

**Let the Sunshine In:
Cleaning Up After the El Paso Chamber's Misinformation Campaign**

El Paso Climate Charter
Prop K

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

“Everything is bigger in Texas” especially the stranglehold that the fossil fuel industry has over the people, economy, and the ecosystem. The efforts to free communities from the control of an industry that adds to the climate crisis, ecological degradation and health challenges is also “big.” We can show you how many cities in Texas and nationally are thriving with economic development and job growth due to their climate action plans and support of the clean energy industry. The El Paso Chamber of Commerce has made it clear that they would rather continue to pollute and conduct business as usual with the fossil fuel industry. Our people and the environment are suffering so we must vote YES to Prop K and the El Paso Climate Charter!

The purpose of this paper is to articulate a response to the Chamber of Commerce’s misinformation and to strengthen the support of taking the first step toward El Paso’s Climate goals. I’m writing as the President of Eco El Paso, a 501(c)3 non-profit dedicated to sustainability in a hot-desert climate. We want the quantity and quality of sustainability jobs to increase in El Paso, to keep our best talent in El Paso, to help us grow the economy, and to sustain a strong community. I’m also an entrepreneur who has helped develop the clean energy industry in Texas. I’ve created dozens of solar energy jobs in Texas and currently profit from my own solar rooftop. I have seen how solar panels provide a profit every day and will continue to do so for decades to come. The City of El Paso can do the same thing.

The Climate Charter outlines policies for the City Government of El Paso. It is NOT a Climate Mandate on residents or businesses. There are no strict guidelines for our own personal lives in this Charter, but guidelines for how the city operates, how it spends its money, how we can improve our operations, save money, create new jobs, and clean up the environment. It is a direction with clear goals and flexibility in achieving them.

El Paso is not going to use 100% renewable energy overnight, the Utility won’t stop using its fossil fuel power plants overnight, and no one is going to force you to replace your natural gas appliances in your home or require you to drive an Electric Vehicle. You probably should stop using natural gas appliances to protect your health, but that is your choice, just like it was my choice to install solar panels. The Chamber’s study makes numerous incorrect assumptions that we want to dispel using facts so the public can see the enormous opportunity in front of us to clean up our city and dramatically grow the clean energy economy in our region. Even the study produced by the Chamber states that we have a massive opportunity over the next 20+ years to install solar energy across the city, which will create numerous private and public jobs for our region. This is an opportunity to grow our clean energy economy while cleaning our ecosystem, not a death sentence for jobs as they want you to believe. We intend to educate you with facts and not fictional scenarios using hyperbole or fear mongering.

Now, let’s get into the facts about the Climate Charter, sustainability, renewable energy, the current state of the clean energy economy in Texas and the United States today. Let’s join the rest of Texas in building an economy that will sustain itself for generations to come!

CLIMATE CHANGE:

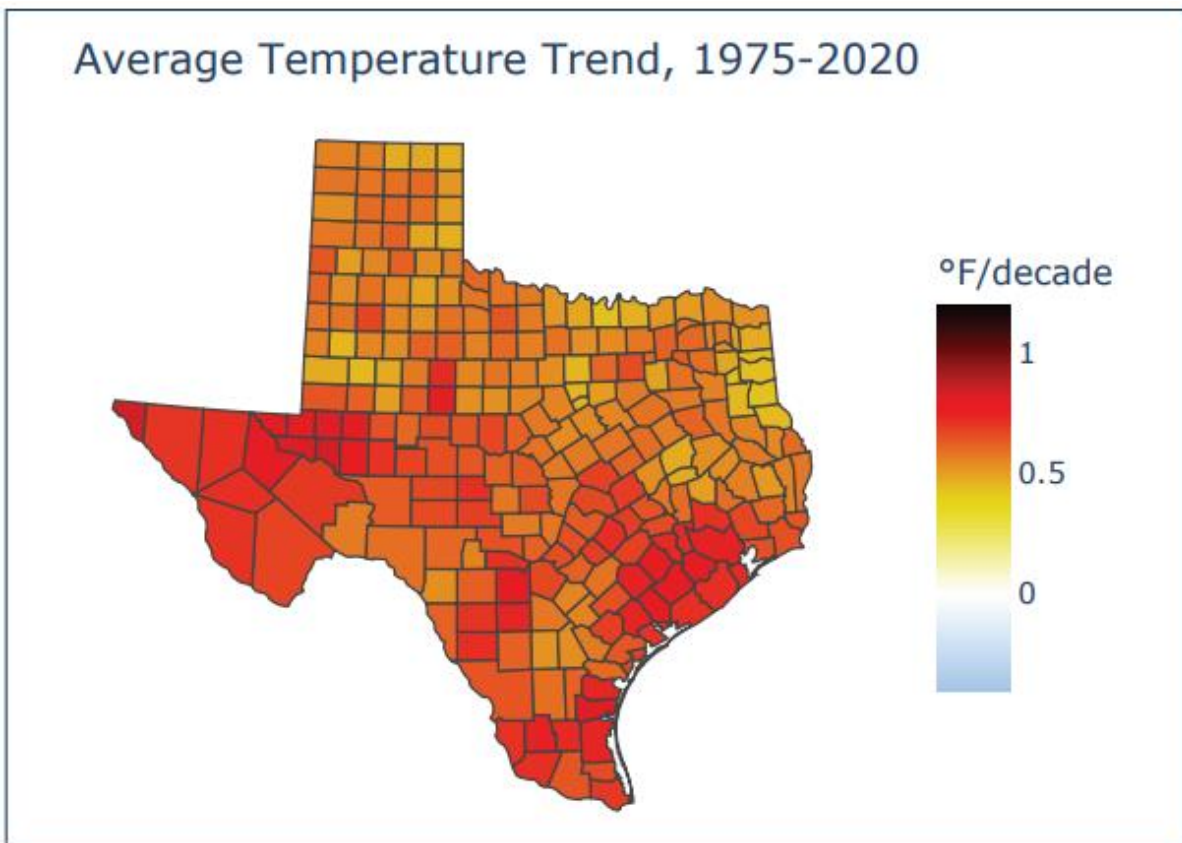
Before we jump into the details of the El Paso Climate Charter, what it is, and what it isn't, we must look at what is happening with our environment and the changes that are taking lives, displacing populations, making parts of the earth unlivable, and ruining economies.

