



# Austin Energy Resource Plan Update Getting Austin to Quit Fossil Fuels

# Current Austin Energy Resource, Generation and Climate Protection Plan

- ▶ Plan for how Austin Energy will meet the community's energy needs in the future
- ▶ Carbon-free by 2035
  - 86% carbon-free by year-end 2025
  - 93% carbon-free by year-end 2030
- ▶ **Commitment to no new carbon generating assets**
- ▶ **Retire AE's portion of the Fayette coal plant by the end of 2022 (before that, reduce usage of the plant)**
- ▶ Retire Decker gas plant units in 2020 and 2021
- ▶ Local solar goals
- ▶ Energy efficiency goals
- ▶ Energy storage goals



# What's Happening Now

- ▶ In a departure from the Climate Equity Plan, AE is proposing a new carbon-emitting gas plant.
- ▶ A greenwashed gas plant
  - ▶ AE says this gas plant is 'green' because it will eventually run green hydrogen (by 2035).
- ▶ This plant would increase carbon emissions in our city and specifically NO<sub>x</sub> and local emissions in East Austin.
  - ▶ This will increase smog, local ozone, and likely make Austin a nonattainment area.
- ▶ AE is likely underestimating the cost of the hydrogen-capable gas plant and the cost of green hydrogen
- ▶ AE has not yet shut down the Fayette Coal Plant



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An aerial photograph of Austin, Texas, showing a multi-lane highway with traffic, a river with a small boat, and a dense urban skyline with various high-rise buildings under a clear sky.

# A Greener Solution

- ▶ The Electric Utility Commission Working Group is working to finalize recommendations that include a suite of clean energy solutions to meet the needs of Austin Energy and its customers:
  - ▶ Increased Local Solar (including option to deploy rooftop solar without customer investment)
  - ▶ Build Local Short and Long-Duration Storage
  - ▶ Increased Energy Efficiency
  - ▶ Increased Demand Response
  - ▶ Shutting down Fayette
  - ▶ Phased closure of the natural gas plants
  - ▶ No new gas plants
- ▶ More information can be found on the Austin EUC Working Group website:
  - ▶ <https://austineucresourceplanningwg.org/>



# How You Can Help

- ▶ Have your neighborhood sign onto our sign-on letter
  - ▶ [Community Letter in Support of a Clean Energy Plan for Austin Energy - Public Citizen](#)
- ▶ Attend public meetings and speak about why building new carbon emitting infrastructure is bad
  - EUC Resource Planning Working Group Meetings
  - Austin City Council meetings (General Communication)
  - Austin City Council Austin Energy Electric Utility Oversight Committee meetings
- ▶ Email the Austin City Council
- ▶ Share information with your neighborhood
- ▶ Show up at events



# Questions?

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(the following slides have  
a bit more information)



# Local Solar

- ▶ AE goals: 375 MW of local solar by 2030, with 200MW being customer-sited
  - AE currently has 298MW of local solar with 120 MW customer-sited
  - Community Solar program is fully subscribed
  - Shared solar allows for multifamily solar installations
  - Incentives for single family, multifamily, nonprofit, commercial customers
  - Value of Solar tariffs in place for all customers with solar
- ▶ New Standard Offer for Distributed Solar underdevelopment
  - Property owners can host solar installations with no cost. Property owner will receive payment from solar company for use of rooftop space.
  - Goals: increase rooftop solar, expand access for lower-income customers and others without capital to purchase solar, expand community solar
  - AE running a survey until October 6<sup>th</sup> about program development
- ▶ Austin Energy applying for Solar for All grant: 35 MW solar and storage at low-income homes, low-income multifamily housing, and nonprofits
- ▶ New federal incentives for solar (30% baseline, 10% for domestic materials, 10% for siting at low-income property, 20% for benefiting low-income customers) create opportunity to expand goals



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# Energy Efficiency

- ▶ Goals under the AE Resource Plan:
  - Achieve energy efficiency savings equal to 1% retail sales per annum, targeting at least 1,200 MW of demand side management by 2030, with 225 MW for peak demand response
  - Target 25,000 residential and business customers a year for EE improvements, with 25% being low-income
- ▶ AE has good suite of EE programs, such as heat pump rebates, smart thermostats, and weatherization assistance programs.
- ▶ New incentives from the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) can make EE upgrades even cheaper (or free), so goals can be increased. (i.e. high efficiency electric home rebate, heat pump rebate, induction stove rebate)
- ▶ Lots of money is on the table, and with new federal money, Austin Energy's EE goals and outreach should be improved.



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# Fayette Coal Plant

- ▶ Fayette is Austin's biggest source of greenhouse gas emissions (29%) and other air pollution
- ▶ Fayette also ranks among the biggest sources of pollution statewide

Pollutant	Tons in 2021	Rank in TX
CO	6,970	4 <sup>th</sup>
NOx	6,490	2 <sup>nd</sup>
PM10	912	4 <sup>th</sup>
PM2.5	889	4 <sup>th</sup>
SO2	1,117	25 <sup>th</sup>

- ▶ Buried coal ash from Fayette is leaking into groundwater at the site



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## Fayette, cont.

- ▶ Two of the three units at Fayette are co-owned by Austin Energy and the Lower Colorado River Authority (LCRA), which is controlled by a board appointed by Gov. Abbott
- ▶ No exit clause in the ownership agreement between Austin Energy and the LCRA, and negotiations to shut down Austin Energy's portion of the plant failed.
  - Austin Energy cites affordability as the barrier but hasn't defined "affordability".
- ▶ Austin City Council does not review expenditures on the plant, unlike for most city expenses over \$65,000.
- ▶ Austin Energy and the LCRA both serve and have equal voting authority on the Fayette Management Committee, which votes on annual budgets and capital expenses for the co-owned units.



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