RESOLUTION NO.

WHEREAS, the mission of Austin Energy is to safely deliver clean, affordable, reliable electricity and excellent customer service; and

WHEREAS, the vision of Austin Energy is powering a cleaner, brighter future with customer-driven, community-focused solutions; and

WHEREAS, the City, as a leader in innovation, routinely identifies and tests solutions to complex challenges facing the City of Austin; and

WHEREAS, in 2003 Austin Energy added the solar incentive program to their strategic plan, initiating a rebate program related to solar, but does not offer a rebate for battery storage systems; and

WHEREAS, Austin Energy offers a Value of Solar rate for power produced by residential or commercial solar panels, but does not have a similar rate program related to battery storage systems; and

WHEREAS, when customers store power on battery systems it opens the door to a variety of benefits to both the consumer and Austin Energy; and

WHEREAS, battery storage can have benefits for the customer during outages by providing backup during an outage and providing some power to the home; and

WHEREAS, residential or commercial storage devices could be employed to reduce the amount of energy Austin Energy buys and could help off-set the need to buy when prices are high; and

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WHEREAS, the Austin Energy Resource, Generation and Climate Protection Plan (the "2030 Plan") recommends Austin Energy utilize new technologies, including energy storage systems, to increase the amount of demand response that can be used to control peak demand; and

WHEREAS, the Climate Equity Plan recognizes the 2030 Plan, and states Austin Energy commits to providing access to the benefits of this 2030 Plan for low-income communities and communities of color; and

WHEREAS, in 2019, Council approved Resolution No. 20190509-020 which, among other things, directed an analysis of transportation electrification and action planning to be included in the subsequent iteration of the City of Austin Community Climate Plan, including grid integration that may include demand response capabilities and managed charging; and

WHEREAS, the Austin Sustainable and Holistic Integration of Energy Storage and Solar Photovoltaics (SHINES) project integrates solar power, energy storage, smart inverters, forecasting tools, market signals, advanced communications, and a software optimization platform, which can be upheld as a model; and

WHEREAS, community-owned utilities, such as Austin Energy, have greater flexibility to design programs that reward residents for supporting the utility's reduced reliance on the grid for buying peak energy, avoiding power plant costs, and avoiding transmission/distribution infrastructure costs while also contributing towards the City's climate goals; and

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WHEREAS, historic weather this summer and during Winter Storm Uri as well as the possibility of extreme weather events support the further exploration of storage on the distribution grid; and

WHEREAS, many technical analyses have shown that power system operations and power market pricing can be made more efficient, lower cost, and more reliable by using deliberate and/or automated dispatch signals to manage and shape customer loads and power systems, including those with behind-the-meter storage, solar and electric vehicles; **NOW, THEREFORE,**

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF AUSTIN:

The City Manager is directed to explore an Austin Energy program that includes solar battery storage that would apply to all customers where solar is allowed. This program could include:

- A rebate for customers that install battery storage systems, including a low-income rebate,
- A rate structure that rewards customers for contributing to the grid during times when Austin Energy could benefit from increased power on the grid due to current wholesale prices or other factors, and
- The ability to install disconnect switches to enable home backup.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Manager is directed to explore battery end-of-life recycling and disposal options and report back.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

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The City Manager is directed to provide a cost analysis related to the rebate, tariff, and disposal program when the plan is brought back to Council.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Manager is directed to explore a tariff structure that would allow microgrids or multifamily developments to share payments for excess solar and storage across customer invoices so that solar and storage that are provided for residents by the building owner or other parties can impact their invoices and revenues can be netted with costs across multiple customers.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Manager is directed to explore a process to allow microgrids for sites to be able to remain independent from the Austin Energy grid in case of an emergency to maintain a reliable power supply from local solar and storage or other renewable resources.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Manager is directed to evaluate and report back options to pilot load-shaping technology that leverages the existing smart meter infrastructure and uses standardized signals to communicate with multiple devices in homes and businesses to time-shift usage to reduce electricity production and delivery costs, reduce carbon emissions, mitigate transmission and distribution constraints, and create the potential for passing along cost savings to the consumer.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Manager shall convene a public stakeholder process that reflects the equity goals of the Climate Equity Plan. The stakeholder group should include

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but not be limited to Solar Austin, the Environmental Officer, Community Resiliency Officer, Chief Sustainability Officer, and other community groups to vet proposals in response to this resolution and report to the Austin Energy Oversight Committee, Resources Management Commission, and Electric Utility Commission on progress relating to these efforts by June 15, 2023.

ADOPTED: _____, 2022 **ATTEST:** _____

Myrna Rios
City Clerk

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