

RESOLUTION NO.

WHEREAS, climate change represents an existential threat to the City of Austin, the nation, and the planet; and

WHEREAS, to meet the threat level of the climate emergency and its effects on the community, the City must act urgently and expediently; and

WHEREAS, in recent years, Austin has experienced an increasing number of shocks in the form of natural- and human-driven disasters, as well as stresses that affect everyday vulnerabilities in the local community; and

WHEREAS, on August 8, 2019, the Council unanimously approved Resolution No. 20190808-078 declaring a climate emergency in the City and calling to accelerate the timeline for achieving the City's climate goals; and

WHEREAS, Resolution No. 20190808-078 directed the City Manager to promote interdepartmental coordination to ensure that existing emergency management plans offer an aligned approach to the threats of the climate crisis and natural hazards, including wildfire and flooding, and to identify where planning gaps may exist; and

WHEREAS, on September 30, 2021, Council approved the Austin Climate Equity Plan that provided 74 strategies to achieve net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2040; and

WHEREAS, the Austin Climate Equity Plan also established environmental justice goals to prioritize low-income communities and communities of color to remedy disproportionate harm; and

23 **WHEREAS**, concurrent with the Austin Climate Equity Plan, Council
24 passed Resolution No. 20210930-110 prioritizing its implementation, requesting
25 Code amendments and budget recommendations, and establishing a public
26 dashboard and quarterly progress updates; and

27 **WHEREAS**, according to the last quarterly update in August 2022, three of
28 74 strategies are complete, 41 are underway, and many strategies require
29 substantial investment to achieve; and

30 **WHEREAS**, by resolution, directed analysis or approved plans, the Council
31 has previously directed the City Manager to take specific steps to advance Austin's
32 climate change, sustainability, and resilience goals, including Water Forward, the
33 Austin Strategic Mobility Plan, the Watershed Protection Strategic Plan, the Green
34 Infrastructure Strengths and Gaps Assessment, the Austin Resource Recovery
35 Comprehensive Plan, One Austin: Resilience Framework for Action, the Austin
36 Energy Resource, Generation, and Climate Protection Plan, the Parks and
37 Recreation Department (PARD) Long Range Plan and Land Management Plan,
38 and the Austin/Travis County Community Wildfire Preparedness Plan; and

39 **WHEREAS**, Council passed Resolution No. 20210610-039 initiating the
40 planning and implementation of a just and resilient regional food system, and the
41 resulting Austin/Travis County Food Plan is currently underway and is expected to
42 include recommendations for ending food insecurity, emergency planning and
43 coordination for inevitable disruptions to supply, and values-based procurement for
44 equitable economic and health outcomes and environmental regeneration; and

45 **WHEREAS**, the programs and goals set forth in the City's plans would
46 collectively make Austin more environmentally sustainable and develop the

community resilience to adapt and address vulnerabilities to rapid climate change;
and

WHEREAS, reducing electricity demand not only lowers greenhouse gas emissions, but also improves the reliability of the grid; and

WHEREAS, having local matching funds allows the City of Austin to maximize resources available under The Inflation Reduction Act, The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, and other federal programs; and

WHEREAS, capital investments or program expenditures can be funded as a part of utility base rate calculations, general fund budgeting, general obligation debt financing, or a combination of sources; **NOW, THEREFORE,**

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

The City of Austin re-affirms its commitment to the target of net-zero community-wide emissions by 2040, as outlined in the 2021 Austin Climate Equity Plan, and to act with the urgency required to achieve this goal.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Manager is directed to solicit community input and prepare options and associated costs of capital improvements or programs that would reduce carbon emissions, decrease water usage, improve water quality and water detention, advance the sustainability of City operations, and improve community resiliency.

BE IT FURTHER RESOVLED:

The City Manager is further directed to post a public hearing of the Joint Sustainability Committee (Committee) in March and/or April 2024 to gather input

from the public and the Committee is requested to submit any recommendations for investments to Council for consideration by May 1, 2024.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Manager is further directed to review whether recommendations for investment from the Committee to address local causes of climate change, enhance the sustainability of City operations, and improve community resiliency to the impacts of extreme weather can be funded through utility rates and fees, general fund expenditures, grants, and/or bond instruments to be approved at a future election, which may include a November 2024 bond election.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

In addition to any proposals put forth by the Joint Sustainability Committee, the City Manager is directed to analyze the investments needed to reach any established goals in the following plans:

- Austin Climate Equity Plan
- Water Forward
- Watershed Protection Strategic Plan
- One Austin: The Climate Resilience Action Plan
- Austin Strategic Mobility Plan
- Austin Resource Recovery Comprehensive Plan
- Austin Energy Resource, Generation, and Climate Protection Plan
- PARD Land Management Plan
- PARD Long-Range Plan
- Austin/Travis County Community Wildfire Preparedness Plan
- Austin/Travis County Food Plan

94 This analysis should identify which investments have the option of being
95 funded through utility rates and fees, general fund expenditures, grants_or bond
96 instruments. The analysis should also identify options for fulfilling either all or
97 specific elements of these plans before their current target date.

98 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

99 The City Manager is directed to prioritize capital improvements and
100 programs that would maximize potential Inflation Reduction Act tax credits, and to
101 develop a mechanism for reinvestment of reimbursement from such credits into
102 similarly climate-focused capital improvements and programs, where appropriate.

103 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

104 The City Council sets a public hearing on the May 30, 2024, to consider
105 direction to the City Manager regarding the development of an environmental
106 investment plan to address climate change, sustainability of City operations, and
107 community resiliency.

108 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

109 The City Manager is further directed to provide information detailing
110 recommendations or actions taken to promote inter-departmental coordination,
111 such as a combined inventory of plan recommendations, to ensure that departments
112 have an aligned approach to combating the threats of the climate crisis and natural
113 hazards, including wildfire and flooding.

114 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

115 The City Manager is further directed to present to the City Council on or
116 before May 30, 2024, with an update of the Austin Climate Equity Plan dashboard

and a briefing or memo on applications and opportunities for federal funding relevant to an environmental investment plan.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Manager is further directed to recommend a process for regularly updating Council on progress to address the climate emergency, including related investments.

ADOPTED: _____, 2024 **ATTEST:** _____
Myrna Rios
City Clerk