How many people have experienced negative health effects in El Paso by living close to Asarco, the oil refinery, natural gas power plants, recycling plants that continue to catch on fire, or the diesel school bus depot? Many thousands of our fellow citizens have experienced needless suffering. Among many reasons, we need a Climate Plan to ensure the health of everyone in Sun City. There is not clear data on how many people have respiratory, neurological and circulation problems because of the fossil fuel industry. Collecting real data to improve the health of children, adults and elders is one of the goals of the Climate Charter.

[What does climate change mean for Texas?](#)

- “The average daily minimum and maximum temperatures in the state both rose by 2.2 degrees Fahrenheit from 1895 to 2020, according to the report.
- The biggest changes in average temperatures were reported in urban areas, where buildings and roads absorb more of the sun's heat, but every Texas county saw an increase. Even minor shifts in average temperatures require more electricity from the power grid, endanger the health of people who work outdoors, and can alter climate patterns and ecosystems.
- Heat also increases the prevalence of ground-level ozone pollution, or smog, making it harder for people with asthma and other health concerns to breathe outdoors in major Texas cities.” [Article Link](#)
- [Texas Climatology Report](#)
 - “The average annual Texas surface temperature in 2036 is expected to be 3.0 °F warmer than the 1950-1999 average and 1.8 °F warmer than the 1991-2020 average.
 - The number of 100-degree days at typical stations is expected to nearly double by 2036 compared to 2001-2020, with higher frequency of 100-degree days in urban areas.”
- “In West Texas' Big Bend National Park, the Rio Grande has stopped flowing in recent months, and experts there worry the river could dry up more frequently, [Marfa Public Radio reported.](#)”
- In the eastern two-thirds of the state, average annual rainfall is increasing, yet the soil is becoming drier.
- “In the second half of this century, Texas could see “megadroughts” worse than any previously recorded, [according to a 2020 report from Texas A&M and University of Texas at Austin scientists.](#)”

- Texas was ranked first in the United States in terms of total carbon dioxide emissions in 2017 and total energy production in 2018. Texas was ranked first again in 2019. [Data Link](#)
- In August 2017, Hurricane Harvey destroyed Houston ranking it right after Hurricane Katrina as the second most destructive storm in the U.S. history. Over 60 inches of rain fell on the Houston area, over 100 people died, and it caused over \$125 billion in damage devastating the region. [Data Link](#)
- Along most of the Texas Coast, the sea is rising almost two inches per decade.
- “Severe droughts could limit forage growth needed to raise cattle for beef, for example. Droughts, along with disruptions from natural disasters, could strain the state’s food supply chains and drive prices up.”
- 14 tornadoes hit North Texas in one day in 2022. ONE DAY! [Article Link](#)
- “Texas’ warming temperatures are also more inviting to insects that carry and transmit diseases historically seen in the tropics. That’s what experts say happened in 2012, when hundreds of Texans in the Dallas area were diagnosed with the mosquito-transmitted West Nile virus after a warm winter.”
- “Last year, Politico documented how states along the U.S.-Mexico border have become destinations for thousands of people fleeing Central America because of climate change, food insecurity and poverty.” [It’s Not a Border Crisis. It’s a Climate Crisis.](#)



Temperature trends since 1975 according to NCEI nClimDiv data.

PURPOSE OF THE CLIMATE CHARTER – PROP K:

The purpose of the Climate Charter / Prop K is to accomplish three goals of paramount importance:

1. First, reduce the City's contribution to climate change.
2. Second, invest in an environmentally sustainable future.
3. Third, advance the cause of climate justice.

Based on the great success of these plans across existing major cities in Texas and most big cities across the country, Prop K aims to improve the quality of life for everyone in El Paso.

Prop K will:

- Create sustainable high paying public and private jobs.
- Bring new businesses and industries to our city, while growing those that exist today.
- Reduce the city's operating costs by using clean energy.
- Save taxpayers money.
- Reduce global climate change.
- Create climate mitigation plans.
- Protect our environment and sustain our ecosystem.
- Allow farmers to thrive in a drought-stricken geography.
- Reduce the billions of gallons of water misused by the fossil fuel industry.
- Create educational opportunities that don't exist today.
- It will help reduce the brain drain of talent from leaving our city for these jobs in other markets who have made this investment and created 100% decarbonization goals like in Austin, San Antonio, Houston, and Dallas.
- Create a more resilient city that is a tourist destination for the world.

El Paso must shift to focus on the 3P's: People, Profit, and Planet, otherwise known as the triple bottom line. This will be a Win, Win, Win, for our community just like other cities across America with proven results. We can catch up with swift changes. Otherwise, our population will continue to leave El Paso to chase these jobs across other Texas cities. "[El Paso County's population grew by fewer than 700 people between 2021 and 2022](#), continuing a flattening trend that has extended for more than a decade."

THE SIMPLE SOLAR EXAMPLE:

One example of how our city government can save money is solar power. You put solar panels up on the roof, they pay themselves back over 5-8 years depending on the size of the system, then they offset your bills for 25+ years, thus creating massive energy savings and profits every day by using the free resource in the sky. The city government must pay for electricity every month no matter what and we currently pay around \$11 Million per year, which will only

increase over the years due to the volatile cost of fossil fuels rising over time. You can't break even on your energy investments by paying your electric bill every month to the Utility and making zero changes in how we operate, but you can if you add solar and wind energy. The \$11+ million saved in our utility bills as a city government can then be put to better use improving the quality of life in El Paso and other critical projects that are underfunded today.

