

Joint Sustainability Committee

Resolution 20240708-03: Resolution on Climate Fee

WHEREAS, it is the Joint Sustainability Committee's responsibility to advise "on matters related to conservation and sustainability and review City policies and procedures relevant to the Austin Community Climate Plan and the Austin Climate Equity Plan, including planning, implementation, community engagement, goal setting, and progress monitoring", and

WHEREAS, the greenhouse gas emissions reduction goal established by the Austin City Council in the Climate Equity Plan is to achieve "net-zero community-wide greenhouse gas emissions by 2040, utilizing a steep decline path followed by negative emissions" that translates to approximately 75% reduction in emissions by 2030; and

WHEREAS the Joint Sustainability Committee identified over \$2.24 billion in one time costs and \$96.14 million in ongoing expenses for implementing the Austin Climate Equity Plan and associated city plans; and

WHEREAS increasing pressures on the city budget and utility rates will make funding the identified sustainability needs very difficult without a new source of revenue; and

WHEREAS other cities have implemented dedicated fees to fund sustainability needs; and

WHEREAS the City of Austin already utilizes dedicated fees to fund certain sustainability needs, including at Austin Energy, Austin Water and Austin Resource Recovery; and

WHEREAS funding from existing fees is insufficient in magnitude to fund all existing needs and existing fees can only be used to fund certain programs;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Joint Sustainability Committee recommends that the Austin City Council and the City Manager actively pursue establishing a new Green Fee to help fill the funding gap for implementing the Austin Climate Equity Plan and associated city plans, including:

- Austin Energy Resource, Generation and Climate Protection Plan
- Austin Strategic Mobility Plan
- Austin Resource Recovery Master Plan
- Water Forward
- Watershed Protection Strategic Plan
- Austin/Travis County Food Plan
- One Austin: Climate Resilience Action Plan
- Central Texas Regional Air Quality Plan

- Urban Forest Plan

This new fee should be structured to be progressive, not regressive, should provide predictable revenue and should be paid by residents, businesses, corporations and/or visitors.