



BOARD/COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

Electric Utility Commission

Resolution 20240318-13 on Austin Energy Resource, Generation and Climate Protection Plan

WHEREAS, the climate crisis continues to worsen and is causing harm to the Austin community. Immediately reducing greenhouse emissions is essential; and

WHEREAS, the Austin Climate Equity Plan established a goal for the Austin community to reach net-zero greenhouse gas emissions, with approximately 75 percent reduction by 2030; and

WHEREAS, the Austin Energy Resource, Generation and Climate Protection Plan to 2030 established that Austin Energy would achieve 100% carbon-free energy by 2035 and that Austin Energy would no longer invest in fossil fuel resources; and

WHEREAS, in December 2022, the Austin City Council adopted Resolution 20221201-040, which directed Austin Energy to collaborate with the Electric Utility Commission (EUC) to update the 2030 Austin Energy Resource, Generation and Climate Protection Plan; and

WHEREAS, the electric market and federal incentives have changed significantly since the last update, and the financial viability of battery storage (as evidenced by widespread investment within the ERCOT market), as well as opportunities to improve energy efficiency and demand response programs and increase deployment of local solar make a transition to clean energy possible; and

WHEREAS, the Electric Utility Commission Resource Planning Working Group consisted of 16 energy experts and community members and met 14 times between September 2023 and January 2024 to learn about and discuss a wide variety of energy topics; and

WHEREAS, the existing Austin Energy Resource, Generation and Climate Protection Plan to 2030 includes a goal to achieve carbon-free generation by 2035, which implies that Austin Energy's gas-burning generation would be shut down, but the plan does not include details on how to fully replace those resources; and

WHEREAS, the plan recommended by the Electric Utility Commission Resource Planning Working Group identifies a robust suite of clean energy resources that can be used to allow Austin Energy to achieve a full transition away from fossil fuels and other polluting resources, while maintaining reliability and affordability;

WHEREAS, the plan recommended by the Electric Utility Commission Resource Planning Group could benefit from further refinement and input from Austin Energy; and

WHEREAS, full the implementation of strategies to enable the transition to clean energy takes time, so moving from planning to implementation in a timely manner is important; and

WHEREAS, Austin Energy's mission is to deliver clean, affordable, reliable energy and excellent customer service,

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED the Electric Utility Commission recommends that that Austin City Council adopt an Austin Energy Resource, Generation and Climate Protection Plan to 2035 that puts Austin Energy on a path to achieve fully carbon-free and emissions-free generation no later than 2035, with emissions reductions starting now and continuing throughout the coming decade. The recommendations from the EUC Resource Planning Working Group should be considered by Austin Energy as they make refinements to that plan to improve it, while achieving the carbon-free and emissions-free goals.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED the Electric Utility Commission recommends that Austin City Council direct Austin Energy to present a refined plan to the EUC for further input no later than September 2024.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED the Electric Utility Commission intends to stay engaged in the Austin Energy Resource, Generation and Climate Protection Plan update process and may make additional recommendations on this topic.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED the Electric Utility Commission recommends that Austin Energy move forward with implementation of contracting and programs that align with the shared vision of the Resource Planning Working Group and staff, including transmission upgrades, utility scale and distributed battery storage, and expansion of local and community solar projects and programs.

Date of Approval: _____

Record of the vote:

Attest: _____

(Staff or board member can sign)