[A few solar facts in the United States:](#)

- The U.S. installed 20.2 gigawatts (GWdc) of solar PV capacity in 2022 to reach 142.3 GWdc of total installed capacity, enough to power 25 million American homes.
- Solar accounted for 50% of all new electricity-generating capacity added in the U.S. in 2022, the largest annual share in the industry's history and the fourth consecutive year that solar was the top technology with new electric capacity installations.
- Residential solar had a record year with nearly 6 GWdc of installations, representing 40% growth over 2021.
- A record 700,000 homeowners installed solar in 2022. [Data Link](#)
- Over the next 10 years, the industry will grow five times larger than it is today, to a total solar fleet of more than 700 GWdc by 2033.

The assessment by the Chamber ignores the fact that solar, battery storage, net zero buildings, Electric Vehicles, improved green building standards, and energy efficiency retrofits will save millions of dollars for our city every year, which frees up those funds to put toward other budget line items like the Climate Charter, city services, jobs, etc. These changes are very profitable versus operating inefficient buildings, buying power from the utility into perpetuity at growing rates, destroying our ecosystem, and making extremely slow progress compared to other big cities in Texas. First, we need to have clean air, water, food, and land, then we can worry about our jobs and economy, not the other way around. **Prop K does all the above!**

YEAROUT ENERGY – INACCURATE FINANCIAL ANALYSIS OF SOLAR COSTS & BENEFITS:

In the [analysis](#) provided by Yearout Energy, the public was provided with incorrect math that purposely neglects to tell you the whole story or the truth about solar energy, the cost of solar, the savings it would provide over 25+ years on warranty for each installation, and the fact that the price of solar panels has decreased by over 90% in the last 20 years and the fully installed cost of solar has dropped by over 53% in the last 10 years. Based on Moore's Law, this will continue to happen. Panels will get cheaper, more efficient, and more powerful per square inch. Below are just a few assumptions provided in their paper, which incorrectly calculate the cost of solar and the savings. Here they are:

- If we look at the electricity portion of their analysis, the city is using around \$11 million per year in electricity and would cost \$275 million for the next 25-years electric bills if we do nothing.

- The study claims we will need around 40MW dc of solar power to offset our bills and we have 3.5MW dc already being installed today, so the total need would be 36.5MW dc of solar power required to offset the city's electric bills at 80% decarbonization and 46.5MW dc at 100% decarbonization.
- The current price per watt of installed solar energy on a **residential** home in Texas averages around \$2.70/watt fully installed today. Commercial and Utility scale solar is drastically cheaper than a residential installation, which averages 20-30 panels per system. The city would need 115,000+ solar panels (400-watt panels) for 46.5MW dc, which would drastically reduce the system price. This is a volume purchase compared to residential solar pricing. [Energy Sage Solar Pricing Data](#).
 - If the city were to purchase 46.5 MW dc of installed solar to offset their bills, the analysis by Yearout claims the cost would be \$2.50/watt installed, which is extremely inaccurate for commercial or utility scale projects of this size.
 - If the city were to submit an RFP (Request for Proposal) to the nations solar companies to help us solarize our buildings with 46.5MW dc of solar power, we would likely receive bids ranging from \$0.90/watt to \$1.25/watt for a fully installed solar system. This is 50%-60+% cheaper than the inflated price used in Yearout's analysis. These are the prices for projects of this size today in Texas.
 - Let's just use a middle ground number for easy math, which is being generous in the competitive solar market today at \$1/watt for installed solar. 36.5MW dc of solar would cost \$36.5 million at 80% decarbonization. Per the study, a 25% reduction in the cost of the system in the form of direct payments can be estimated by the city thanks to the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA). This would reduce the system price by an additional \$9.125 million, bringing the total to \$27,375,000 for 36.5MW dc of installed solar.
 - If we use the very high end of the range at \$1.25/watt installed, the price will cost \$45,625,000 for 36.5MW dc of solar.
 - After the 25% direct payment discount of \$11,406,250, it would come out to \$34,218,750 for the installed 36.5MW dc solar systems.
 - The Yearout study claims it would cost \$90 million for 36.5MW dc, which is miscalculated by over \$55+ million at \$1.25/watt and over \$63+ million at \$1/watt. This inaccurate calculation is misleading and false.
- Remember, solar power will have an upfront cost, but it pays itself back in less than 4 years for a project of this size, and then turns into a profit generating asset for the city, unlike paying your electric bills for life.
- The Yearout study also notes an additional 10MW dc of solar would be needed to go from 80% to 100% decarbonization. Assuming this is true, they are claiming solar would still cost \$2.50/watt installed in 20+ years. We've already shown you it's closer to \$1/watt installed today in Texas, and they want you to believe that in 20 years the price will still be the same as their forecasted cost today. We would likely now be closer to

that \$0.90/watt installed number or less in 20 years when we need to add the additional 10MW dc. Moore's Law has already proven this with solar panels and microprocessors.

