



## Office of the Town Manager

Rafael G. Casals  
Town Manager

# MEMORANDUM

To: Honorable Mayor and Town Council

From: Rafael G. Casals, Town Manager

Date: June 15, 2016

Re: Amending the Town's Growth Management Plan: New Climate Change Element

## REQUEST

**AN ORDINANCE OF THE MAYOR AND TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF CUTLER BAY, FLORIDA, ADOPTING A CLIMATE CHANGE ELEMENT TO BE INCLUDED IN THE TOWN GROWTH MANAGEMENT PLAN; PROVIDING FOR TRANSMITTAL; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.**

## BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS

Town staff is requesting that the Town Council transmit the proposed Climate Change Element to the Department of Economic Opportunity and other review agencies.

Since incorporation, the Town has been a leader in green building and other environment friendly programs, within Miami-Dade County and beyond. The Town Growth Management Plan and Land Development Regulations are at the forefront of "going green".

The Town has already taken a number of steps to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and encourage environmental responsibility at the local level. The Town, along with neighboring communities, participates in the Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) Program, which provides loans to property owners for solar panels, wind generators, insulation and shutters. The Town also recently gained the legislative authority to allow residents of certain areas to receive loans, which can be paid off over time, to finance the initial costs of installing an alternate energy producing device. With that being said it is estimated that between 400,000 and 450,000 metric tons of greenhouse gases are emitted by various sources within the Town.

Greenhouse gas emissions resulting from the consumption of fossil fuels are widely considered to be the major contributing factor to climate change. Short term climate change impacts such as increased drought, flooding, and extreme weather events are already being felt in many areas. Long term impacts such as damage to buildings and infrastructure, agriculture, ecosystems, and human health, including increased asthma and allergies, are starting to be felt as well. Also, to the Town's good fortune Miami-Dade County has also shown leadership in in Climate Change issues.





In 2010, recognizing that climate change has little regard for man-made territorial boundaries, the four counties in southeast Florida formed the Southeast Florida Regional Climate Change Compact (Compact). Miami-Dade, Broward, Palm Beach and Monroe counties became the first, perhaps the only, neighboring local governments to collaborate on their common concerns about climate change. These four counties, comprised of over one hundred (100) cities and representing over thirty (30) percent of the state's population, agreed to contribute staff, resources, and expertise to address climate change issues, including sea level rise. By 2060, it is estimated that there will be two feet of sea level rise. This projection was adopted by all four Compact counties as a guideline for planning purposes.

On July 1, 2014 the Miami-Dade Sea Level Rise Task Force issued its Report (the "Report") and Recommendations concerning Sea Level Rise. The conclusion of this report was the need for an adaption plan, everglades restoration and measures to prevent salt water intrusion. As stated previous the Town has been proactive. For example, the Town's Floodplain Mitigation Plan adopted by Resolution #15-27 in May, 2015 recognizes the challenges of Climate Change and Sea Level Rise (Section 3.2.1).

The Report concluded that it is important to understand that sea level rise is not an endpoint but rather a continuing trend and the Town must consider and plan for sea level rise in future policy decisions. By examining local rates of sea level change and local projections for sea level rise at three to seven (3-7) inches by 2030 and nine to twenty-four (9-24) inches by 2060, the Town can begin to analyze and plan for the impacts of sea level rise in long range planning.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

Staff is recommending approval of the Climate Change Element Ordinance on first reading in order to transmit to the State of Florida Department of Economic Opportunity and other review agencies.

### **ATTACHMENT**

- Attachment "A" – Advertisement (*Miami Herald Local & State Section – June 5, 2016*)

