



## **COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORT**

### **OPEN SPACE, ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE**

**Date:** May 27, 2015

**Agenda Item #:** 10

**Agenda Item:** Consider and develop recommendations for a resolution related to the 2015 Austin Community Climate Plan and steps necessary to implement it.

**Vote** None due to a lack of quorum.

**Sponsors/Department:** Council Member Leslie Pool/Office of Sustainability

#### **Summary of Discussion**

During the presentation of Item 6, “Briefing on the City’s Community Climate Plan” Lucia Athens, Chief Sustainability Officer for the City of Austin, first provided a brief summary of the history of Austin City Council’s Climate Resolutions including the most recent resolution which supports an action plan to achieve net-zero community-wide greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. Zach Baumer, Climate Protection Manager for the City of Austin, explained the greenhouse gas inventory conducted in 2010 throughout Travis County to determine the sources of greenhouse gas emissions in the area. The majority of emissions are produced through transportation and mobile sources and residential electricity. Baumer further explained that the action plan would eliminate approximately 90% of current emissions by the year 2050 with a small portion of emissions left that are impossible to alleviate.

Based on this inventory, a community steering committee and Technical Advisory Group was created to assist in the creation of the action plan for each major emissions sector and allowed for a substantial amount of public input. Baumer elaborated on the strategies recommended by the Technical Advisory Group in four major areas of implementation which are electricity and natural gas, transportation and land use, materials and waste management, and industrial process. Additional recommendations provided in the plan’s executive summary include public outreach by summer 2016, determination of the feasibility of carbon impact statement for major City Council decisions, determination of the feasibility of local carb fee or trading and investment program, and to continue climate research and resilience planning efforts.

Athens noted the cohesiveness of the Community Climate Plan with other City programs such as Image Austin, Urban Trails Master Plan, and CAMPO 2035 Regional Transportation Plan and how this momentum will greatly contribute to the long-term goal of achieving net-zero community-wide greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.

- *Budget implications*

CM Pool asked if there would be any budget implications in order to measure the progress as proposed in the Community Climate Plan. This item is scheduled for discussion during this year's budget work sessions.

- *C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group*

As stated in the draft resolution, a recommendation is included to authorize the Mayor to continue participation with C40 on behalf of the City Council. CM Pool requested a brief description of the C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group. Lucia Athens explained that the group is a global organization of the forty largest cities in the world who are working towards climate change. While the city of Austin is not considered to be one of the forty largest cities, it does participate as a cohort with this group considering all of the work done towards climate change on behalf of the City of Austin. The group is composed of Mayor and staff representation from the forty cities who meet on a semi periodic basis and the City of Austin has been an informal participant in these meetings for the past five years.

MPT Tovo inquired about the participation requirement and financial obligations in the C40's memorandum of understand that may be expected of the City. Athens explained that participation is similar to past years where C40 has provided funding for the Mayor and/or one staff person to travel to the meetings. Athens expects a minimal amount of time to participate in various working groups that have primarily been conducted through conference calls.

- *Composition of the joint sustainability committee*

MPT Tovo inquired about the selection of certain City commissions and if the Parks and Recreation Board should be considered for representation on this board. Athens explained that the final report of the Boards and Commissions Transition Task Force recommended the various bodies, but including additional appointments that have similar goals would make sense. In addition, the Joint Sustainability Committee is taking the place of the Resource Management Commission per the report, which should be reflected in the resolution.

Athens proposed that the new Joint Sustainability Committee should meet quarterly in consideration of the time spent on other boards and commissions by the members. Tovo was concerned that anything more than quarterly meetings would seem burdensome.

CM Pool sought input from Jane Rivera, the Chair of the Parks and Recreation Board, regarding the addition of a Parks and Recreation Board member. Chair Rivera agreed that it would be a great addition. CM Pool committed to reviewing the full list of recommended and potential board

## **Public Comments**

In favor: David King

## **Direction**

The Office of Sustainability plans to present the Community Climate Plan to City Council for adoption and propose that this plan fall under the purview of a proposed Joint Sustainability Committee.

CM Pool agreed that this committee is based on a wide collaboration of a community that supports this and wants to see it move forward on the goals. CM Pool concluded by saying that the list of proposed commissions to be included are indeed still continuing, for example, the Resource Management Commission is no longer active.

**Recommendation:**

Whereas a formal motion could not be made, CM Pool tabled the vote and suggested revisiting the item during a special called meeting in order to have input from the full committee.

See attached draft resolution.

## **RESOLUTION NO. \_\_\_\_\_**

**WHEREAS**, the City of Austin is committed to protecting the long-term health and viability of our community through strategies designed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and mitigate the effects of climate change; and

**WHEREAS**, the City Council passed Resolution No. 20070215-023 that established the framework for the Austin Climate Protection Plan (ACPP), which includes five major goals and related supporting objectives to: (1) Make all City of Austin facilities, fleets, and operations carbon-neutral by 2020; (2) Make Austin Energy (AE) the leading utility for greenhouse gas reductions; (3) Implement the most energy efficient building codes and aggressively pursue energy efficiency retrofits; (4) Create a community-wide inventory of greenhouse gases, establish short- and long-term emission reduction targets, and a comprehensive plan for meeting those targets; and (5) Develop and implement a program to assist all citizens, businesses, organizations, and visitors in achieving carbon neutrality; and

