demographic forecasts and land use assumptions used in the Climate Action Plan can utilize the checklist to demonstrate consistency with the Climate Action Plan’s GHG emissions reduction strategy, and if consistent, can tier from the existing programmatic environmental review contained in the adopted IS-ND for the Climate Action Plan; and
WHEREAS, the GHG Checklist is an administrative document that may be separately updated by the City to include new GHG reduction measures or to comply with later amendments to the 2020 Climate Action Plan; and

WHEREAS, the potential environmental impact of the Climate Action Plan for Community Recovery and CEQA GHG Emissions Thresholds and Guidance has been evaluated in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act pursuant to an initial environmental study (EID 0275-2020) and an Initial Study/Negative Declaration of environmental impact has been prepared and circulated for public review and comment period from June 22, 2020 to July 22, 2020; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission, at the hearing on July 8, 2020, considered the Climate Action Plan for Community Recovery, including the GHG Emissions Thresholds and Guidance and proposed Initial Study/Negative Declaration and it’s consistency with the General Plan, and recommend approval; and

WHEREAS, the Active Transportation Committee, at the meeting on July 16, 2020, reviewed the Climate Action Plan for Community Recovery and unanimously recommended approval of the plan.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of San Luis Obispo as follows:

SECTION 1. Recitals. The recitals set forth above are hereby adopted as the findings of the City in adopting the policies herein.

SECTION 2. Environmental Review. The City Council has determined that the adoption of the proposed 2020 update to the City’s Climate Action Plan titled, Climate Action Plan for Community Recovery, including the CEQA GHG Thresholds and Guidance document will not create a substantial environmental effect as defined by the California Environmental Quality Act (“CEQA”) and hereby adopts the Negative Declaration and directs staff to prepare and file a Notice of Determination with the County Clerk within five working days of the execution of this Resolution and approval of the Project and with the Office of Planning and Research.

SECTION 3. Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Targets. The City Council adopts carbon neutrality by 2035 or sooner as its community greenhouse gas emissions reduction target. The City Council also adopts the following sector specific goals:

1. Carbon neutral government operations by 2030
2. 100 percent carbon free electricity by 2020
3. No net new building emissions from onsite energy use by 2020; 50 percent reduction in existing onsite building emissions (after accounting for MBCP) by 2030
4. Achieve General Plan mode split objective by 2030; 40 percent of vehicle miles travelled by electric vehicles by 2030
5. 75 percent diversion of landfilled organic waste by 2025; 90 percent diversion by 2035
6. Increase carbon sequestration on the San Luis Obispo Greenbelt and Urban Forest through compost application-based carbon farming activities and tree planting; ongoing through 2035
SECTION 4. Qualified GHG Reduction Plan. The City Council finds after due
deliberation that the Climate Action Plan for Community Recovery will effectively serve as the
City’s “qualified” greenhouse gas emissions reduction plan and be used for CEQA streamlining
purposes consistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15183.5(b)(1).

SECTION 5. 2020 Climate Action Plan for Community Recovery. The City Council
hereby approves the Climate Action Plan for Community Recovery including Volume 1, Volume
2, Technical Appendices, and the California Environmental Quality Act Greenhouse Gas
Emissions Thresholds and Guidance document.

Upon motion of Mayor Harmon, seconded by Vice Mayor Gomez, and on the following
roll call vote:

AYES: Council Member Christianson, Pease, Stewart, Vice Mayor Gomez and
Mayor Harmon

NOES: None

ABSENT: None

The foregoing resolution was adopted this 18th day of August 2020.

Heidi Harmon
Mayor Heidi Harmon

ATTEST:

Teresa Purrington
City Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

J. Christine Dietrick
City Attorney

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the official seal of the City
of San Luis Obispo, California, on 8/19/2020 | 3:49 PM PDT