- They claim this will cost \$25 million, but it would likely be less than \$10 million based on today's cost of solar, and even cheaper in 20 years.
- **The analysis by Yearout claims that 46.5MW dc of solar energy would cost \$115 million, but based on today's cost of solar installed in Texas would cost less than \$38 million at \$1/watt and \$45 million at \$1.25/watt.**
 - Yearout miscalculated the entire cost of the project by \$78 million at \$1/watt and \$70 million at \$1.25/watt.
- This also means the [City's Financial Impact study](#) is highly inaccurate.
 - Their math is incorrect using Yearout's study and uses inflated costs of solar.
 - Their analysis fails to show the payback from the solar energy and profits it will generate after we break even on the investment, likely in less than 4 years on a 25-year warranty. They only show costs with zero benefits from the investment.
- After a 4 year breakeven, the city would generate solar at a profit for over 21 years on warranty, which would be over \$231+ million in profit (\$11M/year for 21 years) with no electric bills at the same time. If we do nothing, we will pay \$11+ million per year in electric bills x 25 years = \$275 million in Electric Bills. Also, volatile fossil fuel costs will increase the cost of dirty energy, which means the savings would be even higher compared to doing nothing.
- **The delta between going solar and doing nothing is net positive \$500+ million for the City of El Paso. HALF A BILLION DOLLARS IN SAVINGS WITH SOLAR VERSUS PAYING OUR BILLS LIKE WE DO TODAY!** Solar not only saves you money on your electric bills, but it becomes a profit generating asset, cleans our air quality and overall environment, and is a net job creator for the City of El Paso. This improves the triple bottom line: People, Profit, and Planet.
- Even if we use the inflated number in the Yearout study of \$2.50/watt for solar, multiplied by the 46.5MW dc of solar required, this will cost \$116 million. If we save over \$11+ million per year from this solar, we will break even in 10 years and generate pure profit for 15 years on warranty (solar panels last more than 25 years, we're just focused on the warranty period for simplicity). This would be a profit of \$165 million by going solar and with no electric bills at the same time using the Yearout calculations.
- **Whether you use the highly inaccurate and inflated number of \$2.50/watt for solar or the current cost of this size system in Texas today, which is closer to \$1/watt, the city would profit between \$165M-\$500M over the next 25 years and have no electric bills at the same time. WINNING!**

HISTORY: [RREAC \(Regional Renewable Energy Advisory Council\)](#)

The City of El Paso created RREAC (Regional Renewable Energy Advisory Council) in 2016, thanks to the Board Members of Eco El Paso who requested the creation of this council during a City Council meeting. We wrote a Sustainability Plan for El Paso in 2018 with RREAC and presented it to the City Council, but it has been sitting on a shelf ever since. The next cohort of RREAC volunteers continued our effort and published a second revised sustainability and climate plan for the City Council, but again it stopped with our plan and no tangible action by the City Manager or City Council. These two plans by RREAC created the foundation for Prop K, but the City of El Paso did not take any action on these plans and were pushed aside by the City Manager.

There was no accountability by the city to implement RREAC plans and by creating a Climate Director role and a new council that works with the Director and City Council, we will have a bigger voice and the City Council will have more accountability to enact these plans by law instead of dragging their feet to appease fossil fuel interests like they do today. If the City had implemented the RREAC recommendations on their own in 2018, we would already see the positive results we were proposing in those plans.

Prop K is the teeth and accountability to what RREAC expected, but City Council failed to implement. How many people have experienced negative health effects by Asarco, the refinery, natural gas power plants, the recycling plants that continue to catch on fire, or those living by the diesel bus depots? Many thousands, and unfortunately, we don't have that data. This is why we need a climate plan so we can start to collect data that tells the truth about our environment. Without it, nothing will change as we've seen year after year. The Climate Charter would create accountability and increase smart purchasing decisions that would benefit the city and its residents.

Here is an example of why we need more accountability and a city that does not cater to the billionaire class in our region:

- “El Paso city officials are proposing to trade 2,313 acres of El Paso Public Service Board land surrounding Painted Dunes golf course in Northeast El Paso for 44 acres of West Side land owned by businessman Paul Foster.”
- [Great Wolf land swap hurts city and ratepayers, largest El Paso land developer says.](#)

The Chamber's assessment states that it would be time-consuming for the City Staff to collect data, which would hold the city accountable for its goals. They are trying to say that it's harmful to report the metrics required to hold our city accountable. Essentially, they don't want any accountability. Every major Texas city does this today except El Paso.

COUNTERPOINTS TO THE EL PASO CHAMBER UNTRUTHFUL ASSESSMENT:

A few counterpoints to the fictional Chamber assessment are as follows:

- It won't cost the city \$9B or lose 198K jobs. This is made up math and false.
- No one is going to make you change your natural gas appliances to electric. This is false and it's not in the Charter; please read it.
- Refinery jobs are dirty polluting jobs and could easily be transitioned to a new clean energy economy that the charter is proposing. Also, the refinery isn't closing any time soon and they have a very strong contract with the state of Texas that would be very difficult to change today but could be changed over time. We do plan to phase it out!
- El Paso Electric Utility will profit from renewable energy projects, which is why they are currently adding solar and battery storage and recently noted they will decarbonize 80% by 2030 and 100% by 2045. They are drastically behind the rest of Texas, but they see the future and the profits it will bring.
 - Note: Hydrogen Energy created with natural gas is not decarbonizing and is not clean. It's just a way to convince you into thinking hydrogen is clean. Unless hydrogen energy is created using pure solar or wind power, it's not clean, it's still polluting our city, and it's just a marketing campaign.
 - **According to the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA), the cost of solar photovoltaic (PV) power has fallen by over 80% since 2010, making it one of the most cost-competitive sources of electricity in many regions.**
- Taxpayers will save money due to the job creation of a clean energy economy. Fossil fuel costs have consistently increased while destroying our environment. Fossil fuels have resulted in environmental disasters like Exxon Valdez, BP Deep Horizon oil spill, countless pipeline ruptures, and train derailments across the country.

