

RESOLUTION NO.

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WHEREAS, on April 22, 2016 174 countries and the European Union signed the Paris Climate Agreement, recognizing the threat of climate change and agreeing to pursue efforts to limit the global temperature increase to 1.5 degrees Celsius; and

WHEREAS, on October 8, 2018 the United Nations International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) projected that limiting the global temperature increase to 1.5 degrees Celsius will require unprecedented transitions in all aspects of society over the next 12 years; and

WHEREAS, over 700 governmental jurisdictions across the world have recently declared or officially acknowledged the existence of a global climate emergency; and

WHEREAS, the impacts and risks of the climate crisis include increased and intensifying extreme weather events, including those that Austin is particularly vulnerable to, such as wildfires, flooding, and drought; and

WHEREAS, NASA’s Goddard Institute for Space Studies reported global temperatures in 2018 were .83 degrees Celsius warmer than the average temperature between 1951 and 1980, and the past five years are collectively the warmest in modern history; and

WHEREAS, on June 24, 2019 more than 70 health organizations including the American Medical Association and the American Public Health Association declared climate change to be a health emergency and issued a call to action for government, business, and civil society leaders to recognize climate change as a health emergency; and

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26 **WHEREAS**, in 2014, ATMOS Research and Consulting’s Climate Change
27 Projections for the City of Austin predicted increases in annual and seasonal
28 average temperatures, more frequent high temperature extremes, more frequent
29 extreme precipitation, and more frequent drought conditions in summer due to
30 hotter weather; and

31 **WHEREAS**, on November 29, 2018 City Council adopted Water Forward,
32 Austin’s Integrated Water Resource Plan;

33 **WHEREAS**, the City of Austin has committed to achieving net zero
34 greenhouse gas emissions by 2050, which is a vital and necessary step towards
35 slowing warming trends; and

36 **WHEREAS**, Austin Energy plans for 65 percent of the power supplied
37 to customers to be from renewable sources by 2027; and

38 **WHEREAS**, on January 11, 2019 Austin was selected as a winner of up to
39 two years of support from Bloomberg Philanthropies as part of the American
40 Cities Climate Challenge; and

41 **WHEREAS**, the City of Austin has committed to a goal of Zero Waste by
42 2040; and

43 **WHEREAS**, transportation is currently the leading cause of greenhouse gas
44 emissions in Austin, and the City of Austin has taken the following actions to
45 address transportation’s role in climate change: 1) on May 9, 2019 the City
46 Council voted unanimously to include planning and goal-setting for the
47 electrification of Austin’s transportation systems in the upcoming update to the
48 Austin Community Climate Plan; 2) on April 11, 2019 the City Council adopted the

49 Austin Strategic Mobility Plan; 3) on October 5, 2017 the City released the Smart
50 Mobility Roadmap; and 4) on October 5, 2016 the Mobility Committee approved a
51 roadmap to electrify 330 fleet vehicles by 2020; and

52 **WHEREAS**, on May 9, 2019 the City Council unanimously approved a
53 resolution supporting the Green New Deal and directing City staff to develop
54 recommendations for a comprehensive climate resilience plan; and

55 **WHEREAS**, City Council anticipates City staff will return to Council with
56 such climate resilience recommendations over the coming weeks, at which time
57 Council will respond; and

58 **WHEREAS**, Health and Environment was identified as one of six priority
59 Strategic Outcomes of Austin Strategic Direction 2023, with indicators including
60 climate change and resilience and environmental quality; and

61 **WHEREAS**, the City of Austin has been at the forefront of sustainability
62 and environmental policy and can be a global leader in emergency climate action
63 by building a climate-resilient and adaptive city for all residents; and

64 **WHEREAS**, building a climate-resilient and adaptive society will have a
65 positive impact on the health and wellbeing of residents, and will offer
66 protections from the adverse potential consequences of climate change to Austin's
67 ecosystems and economies; **NOW, THEREFORE**,

68 **BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF AUSTIN:**

69 Austin City Council declares a climate emergency and calls for an
70 immediate emergency mobilization to restore a safe climate.

71 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

72 Accountability

73 The City Manager is directed to determine an accountability and regular
74 reporting structure to City Council on overarching climate change goals and
75 mobilization efforts. The City Manager is also directed to provide clarity on
76 leadership responsibilities for climate change goals within the new Assistant/City
77 Manager organizational structure. Beginning with the FY2021 budget process, the
78 City Manager is directed to identify proposed budget items that might have a
79 significant contribution to greenhouse gas emissions; and identify areas where
80 additional resources could make new or existing greenhouse gas emissions
81 reduction efforts more successful.

