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RESOLUTION NO.

WHEREAS, the Austin Climate Equity Plan established the goal of equitably reaching net-zero community-wide greenhouse gas emissions by 2040; and

WHEREAS, in 2004, Council adopted Resolution No. 040115-31 directing the initiation of a pilot project for emissions reductions through changes and improvements to the City's acquisition processes for goods and services to accomplish the most immediate, short-term impact to air quality without increasing the cost to the City more than five percent of the cost of such goods and services; and

WHEREAS, since 2008, the City's central procurement office has been working to implement a responsible purchasing program to help the City identify more sustainable alternatives to traditional goods and services; and

WHEREAS, a City-wide purchasing policy was adopted in 2018 that asks all City departments to track, measure, and encourage the use of sustainable products and services with the following attributes:

1. Conserve natural resources, including water, energy, and raw materials throughout the product life cycle;
2. Minimize environmental impacts such as water and air pollution during usage;
3. Eliminate or reduce toxins that create hazards to workers, citizens, wildlife, and the environment;
4. Support upcycling and recycling efforts, as well as utilize products with high recycled content;

- 27 5. Encourage vendors to reduce environmental impacts in their production
28 and distribution systems;
29 6. Support worker health, safety, and fair wages; and
30 7. Consider total cost of ownership during the product’s useful life,
31 including operation, suppliers, maintenance, and disposal cost.

32 **WHEREAS**, in 2020, Austin adopted the Austin Climate Equity Plan,
33 which included the goal “[b]y 2030, reduce greenhouse gas emissions from
34 institutional, commercial, and government purchasing by at least 50%”; and

35 **WHEREAS**, in December 2021, the White House issued Executive Order
36 14057, which created the Federal Sustainability Plan that includes actions to
37 achieve net-zero emissions from federal procurement by 2050 while increasing the
38 sustainability of federal supply chains; and

39 **WHEREAS**, City staff, along with the Sustainable Procurement Leadership
40 Council, has worked to develop a methodology to measure lifecycle greenhouse
41 gas emissions and other environmental and social impacts from non-residential
42 purchasing and identify a baseline for progress; and

43 **WHEREAS**, the Sustainable Procurement Leadership Council’s initial
44 baseline analysis of the City’s existing spending across human respiratory impacts,
45 toxicity, water use intensity, and energy impacts highlighted the disproportionate
46 impact of certain products, particularly cement and transportation equipment, and
47 services such as waste management and green space maintenance; and

48 **WHEREAS**, the City has existing programs and focused goals regarding
49 some high-impact procurements, such as electric vehicle transition and waste
50 reduction; and

51 **WHEREAS**, lawncare equipment, which runs on smaller, less efficient
52 motors with a mix of fuels, has a significant climate impact; and

53 **WHEREAS**, the 2020 National Emissions Inventory from the
54 Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) found that lawncare equipment emitted
55 large quantities of smog-producing nitrogen oxides, greenhouse-gas-contributing
56 carbon dioxide, and other toxins such as benzene; and

57 **WHEREAS**, the EPA report found that lawncare equipment produced a
58 disproportionate amount of fine particulate matter, known as PM_{2.5}, that is
59 particularly harmful to human health; and

60 **WHEREAS**, in 2020, gas-powered lawn equipment in the United States
61 produced 21,800 tons of PM_{2.5}, which is an amount equivalent to the pollution
62 from 234 million typical cars over the course of a year; and

63 **WHEREAS**, in February 2024, the EPA finalized rules regarding the level
64 of air pollution, seeking to limit PM_{2.5} at less than 9.0 ug/m³, and published
65 guidance that the air quality data for Travis County recorded between 2020 and
66 2022 would be considered non-attainment by this standard; and

67 **WHEREAS**, City staff and contractors specializing in green space
68 maintenance have provided feedback regarding some of the cost challenges
69 regarding a transition to electric lawncare equipment; and

70 **WHEREAS**, Council passed Resolution No. 20230420-024 acknowledging
71 the disproportionate environmental impact of cement production, which accounts
72 for seven percent of all global carbon emissions, and directed City staff to explore
73 a plan to transition all future City contracts and projects to low-embodied-carbon
74 concrete; and

75 **WHEREAS**, after working to get industry feedback, City staff presented to
76 the Joint Sustainability Committee in January 2024 regarding a draft
77 implementation plan for transition to low-embodied-carbon concrete and
78 recommended revising City-wide purchasing and contracting documents to reflect
79 updated standards; **NOW THEREFORE**,

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

81 The City Manager is directed to develop a systemic approach for the
82 procurement processes of the City, including enterprise departments such as the
83 Airport and Convention Center, to prioritize low environmental impact options and
84 actively support the transition of contracted goods and services to more
85 environmentally sustainable practices.

86 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

87 The City Manager is directed to commence an initial pilot program that
88 focuses on the two categories identified by staff during the baseline analysis:
89 concrete construction and greenspace maintenance services and equipment.

90 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

91 The City Manager is directed to include establishing a preference policy for
92 low environmental impact options as well as providing tailored assistance to
93 vendors seeking to transition to more sustainable practices in the pilot program.

94 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

95 The City Manager is directed to work collaboratively with other regional
96 government purchasing managers to seek harmonization of sustainable purchasing
97 practices and cooperation in any vendor support programs.

98 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

99 The City Manager is directed to include environmental impact information
100 used for evaluation or tracking, such as Environmental Product Declarations, as a
101 part of any request for Council action on a Council agenda related to these pilot
102 areas.

103 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

104 The City Manager is directed to report to Council by July 19, 2024,
105 regarding program recommendations and to identify any staffing or resources
106 needed for pilot implementation in Fiscal Year 2024-2025 and for the broader
107 implementation of sustainable procurement practices.

108 **ADOPTED:** _____, 2024 **ATTEST:** _____
109
110 Myrna Rios
111 City Clerk
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