The City and Electric Utility will not turn off the energy to your home or business, so there will be no loss in productivity. Saying the power will be shut off is a harmful fictional story made up to create fear and distrust in clean energy. Look what other Texas cities are doing:

- Climate Plans in Texas today: [Austin](#), [San Antonio](#), [Houston](#), and [Dallas](#).
- Austin has over 2500+ solar professionals and has attracted numerous large sustainability companies, both publicly traded and smaller companies.
 - [72 solar companies](#) are now registered with Austin Energy.
- San Antonio is now the 7th largest solar city in the country and attracted Mission Solar to their city, which is a solar panel manufacturing business.
 - [77 solar companies](#) are now registered with CPS Energy in San Antonio, which is a Municipally owned utility.
- Houston, TX has attracted some of the largest solar companies, solar distribution companies, and training companies in the world to its city creating thousands of new jobs.
 - [118 solar companies](#) are now operating in the Houston, TX area.

- Dallas, TX has attracted hundreds of solar energy companies and has its own climate plan.
 - [258 solar companies](#) are now operating in or near the Dallas area per the Better Business Bureau.

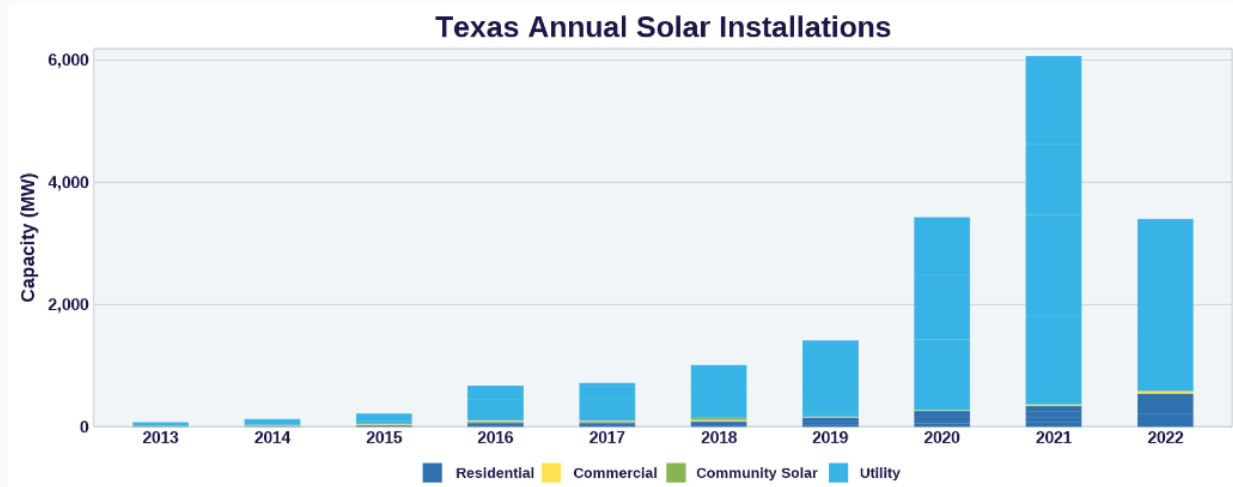
RENEWABLE ENERGY IN TEXAS TODAY – FACTS:

The economic impact of renewable energy in Texas is amazingly positive, yet the Chamber’s fictional assessment fails to do proper research and tell you the real story. [Here are a few facts about renewable energy in Texas](#). This work was funded by the Conservative Texans for Energy Innovation (CTEI), Texas Association of Business, and the Advanced Power Alliance. **The Texas Association of Business (TAB) is the Texas State Chamber, representing companies of every size and industry.**

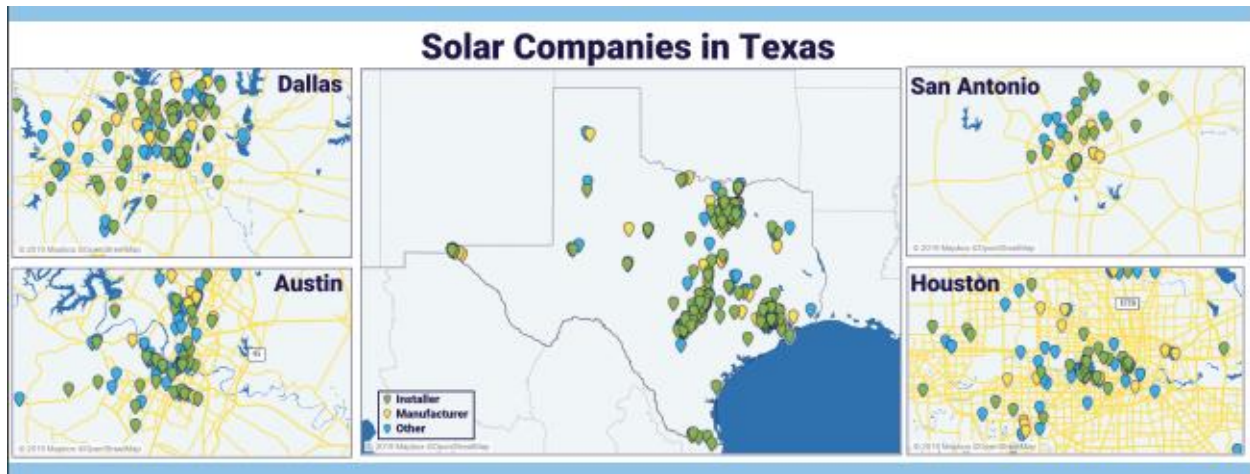
- “Over their lifetime, the current fleet of utility-scale wind, solar, and energy storage projects in Texas are estimated to generate **\$7.2–\$8.8 billion in new tax revenue** to local communities.
- If all projects with interconnection agreements are built, existing and planned utility-scale wind, solar, and energy storage projects will pay between **\$12.5 billion and \$15.9 billion in total tax revenue over their lifetimes**.
- Existing utility-scale wind, solar, and energy storage projects in Texas are estimated to **pay Texas landowners \$7.1–\$11.3 billion over the lifetime** of the projects.
- If all projects with signed interconnection queues are built, **Texas landowners will directly receive \$11.8–\$21.7 billion** over the existing and planned project lifetimes.
- A county in Texas could expect to **receive \$9.4–\$13.1 million in lifetime taxes** (including school taxes) for a 100 MW solar project located in its boundaries, **\$16.8–\$20.3 million for a 100 MW wind project**, and **\$3.8–\$4.7 million for a 100 MW energy storage project**.
- A 100 MW wind farm, over its lifetime, could expect to pay **\$16.2–\$33 million in payments to the landowner**, depending on length of contract and location in the state.
- A 100 MW solar farm, over its lifetime, could expect to pay **\$5.2–\$27.7 million in payments to the landowner**, depending on length of contract and location in the state.
- A 100 MW energy storage project, over its lifetime, could expect to **pay \$260,000–\$1.2 million in payments to the landowner**, but much less land is used when compared to a 100 MW wind or solar farm.
- Residents and community leaders indicated that counties with renewable energy and storage projects tend to see them as good neighbors.
- Elected county leaders look favorably on renewable energy projects for the planning stability that comes with having confidence in consistent long-term revenue streams.
- The growth of renewables has been a significant source of revenue for local jurisdictions and landowners across Texas, but any policy changes that reduce renewable or storage

