

Transportation and Land Use and Electrification Working Group
FY2026 Budget Recommendations
DRAFT for JSC Review - February 19, 2025

1. Low-cost, accessible charging stations at City of Austin-owned facilities

Background

Transportation Electrification Goal 2 of Austin Climate Equity Plan requires that by 2030 Austin has a compelling and equitably distributed mix of level 1, 2, and DC fast charging infrastructure to accommodate 40% of total vehicle miles traveled in the city. Austin's Climate Equity Plan Implementation Dashboard indicates that as of 2023, the City of Austin (COA) is falling behind on this goal. Therefore, additional assistance to accelerate EV charging and EV adoption is critical.

COA will be conducting an assessment to identify city facilities where charging stations can be installed. This assessment is focused on COA properties to support fleet, workplace, and public charging needs. Service areas for public charging should be prioritized in low-income and marginalized communities. Charging to enable electrification of heavy-duty diesel vehicles (including the Austin Resource Recover Fleet) and electrification of landscaping on city properties should also be a priority because of the significant negative health impacts from air pollution that comes from diesel vehicles and gasoline powered landscaping equipment. In addition, service areas should prioritize city buildings near local small businesses to increase their revenue potential to benefit Austin's small business local community economy.

Recommendation

The Joint Sustainability Committee recommends that \$150,000 in additional annual funding for a full-time Program Manager Coordinator position (1 FTE) from the Office of Climate Action and Resilience (OCAR) be allocated to work with Austin Energy (AE), other COA staff, and other corresponding entities for the implementation of charging station installations. The Project Manager function should prioritize the following tasks:

- Facilitate the completion of the assessment to identify city facilities where charging stations can be installed. Coordinate with COA staff to prioritize choosing charging station locations that benefit low-income communities, air pollution benefits, and as well as Austin's local small businesses.
- Facilitate the acceleration of installing the identified charging station to accelerate EV adoption.
- Identify funding needed to install all charging stations identified as part of the COA assessment. The aim should be for the OCAR Project Manager, AE, and other COA staff to identify funds totaling \$10 Million to install the charging stations. Assuming a \$10k per installed port (level 2 - 7.2kW) that would be 1,000 ports, roughly 7.2MW of installed load for EV charging. That would be equivalent to approximately 3,154 MWh/year of potential load to EV vehicles.

Benefits

Commented [KW1]: Just curious - where did you get this number? The Consumption WG was assuming about \$110,000 for a program manager. Perhaps we need to increase our number.

Commented [KW2]: Can this be somewhat more general and worded to include charging for heavy duty trucks and solar-powered charging stations to enable landscaping electrification?

Air pollution reduction, GHG reduction, address EV adoption inequities, accelerate EV adoption, benefit Austin's small business local community economy, improved coordination across departments

Cost

\$150,000 to the OCAR for one Program Manager Coordinator FTE

Plan Alignment

Goal 2, Strategy 1 of the Austin Climate Equity Plan, "Create a network with more low-cost, accessible charging stations." Continue to incentivize the installation of EV charging infrastructure by the City, businesses, auto manufacturers, and third party charging companies to create a compelling (convenient, reliable, and low cost) network accessible to all.

Commented [KW3]: Suggesting cutting for length, since basically all this info is above.

2. Resilient Infrastructure and Capital Improvement Coordinator

Background

Extreme heat, drought, flooding, and poor air quality threaten the health, safety, and quality of life of Austinites, especially children, the elderly, low-income populations, communities of color, and outdoor workers. To mitigate these impacts, the City of Austin will need to coordinate across departments to design and implement heat resilience and green infrastructure projects throughout the city, including the conversion of impervious cover to green cover, tree planting, and shade structure projects, and the installation of bioswales, rain gardens, drought-tolerant vegetation, and other shade/cooling amenities and nature-based solutions along "Cool Corridors."

Recommendation

The Joint Sustainability Committee recommends that \$150,000 in annual funding be allocated to the Office of Climate Action and Resilience for a Resilient Infrastructure and Capital Improvement Coordinator (1 FTE) to build organizational capacity for green infrastructure projects. This employee will identify, scope, and coordinate resilient and green infrastructure projects on city-owned property and in the right of way in partnership with community stakeholders and City departments. They will research best management practices based on success stories from peer cities. This employee will also play a leading role in coordinating the implementation of several priority actions identified by the comprehensive climate implementation program (CCIP), including the development of a Citywide Green Infrastructure Plan and Public Tree Inventory and other actions related to green infrastructure, green space conservation, and environmental restoration. The FTE will also support implementation of the Austin Heat Resilience Playbook and other climate resilience strategies in accordance with the Austin Climate Equity Plan and Austin Forward Plan. [This recommendation addresses climate resilience, GHG reduction, water and green space conservation, and environmental inequities.](#)

Commented [4]: Other possible descriptions:

- Environmental Planner
- Green Infrastructure Coordinator
- Sustainable Design Coordinator

