

---

# Austin Climate Equity Plan

September 2020



OFFICE OF  
SUSTAINABILITY

CITY OF AUSTIN

---

# Summary

- We've been updating the Community Climate Plan
  - Draft for public comment out now
  - Council in October
- What we're looking for from you:
  - Comments
  - Areas of Interest
  - Pledge of Support



# 2015 Community Climate Plan

## Adopted by Council in June 2015



**Austin** COMMUNITY  
2015  
CLIMATE PLAN



**2017 Travis County Carbon Footprint**  
12.5 million metric tons carbon dioxide-equivalent



Electricity & Natural Gas

Transportation & Land Use

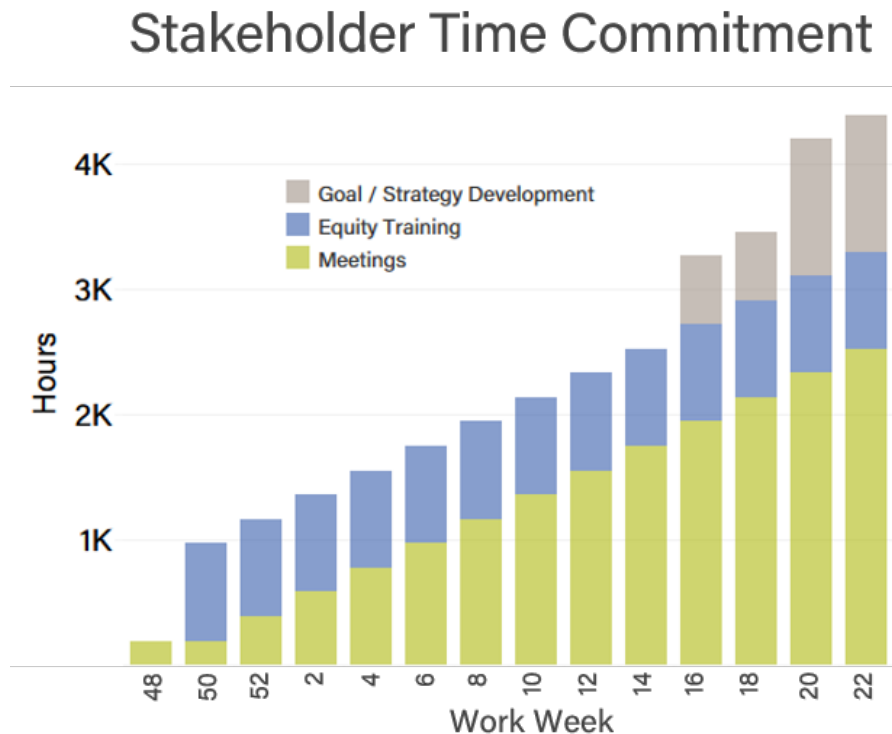
Materials & Waste  
Management

Industrial Processes

*135  
qualitative  
actions  
directed at  
departments*

# How was this plan update created?

- 24 City Staff
- 120 Community Members  
(NGO, Govt., Business)
- 12 Ambassadors
- 4 Equity Trainings
- 5 Community Workshops (over 250 attendees)
- 14 Steering Committee Meetings
- 60+ Advisory Group Meetings
- 50+ Interviews by Ambassadors



# Steering Committee Members

## Co-Chairs

Mayuri Raja, AZAAD, Google

Shane Johnson, Sierra Club

Katie Coyne, Asakura Robinson

Susana Almanza, PODER

Joep Meijer, Citizen

Jim Walker, Univ. of Texas

Rocio Villalobos, Equity Office

Drew Nelson, Mitchell Foundation

Rodrigo Leal, Guidehouse

Rene Renteria, Citizen

Kaiba White, Public Citizen

Lauren Peressini, Sunrise Movement

Shawanda Stewart, Huston-Tillotson Univ.

Kenneth Thompson, Solar Austin

Ben Leibowicz, Univ. of Texas

Suzanne Russo, Pecan Street Inc.

