



## Recommendation for Action

**File #:** 23-2606, **Agenda Item #:** 96.

9/21/2023

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### **Posting Language**

Approve an ordinance amending the Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Management Services Department Operating Budget Special Revenue Fund (Ordinance No. 20230816-008) to accept and appropriate \$1,000,000 in grant funds from the United States Environmental Protection Agency Climate Pollution Reduction grant to lead an effort to develop and implement a regional plan for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and other harmful air pollution.

### **Lead Department**

Office of Sustainability.

### **Fiscal Note**

Funding in the amount of \$1,000,000 is available from the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Climate Pollution Reduction Grant. A City funding match is not required. A fiscal note is attached.

### **Prior Council Action:**

February 15, 2007 - Council approved Resolution No. 20070215-023, the first resolution in the City's history that was focused on climate change. The resolution directed the City Manager to make City facilities, fleets and operations carbon neutral by 2020, make Austin Energy the leading utility in the nation for greenhouse gas reduction through renewable energy and energy efficiency, implement the most energy efficient building codes in the nation, establish an interdepartmental City Climate Action Team, and work with community members, businesses and regional entities on reducing emissions.

April 10, 2014 - Council approved Resolution No. 20140410-024, adopting the goal of net-zero community-wide greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 with the preference to achieve it as soon as feasible. The resolution also directed the City Manager to review the goals from the 2007 plan and create a stakeholder process to develop a new community-wide plan focused on energy, transportation and waste/industrial emissions sources.

June 4, 2015 - Council approved Resolution No. 20150604-048, adopting the 2015 Austin Community Climate Plan, supporting the trajectory to net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 with interim targets. The resolution also directed the City Manager to identify and prioritize resources to implement the plan as well as create the Joint Sustainability Committee to oversee its implementation.

May 9, 2019 - Council approved Resolution No. 20190509-020, declaring transportation electrification to be included in the revision of the Austin Community Climate Plan. The resolution directed the City Manager to analyze electric vehicle adoption scenarios and associated emission reductions, establish interim targets and identify partnerships.

August 8, 2019 - Council approved Resolution No. 20190808-078, declaring a climate emergency and called for immediate emergency mobilization to restore a safe climate. The resolution directed the City Manager to reconsider accountability structures, increase external engagement and accelerate activity towards the City's net-zero goal.

September 30, 2021 - Council approved adopting the Austin Climate Equity Plan, which sets a new community-wide goal of equitably reaching net-zero community-wide greenhouse gas emissions by 2040, using a steep decline path followed by negative emissions.

September 30, 2021 - Council approved Resolution No. 20210930-110, directed the City Manager to establish leadership responsibilities over Austin Climate Equity Plan implementation, provide quarterly updates on plan implementation, identify budget recommendations that support plan implementation, prioritize strategies that provide multiple benefits (including regional collaboration), and monitor climate related federal legislation and purpose opportunities to assist in the City's climate efforts within legislation that passes.

**For More Information:**

Zach Baumer, Interim Chief Sustainability Officer, 512-974-2836.

**Additional Backup Information:**

The EPA's "The Climate Pollution Reduction Grants" program is a two-phase, five billion dollar program, funded by the Inflation Reduction Act:

- Phase one (250 million dollars) provides non-competitive funding to states, Metropolitan Statistical Areas, territories and tribes to develop or update climate, energy, or sustainability plans. This requests Council to authorize acceptance of one million dollars in funding for a regional climate planning effort as part of phase one of this program which will be paid out over a four-year period.
- Phase two will make 4.6 billion dollars in competitive grants available for implementation projects that reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Participation in phase one is a prerequisite to apply for competitive grants in phase two.

The Office of Sustainability has been leading and convening a regional coalition of partners, which includes:

- City of Austin
- City of Kyle
- City of Buda
- City of San Marcos
- City of Lakeway
- City of Round Rock
- City of Pflugerville
- Travis County
- Hays County
- Bastrop County
- Capital Area Council of Governments
- Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization
- Clean Air Force
- The South-Central Partnership for Energy Efficiency as a Resource (SPEER)
- Movability
- Lone Star Clean Fuels Alliance
- Sierra Club

Through a consensus-based decision-making process, regional partners have agreed that the City of Austin will lead and manage this program, hiring temporary staff to complete deliverables, manage community and intergovernmental stakeholder engagement, and administer financial and grant requirements.

The program will lead to the delivery of a Priority Climate Action Plan for the region in 2024, a Comprehensive

Climate Action Plan for the region in 2025, and a Status Report in 2027. This program presents an excellent opportunity to engage our region in climate planning and implementation, and supports the Austin Climate Equity Plan's overarching objective of regional collaboration.

The General Fund will not be required to contribute additional funds beyond those currently budgeted to this grant. When the grant funds expire, the Department's need for continuing funding will be evaluated and may be denied.