deployment in Texas will reduce these benefits, which are a lifeline to many rural communities across the state.”

SOLAR ENERGY IN TEXAS – [FACTS](#):



- **Texas Ranks 2nd for total installed solar capacity.**
- **Texas has installed 17,247 Megawatts of solar energy.**
 - **El Paso has 15 Megawatts and is drastically far behind other big cities.**
 - **El Paso has 0.0869% of all the solar installed in Texas. Not even 1%. This is unsuited for the Sun City and our Electric Utility!**
- **There are 10,346 solar jobs in Texas, but growth within El Paso has been slow due to the Electric Utility is taxing new solar homeowners with a \$30 minimum bill, meaning no homes in El Paso can go Net Zero. We are the only city in Texas to do this and possibly the only city in the Country.**
- **99 Manufacturers operate in Texas, but only 1 in El Paso.**
- The value of the state of solar market in Texas = \$20.6 Billion, \$4.6 Billion of that was invested in 2022 alone.
- Price Decline of installed solar over the last 10 years = 53%
- [Solar Companies in Texas by market.](#) Notice anything missing? El Paso wasn't worth the Solar Energy Industry Association's (SEIA) time to create a map for, although we're the 6th largest city in Texas and 20th largest city in the United States.
- See the map below:



WHAT ARE OTHER MAJOR TEXAS CITIES DOING TO CREATE CLIMATE ACTION:

Examples of Climate Plans in place today in Texas include [Austin](#), [San Antonio](#), [Houston](#), [Dallas](#), and other smaller cities around Texas that are wildly successful. [Here is a list of 90+ cities](#) implementing or creating climate plans today across the United States. Let's look at the 4 plans for Austin, San Antonio, Houston, and Dallas in more detail with links to their plans so you can study them in more detail.

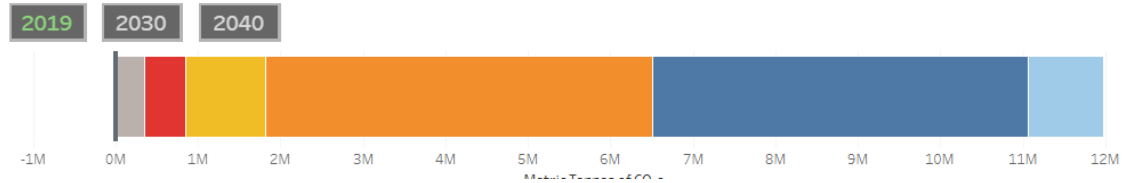
[Austin's Climate Plan & Results:](#)

- The Austin Climate Equity Plan proposes the bold and aggressive goal of equitably reaching net-zero community-wide greenhouse gas emissions by 2040. The new proposed goal updates our previous goal, set by the City Council in 2015, to reach net-zero by 2050.
- "Climate change does not affect everyone equally. Low-income communities and communities of color disproportionately bear the brunt of the impacts. The effects of extreme weather, air pollution, water pollution, and exploitation of natural resources amplify the inequities and injustices that these communities are experiencing. This is why we cannot solve climate change without addressing equity, and we cannot talk about climate change solutions without talking about racial and environmental justice and centering communities of color in our response."
- **By March 2022, Austin had 7 Solar Farms (966 MW) and 8 Wind Farms (1796 MW).**
- [Austin Energy Ranks First Nationally for Per Capita Solar Among Municipal Utilities](#)
 - "The report, which is the most comprehensive survey available of installed solar capacity in major U.S. cities, found that total solar capacity increased almost 50% between the end of 2019 and the end of 2021. The city is home to 92.3 megawatts of solar capacity, or about 96 watts per person."
 - "Austin was highlighted as a "Solar Star," ranking number 20 in the country for solar capacity per capita with 96 watts per person."

- Austin's 2019 Dashboard Stats: Over \$12M in costs.