Pooja Sethi, Sethi Law

Darien Clary, AISD

Alberta Phillips, Joint Sustainability Committee, ECHO

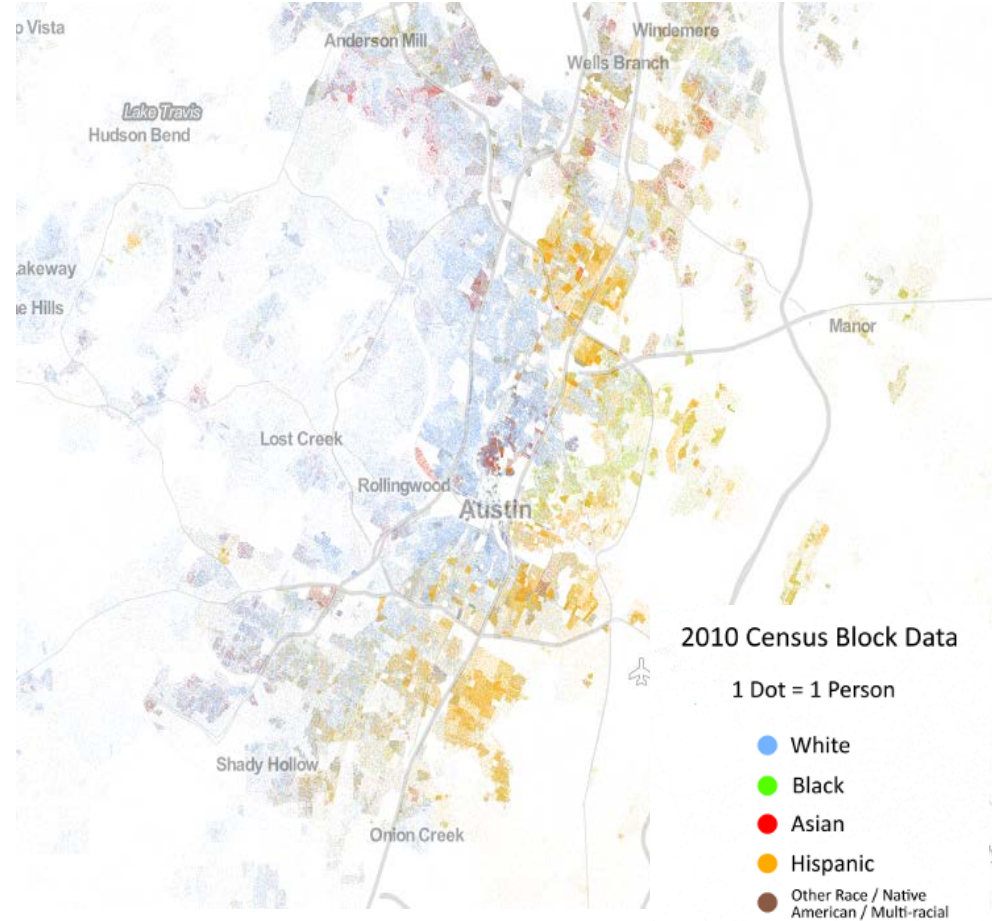
AG Representatives: Nakia Winfield, Brandi Clark Burton, Karen

