



BOARD/COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT COMMISSION

Recommendation No. 20160621-005:

Solar-Ready Zone Amendment to the 2015 International Energy Conservation Code

WHEREAS, Austin Energy and the City of Austin have been a leader in the country on sustainable building codes designed to encourage energy efficient and sustainable building design; and

WHEREAS, Austin Energy and the City of Austin set a Zero Energy Capable Homes Initiative (Council Resolution No. 20071018-036) for new single-family homes constructed under the 2015 Energy Code; and

WHEREAS, Austin Energy and the City of Austin have a Green Building Program to foster the design and construction of sustainable and efficient buildings; and

WHEREAS, Austin Energy and the City of Austin recently proposed new building energy codes based on the 2015 International Energy Conservation Code (IECC) and the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating, and Air-Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE) 2013-90.1 scheduled for a public hearing by the City Council on June 23, 2016; and

WHEREAS, Austin Energy and the City of Austin have set long-term goals for energy efficiency, demand reduction, and local solar, including a minimum of 200 MW of local solar by 2025, as approved by the City Council on December 14, 2014; and

WHEREAS, the existing 2015 IECC includes an appendix called Appendix RB, or a Solar-Ready Zone appendix that allows local jurisdictions to require local builders to make new homes “solar-ready;” and

WHEREAS, the proposed Solar-Ready Zone amendments have been shared with commercial and residential builders, architects, the members of the Electric Utility Commission, the Resource Management Commission and the Development Services Department at the City of Austin; and

WHEREAS, the proposed Solar-Ready Zone amendments are limited to design changes to encourage adequate space for future solar PV systems and electrical panels, but do not require that any equipment be installed; and

WHEREAS, the proposed Solar-Ready Zone amendments includes exceptions for smaller homes and smaller commercial buildings, homes and commercial buildings that are already

incorporating renewable systems into their building design, or buildings that are shaded by trees or other buildings; and

WHEREAS, adoption of the Solar-Ready Zone amendments would help encourage compliance with both the City of Austin's Zero Energy Capable Homes Initiative and with Austin Energy's 2025 local solar goal.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Resource Management Commission recommends that:

1. The Austin City Council adopt a commercial and residential Solar-Ready Zone amendment to the Residential and Commercial Energy Codes that would go into effect six months after adoption by the City Council; and
2. The Solar-Ready Zone amendments be included as part of the adoption of the technical codes being developed by the Development Services Department, by the end of the year.

Date of Approval: June 21, 2016

Record of the vote: Unanimously approved on an 8-0 vote by the following Commissioners:

Leo Dielmann, Chair (District 7)
Cyrus Reed, Vice Chair (District 9)
Kaiba White (District 2)
Shane Saum (District 3)
Michael Wong (District 4)
Gregory Santiago (District 5)
James Dwyer (District 6)
Andrew Gill (District 10)

Attest:



Toye Goodson, Staff Liaison