Relevant City job title:

- Environmental Program Coordinator
- Environmental Conservation Program Manager
- Planner Senior

Benefits

Climate resilience, GHG reduction, water and green space conservation, address environmental inequities, improved coordination across departments

Cost

\$150,000 to the Office of Climate Action and Resilience for one Resilient Infrastructure and Capital Improvement Coordinator FTE

Plan Alignment

Austin Climate Equity Plan; Austin Heat Resilience Playbook, Austin Water Forward Plan

3. Cool Corridors for Heat Resilience

Background

"Summer 2023 was Austin's hottest meteorological summer on record, with over 80 days with 100-degree heat, and of those 80, 40 days saw temperatures of 105 degrees or higher." This startling reminder opens the City of Austin [Heat Resilience Playbook](#); the lived realities of this extreme heat demand greater investment in heat mitigation and resilience. This recommendation builds off JSC Recommendation 20240228-014, approved by Council, which directs the City Manager to improve and build out green infrastructure - including drought-tolerant trees, plantings, rain gardens, and bioswales - along new roadways, transit lines, in the right-of-way, and around utilities. We endorse these directives for improving heat mitigation and resilience.

Recommendation

The JSC further recommends funding these specific steps toward creating "cool corridors":

1. Implementing a new demonstration project for drought-tolerant tree planting in public and private parks and along high-heat corridors. The Office of Climate Action and Resilience is currently piloting a demo project that includes job training and workforce development that can serve as a model for this expansion. Based on data from heat mapping, social vulnerability indexes, and community group ground-truthing, an Austin corridor of greatest need should be prioritized for the next demo project, and cooling effects should be monitored to better understand the scale of tree planting necessary for heat mitigation effects.
2. Community Canopy Grant (CCG) Program pilot, coordinated by the proposed **[insert final title of FTE from above]**. Modeled on a City of Phoenix program (see [Shade Phoenix Plan](#) Item 11, page 57) and in alignment with Action 2.4.2 of the CoA *Heat Resilience Playbook*, "Explore a Cool Businesses Program," we recommend piloting a program to incentivize drought-tolerant tree planting and other shade provisioning on residential and business properties in areas with the highest heat vulnerability. A reasonable goal should be set that meets the budget, benefits neighborhoods today, creates a canopy sustainable into the future, and provides evidence for the viability and expansion of CCGs beyond the pilot.

Commented [5]: Other possible descriptions:

- Environmental Planner
- Green Infrastructure Coordinator
- Sustainable Design Coordinator

Relevant City job title:

- Environmental Program Coordinator
- Environmental Conservation Program Manager
- Planner Senior

Commented [KW6]: Suggesting cutting for length. If there are any of these points that aren't in the top section, you could work them in.

Commented [KW7]: This seems very similar to the recommendation above. Can they be combined? Also, how much additional funding was allocated this year? Is the ask to maintain that level of funding in next year's budget or to increase it?

Commented [HH8R7]: @kaiba: The one above has a portfolio that includes these but goes beyond it. We also wanted to separate out staffing recs from program, materials, etc. ones.

Commented [HH9R7]: Acc to the Budget Public Engagement Report Fiscal Year 2025 our rec for shade plantings wasn't funded (p. 314). This rec expands a current demo project Rohan told us about. There's no extant canopy grant program we're aware of.

Benefits

Cooling and heat resilience measures mitigate the effects of extreme heat, increase water conservation, increase carbon sequestration, encourage park and transit usage, encourage active transportation, improve flood control through water retention, and improve health and well-being, especially for children, the elderly, low-income populations, communities of color, and outdoor workers. As ACEP emphasizes, "Low-income communities and communities of color are the most impacted by extreme weather and pollution despite having contributed least to the drivers of climate change and pollution." In addition to the aforementioned benefits, trees and other plantings offer aesthetic benefits that can increase neighborhood satisfaction and make public spaces, transit, and active transportation more accessible and comfortable for all users. This also serves ASMP priorities.

Costs

1. \$1M for trees, supplies, and wages for youth labor
2. \$500K for trees, supplies, and staff labor to assist with plantings

Commented [10]: We realize these \$\$ might be too high and welcome JSC & staff input on appropriate ask.

Plan Alignment

Providing shade and cooling in low-income and high-heat vulnerability areas of need follows the CoA *Heat Resilience Playbook*, bolsters the CoA Office of Climate Action and Resilience Climate Implementation Plan Priorities, and supports the following other plans: ASMP Policies (e.g., Public Transportation System Policy 5, Improve the public transportation experience); ACEP TLU Goal 3, Strategies 1 (Expand and improve public transportation), 3 (Enhance transit stations and stops), 4 (Prioritize bicycle networks), and 6 (Improve sidewalks, urban trails, and crossings) and Natural Systems Goal 3, Strategy 3 (Increase community tree planting) and Goal 4, Strategy 2 (Reclaim public space and prioritize green infrastructure).