Magid, Kurt Stogdill, and Nick Kincaid

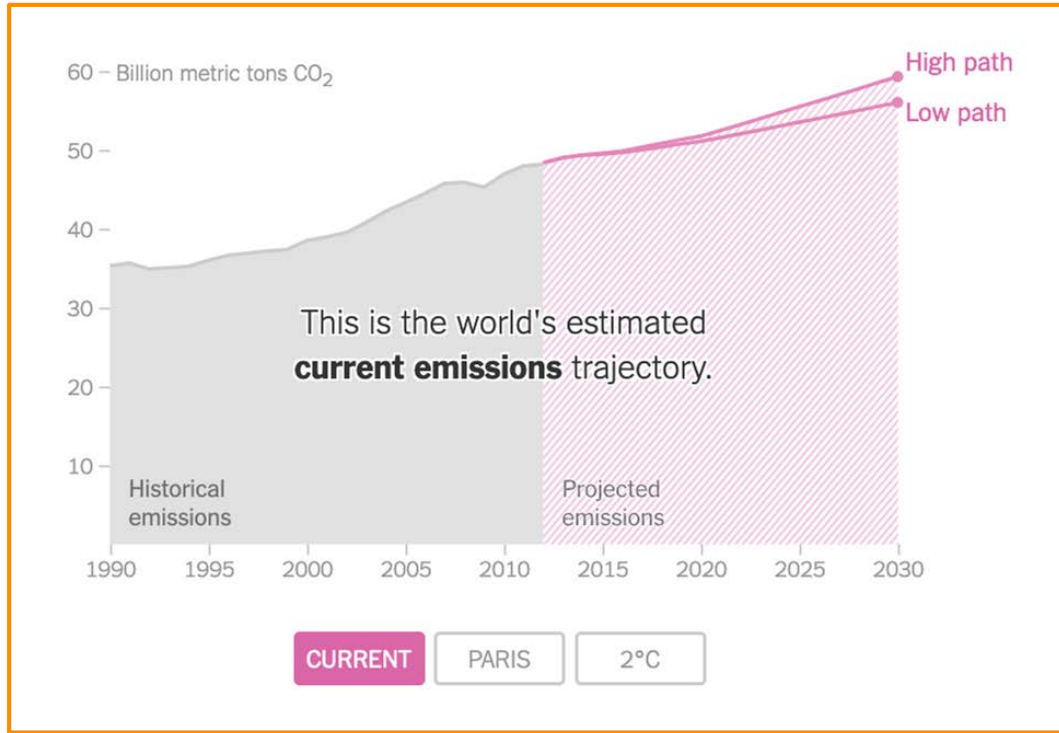
---

# A History of Inequities that Remains Today

- The Austin 1928 Master Plan divided the city along racial lines, forcibly displacing Black residents into specific, undesirable areas.
- The Tank Farm fuel storage facility, Eastside Landfill, and the Holly Power Plant exposed people of color to toxic pollution in East Austin neighborhoods.
- Gentrification is taking place in parts of the city where low-income people and people of color have been forced to live, the African-American share of the Austin population declined from 12% in 1990 to 7.7% in 2010.
- As of 2015, 52% of white Austin residents were homeowners, only 27% of African-American and 32% of Hispanic/Latinx residents owned homes.
- Cases of COVID-19, hospitalization and mortality rates are disproportionately affecting Latinx and Black communities



# We are Changing the Earth's Climate



*Warming over  
2°C could be  
catastrophic to  
life on earth*

# Climate Projections for Austin

- Low-income communities and communities of color are disproportionately affected by climate hazards
  - Experience climate shocks on top of existing economic stressors
  - Have less resources to bounce back from event
  - Suffer long-term impacts to mental and physical health



HIGHER TEMPERATURES



EXTENDED PERIODS OF DROUGHT



INCREASED RISK OF WILDFIRE



INTENSE RAIN AND FLOODING



# Our Commitment to Climate Equity

## Climate Change

**Eliminate the use of fossil fuels for energy & transportation**

- Energy efficiency
- Renewable energy
- Less dependence on cars
- Electric vehicles
- More trees & natural spaces
- Healthier consumer choices

**Health**

**Affordability**

**Accessibility**

**Cultural Preservation**

**Community Capacity**

**Just Transition**

**Accountability**

## Racial Equity

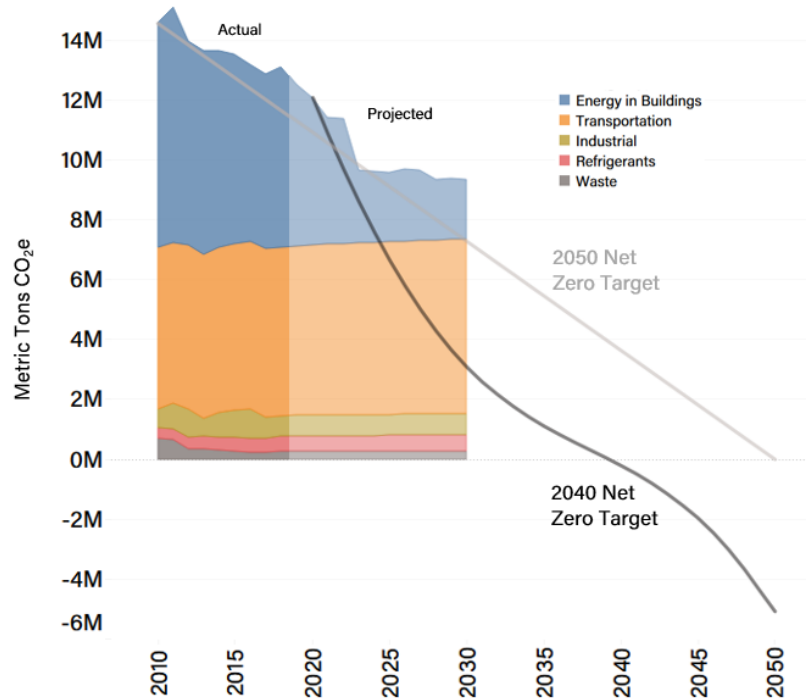
**Eliminate disparities that can be predicted by race**

