

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

- 56 ● A rebate for customers that install battery storage systems, including a
57 low-income rebate,
- 58 ● A rate structure that rewards customers for contributing to the grid during
59 times when Austin Energy could benefit from increased power on the
60 grid due to current wholesale prices or other factors, and
- 61 ● A standardized process to approve or deny customer-owned meter collar
62 disconnect switches within a specified timeframe.

63 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

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

66 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

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

72 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

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

78 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

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

83 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

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

90 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

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

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

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100 **ADOPTED:** _____, 2022 **ATTEST:** _____
101 Myrna Rios
102 City Clerk
103