



Dear Mayor Haroff and Members of the Larkspur City Council,

On behalf of the Redwood Community Health Coalition (RCHC), Marin Community Clinics (MCC), and Ritter Center and our patient population, we urge you to adopt a robust Climate Emergency Resolution (CER) this week. Passing a CER that emphasizes the urgency of acting swiftly to prioritize climate issues, and applies a climate lens to issues traditionally viewed separately, is needed now more than ever.

As community health centers, we recognize the challenges that climate change poses to our patient population. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) rightly identifies climate change as a human-made health stressor which influences health and disease due to the increase in frequency and severity of natural disasters such as wildfires and flooding, sea level rise, infectious diseases, and increased behavioral health challenges. As the CDC notes, climate change induced disruptions in natural systems can result in an increase in respiratory and cardiovascular disease, injuries and even premature deaths.

Climate change intersects with multiple social determinates of health impacting our patients, including access to equitable transit, sustainable water supplies, clean air, and affordable and safe housing conditions. Over the past year and a half, our country has in many ways had a racial reckoning, recognizing that our systems and institutions disproportionately affect lower-income residents and communities of color. Climate change exacerbates these inequities, including in our frontline communities locally in the Canal Neighborhood of San Rafael and Marin City who are at the greatest risk from Sea Level Rise.

Meeting this challenge will take all of us. The City of Larkspur, in partnership with state and federal agencies, can have a direct impact on climate change through mitigation efforts including building electrification, EV adoption, mandatory organics recycling, and the many other worthy and achievable actions. Looking inwardly at the operations of each of our health centers in Marin County, we hope to be a partner and agent of change with you in this effort. If each entity, whether government or private takes action we can ensure an equitable and resilient future.

Thank you for taking this ambitious action, and for your steadfast leadership in so many key areas.

In partnership,

Alvaro Fuentes, Interim CEO, Redwood Community Health Coalition

Mitesh Popat, CEO, Marin Community Clinics

Mark Shotwell, Executive Director, Ritter Center