- Safety for all at all times
- No disproportionate economic outcomes
- Fair access to services for all
- Inclusive participation in our city
- Positive health outcomes for all
- Embrace culture & difference

***If we're not proactively addressing equity, we're perpetuating injustice.***

# Net-zero by 2050 → Net-zero by 2040

## Austin Community GHG Emissions



The updated Net-zero by 2040 target has a more aggressive emissions reduction target than the previous Net-zero by 2050 target

# A Plan Among Plans

## 5 Plan Sections:

- Sustainable Buildings
- Transportation Electrification
- Transportation & Land Use
- Natural Systems
- Consumption



# Equity Process for Advisory Groups



# Equity-focused Engagement

## Community Climate Ambassadors



# Draft Goals & Strategies

---

# Summary

**18 Goals** - What needs to be accomplished by 2030 to keep us on track

**75 Strategies** - What should be implemented in the next 5 years to make progress

## Centered on Equity Throughout

- Prioritize incentives and target communications towards low-income communities and communities of color
- Specific focus on anti-displacement
- Focus on a just transition (training and jobs) for new industries and technology
- Prioritize health and other benefits for the Eastern Crescent
- Center communities of color in ongoing learning and studies

# Cross-cutting Strategies

## **Strategy 1: Green Jobs and Entrepreneurship**

Create Green Jobs and Entrepreneurship opportunities that advance the goals of this plan, create economic opportunity and build agency and decision-making power in low-income communities and communities of color.

## **Strategy 2: Regional Collaboration**

Create a Texas Climate Collaborative linking elected officials and City staff who are working to implement recently adopted climate plans in San Antonio, Houston, Dallas and Austin. Bring in neighboring cities in the Central Texas region as well as the five-county governments.

## **Strategy 3: Carbon Offsets and Carbon Dioxide Removal**

Getting to zero fossil fuel usage, addressing our historical emissions, and eventually removing CO<sub>2</sub> from the atmosphere are essential but will be very challenging, so we've laid the ground-work for establishing definition, priorities and future research opportunities.



# Sustainable Buildings

**GOAL 1: By 2030, decarbonize buildings and reduce energy burden by achieving net-zero carbon for all new buildings and 25% of existing buildings.**

- Ensure benefits flow to low income communities and communities of color
- Enhance understanding of energy consumption
- Decarbonize buildings
- Ensure equitable workforce development for emerging technologies

**GOAL 2: By 2030, reduce community-wide greenhouse gas emissions from refrigerant leakage by 25%.**

- Capture and destroy old refrigerants
- Improve building codes to encourage cleaner refrigerants
- Create incentives for leak detection and repair
- Awareness and training for HVAC service providers
- Reduce the volume of refrigerants

**GOAL 3: By 2030, reduce the embodied carbon footprint of building materials used in local construction by 40% from a 2020 baseline.**

- Lead by example through design and construction standards
- Incentivize lower-carbon materials
- Educate stakeholders on materials best practices
- Stimulate decarbonization with local producers

**GOAL 4: By 2030, equitably achieve a community-wide water demand of 152,000 acre-feet per year.**

- Engage residents in technological transitions and conservation programs
- Evaluate program participation criteria
- Reduce emissions at the water-energy nexus

# Transportation and Land Use

**Goal 1: By 2030, 80% of new non-residential development is located within the city's growth centers and corridors**

- Plan for Complete Communities
- Work with employers on location and amenities
- Create mobility hubs
- Phase out free parking

**Goal 2: By 2030, 70% of new housing units are located within the city's growth centers and corridors while preserving 10,000 deeply affordable housing units and producing 1,000 deeply affordable units.**

- Offer Immediate Affordable Housing Assistance
- Fund Affordable Housing
- Enhance community engagement for affordable housing

**Goal 3: By 2030, Public Transit will make up 5% (up from .3% in 2018) of distance traveled for all trips in Austin.**

- Expand and Improve Public Transportation
- Promote Free Transportation Options
- Transit Stations and Stops

**Goal 4: By 2030, people-powered transportation (bicycle, walking, wheelchairs, strollers, etc.) will make up 4% of distance traveled for all trips in Austin.**

- Prioritize Bicycle Network
- Bicycle Education and Training
- Sidewalks, Urban Trails and Crossings

