



BOARD/COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

Austin-Travis County Food Policy Board

Recommendation Number: (YYYYMMDD-XXX) (XXX is the agenda item number): Defining and Supporting Regenerative Agriculture

NOTE: The "WHEREAS"s should give the background and the "NOW, THEREFORE," should state what the board is requesting Council to do.

WHEREAS, the 2022 City of Austin State of the Food System Report indicates that 21% of all greenhouse gas emissions in our community are related to the food supply chain; and

WHEREAS, implementing Regenerative Agriculture also supports the goals of the Austin Climate Equity Plan, which aims to ensure that by 2030, 100% of Austinites, especially those who are food insecure, can access a pro-climate, pro-health food systems that prioritize regenerative agriculture; and

WHEREAS, the goals and strategies in the Austin/Travis County Food Plan, approved by the Austin City Council in October 2024, prioritize regenerative agriculture implementation, with reference to regenerative agriculture and food systems occurring 44 times throughout the document; and

WHEREAS, Regenerative Agriculture is defined in the food plan as an approach to farming that works to restore soil and ecosystem health, address inequity, and improve land, water, and climate for the future; and

WHEREAS, the Austin/Travis County Food Plan also states that a more specific definition of Regenerative food production may need to be developed to implement strategies under Goal 1, which pertain to agricultural land use; and

WHEREAS, a more specific definition is contained within the Resilient Farm Planning framework, which utilizes Conservation Practice Standards codified by the USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) and aligns with national standard parameters for climate smart, conservation focused, regenerative practices; and

WHEREAS, the Resilient Farm Planning process utilizes COMET-farm modeling technology to quantify greenhouse gas sequestration potential from practice implementation, creating an avenue for measuring implementation predictions vs. results; and

WHEREAS, the Resilient Farm Planning process has seen wide adoption and proof of concept in California for over a decade, with 137 Resilient Farm Plans (called Carbon Farm Plans in California) encompassing 71,440 acres; and

WHEREAS, the Resilient Farm Planning process can be also be applied to outdoor spaces such as parks, flood plain, and greenbelts; and

WHEREAS, the City of Austin Office of Sustainability has previously allocated funds for [Texas' First Resilient Farm](#) plan at the Refugee Collective Farm, establishing a precedent of city support for plan implementation; and

WHEREAS, the City of Austin currently lacks a dedicated mechanism to assist with the writing and implementation of Resilient Farm Plans; and

WHEREAS, the Austin-Travis County Food Policy Board's Recommendation Number 20240318-7 urged the City of Austin to allocate funds and create a full-time equivalent (FTE) position to support the implementation of the Food Plan;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Austin-Travis County Food Policy Board encourages the Austin City Council to adopt the Resilient Farm Planning Framework and its subsequent NRCS Conservation Practice Standards as the specific definition of Regenerative Agriculture in the Austin area; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Austin-Travis County Food Policy Board recommends that Austin City Council allocate funds and explore all available means in order to establish a dedicated management mechanism, such as a dedicated city department or full-time equivalent staff (FTE), to oversee and coordinate the writing and implementation of Resilient Farm plans on local farms; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Austin-Travis County Food Policy Board recommends that Austin City Council expands grant funding for climate smart agriculture, such as through an expansion of the existing Food and Climate Equity (FACE) grant, with priority placed on offering grantees assistance with writing and implementing Resilient Farm Plans; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the Austin-Travis County Food Policy Board recommends that Austin City Council allocates funds for the writing and implementation of the Resilient Farm Planning framework on all publicly owned parkland, as well as any underutilized outdoor spaces to work towards the city's net zero goals utilizing a predictive, quantifiable model.

Date of Approval: \_\_\_\_\_

Record of the vote: (Unanimous on a 7-0 vote, 4-3 vote with names of those voting no listed)

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_

(Staff or board member can sign)

**Commented [1]:** how many hours does this take per plan, how much will it cost?