

## ..Title

### Resolution in Support of Ann Arbor's A<sup>2</sup>ZERO Energy Principles

## ..Memorandum

With the June 2020 adoption of A<sup>2</sup>ZERO, the City is now actively pursuing solutions to achieve a just transition to community-wide carbon neutrality by the year 2030. Within the A<sup>2</sup>ZERO Plan are seven overarching strategies, which are supported by 44 actions. Given the importance of energy-related emissions within the community, many of the actions focus on reducing energy usage, electrification, and investing in renewable energy.

As the City looks to operationalize A<sup>2</sup>ZERO, especially actions related to generating purchasing or generating and purchasing renewable-based electricity, a series of principles are being proposed to guide this work. These principles are rooted in the A<sup>2</sup>ZERO plan and stem from the overall ethos of the Office of Sustainability and Innovations. These principles include finding solutions that:

1. Reduce greenhouse gas emissions
2. Enhance the resilience of our people, our community, and our natural systems
3. Are grounded in equity and, to the fullest extent possible, avoid placing additional burdens on low-income and minority populations
4. Are new and displacing fossil fuel-based fuels
5. Are local. When not possible, are regional. If not possible, to the fullest extent feasible, projects should be located in environmental justice communities who have been (and still are) disproportionately burdened by our extractive fossil fuel-based economy
6. Are scalable and transferable to other locations – not just solutions that work only for the City of Ann Arbor

**Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions:** To this point, we seek solutions that could power Ann Arbor's electricity needs with renewable energy that is as close to carbon neutral as possible. This includes technologies such as solar photovoltaic, hydroelectric turbines, geothermal energy, and wind. This does not include certain forms of generation that have been labeled "renewable" such as solid waste incineration and wood-burning since these fuel sources are associated with operations that continue to release large quantities of greenhouse gas emissions and other harmful byproducts.

**Enhance Resilience:** Through the eyes of our energy work, this principle focuses on ensuring that individuals, especially at-risk individuals and emergency service personnel, have power during a disaster. This means exploring microgrids and battery storage, creating a more reliable and resilient physical grid infrastructure, investing in deep energy efficiency improvements, working on load distribution and capacity balancing, and other related solutions. This principle is about ensuring that during a disaster, electricity is not lost and if it is, that this loss does not compound an existing crisis.

**Grounded in Equity.** This principle means that we seek solutions to powering our grid with renewable energy solutions that prioritize the needs of low-income and minority populations. To do this we must engage frontline populations in identifying and implementing solutions, so we ensure their ideas and concerns are prioritized in decision making. This also means challenging regulatory and policy frameworks that place undue burden on vulnerable and frontline populations as well as working to ensure programs developed within the City use targeted solutions to address the needs of vulnerable residents.

**Additionality.** The fourth principle is about ensuring that renewable energy projects are new and displacing fossil-fuel-based fuels. We want to ensure that our investments are leading to additional renewable energies being developed and avoid having our projects fulfill state mandates (i.e., RPS) or

avoid consuming renewable energy credits for projects that are already built. This is true both for new builds as well as carbon offsets.

**Maximize Local.** There is a desire to generate as much new local renewable energy as possible, within reasonable economic bounds. When not possible, stakeholders have emphasized a desire for regional (i.e., County, S.E. Michigan), followed by within Michigan generation. When renewable energy solutions are not viable in Michigan, we will prioritize projects that are developed in partnership with environmental justice communities that have been disproportionately burdened by the extractive nature of the fossil fuel-based economy. Only if or when communities such as these are not interested in partnering will we actively seek other locations for new renewable energy developments.

**Scalable and Transferable.** the core of this principle is ensuring that we find solutions to achieving carbon neutrality in Ann Arbor that other Michigan municipalities (and, potentially, municipalities in other states) could replicate. The idea is to create pathways that others can follow so that the work we do scales to even greater greenhouse gas reductions throughout the region.

This resolution supports the use of these principles and asks Ann Arbor City Council to formally adopt them as guidance to the City as it moves forward with implementing energy-related actions in A<sup>2</sup>ZERO.

#### **..Staff**

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#### **..Body**

Whereas, The City of Ann Arbor has committed to reaching carbon-neutrality by the year 2030 through the unanimous adoption of the A<sup>2</sup>ZERO Carbon Neutrality Plan;

Whereas, A<sup>2</sup>ZERO Strategy 1 calls for Powering the Electrical Grid with 100% Renewable Energy;

Whereas, There are multiple pathways by which the City could achieve this goal, with some pathways being in closer alignment with other City priorities than others;

Whereas, The Office of Sustainability and Innovations has identified six principles to help guide the implementation of energy-related actions in A<sup>2</sup>ZERO;

Whereas, These principles include: reducing greenhouse gas emissions; enhancing resilience; grounding actions in equity; ensuring projects are additional; maximizing local generation; and finding solutions that are scalable and transferable;

RESOLVED, The Ann Arbor Environmental Commission supports the City using the following six principles to guide energy-related decisions: reducing greenhouse gas emissions; enhancing resilience; grounding actions in equity; ensuring projects are additional; maximizing local generation; and finding solutions that are scalable and transferable;

RESOLVED, The Ann Arbor Environmental Commissions advises Ann Arbor City Council to formally adopt these principles and support the Office of Sustainability and Innovations in finding energy-related solutions that align, to the fullest extent possible, with these principles.