
20240215-025

“Environmental Investment Plan”

March 27, 2024

Resolution 20240215-025

Reaffirm commitment to net-zero by 2040, act with urgency.

Prepare options and costs of capital improvements or programs that would:

1. Reduce carbon emissions
2. Decrease water usage and improve water quality and detention
3. Advance the sustainability of City Operations, and
4. Improve Community Resilience

Public hearing of the JSC in March (27) / April (24) to gather input from the public
JSC to submit any recommendations for investments to Council by May 1

Review whether recommendations can be funded through:

- Utility rates and fees
- General Fund Expenditures
- Grants
- General Obligation Bonds (may include Nov 2024)

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Analyze investments needed to fulfill the following adopted plans:

- Climate Equity Plan
- Water Forward
- Watershed Protection Strategic Plan
- Green Infrastructure Strengths and Gaps Assessment
- One Austin: Climate Resilience Action Plan
- Austin Strategic Mobility Plan
- ARR Comprehensive Plan
- AE Resource Generation Plan
- PARD Land Management Plan and Long Range Plan
- Austin Travis County Wildfire Preparedness Plan
- Central Texas Regional Air Quality Plan
- Urban Forest Plan
- Austin Travis County Food Plan, State of the Food System Report, & Supply Chain Vulnerability Assessment

Analysis should also identify options for fulfilling either all or specific elements of these plans before their current target date.

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Identify capital improvements and programs that would maximize potential Inflation Reduction Act tax credits, and to develop a mechanism for reinvestment of reimbursement from such credits into similarly climate-focused capital improvements and programs, where appropriate.

Provide information detailing recommendations or actions taken to promote inter-departmental coordination to ensure that departments have an aligned approach to combating the threats of the climate crisis and natural hazards, including wildfire and flooding.

Present to the City Council on or before May 30, 2024, with an update of the Austin Climate Equity Plan dashboard, a combined inventory of plan recommendations, and a briefing or memo on applications and opportunities for federal funding relevant to an environmental investment plan.

Public hearing on May 30 to consider this Environmental Investment Plan

What are they really looking for?

Council Member R. Alter's Office communicated that:

- They're not looking for business as usual spending.
- They're not looking for spending to make annual incremental progress.
- **They're looking for the DELTA between our current trajectory and fully meeting our goals.**

This resolution is about project identification

- Think big, finding funding comes later
- What isn't getting done because we don't have the funding?
- Tie project proposals to the environmental result meant to be achieved, clearly and concretely

What are they really looking for?

Focus on “environmental, climate, and resilience” goals from the plans and specific goals where we can easily defend how an investment would achieve the goal.

Review all applicable Council adopted environmental goals

- Are we on track to meet the goal?
- If not, what is needed? (policy, project, program, capital)
- Prioritize biggest bang for the buck / most impactful
- What is the approximate cost?

Final Product = A full menu of projects / programs + costs that could be funded in various different ways to “move the needle” on climate mitigation / resilience in the next 5-10 years.

- The goal between now and May 30 is to identify potential impactful projects.
- May 30 - Beyond will focus on matching projects with available funding sources

Final Product

JSC + Public Recommendations
Staff Recommendations

A prioritized list of projects and programs that:

1. Reduce carbon emissions
2. Decrease water usage and improve water quality and detention
3. Advance the sustainability of City Operations
4. Improve Community Resilience

For each project or program

- General Scope / Description
- Aligned with which Plan and Goal
- Timeline
- Approximate Cost
- Potential Funding Mechanism
 - Utility base rates
 - General Fund Expenditures
 - Grants
 - General Obligation Bonds

Timeline

March

- Staff working to analyze plans / determine gaps
- JSC holds first “public forum” to generate ideas on March 27, 2024

April

- Pull draft pieces together (from the public, JSC, and Staff), analysis and cost estimates
- Draft presentation of projects / concepts to the JSC on April 24, 2024
- Final list of JSC Recommendations due on May 1, 2024

May

- Finalization of a spreadsheet + memo + ppt present to City Manager’s Executive Team
- Presentation to the council work session on May 28, 2024 & public hearing on May 30, 2024

Thank you!
