

**RESOLUTION NO. 20220609-059**

**WHEREAS**, Austin must take action to fight the global climate crisis; and

**WHEREAS**, Austin must take action to address the local affordability crisis; and

**WHEREAS**, the City has approved and embraced the Austin Strategic Mobility Plan's goal of a 50/50 sustainable mode share by 2039; and

**WHEREAS**, the voters of Austin have demonstrated their support for accelerating mode shift to sustainable, active transportation by approving the 2016 mobility bonds, which included \$137 million for local mobility, and the 2020 safe and active mobility bonds (\$460 million); and

**WHEREAS**, the Austin Transportation Department, Public Works Department, and other partners have completed over 50% of the All Ages and Abilities bike network, a citywide, interconnected network of protected bicycle lanes, neighborhood bikeways, street crossings, and urban trails, and is on-track to add another 200 miles by 2025; and

**WHEREAS**, People for Bikes, a national cycling advocacy organization, declared in 2021 that Austin will be America's next great biking city; and

**WHEREAS**, in May of 2019 Resolution No. 20190509-020 directed the City Manager to include transportation electrification and action planning within Austin's climate plan update; and

**WHEREAS**, in September of 2021, City Council adopted the Austin Climate Equity Plan, which establishes an overarching goal of net-zero community-wide greenhouse gas emissions by 2040 and establishes specific goals related to transportation mode shift and transportation electrification; and

**WHEREAS**, the electric bicycle is a game-changing mode of transportation that allows an individual to easily ride much further than on a non-electric bike, offering a viable alternative to driving a car while not producing greenhouse gases; and

**WHEREAS**, electric cargo bikes can carry not only the rider but also additional passengers and/or cargo, making them a family-friendly vehicle alternative; and

**WHEREAS**, the City faces a geometric challenge in efficiently moving our rapidly growing population around town, and many more people can move through a given space on bikes than in individual cars due to bikes' compactness; and

**WHEREAS**, that geometric challenge will soon become substantially more difficult as IH-35, the Project Connect corridors, and other major highways and corridors undergo construction that will last for years; and

**WHEREAS**, Austin voters approved a transformational investment in high-capacity transit with Project Connect, and bicycles not only greatly extend the distance from which an individual can access transit without a car, but also can be carried onto transit to solve the first mile/last mile problem; and

**WHEREAS**, bikes do less damage to our public streets than heavier vehicles and therefore incur less street maintenance costs for the City; and

**WHEREAS**, the price of an electric bike is less than that of a car but still poses a financial barrier to many Austinites; and

**WHEREAS**, low-interest loan financing is not widely available for the purchase of a bike, which can pose an obstacle to families and individuals with

insufficient wealth to buy a vehicle outright and/or lead to the use of high-interest rate credit card debt to finance an electric bike purchase; and

**WHEREAS**, Austin Energy offers an electric bike rebate program that has benefited over 2,600 participants over the years; and

**WHEREAS**, actions to strengthen existing City incentives and to improve access to low-interest financing tools could reduce the financial barriers to electric bike ownership; **NOW, THEREFORE**,

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

Council directs the City Manager to take action to accelerate adoption of electric bicycle (e-bike) ownership, access, and usage by Austin residents. The Manager shall consider, but not be limited to, the following actions:

1. Strengthen the City incentives for e-bike purchases, potentially including:
  - a. Increasing the rebate amount and percentage for an e-bike purchase generally;
  - b. Creating an income-based sliding scale for the rebate amount;
  - c. Providing a stronger incentive for the purchase of an electric cargo bike than for a standard e-bike with less cargo- or people-carrying capacity;
  - d. Allowing, with proof of address, any member of a household that receives electricity from Austin Energy to be eligible to apply for and receive the rebate, regardless of whether that member is the named Austin Energy account holder for the household; and/or
  - e. Allowing an online e-bike manufacturer that sells directly to consumers to become an Austin Energy Participating Dealer, and thereby allowing an online e-bike purchase to be eligible for a

rebate, potentially at a lower incentive level than an e-bike purchase from a local bike retailer.

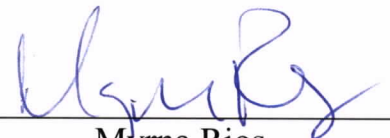
2. Collaborate with local credit unions or other financial institutions with the goal of encouraging their creation of low-interest loan programs for e-bike purchases, and/or identify existing, low-interest financing tools for e-bike purchases that are available to Austinites.
3. Collaborate with non-Austin Energy electricity providers that serve Austin residents with the goal of encouraging their creation of e-bike incentive programs.
4. Incentivize the installation of e-bike charging infrastructure, with greater emphasis and displacement mitigation in areas that have historically under-developed transportation infrastructures, such as low-income communities and communities of color.
5. Expand community outreach citywide, including in the Eastern Crescent, to increase opportunities to test-ride e-bikes, improve awareness of financial resources for e-bike purchases, and share information on the MetroBike system and its e-bikes available for rent and on the City's bike infrastructure network.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

The City Manager is directed to provide the City Council with an update on this Resolution by November 15, 2022.

**ADOPTED:** June 9, 2022

**ATTEST:**



Myrna Rios  
City Clerk