

1 **RESOLUTION NO.**

2 **WHEREAS**, the climate emergency represents an existential threat to the
3 City of Austin, the nation, and the planet; and

4 **WHEREAS**, according to the recent report of Working Group I of the
5 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, *AR6 Climate Change 2021: The*
6 *Physical Science Basis* (the “WGI Report”), climate change is already causing
7 devastating floods, droughts, heat waves, wildfires, sea level rise, thawing
8 permafrost, melting glaciers, ocean acidification, warming of the ocean, and other
9 harms around the world; and

10 **WHEREAS**, according to the WGI Report, the remaining carbon budget
11 that would give a 50/50 chance to keep global warming below 1.5 °C will be used
12 up within 12 years at current emissions levels; and

13 **WHEREAS**, in order to meet the threat level of the climate emergency and
14 its effects on the community, the City of Austin must act with urgency and
15 expediency; and

16 **WHEREAS**, Austin is a recognized national leader in sustainability and the
17 fight against climate change, and has for years taken steps to create a greener and
18 more sustainable city for its residents; and

19 **WHEREAS**, on September 30, 2021, the Austin City Council will vote to
20 approve the 2021 Climate Equity Plan, which sets new or updated goals and
21 recommendations for the city to achieve net-zero greenhouse gas emissions; and

22 **WHEREAS**, the previous goal for the City of Austin to achieve net-zero
23 emissions was 2050, and the 2021 Climate Equity Plan accelerates the timeline by
24 a decade to the year 2040, and accelerating achievement of the net-zero goal for

25 community-wide emissions sets the city up for a greener, healthier, and safer
26 community; and

27 **WHEREAS**, Austin City Council has previously directed the City Manager
28 to take specific steps to advance Austin’s climate change, sustainability, and
29 resilience goals, including Water Forward, the Austin Strategic Mobility Plan, and
30 Austin Energy Resource, Generation, and Climate Protection Plan; and

31 **WHEREAS**, in August 2019 the Austin City Council unanimously
32 approved Resolution No. 20190808-78, declaring a climate emergency in the City
33 of Austin and calling for an acceleration of the timeline for achieving the City’s
34 climate goals; and

35 **WHEREAS**, Resolution No. 20190808-78 also included direction to the
36 City Manager to provide clarity on leadership responsibilities for climate goals
37 within the organizational structure of the City Manager’s Office; and

38 **WHEREAS**, the 2021 Climate Equity Plan includes a number of
39 recommendations that may be implemented and/or launched in the short term, and
40 the imperative to act means we cannot wait for the next budget cycle to make
41 investments that further advance the strategies outlined therein; and

42 **WHEREAS**, the Joint Sustainability Committee, the Office of
43 Sustainability, and the Equity Office worked collaboratively to assemble a diverse
44 team of Austin community members and an equitable process for engaging the
45 community to develop the 2021 Climate Equity Plan; and

46 **WHEREAS**, the 2021 Climate Equity Plan was created by a collaboration
47 of 120 community members and 24 City staff, with additional community input

48 provided by over 50 interviews conducted by 24 climate ambassadors and over 250
49 attendees at five community workshops; and

50 **WHEREAS**, low-income communities and communities of color in Austin
51 and around the world are the most impacted by extreme weather and pollution
52 despite having contributed least to the drivers of climate change and pollution; and

53 **WHEREAS**, successful implementation of the 2021 Austin Climate Equity
54 Plan will depend on focused attention from the City Council and other City
55 leadership, adequate funding, guidance from community advisory bodies, and
56 continued engagement with the broader Austin community; **NOW**,

57 **THEREFORE**,

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

59 The Austin City Council affirms its commitment to the new and more
60 aggressive timeline to achieve net-zero community-wide emissions of 2040
61 outlined within the 2021 Climate Equity Plan.

62 In adopting the 2021 Climate Equity Plan, the City Council recognizes that
63 how the City of Austin achieves net zero emissions will have a direct impact on the
64 lives of its residents, and therefore directs the City Manager to use the strategies
65 and goals outlined in the 2021 Climate Plan to achieve a just transition that
66 addresses the disproportionate impacts of the climate emergency on low-income
67 communities and communities of color as we meet our emission goals.

68 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

69 The City Manager is directed to identify and clearly define leadership
70 responsibilities over the implementation of the 2021 Climate Equity Plan, and

71 more generally over the climate emergency and sustainability efforts of the City
72 government, and return to Council with this information by November 1, 2021.

73 Furthermore, the City Manager is directed to provide at least quarterly
74 updates on the implementation of the 2021 Climate Equity Plan to the City Council
75 during regular work sessions. Updates should include progress on City's own goals
76 as well as community-wide efforts, and report back on regional collaboration
77 activities.

78 The City Manager is additionally directed to return with an update to the
79 Climate Equity Plan within the next five years.

80 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

81 In the interest of acting with expediency and treating the climate emergency with
82 the urgency it requires, the City Manager is directed to:

- 83 • identify recommendations included in the 2021 Climate Equity Plan that
84 may be brought forward as a midyear budget amendment and present such
85 recommendations to Council by March 1, 2022 or sooner;
- 86 • identify recommendations and strategies that do not require a budget
87 amendment and that can be launched by departments in the near term, and
88 report to Council on the progress and timeline of implementing such
89 recommendations at the first quarterly update; and
- 90 • bring forward a list of proposed investments that would advance the city's
91 sustainability and climate goals and further the implementation of the 2021
92 Climate Equity Plan in advance of the Fiscal Year 2023 budget process.

94 Within the Fiscal Year 2023 budget process and all future budgets, the City
95 Manager is directed to identify specifically investments related to supporting the
96 city's greenhouse gas reduction efforts to achieve net-zero goals.

97 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

98 The City Manager is directed to identify and prioritize the strategies and
99 action items within the 2021 Climate Equity Plan that support multiple plan goals
100 and recommendations, have a large impact on emissions reduction, are directly
101 beneficial to the local Austin community, and take an innovative approach to one
102 or more of the plan's overarching strategies:

- 103 • Green Jobs and Entrepreneurship
- 104 • Prioritize Local Community Initiatives
- 105 • Regional Collaboration
- 106 • Local Carbon Reduction Projects, Carbon Dioxide Removal, and
107 Carbon Offsets

108 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

109 The City Manager is directed to create a public-facing, accessible dashboard,
110 webpage, or similar mechanism to provide up-to-date information on the methods
111 and metrics on the City's progress in implementing the 2021 Climate Equity Plan
112 and net-zero goals overall. The information presented should include aspects of
113 other City plans (such as the Austin Strategic Mobility Plan and the Austin Energy
114 Resource, Generation, and Climate Protection Plan) that have an impact on
115 reducing community-wide emissions.

116 The City Manager is further directed to provide regular accessible public
117 engagement opportunities regarding the implementation of the climate plan, and to

118 evaluate extending the Climate Ambassador program to incorporate the
119 implementation stage of the 2021 Climate Equity Plan.

120 The City Council additionally supports updating bylaws for the Joint
121 Sustainability Committee to add additional members to the committee from the
122 Austin community, appointed by City Council. The City Council recognizes and
123 appreciates the role of the Joint Sustainability Committee in advancing the City's
124 climate goals.

125 **ADOPTED:** _____, 2021 **ATTEST:** _____

127 Jannette S. Goodall
128 City Clerk
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