



# City of Austin

## Recommendation for Action

---

**File #:** 26-1580, **Agenda Item #:** 23.

4/23/2026

---

### **Posting Language**

Authorize two contracts for City owned solar installations on City facilities for Austin Climate Action and Resilience with GS Solar LLC d/b/a Big Sun Solar, for an initial term of five years with up to five five-year extension options in an amount not to exceed \$76,500,000 and with PowerFin Texas Solar Projects, LLC for a term of up to 25 years with an estimated revenue of \$17,700,000. Funding: \$1,300,000 is available in the Capital Budget of Austin Energy. Funding for the remaining contract term is contingent upon available funding in future budgets.

### **Lead Department**

Austin Financial Services.

### **Client Department(s)**

All City Departments.

### **Fiscal Note**

\$1,300,000 is available in the Capital Budget of Austin Energy.

Funding for the remaining contract term is contingent upon available funding in future budgets.

### **Procurement Language:**

Austin Financial Services issued a Request for Proposals solicitation RFP 4400 SMW3035 for these goods and/or services. The solicitation was published on December 12, 2025, and phase 1 closed on January 6, 2026. Phase 2 was issued to the short-listed firms from Phase 1 on January 15, 2026 and closed on February 17, 2026. Of the 16 offers received, the proposals submitted by the recommended contractors represented best value to the City based on the solicitation's evaluation criteria. A complete solicitation package for Phase 1, including a log of offer received, is available for viewing on the City's website. This information can currently be found at [https://financeonline.austintexas.gov/afo/account\\_services/solicitation/solicitation\\_details.cfm?sid=143513](https://financeonline.austintexas.gov/afo/account_services/solicitation/solicitation_details.cfm?sid=143513).

### **MBE/WBE:**

This contract will be awarded in compliance with the City Code Chapter 2-9B (Minority-Owned and Women-Owned Business Enterprise Procurement Program) by meeting the Combined MBE/WBE goal with 1.80% participation.

### **For More Information:**

Direct questions regarding this Recommendation for Council Action to the Austin Financial Services - Central Procurement at [FSDCentralProcurementRCAs@austintexas.gov](mailto:FSDCentralProcurementRCAs@austintexas.gov) or 512-974-2500. Respondents to the solicitation and their Agents should direct all questions to the Authorized Contact Person identified in the solicitation.

### **Additional Backup Information:**

In May 2025 Council approved Resolution 20250522-052 directing the City Manager to explore the use of solar

---

on City facilities. Staff from Austin Facilities Management, Austin Climate Action and Resilience, and Austin Energy have been leading the development of this project resulting in the development of this procurement. In an effort to take advantage of the Investment Tax Credits being phased out by the 'One Big Beautiful Bill Act', projects must either 'commence construction' by July 4, 2026, or be placed in service by December 31, 2027.

These contracts will allow for a dual-portfolio approach to the installation of solar on City facilities. This allows the City to take advantage of both City-owned and third-party-owned financing models, maximizing value to the City and overall project scale while minimizing project delivery risk.

GS Solar LLC dba Big Sun Solar - The city-owned portfolio

The contractor will install *behind the meter* equipment, paid for by the City, which will generate long-term savings through utility bill credits paid at Austin Energy's Value of Solar rate. The contractor will be responsible for designing, planning, procuring, scheduling, permitting, constructing, interconnecting, and maintaining the solar portfolio, which will remain in city ownership. The requested authorization amount includes:

- A 25% program expansion authorization over the base proposal amount allowing for program expansion if funding is available. This additional capacity is intended to provide the City with the agility to incorporate emerging solar-ready sites or add-on infrastructure such as battery storage or electric vehicle charging-integrated canopies. By authorizing the full amount now, the City can maximize the impact of Federal Solar Investment Tax Credits across a broader asset base, ensuring we are positioned to scale our renewable energy transition as rapidly as site readiness and emerging opportunities allow.
- The authorization requested includes funding to cover annual maintenance once installed.