**WHEREAS**, City Council recognizes that investments in reducing greenhouse gas emissions also have positive outcomes that extend beyond environmental benefits, which include enhancing social equity, maintaining an innovative and strong economy, and providing affordable options for Austin residents related to energy, transportation and waste; and

**WHEREAS**, the C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group (C40) is a network of the world's megacities committed to addressing climate change, and the City of Austin is an "Innovator City" within C40; and

**WHEREAS**, City Council passed Resolution No. 20131121-60 that directed the City Manager to develop climate adaptation strategies as an important missing piece to the existing ACPP; and

**WHEREAS**, the City Council passed Resolution 20140828-157 that set the vision for reducing CO2 emissions from all city-controlled generation resources to zero by 2030, subject to the previously-adopted and reaffirmed affordability goals; and

**WHEREAS**, the City Council passed Resolution No. 20140410-024 that established a goal of reaching net zero community-wide greenhouse gas emissions by 2050, recognizing that it is important and valuable for our city's climate protection effort to accomplish emissions reductions as soon as it is feasible; and

**WHEREAS**, Resolution No. 20140410-024 directed the City Manager to review the goals and objectives of the 2007 ACPP and work with stakeholders to create an action plan, here referred to as the Austin Community Climate Plan (ACCP), for

the following major sectors responsible for the community-wide greenhouse gas emissions in Austin, energy, transportation, and waste/industrial, in order to meet the new long-term goal established by Resolution No. 20140410-024; and

**WHEREAS**, Resolution No. 20140410-024 directed the ACCP to include the following components:

- Measurable interim greenhouse gas reduction targets, starting with 2020 and periodic targets until 2050;
- When and how annual progress reports will occur; and
- How often to conduct comprehensive updates to the climate protection plan; and

**WHEREAS**, the Office of Sustainability and multiple City departments produced the draft 2015 ACCP, attached here as Exhibit A, the result of the work of fifty community volunteers meeting regularly over a seven-month period and Austin residents providing public input and feedback on the draft strategies and actions throughout the plan development process; and

**WHEREAS**, reaching the goal of NET-ZERO emissions by 2050 will take sustained effort, with all individuals, businesses, and organizations in the community playing a role; **NOW, THEREFORE**,

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

The City Council adopts the 2015 Austin Community Climate Plan (ACCP) to achieve the citywide NET-ZERO greenhouse gas emissions by the 2050 goal and a target path to get to NET-ZERO by 2050 including interim targets for 2020, 2030, and 2040 allowing for up to 10% of carbon offsets for all targets.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

The City Council directs the City Manager to:

- Implement the recommendations from the executive summary of the ACCP within one year of the passage of this resolution;
- Identify and prioritize any resources needed to implement these recommendations and incorporate this information into the FY 2015-2016 budget allocations;
- Develop appropriate performance metrics for the relevant City departments to report progress to achieving the ACCP goals; and

- Provide semi-annual progress updates to City Council, with the first one occurring by September 1, 2015.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

The City Council directs the City Manager to create a Joint Sustainability Committee as recommended by the City of Austin Board and Commission Transition Task Force, consisting of members of the:

- 1) Environmental Board;
- 2) Electric Utility Commission;
- 3) Zero Waste Advisory Commission;
- 4) Urban Transportation Commission;
- 5) Water and Waste Water Commission;
- 6) Planning Commission;
- 7) Economic Prosperity Commission;
- 8) Community Development Commission,
- 9) Sustainable Food Policy Board, and
- 10) Resource Management Commission.

Each of the above identified boards and commissions shall select one member to serve on the Joint Sustainability Committee.

It is encouraged that these Committee members should also represent a broad diversity of community stakeholders including the following:

- 1) Large companies and employers;
- 2) Small businesses owners and non-profit leaders;
- 3) Renters;
- 4) Central city individuals and families; and

5) Suburban individuals and families.

If the Open Space, Environment and Sustainability Committee, or a comparable Council committee assigned the authority to review climate protection, determines that greater diversity of Joint Sustainability Committee members is needed to ensure adequate community stakeholder representation, the applicable Council committee may appoint three community stakeholders members.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

The Joint Sustainability Committee shall:

- Review all city policies and procedures relevant to the ACCP, including the planning, implementation, community engagement, goal setting and progress monitoring;
- Promote close cooperation between the City Council, City departments, City boards, commissions, committees, and taskforces, and individuals, institutions, and agencies concerned with the politics, procedures, and implementation of the ACCP with the goal of coordinating all similar activities within the City and the community in order to secure the greatest public benefits; and
- Forward to the City Manager all advisory material that the committee provides to the City Council, the Office of Sustainability, City departments or City boards, commissions, committees and taskforces.

The Joint Sustainability Committee may:

- Advise the City Council, the City Manager, the Office of Sustainability, City departments and City boards, commissions, committees and taskforces on policy matters related to the ACCP;
- Ask the City Manager for any information it deems to pertain to the ACCP;
- Make recommendations to the Open Space, Environment and Sustainability Committee before final council action on relevant policies or procedures; and
- Establish advisory groups or working groups as it deems necessary to pertain to the ACCP.

The Council directs the City Manager to provide staff support to the Joint Sustainability Committee. Council recommends that such support be provided by the Office of Sustainability.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

On behalf of the City Council, the City Manager is authorized to complete the Memorandum of Understanding with C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group to continue the City of Austin's official participation with C40.

**ADOPTED:** \_\_\_\_\_, 2015 **ATTEST:** \_\_\_\_\_

Jannette S. Goodall  
*City Clerk*