

**RESOLUTION NO. 20210520-028**

**WHEREAS**, the Austin-Round Rock Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), which consists of Bastrop, Caldwell, Hays, Travis, and Williamson Counties, has fine inhalable particulate matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>) concentrations high enough to place the region at risk of a nonattainment designation for tighter PM<sub>2.5</sub> National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS); and

**WHEREAS**, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) sets federal air quality standards at levels it considers necessary to protect human health and public welfare from harm, and could begin consideration of tighter annual (PM<sub>2.5</sub>) NAAQS in the future; and

**WHEREAS**, the Austin-Round Rock MSA's continued compliance with federal air quality standards is important to ensure public health, protect economic growth, and address the region's evolving needs; and

**WHEREAS**, the Austin-Round Rock MSA's air pollution regularly reaches levels that the EPA considers "moderate" or "unhealthy for sensitive groups" based on its air quality index (AQI); and

**WHEREAS**, the EPA's review of health studies have linked exposure to PM<sub>2.5</sub> to premature death, lung cancer, cardiovascular effects, nervous system effects, and respiratory effects; and

**WHEREAS**, people with heart or lung diseases, children, and older adults are the most likely to be affected by PM<sub>2.5</sub> pollution exposure and comprise at least 40% of the MSA population; and

**WHEREAS**, people of color and people with low incomes tend to have disproportionate exposure to high PM<sub>2.5</sub> levels; and

**WHEREAS**, EPA staff indicated that there is no clear threshold below which exposure to PM<sub>2.5</sub> pollution will not cause significant health problems, and actions which reduce emission of local air pollutants have other environmental and health benefits, such as reduced emissions of greenhouse gases; and

**WHEREAS**, the Central Texas Clean Air Coalition (CAC), of which the City of Austin is a member, was charged with the development and implementation of a regional clean air plan to maintain compliance with federal air quality standards and the development of policies and strategies to guide CAC members about actions that will achieve clean air in Texas; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Austin has a long history of participating in regional clean air plans in coordination with regional partners through the Capital Area Council of Governments (CAPCOG); and

**WHEREAS**, the region's current air quality plan includes strategies for public outreach and education to reduce individual exposure to dangerous PM<sub>2.5</sub> pollution, but it does not include strategies for reducing the PM<sub>2.5</sub> emissions themselves; and

**WHEREAS**, the CAC has requested that the City of Austin take action to formally participate in the PM<sub>2.5</sub> Emissions Reduction Measures revision of the regional air quality plan for 2019-2023, as part of regional participation in the EPA Advance Program; and

**WHEREAS**, the PM<sub>2.5</sub> Emissions Reduction Measures are intended to: 1) maximize the probability of compliance with federal air quality standards, and 2) minimize health and environmental impacts associated with regional air pollution; and

**WHEREAS**, controlling and reducing emissions of particulate matter and improving public awareness about air quality are critical to supporting regional air quality goals; and

**WHEREAS**, the City's Office of Sustainability has inventoried the City's existing PM<sub>2.5</sub> reduction actions and begun assessing potential new PM<sub>2.5</sub> reduction strategies and actions in communication with the following departments: Public Works, Development Services, Austin Energy, Austin Water, Watershed Protection, ABIA, Austin Fire Department, Austin Transportation, Fleet Services, and Austin Resource Recovery; and

**WHEREAS**, on April 28, 2021, the Joint Sustainability Committee unanimously recommended that the City Council take action as recommended by CAPCOG to reduce PM<sub>2.5</sub> pollution, recognizing both the public health problems caused by PM<sub>2.5</sub> pollution and also that communities of color are disproportionately impacted; **NOW, THEREFORE**,

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

The City Manager is directed to have the City of Austin formally participate in the revision of the CAPCOG 2019-2023 Austin-Round Rock-Georgetown MSA Regional Air Quality Plan by committing the City to the PM<sub>2.5</sub> emissions reduction measures proposed for the regional air quality plan as described in Appendix A and reporting to CAPCOG annually on implementation progress.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**


The City Manager is directed to implement and prioritize, to the extent possible, the following specific high-impact strategies to address the greatest sources of local PM<sub>2.5</sub> emissions and improve regional awareness of local PM<sub>2.5</sub> emissions:



- Reduce PM<sub>2.5</sub> emissions from City construction projects:
  - Develop and document dust control plans, with consideration of rescheduling activities during high PM<sub>2.5</sub> days.
  - Pursue deconstruction versus demolition where feasible.
- Reduce PM<sub>2.5</sub> emissions from private construction:
  - Provide outreach and education to private developers and construction permit applicants on best practices for reducing construction and road dust.
- Reduce PM<sub>2.5</sub> emissions from controlled and outdoor burning:
  - Ensure enforcement of the State's Outdoor Burning Rule (Title 30, Texas Administrative Code, Sections 111.201-221) and local burn bans to help reduce open burning.
  - Consider potential code amendments to allow high PM<sub>2.5</sub> days as a factor for allowing prescribed burning activities.
- Increase monitoring of PM<sub>2.5</sub> emissions:
  - Support expanded PM<sub>2.5</sub> monitoring opportunities, particularly in areas with populations with increased sensitivity to air pollution due to disproportionate rates of respiratory conditions, such as asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease.

ADOPTED: May 20, 2021

ATTEST:

  
Jannette S. Goodall  
City Clerk

Appendix A – City of Austin Commitments to PM<sub>2.5</sub> Emissions  
Reductions Measures for the Austin-Round Rock-Georgetown MSA Air  
Quality Plan, May 2021

Measure and Status (i.e., new or existing)	Implement within own organization's operations	Encourage 3 <sup>rd</sup> party organizations to implement	Educate and encourage the public at large to implement
1: Reduce PM emissions from construction and demolition activities (new)	Yes	Yes	Yes
2: Reduce PM emissions from commercial cooking/charbroiling (new)	No	No	No
3: Reduce PM emissions from road dust (new)	Yes	Yes	Yes
4: Reduce PM emissions from mining and quarrying activities (new)	N/A	No	No
5: Reducing PM emissions from open burning (new)	Yes	Yes	Yes
6: Reduce PM emissions or impact of PM emissions from prescribed burning on high PM days (new)	Yes	Yes	Yes
7: Reduce emissions from mobile sources year-round (existing)	Yes	Yes	Yes
8: Reduce emissions from stationary combustion sources year-round (existing)	Yes	Yes	Yes

<b>9: Installation additional PM<sub>2.5</sub> monitors/sensors within the region (new)</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>10: Promote awareness of health effects of PM air pollution (new)</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes