

## **RESOLUTION NO. 20190808-078**

**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

**WHEREAS**, in 2014, ATMOS Research and Consulting's Climate Change Projections for the City of Austin predicted increases in annual and seasonal average

temperatures, more frequent high temperature extremes, more frequent extreme precipitation, and more frequent drought conditions in summer due to hotter weather; and

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

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

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

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

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

**WHEREAS**, transportation is currently the leading cause of greenhouse gas emissions in Austin, and the City of Austin has taken the following actions to address transportation's role in climate change: 1) on May 9, 2019 the City Council voted unanimously to include planning and goal-setting for the electrification of Austin's transportation systems in the upcoming update to the Austin Community Climate Plan; 2) on April 11, 2019 the City Council adopted the Austin Strategic Mobility Plan; 3) on October 5, 2017 the City released the Smart Mobility Roadmap; and 4) on October 5, 2016 the Mobility Committee approved a roadmap to electrify 330 fleet vehicles by 2020; and

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

**Accountability**

The City Manager is directed to determine an accountability and regular reporting structure to City Council on overarching climate change goals and mobilization efforts.



The City Manager is also directed to provide clarity on leadership responsibilities for climate change goals within the new Assistant/City Manager organizational structure. Beginning with the FY2021 budget process, the City Manager is directed to identify proposed budget items that might have a significant contribution to greenhouse gas emissions; and identify areas where additional resources could make new or existing greenhouse gas emissions reduction efforts more successful.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

**External Engagement**

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

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

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

**Achieving Net-Zero and Mitigating Impacts of the Climate Crisis**

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

- provide options for more aggressive interim targets to accelerate the reduction pathway to achieve net-zero by 2050;

- consider a range of innovative and aggressive strategies, to include but not be limited to: community agriculture and local food access; incentivizing non-fossil fuel heating sources; carbon tax credits; and promoting the goals of the Austin Strategic Mobility Plan, including a shift to 50 percent of trips being independent from single occupancy cars, as a means of addressing the climate crisis;
- engage with relevant stakeholders and communities as part of the planning process to ensure those most impacted by the climate crisis have input on how the update to the Austin Community Climate Plan is conducted;
- develop and present to Council recommendations for a community awareness campaign plan that helps the City meet its Community Climate Plan goals. Goals of a community awareness campaign might include recruiting and training a diverse base of community ambassadors to educate, guide, and prepare communities that are most impacted by the climate crisis. Education might range from helping families engage with methods like recycling to ensuring that Austin residents understand the potential catastrophic effects of the climate crisis, especially for vulnerable communities at home and abroad. The community awareness campaign plan should identify all resources, budget, and schedule necessary for successful implementation;
- identify any funding gaps or shortfalls that arise and consider options to fill any such gaps.

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

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

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

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

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

**Emergency Management**

The City Manager is directed to promote inter-departmental coordination to ensure that existing emergency management plans offer an aligned approach to the threats of the climate crisis and natural hazards, including wildfire and flooding, and to



identify where planning gaps may exist.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

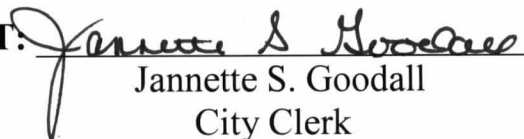
**Reporting**

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

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

**ADOPTED:** August 8, 2019

**ATTEST:**

  
Jannette S. Goodall  
City Clerk