

Austin Energy Resource Plan Talking Points

When speaking, it's important to speak from your own experience and relate it to the item you're speaking on. It helps to share something about yourself. Don't worry about being a technical expert—just get the basic facts right and then talk about why it's important to you.

The following guide can help you craft your statement.

Good afternoon, Chair Pool, Vice Chair Vela, Mayor Watson and Council members. My name is _____ and I live in council district _____.

[Put this in your own words and include information from the other side of this paper:] I'm here today because I am concerned about the future of energy issues in our city. Energy choices made in the Austin Energy Resource Plan will determine whether the Austin community can meet our climate goals and reduce pollution. I'm asking each of you to support a fully carbon-free and clean energy plan for our utility. In light of recent election results, we can't rely on federal regulations to make the changes we need to retire the Fayette coal and our other fossil fuel power plants -- local action is more needed than ever

Talk about why phasing out fossil fuels and addressing the climate crisis and air pollution is personally important to you. This should make up the majority of your comments. Here are some ideas of things to mention [put in your own words]:

- Climate change is causing more extreme weather like wildfires, flooding and heat waves
 - preventing me from doing activities I used to enjoy doing or from doing my work
- High numbers of ozone and bad air quality days are negatively affecting my health or the health of a loved one – we should not add another polluting power plant in East Austin
- My electricity bills are rising every summer due to hotter weather from climate change
- I care about the environment and stopping pollution
- I care about my children's future and their future health

Concluding statement [put in your own words]: I'm asking each of you to support a full transition to clean, renewable energy in the updated Austin Energy Resource Plan. Committing to renewable energy will ensure that we have cleaner air, a more livable Austin, and a better future. Thank you for the opportunity to speak.

To help make it go smoothly, practice your statement before the council meeting.

There will be future opportunities to speak at the Electric Utility Commission on December 2nd, Austin City Council Work Session on December 10th and the final vote at the Austin City Council Meeting on December 12th.

Austin Energy Resource, Generation and Climate Protection Plan Update

What is the Austin Energy Resource, Generation, and Climate Protection Plan?

- The AE Resource Plan details how our city-owned utility will meet the Austin community's electricity needs and our climate goals. The current plan goes through 2030 and was created in 2020 with community input. Current goals are to be carbon-free by 2035, add no new fossil fuel generating assets, retire the Fayette coal plant, and increase energy efficiency, affordability, energy storage, and local solar.

What is the update?

- City Council directed AE to update the Resource Plan with the help of the city's oversight body of AE, the Electric Utility Commission (EUC).
- The update was initiated because the energy world is changing rapidly, and because AE had failed to close its portion of the Fayette coal plant by the end of 2022.
- The EUC convened a Resource Planning working group that included members of the EUC and the Resource Management Commission and other energy experts and representatives from the Austin Community. The Resource Planning Working Group crafted a recommendation for a [fully clean energy Resource Plan](#).

Why is this important?

- This update will affect greenhouse gas and other polluting emissions from Austin Energy for the coming decades. AE's portion of the Fayette coal plant accounts for over 25% of the entire Austin community's greenhouse gas emissions. We can't meet our climate goals if AE builds more fossil fuel power plants. And Austin's air is already polluted.
- Adding fossil fuel generation would be contrary to the commitments in the current Resource Plan and Austin Climate Equity Plan. The Fayette coal plant and existing gas plants must be retired to meet climate goals.
- Federal environmental regulations are likely to be gutted under the Trump administration, making local climate action paramount.

What you should tell your Council Member:

- Council should adopt a plan that sets AE on a path to serve its customers clean, carbon-free energy, in alignment with the City's climate and clean energy goals.
- Austin Energy's existing gas-burning generation is available, so there's no need to commit to building a new gas plant right now—we can start with local batteries, solar, and energy conservation and can reassess gas in a few years.
- Existing gas units should be run only when they are most needed to reduce pollution.
- Batteries are being widely deployed in Texas and should be a key part of AE's strategy.
- Local rooftop solar is a plentiful resource that can be scaled up to meet local energy needs and create good-paying green jobs.
- Any power generation that burns a fuel creates local air pollution. Austin's air is already polluted and our community - especially children - deserve a healthy environment.
- In this moment of crisis your leadership is more important than ever.

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The purpose of this one-pager is to provide a few key facts. This should be used in addition to personal stories about climate change, local air quality, energy resilience, etc.