

RESOLUTION NO. 20180201-068

WHEREAS, the City of Austin owns and operates three municipal utilities: Austin Energy, Austin Water, and Austin Resource Recovery; and

WHEREAS, according to the Fiscal Year 2017/18 Taxpayer Impact Statement, the services provided by those three utilities will cost the average Austin resident approximately \$2,475; and

WHEREAS, in 2010, the City of Austin, by benchmarking residential, commercial, and industrial electric bills across the State, was able to calculate how affordable utility bills were when compared to other cities; and

WHEREAS, through that analysis, the City Council adopted Austin Energy's Affordability Goals which set a goal for Austin Energy to keep rates in the lowest 50% of Texas utilities and limit annual rate increases to no more than two percent for any customer class; and

WHEREAS, those Affordability Goals have been utilized when considering annual budgets as well as when deciding to make long-term investments for the utility; and

WHEREAS, given the differences in the energy, water, and solid waste markets and the differences in services and other factors between utilities in different cities, the goals may be different for each utility; and

WHEREAS, the City of Austin is committed to protecting the long-term viability and competitiveness of all of its municipally-owned utilities as well as ensuring affordable utility bills for all customers; and

WHEREAS, affordable utility bills are a critical part of all resident's personal monthly budgets and are an impactful piece of managing the rising cost of living in Austin; and

WHEREAS, the City of Austin has not established Affordability Goals or other standards for Austin Water or Austin Resource Recovery; and

WHEREAS, it is in the public's interest for the City to establish Affordability Goals for Austin Water and Austin Resource Recovery; **NOW, THEREFORE**,

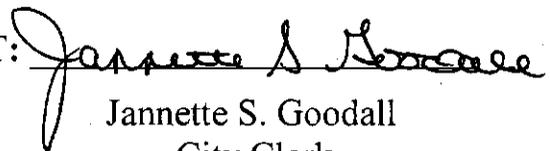
BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF AUSTIN:

The City Council directs the City Manager to provide information about internal benchmarks that the City of Austin's utilities conduct when assessing affordability and sustainability of the utilities' services to customers. The City Manager is directed to conduct a comprehensive, data-driven benchmarking study of public, and where available private, water and solid waste utilities in Texas that includes contextual information, where useful, such as efforts relating to sustainability, zero waster commitments, landfill diversion goals, conservation and drought mitigation efforts, the value of water, the source of water, purity standards, climate, and other components the City Manager deems appropriate.

Utilizing the findings of this review, the City Manager shall make recommendations for how to continue the utilities' evaluations with regard to affordability, as well as strategies for effectively communicating these ongoing efforts to customers, and how affordability goals may be reasonably determined, applied, tracked, and disclosed.

ADOPTED: February 1, 2018

ATTEST:


Jannette S. Goodall
City Clerk