82 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**83 External Engagement**

84 The City Manager is directed to support the City's external engagement in
85 climate change policy, including support for Council roles in intergovernmental
86 bodies involved in issues related to the climate crisis including CAMPO, CAPCOG,
87 and CapMetro, as well as coordination of efforts with partners at the county, state,
88 and federal levels, including but not limited to expressing the City's support for a
89 national declaration of climate emergency.

90 The City Manager is directed to work with relevant City staff who act in
91 nongovernmental bodies such as the Urban Sustainability Directors Network, the
92 National Association of City Transportation Officials, and the Electric Power
93 Research Institute, to elevate the climate crisis as a priority.

94 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**95 Achieving Net-Zero and Mitigating Impacts of the Climate Crisis**

96 As part of the upcoming update to the Austin Community Climate Plan, the
97 City Manager is directed to

- 98 • provide options for more aggressive interim targets to accelerate the
99 reduction pathway to achieve net-zero by 2050;
- 100 • consider a range of innovative and aggressive strategies, to include but not
101 be limited to: community agriculture and local food access; incentivizing
102 non-fossil fuel heating sources; carbon tax credits; and promoting the
103 goals of the Austin Strategic Mobility Plan, including a shift to 50 percent
104 of trips being independent from single occupancy cars, as a means of
105 addressing the climate crisis;
- 106 • engage with relevant stakeholders and communities as part of the planning
107 process to ensure those most impacted by the climate crisis have input on
108 how the update to the Austin Community Climate Plan is conducted;
- 109 • develop and present to Council recommendations for a community
110 awareness campaign plan that helps the City meet its Community Climate
111 Plan goals. Goals of a community awareness campaign might include
112 recruiting and training a diverse base of community ambassadors to educate,
113 guide, and prepare communities that are most impacted by the climate crisis.
114 Education might range from helping families engage with methods like
115 recycling to ensuring that Austin residents understand the potential
116 catastrophic effects of the climate crisis, especially for vulnerable
117 communities at home and abroad. The community awareness campaign plan
118 should identify all resources, budget, and schedule necessary for successful
119 implementation;
- 120 • identify any funding gaps or shortfalls that arise and consider options to fill

121 any such gaps.

122 Additionally, the City Manager is directed to examine other objectives
123 related to greenhouse gas emissions reduction (such as those set by the Austin
124 Energy Resource Generation and Climate Plan) and identify the feasibility of
125 accelerating the timelines of achieving such objectives.

126 The City Manager is directed to incorporate climate resilience policies during
127 implementation and planned updates of the Austin Community Climate Plan, and to
128 other City plans with climate impacts (to ensure climate change and resiliency efforts
129 are strong, effective, and aligned), including: the Austin Energy Resource,
130 Generation, and Climate Protection Plan, the Zero Waste Master Plan, the Hazard
131 Mitigation Plan, the Flood Mitigation Plan, Water Forward, the Land Development
132 Code, the Energy Code, the Austin Strategic Mobility Plan, Public Health
133 Emergency Preparedness plans, and other City plans. The City Manager is also
134 directed to examine existing City plans to identify those that may be outdated.

135 The City Manager is directed to identify innovative policy approaches to
136 address the climate crisis's causes as well as mitigation strategies, including the
137 promotion of natural systems, green infrastructure, and carbon sequestration; the
138 role of tree planting as a carbon offsetting strategy; public cooling spaces to
139 combat heat waves; and updated information about the heat island effect in
140 Austin and strategies to mitigate this effect.

141 Furthermore, the City Manager is directed to identify the support needed to
142 implement the Office of Sustainability's recommendation to leverage and invest
143 in established and trusted community facilities in low-to-moderate income areas
144 to serve as "Resilience Hubs," and to ensure that new facilities have the capacity
145 to serve as shelters, evacuation centers, and disaster response hubs during climate
146 emergencies.

147 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

148 **Emergency Management**

149 The City Manager is directed to promote inter-departmental coordination
150 to ensure that existing emergency management plans offer an aligned approach to
151 the threats of the climate crisis and natural hazards, including wildfire and flooding,
152 and to identify where planning gaps may exist.

153 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

154 **Reporting**

155 The City Manager is directed to report back to City Council on an
156 accountability and regular reporting structure, as well as the proposed stakeholder
157 engagement process for the planned update to the Austin Community Climate Plan,
158 by October 1, 2019.

159 The City Manager is directed to report back to City Council on a climate
160 awareness campaign, and identified gaps in City planning by May 2020, as part of
161 the planned updated to the Austin Community Climate Plan.

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165 **ADOPTED:** _____, 2019 **ATTEST:** _____

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Jannette S. Goodall
City Clerk