



**POSITIVE IMPACT ON
CLIMATE & COMMUNITY**

FACT SHEET

Background:

The City of Austin's Climate Protection Resolution No. 20070215-023 calls for City Staff to develop and implement programs to assist citizens, businesses, organizations and visitors in achieving carbon neutrality. These programs should include local greenhouse gas reduction strategies through the purchase of "carbon offsets," as well as mechanisms and incentives for carbon neutrality through the purchase of offsets by travelers, conventions, tradeshow and festivals.

PICC Program Summary:

Large events and festivals in Austin involve over a million attendees annually and have a large environmental impact involving air and ground transportation, energy and water usage, food service, and material waste. The City of Austin's Office of Sustainability has partnered with local event organizers to create the Positive Impact on Climate and Community (PICC) program. The program will raise funds through ticket purchases or other funding mechanisms; funds collected will be split between third-party-verified greenhouse gas emission reduction projects in Texas and local projects in Austin that create tangible sustainability and community benefits.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

Which event organizers are participating in this effort?

The following organizations are working together with the City's Office of Sustainability to implement the pilot phase of the PICC program:

- ACL Live at the Moody Theater
- Austin City Limits Music Festival
- Circuit of The Americas LLC

Environmental Defense Fund will provide additional oversight of the PICC program, helping to establish sustainability criteria for local projects and carbon offset projects. After the initial pilot phase, additional organizations may be asked to participate in the PICC program.

What are Third-Party-Verified greenhouse gas reduction projects and how will they be selected?

These are projects that follow defined protocols, meet specified standards, and result in a measurable reduction in carbon emissions (such as 1 metric ton) that is third-party-verified. Examples of projects in Texas that create verified emission reductions are landfill methane gas destruction, organic waste composting or digestion, and renewable energy projects.

Projects that create large volumes of verified emission reductions do not currently exist within Austin's city limits, so PICC program partners will be exploring projects that meet those criteria within the state of Texas. In addition to meeting verification criteria, projects will be evaluated on price, the amount of emission reductions achieved, and additional benefits beyond emissions reduction that the projects provide.

While Third-Party-Verified projects are best in advancing cost effective carbon neutrality, there is an equally high priority placed on projects that will benefit the Austin community. For that reason, approximately half of PICC funds will support Third-Party-Verified Projects, while the remaining half will be dedicated to Local Sustainability Projects.

What kinds of projects will qualify as Local Sustainability Projects?

Qualified Local Sustainability Projects involve activities located in Travis, Williamson, Hays, Bastrop, or Caldwell counties, create measurable social and / or environmental benefits, are highly visible to the general public, and can be completed in an identified time period. Local projects will not be required to demonstrate third-party-verified greenhouse gas emission reductions, although their greenhouse gas, energy, water, and other quantifiable benefits will be documented. Examples may include projects such as urban forestry, distributed solar photovoltaic or water heating, home weatherization, composting, bike-sharing, rain gardens, public art installations, education programs, health and wellness programs, wildlife habitat restoration, or community gardens.

NEXT STEPS:

Two Requests for Application (RFA) have been released by the Office of Sustainability to identify carbon offset and sustainability projects eligible for PICC funding. Copies of the RFAs can be downloaded at www.austintexas.gov/department/positive-impact-climate-community. An information meeting is scheduled for Monday, June 3, 2013 and questions about the RFA can be submitted to sustainability@austintexas.gov. Submittals are due no later than 5:00 p.m. on Monday, July 1, 2013.