# Transportation Electrification

**Goal 1: By 2030, 40% of total vehicle miles traveled in the City of Austin are electrified and electric vehicle ownership is diverse culturally, geographically and economically. This translates to approximately 460,000 electric vehicles on the road.**

- Conduct an EV Community Needs Assessment
- Create Equitable Incentives for Buying and Leasing EVs
- Reduce Tolls for EV's in the Eastern Crescent
- Launch an e-Bike + Electric Car Sharing Program
- Electrify Public Sector Fleet Vehicles
- Electrify Private Sector Fleet Vehicles

**Goal 2: By 2030, Austin has compelling and equitably-distributed charging infrastructure that is a mix of level 1, 2, and DC fast charging to accommodate 40% of total vehicle miles traveled in the city. This translates to 226 megawatts of electrical load and could mean over 37,000 charging ports.**

- Create a Network of Low-cost, Accessible Charging Stations
- Incentivize Internet-Connected Smart Charging
- Adopt New Energy and Building Codes
- Expand Outreach to Underserved Groups

**Goal 3: The Austin-Round Rock-San Marcos MSA will be a global leader in transportation electrification by adopting policies and technologies that maximize the economic and health benefits for all while evolving with and defining the growth of this emerging industry.**

- Create a Regional Coalition to Support EV's
- Pilot and Adopt New Technology
- Prioritize a Just Transition
- Expand the EV-related Business Ecosystem

# Food and Product Consumption

**Goal 1: By 2030, ensure 100% of Austinites, with a focus on the food insecure, can access a pro-climate, pro-health food system that is community-driven, prioritizes regenerative agriculture, supports dietary and health agency, prefers plant-based over animal-based foods and minimizes food waste.**

- Support institutional food purchasing
- Promote and fund community-driven food retail programs
- Incentivize pro-health, pro-climate food choices
- Conduct a food waste root cause analysis

**Goal 2: By 2030, reduce greenhouse gas emissions from institutional, commercial, and government purchasing by at least 50%.**

- Measure institutional lifecycle emissions
- Strengthen the City's sustainable purchasing program
- Strengthen non-City institutional purchasing programs
- Expand the City's Circular Economy Program

**Goal 3: Aggressively pursue waste reduction, organics composting and recycling to achieve a new overall zero waste goal pending adoption of a new Austin Resource Recovery Zero Waste Plan. The new community-wide per capita disposal rate goal will be added as an amendment to the Climate Equity Plan by June 2021.**

- Promote Reuse
- Create Eco-Hubs
- Create a workforce development program for the circular economy
- Offer incentives for products that have lower negative environmental and social impact
- Retool the bulk pick-up collection program

# Natural Systems

**Goal 1: By 2030, Legally protect an additional 20,000 acres of carbon pools on natural lands and manage all new and existing natural areas (70,000 acres total) with a focus resilience.**

- Protect Natural Lands
- Manage Natural Lands for Resilience
- Increase Community Access and Positive Perception of Public Land
- Protect Water Sources

**Goal 2: By 2030, Protect 500,000 acres of farmland in the 5-county region through legal protections and/or regenerative agriculture programs.**

- Protect of Working Lands
- Reform Agricultural Tax Appraisals
- Support Farmers through Financial Assistance
- Provide Farmers with Resources
- Expand Composting
- Workforce Development for Farmers

**Goal 3: Achieve 50% citywide tree canopy cover by 2050, with a focus on increasing canopy cover in areas where coverage is lower than average.**

- Protect Canopy Cover on City Lands
- Tree Protections and Landscape Regulations
- Community Tree Planting
- Promote Tree Health and Resilience on Private Properties

**Goal 4: By 2030, Include all City-owned lands under a management plan that result in neutral or negative carbon emissions and maximize community co-benefits.**

- Prioritize Carbon Neutrality for Public Lands
- Reclaiming Public Space
- Community Stewardship
- Carbon Farming

# Schedule

Sep

Public Comment Period, Boards and Commissions and Revisions

Oct

Finalize and Present to Council



# Thank you!

## Contact:

Office of Sustainability

Zach Baumer

[zach.baumer@austintexas.gov](mailto:zach.baumer@austintexas.gov)

Celine Rendon

[celine.rendon@austintexas.gov](mailto:celine.rendon@austintexas.gov)



## More information:

- [austintexas.gov/ climateplan](https://austintexas.gov/ climateplan)
- [SpeakUp Austin!](#)