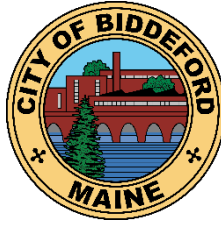


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# CITY OF BIDDEFORD, MAINE

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## PRESS RELEASE

### **Biddeford Joins Race to Zero Movement to Achieve Climate Neutrality by 2050**

*City is First Municipality in Maine to Join*

BIDDEFORD (December 28, 2022) — The Biddeford City Council passed a resolution on December 6 to adopt the ‘Race to Zero’ climate pledge. The [Race to Zero campaign](#) is an initiative of ICLEI – *Local Governments for Sustainability* to rally local-level leadership on climate action in line with the 2015 Paris Agreement, which aims to limit global warming to 1.5°C.

By approving the Race to Zero pledge, the City of Biddeford set a community-wide goal of achieving net-zero carbon emissions by 2050, with an interim target to reduce emissions by 62.6% by 2030. Additionally, the pledge formalizes Biddeford’s intent to adopt a Climate Action Plan and to undertake at least one high-impact climate action during 2023. Biddeford is the first municipality in the state of Maine to join the Race to Zero pledge.

Following the passage of the pledge, Biddeford City Council President Norman Belanger noted that adopting meaningful climate goals under the Race to Zero initiative helps move the climate action plan process forward. “Hopefully, the next generation will benefit from the work we are doing now,” Belanger said.

“As a community, we are all in this together and together as a community we can change the future,” Steve Reiter, Chair of the Biddeford Climate Task Force, said. “The time to do that is now.”

Tom Herrod, Senior Program Officer at ICLEI, applauded Biddeford’s passage of the Race to Zero pledge.

"Biddeford's commitment to the Cities Race to Zero punctuates a year of action in the community. From establishing a baseline of emissions to setting a Science Based Target, this commitment sets the stage for Biddeford to model actions and strategies that will lead to hitting their climate targets and contributing to the necessary emissions reductions needed to keep global warming below 1.5 degrees Celsius," Herrod said. "Biddeford's leadership is a model for Maine communities and ICLEI – *Local Governments for Sustainability USA* is excited to continue its partnership with Biddeford into the future."

The adoption of the Race to Zero pledge furthers the ongoing work of Biddeford’s Climate Task Force, an ad-hoc committee established by Biddeford’s Mayor, Alan Casavant, in December 2020. The Climate Task Force is in the process of developing a climate action plan to identify strategies and actions intended to achieve these newly adopted emissions reduction targets, with expected completion in September 2023.

“Climate change is affecting all of us, and each year seems to bring more negative impacts in our area, said Mayor Alan Casavant. “ It is critical that we all work together do what we can to limit its impacts. I am proud that Biddeford has been a leader in Maine by adopting the Race to Zero pledge, and that the Biddeford Climate Task Force is working hard to develop strategies for concrete climate action in our community.”

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### **About the Biddeford Climate Task Force**

The Biddeford Climate Task Force is an ad-hoc committee established by Mayor Alan Casavant. The Task Force’s mission is to create a comprehensive Climate Change Action Plan that focuses on adaptation, mitigation and sustainability strategies that address the real effects of climate change in Biddeford through the provision of effective, cost-efficient, and equitable strategies. The Task Force is made up of 9 members, including Biddeford residents, City staff, and local organizations and institutions.

### **About ICLEI150**

ICLEI150 is an initiative by ICLEI - Local Governments for Sustainability USA (ICLEI USA). It is a movement of 150 U.S. local governments to join the Cities Race to Zero by pledging to meet the climate crisis, setting a Science-Based Target, implementing at least one high-impact action, and reporting progress. ICLEI USA is the country office of ICLEI, a global network working with more than 2,500 local and regional governments committed to sustainable urban development. Active in 125+ countries, we influence sustainability policy and drive local action for low emission, nature-based, equitable, resilient and circular development. ICLEI USA is the leading technical expert on local government greenhouse-gas emissions accounting, climate action, and resilience and sustainability planning.

### **About Race to Zero**

The UNFCCC Race To Zero is a global campaign to rally leadership and support from businesses, cities, regions, investors for a healthy, resilient, zero carbon recovery that prevents future threats, creates decent jobs, and unlocks inclusive, sustainable growth. The objective is to build momentum around the shift to a decarbonized economy ahead of COP26, where governments must strengthen their contributions to the Paris Agreement.