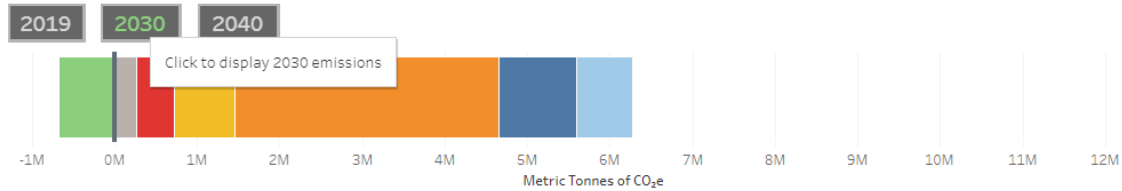
Select a year:



- Austin's 2030 Projected Dashboard: Reduced from \$12M to \$6M in costs. **50% savings.**



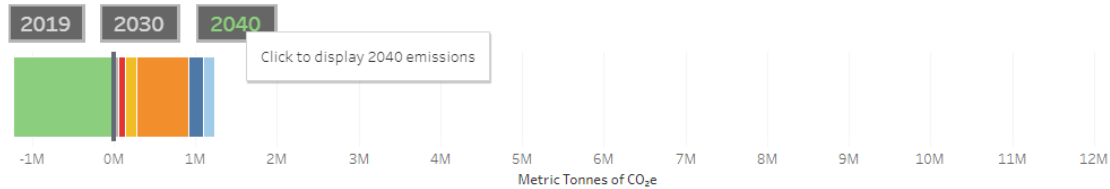
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- Austin's 2040 Projected Dashboard: **Just over \$1M in costs, over 90% savings for the city of Austin, TX between 2019 and 2040.**

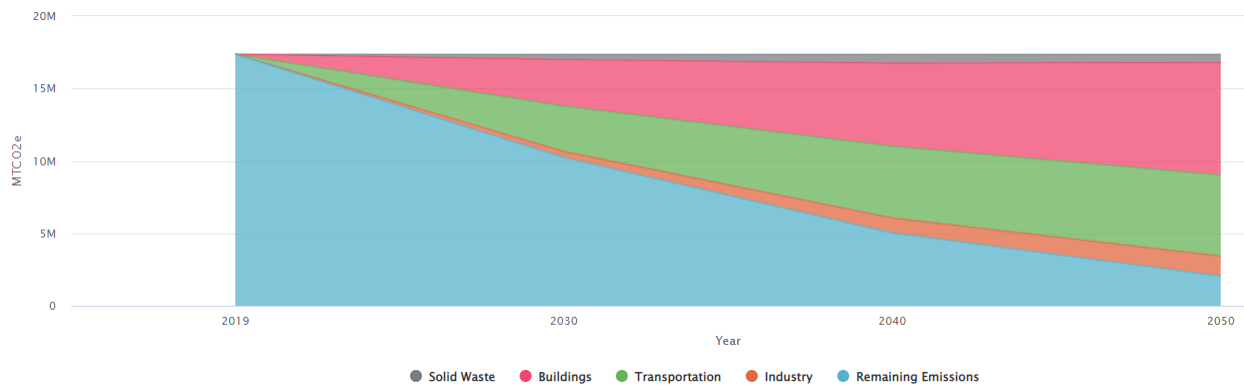


Select a year:



San Antonio's Climate Action Plan – SA Climate Ready:

- SA Climate Ready contains 11 different approaches for reducing building energy consumption.
- “San Antonio led the South-Central region and the state, ranking fifth in the nation for solar capacity per capita and earning the designation of “Solar Superstar,” with 247.4 solar watts per person.” [Article Link](#)
- The chart below depicts the different sections of SA Climate Ready and their potential greenhouse gas reduction path.



- Our goal is to make San Antonio carbon neutral by 2050—meaning that three decades from now, our city will contribute no net carbon into the atmosphere.
- San Antonio's Goal:
 - A 10% reduction in total GHG emissions from 2014 to 2016, despite population and economic growth.
- Recognition in 2018 as the #7 city in the nation and first in Texas for locally installed solar photovoltaic capacity.
- Adoption of the most advanced International Energy Conservation Code (IECC) for buildings, setting the city apart as one of the most energy efficient in the nation; and
- A savings of 771 megawatts (MW) of energy since 2009 through CPS Energy's Save for Tomorrow Energy Plan (STEP), eliminating the need for a new fossil fuel power plant.

Houston's Climate Action Plan:

- On April 22, 2020 – the 50th anniversary of Earth Day – the city launched the science-based, community-driven Houston Climate Action Plan to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, meet the Paris Agreement goal of carbon neutrality by 2050, and lead the global energy transition.

The Dallas Comprehensive Environmental & Climate Action Plan:

- The Dallas Comprehensive Environmental & Climate Action Plan (CECAP) was unanimously approved on May 27, 2020, and is a comprehensive roadmap that outlines

the activities that the city will undertake to improve quality of life, to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, to prepare for the impacts of climate change, and to create a healthier and more prosperous community.

CLIMATE DIRECTOR FOR EL PASO:

The City of El Paso recently created a Sustainability & Climate Office position, which is currently part of the city budget and plan. This means we already have the money, we have the budget, we're already spending it today, and we can replace that role with a new Climate Director title that is accountable to the people and to the Climate Charter.

Our current form of government has a City Manager that has ballooned our debt, dismantled the Sustainability department, and merged it into the Neighborhood and Community Development department. This is why we need a new City Manager with a vision to improve our city and why this new Climate Director role should not report to a City Manager who could stonewall progress, disregard RREAC plan recommendations like in recent years, or attempt to dismantle the Climate Director role.

A few incorrect assumptions the Chambers assessment is trying to convince you of regarding the role of a Climate Director.

- First, the study wants you to believe that doing a climate assessment and study each year would be a negative outcome for the city and its residents because it costs time and money. We don't have the data today as a baseline of where the city is at, and this is required so we can have real data to analyze and so we can show improvement year over year. Once these reports are developed for the first fiscal year, they will get easier to create each year, we'll learn more each year, and the staff will be better trained each year to collect this data.
- Second, they think that providing a climate impact position prior to any city council vote regarding the Charter would be bad. This is the definition of accountability so the city council can't unilaterally defy the charter and push policies that contradict the Charter.
- Third, the assessment implies that future grants, contracts, and funding that would be put toward green jobs is negative. Without the jobs, the data, the annual reports, and the Charter, this would never happen in El Paso.
- Fourth, they stated that the Climate Director would interact with Utilities and energy generators and serve as the city's representative with state and federal agencies. The Chambers assessment alludes that this is not needed since utilities interact with the agencies already, but without any oversight from a city representative, and they feel that this is a good thing. This shows they don't want any oversight, they don't want regulation, they don't want accountability, and they want to continue business as usual. The city must be a part of these conversations and needs a seat at the table.

