



MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor and Council

FROM: Lucia Athens, Chief Sustainability Officer
Zach Baumer, Climate Program Manager

DATE: October 4, 2017

SUBJECT: Resolution No. 20150604-048
Austin Community Climate Plan – Carbon Impact Statement Update

BACKGROUND

The Office of Sustainability, along with many partner Departments, is continuing work on multiple fronts to achieve the Council-adopted goal of net-zero community-wide greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. One recommendation from the 2015 Austin Community Climate Plan is to *“Determine the feasibility of a carbon impact statement that could be used to inform policy makers of the greenhouse gas emissions impacts of major City decisions...All future revisions to the building code and land development code should take into consideration the reduction of carbon through compact and efficient development.”*

The Office of Sustainability has been working collaboratively with staff from Planning and Zoning, Development Services, Austin Energy, Austin Transportation, Austin Resource Recovery, and Watershed Protection, to determine the scope and feasibility of a carbon impact statement for Austin. This memo provides an update on those efforts, as well as information about a Carbon Impact Statement Pilot.

CARBON IMPACT STATEMENT FEASIBILITY AND FOCUS

One type of Council decision that can have a significant impact on greenhouse gas emissions is related to Planned Unit Development (PUD) applications. PUD location, method of construction, and approach to ongoing operations influences the overall carbon emissions associated with the project. Staff have identified Planned Unit Developments as an area for focus to pilot a draft Carbon Impact Statement.

Population growth and the development that comes with it will continue to be a major topic of discussion and decisions for Austin City Council for the foreseeable future. New development

directly affects electricity usage and transportation choices, which in the aggregate contributes to 85% of greenhouse gas emissions community-wide. Austin's built environment – homes, businesses, and infrastructure – will have a lasting impact on the community and the climate. By making sound upfront decisions about a project's location, parking requirements, energy efficiency, and design materials, carbon emissions can be reduced.

DRAFT CARBON IMPACT STATEMENT AND PILOT PROJECT

It is envisioned that developers would complete a Carbon Impact Statement scorecard for their proposed PUD (a sample scorecard is provided as an attachment to this memo). The scorecard consists of 12 questions designed to make completing the Carbon Impact Statement simple and efficient. This scorecard would be validated by the Office of Sustainability and included as part of the backup in materials submitted to relevant Boards and Commissions and City Council for consideration. The Carbon Impact Statement is envisioned as advisory in nature and is not intended to trigger any formal development requirements.

The draft Carbon Impact Statement is a straightforward "yes / no" checklist concerning details for the proposed development related to: transportation connections and parking, land use, water and energy systems, food sources, and material use. Response scores are tallied to provide the relative carbon impact of the proposed development. The project can receive a low score (Business as Usual), moderate score (Some Positive Actions), or high score (Demonstrated Leadership.)

Over the next six months the Office of Sustainability will engage with willing Planned Unit Development teams to test the draft impact statement. Several stakeholders from the development community have had the opportunity to review and comment on the draft scorecard, and have agreed to assist with the initial pilot. After that time, we will evaluate the pilot period and consider options for next steps. At the conclusion of these efforts, we will provide an update on the results and propose a way forward with the Carbon Impact Statement.

CC: Elaine Hart, Interim City Manager
Ray Baray, Chief of Staff
Assistant City Managers



Carbon Impact Statement

Project:

Scoring Guide:

1-4: Business as usual

5-8: Some positive actions

9-12: Demonstrated leadership



	Response: Y=1, N=0	Documentation: Y/N
<u>Transportation</u>		
T1: Public Transit Connectivity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T2: Bicycle Infrastructure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T3: Walkability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T4: Utilize TDM Strategies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T5: Electric Vehicle Charging	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T6: Maximize Parking Reductions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Water + Energy</u>		
WE1: Onsite Renewable Energy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
WE2: Reclaimed Water	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Land Use</u>		
LU1: Imagine Austin Activity Center or Corridor	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
LU2: Floor-to-Area Ratio	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Food</u>		
F1: Access to Food	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Materials</u>		
M1: Adaptive Reuse	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Total Score:</u>		

The Carbon Impact Statement calculation is a good indicator of how your individual buildings will perform in the Site Category of your Austin Energy Green Building rating.

Notes: Brief description of project, further explanation of score and what it means

T1. Is any functional entry of the project within 1/4 mile walking distance of existing or planned bus stop(s) serving at least two bus routes, or within 1/2 mile walking distance of existing or planned bus rapid transit stop(s), or rail station(s)?

T2. Is there safe connectivity from the project site to an “all ages and abilities bicycle facility” as listed in the Austin Bicycle Master Plan?

T3. Is the property location “very walkable” with a minimum Walk Score of 70 (found at walkscore.com), or will the project include at least five new distinct basic services (such as a bank, restaurant, fitness center, retail store, daycare, or supermarket)?

T4. Does the project utilize two or more of the following Transportation Demand Management strategies: unbundling parking costs from cost of housing/office space, providing shower facilities, providing secured and covered bicycle storage, and/or providing 2+ car sharing parking spaces for City-approved car share programs?

T5. Will the project include at least one DC Fast Charging electric vehicle charging station?

T6. Does the project utilize existing parking reductions in code to provide 20% less than the minimum number of parking spaces required under the current land development code (or 60% less than the code's base ratios if there is no minimum parking capacity requirement)?

WE1. Will the project include on-site renewable energy generation to offset at least 1% of building electricity consumption?

WE2. Will the project include one or more of the following reclaimed water systems: large scale cisterns, onsite grey or blackwater treatment, and reuse or utilization of Austin Water Utility's auxiliary water system to eliminate the use of potable water on landscape/irrigation?

LU1. Is the proposed project site located within one of the centers or corridors as defined in the Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan Growth Concept Map?

LU2. If located in an Imagine Austin activity center or corridor, will the proposed project use at least 90% of its entitled amount of floor-to-area ratio?

F1. Will the project include a full service grocery store onsite, or is one located within 1 mile of the project, or will the project integrate opportunities for agriculture to the scale as defined by Austin Energy Green Building?

M1. Will the project reuse or deconstruct existing buildings on the project site?