

RESOLUTION NO.

1
2 **WHEREAS**, climate change represents an existential threat to the City of
3 Austin, the nation, and the planet; and

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

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

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

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

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

20 **WHEREAS**, the Austin Climate Equity Plan also established environmental
21 justice goals to prioritize low-income communities and communities of color to
22 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 Central Texas Regional Air Quality Plan, the Austin/Travis County Community
39 Wildfire Preparedness Plan, and the Austin/Travis County Food Plan; and

40 **WHEREAS**, the programs and goals set forth in the City's plans would
41 collectively make Austin more environmentally sustainable and develop the
42 community resilience to adapt and address vulnerabilities to rapid climate change;
43 and

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

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

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

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

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

56 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

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

62 **BE IT FURTHER RESOVLED:**

63 The City Manager is further directed to post a public hearing of the Joint
64 Sustainability Committee (Committee) in March and/or April 2024 to gather input
65 from the public and the Committee is requested to submit any recommendations
66 for investments to Council for consideration by May 1, 2024.

69 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

70 The City Manager is further directed to review whether recommendations
71 for investment from the Committee to address local causes of climate change,
72 enhance the sustainability of City operations, and improve community resiliency to
73 the impacts of extreme weather can be funded through utility base rates and fees,
74 general fund expenditures, grants, and/or bond instruments, including those that
75 could to be approved at a future election, including a November 2024 bond
76 election.

77 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

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

- 81 - Austin Climate Equity Plan
- 82 - Water Forward
- 83 - Watershed Protection Strategic Plan
- 84 - One Austin: The Climate Resilience Action Plan
- 85 - Austin Strategic Mobility Plan
- 86 - Austin Resource Recovery Comprehensive Plan
- 87 - Austin Energy Resource, Generation, and Climate Protection Plan
- 88 - PARD Land Management Plan
- 89 - Recommended Land Management Strategies and Climate Vulnerability
90 Analysis for Austin Parks and Recreation Department natural areas,
91 otherwise known as the PARD Land Management Plan
- 92 - Austin/Travis County Community Wildfire Preparedness Plan
- 93 - Central Texas Regional Air Quality Plan

94 - Austin/Travis County Food Plan

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

99 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

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

104 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

105 Building on the work directed in the Austin Climate Equity Plan, Resolution
106 No. 20210610-039, and the investment of American Plan Rescue Act funding to
107 further food system resilience and fund the planning process for the Austin/Travis
108 County Food Plan, the City Manager is further directed to include investment
109 strategies for the implementation of the forthcoming Austin/Travis County Food
110 Plan, especially land acquisition for farmland preservation and regenerative
111 agriculture, along with other priorities, such as food processing facilities,
112 alternative agricultural production such as vertical agriculture and
113 hydro/aeroponics, direct-to-consumer market spaces, and other land- and capital-
114 deficient food system needs identified by the City Manager.

115 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

116 The City Manager is further directed to recommend investments the City
117 Council should consider from the City of Austin's 2022 State of the Food System

118 Report and Supply Chain Vulnerability Assessment, as well as the Central Texas
119 Food System Dashboard, which is partially funded by the City of Austin.

120 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

121 The City Manager is further directed to provide information detailing
122 recommendations or actions taken to promote inter-departmental coordination to
123 ensure that departments have an aligned approach to combating the threats of the
124 climate crisis and natural hazards, including wildfire and flooding.

125 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

126 The City Manager is further directed to present to the City Council on or
127 before May 30, 2024, with an update of the Austin Climate Equity Plan dashboard,
128 a combined inventory of plan recommendations, and a briefing or memo on
129 applications and opportunities for federal funding relevant to an environmental
130 investment plan.

131 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

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

135 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

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

ADOPTED: _____, 2024 **ATTEST:** _____

Myrna Rios
City Clerk

DRAFT

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