PowerFin Texas Solar Projects LLC - The Solar Standard Offer portfolio

The contractor will install *in front of the meter* equipment that will be paid for and owned by a third party. The contractor will make an annual payment to the City (to be determined through contract negotiations) to compensate for use of City rooftops, parking lots (for canopies), and other spaces. The contractor will be compensated by Austin Energy for electricity produced at the Solar Standard Offer rate, and electricity produced will be used to support the Community Solar program. The contractor will be responsible for designing, planning, procuring, scheduling, permitting, constructing, interconnecting, and maintaining the solar portfolio. At the end of the contract term, the portfolio will either be transferred to the City at negligible cost or decommissioned by the contractor.

The goal of this Solar on City Facilities project supports:

- The Austin Climate Equity Plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and equitably achieve net-zero emissions by 2040.
- The Austin Energy Resource, Generation and Climate Protection Plan to 2035 to install at least 205 mega watts of local solar by 2027 and 405 MW of local solar by 2035.
- The Citywide Strategic Plan to Protect Austin's natural resources and ecological systems and mitigate for climate change; Manage and improve City facilities to ensure a portfolio of safe, reliable, resilient, and sustainable facilities.

A two-phase procurement was implemented, where 16 offerors were evaluated first on qualifications, and then 8 were invited to propose a portfolio that meets the City's goals.

An evaluation team with expertise in this area evaluated the offers and scored GS Solar LLC dba Big Sun Solar and PowerFin Texas Solar Projects, LLC, as the best to provide these services based on small business preference, company profile and experience, project team, financial strength, proposed site portfolio, project viability and risk management, operations maintenance and monitoring, progress towards energy and sustainability goals, community benefits and innovation, price proposal and net financial benefits, and financing plan.

A delay in approving these contracts would risk the possibility of losing out on the Investment Tax Credits, which are being phased out through the One Big Beautiful Bill Act of 2025. This could lead to solar projects being 30-40% more expensive.

History of Council approved actions relating to climate and sustainability:

February 15, 2007 - Council approved Resolution 20070215-023, adopting a Climate Protection Plan for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and directing the City Manager to develop the policies and procedures necessary to implement the Plan.

August 8, 2019 - Council approved Resolution 20190808-078, declaring a climate emergency and calling for immediate and coordinated mobilization by the City to address the causes and consequences of climate change and directing the City Manager to take appropriate action.

September 30, 2021 - Council approved Resolution 20210930-099, the adoption of the Austin Climate Equity Plan, which sets a new community-wide goal of equitably reaching net-zero community-wide greenhouse gas emissions by 2040, using a steep decline path followed by negative emissions.

February 15, 2024 - Council approved Resolution 20240215-025, establishing the City’s intent to act urgently to address local causes of climate change, enhance the sustainability of City operations, and develop community resiliency to the impacts of extreme weather; directing the City Manager to post a public hearing of the Joint Sustainability Committee to gather public input and make recommendations; further directing the City Manager to prepare an environmental investment plan, including recommendations for appropriate funding sources; and setting a public hearing.

May 22, 2025 - Council approved Resolution 20250522-052, directing the City Manager to analyze City-owned property and property owned or operated by other local governmental entities within the Austin Energy load zone for solar generation potential, make recommendations for priority projects, and return to Council with the recommendations and analysis needed to implement development.

August 13, 2025 - Council approved Resolution 20250813-013 directing the City Manager to establish a real estate development strategy and asset management system to evaluate existing City-owned lands related to climate project usage including but not limited to carbon sequestration, sustainable food production, and renewable energy generation.

<b>Contract Details GS Solar dba Big Sub Solar:</b>		
<b>Contract Term</b>	<b>Length of Term</b>	<b>Contract Authorization</b>
Initial Term	5 years	\$66,500,000
Optional Extension 1	5 years	\$2,000,000
Optional Extension 2	5 years	\$2,000,000
Optional Extension 3	5 years	\$2,000,000
Optional Extension 4	5 years	\$2,000,000
Optional Extension 5	5 years	\$2,000,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>30 years</b>	<b>\$76,500,000</b>

<b>Contract Details (PowerFin Texas Solar Projects LLC):</b>		
<b>Contract Term</b>	<b>Length of Term</b>	<b>Estimated Revenue</b>
Initial Term	25 years	\$17,700,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>25 years</b>	<b>\$17,700,000</b>