



## Joint Sustainability Committee

### RECOMMENDATION 20240327-XX

Date: March 27, 2024

Subject: Austin Energy Budget Recommendations

***Motioned By:***

***Seconded By:***

#### Recommendations on the FY 24-25 Budget

#### Description of Recommendation to Council

1. Low-Income Bill Discounts: Austin Energy customers pay a dedicated Customer Assistance Program fee to provide bill discounts for low-income customers. The purpose of this fee is to provide needed support in a transparent way. Forcing solar to pay for low-income discounts (as is the current structure of Austin Energy's Community Solar program) only serves to slow the transition to clean energy. Low-income discounts are needed regardless of the source of energy. **The Joint Sustainability Committee recommends that all bill discounts for lower-income residents be paid from the Customer Assistance Program fund, including bill discounts for low-income Community Solar subscribers.**
2. Transmission Improvements: Improvements to Austin Energy's transmission system are essential for mitigating local congestion that increases costs to the utility and customers and for enabling the transition from fossil fuels to clean energy. Austin Energy commissioned a study that identified five recommended types of transmission upgrades. **The Joint Sustainability Committee recommends that these recommended upgrades be implemented as quickly as possible and that sufficient funding be allocated to this need to ensure that that of funds is not a source of delay.**

3. Fayette Coal Plant: Austin Energy and the Austin City Council have established that shutting down Austin Energy's portion of the Fayette coal plant is a top priority. Investing in an asset that the utility is actively trying to shut down is not a prudent use of ratepayer or utility funds. **The Joint Sustainability Committee recommends that the budget not include any capital investments in Fayette.**