- Lastly, the assessment also discusses the issue that the City would develop infrastructure to withstand extreme weather conditions but could require funding. Investing in infrastructure is how you prevent disasters from extreme weather. The city must invest in these plans, otherwise we will have major disasters like the floods that caused havoc and wiped out parts of El Paso 10 years ago. Cleaning up after a disaster could be 10x-20x+ more expensive and could devastate companies, neighborhoods, and city property.

BUYING EL PASO ELECTRIC – MUNICIPALIZATION OF OUR ELECTRIC UTILITY:

One other major point mentioned in the Chambers assessment is that the City of El Paso will buy El Paso Electric.

First off, El Paso Electric Utility is not for sale today.

Second, the Charter says to do a study to assess if this is possible and if it would be profitable. No decision will be made until a thorough investigation of the pros and cons is made and presented to the City Council. I believe this is a worthwhile endeavor. Since El Paso Electric is very profitable and earning over \$140 million per year in net profit annually, municipalization of our utility could be a very smart business decision and would not result in any job losses. Even with a debt payment to pay back the loan, this could be an extremely wise decision for the city.

- Austin and San Antonio are 2 great examples of Municipally owned electric utilities that provide a large profit to the city government every year, while being controlled by the city, City Council, and ultimately the voters.
- Municipally owned utilities make the profit, keep the profits, and then spend it locally in a circular and insular economy improving their region.
- El Paso ships \$140+ million per year to JP Morgan in New York City, extracting wealth from our region with minimal reinvestment, unlike Municipally owned utilities in Texas that thrive.

El Paso Electric Profits for example:

- El Paso Electric Gross Profits in 2019 = \$686+ Million
 - EBITDA = \$345+ Million
 - Net Profit = \$123+ Million
- El Paso Electric Net Profits in 2021 = \$146+ Million
 - Gross profits rose a historic 87.4% in 2021, yet El Paso Electric keeps asking for more rate cases to increase the cost of your electricity.

WATER CONSERVATION:

- The El Paso Chamber claims in their paper that the city will prohibit the sale or transfer of City water for any fossil fuel industry activities. This is not true. Specifically, and more accurately it says: “Ban on using City water for fossil fuel industry activities outside of the city limits.” OUTSIDE OF THE CITY LIMITS is the key phrase.
- In the Fall of 2022, El Paso Water Utility requested \$441 Million in additional revenue bonds and issued a drought emergency. Using our precious water to spin natural gas turbines to create electricity is a bad idea for a drought-stricken desert community.
- **El Paso Electric Utility uses 2.04 billion gallons of water per year to create dirty natural gas fracked electricity that poisons our community.**
 - “The Rio Grande is rapidly shrinking under human-caused climate change, with less snowmelt to feed it, less water in riverbed from thirstier soils and depleted groundwater, and more demand in hotter weather by people, crops and ecosystems. New Mexico’s Elephant Butte Reservoir, where Rio Grande water is stored for Texas and Mexico users downstream, is only at 4% of capacity, one of the lowest recorded depths in its history.” [El Paso Matters - Article Link](#)
- As Rio Grande Shrinks, El Paso Plans for Uncertain Water Future – Yale Environment 360 – [Article Link](#)
 - El Paso is drinking its own process treated water, and the Chamber of Commerce wants to give water to the fossil fuel industry outside of our city. We must oppose this if we want a city to live in.
 - “With a megadrought persisting in the Southwest, El Paso and other cities on the Rio Grande are scrambling to find alternative sources of water and are turning to innovative approaches — desalination, transporting water via pipelines, and “toilet-to-tap” wastewater recycling.”
 - “The changes have left urban water authorities scrambling to find ways to provide cities with alternate supplies of water. ‘We have to prepare for the year that there is no river water,’ says Lisa Rosendorf, a spokesperson for El Paso Water, the utility that serves the city, ‘because that year will come’.”

RENEWABLE ENERGY:

- The Chambers study says renewable energy is significantly more expensive than fossil fuels. This is not true. Solar and wind farms today in Texas are being sold on par with or cheaper than current fossil fuel power plants. Natural gas is not clean!
 - [Solar Is Now 33% Cheaper Than Gas Power In US](#)
 - “Utility-scale solar is now about a third cheaper than gas-fired power, while onshore wind is about 44% less expensive.”

- “According to the IEA’s World Energy Outlook and other research projects, solar and wind energy have continued to occupy the top spots in terms of the cheapest renewable energy sources. Both energy sources cost significantly less than fossil fuel alternatives and continue to become more affordable every year. Solar PV, in particular in terms of its scope, significant price decreases across the board, and increasing energy capacity can be seen as the true winner, though it’s a close race when comparing the overall costs.” [Article Link](#)
- [Wind and Solar are Saving Texas \\$20 Million Per Day](#)
 - “High production from renewables and high fossil fuel prices together mean wind and solar are having an outsized impact on lowering energy costs. Based on benchmark natural gas prices, RMI estimates that, on average, wind and solar projects in Texas have avoided \$20 million per day in fuel that otherwise would have been needed for fossil fuel-based power plants to meet electricity demand.”
- [Natural Gas or Solar? Your Call](#)
 - “According to the U.S. Energy Information Administration, the cost of electricity for residents rose 10% in the last year. The average cost of electricity rose to 12.8 cents per kilowatt hour in March. Natural gas prices are up 181% from May 2021 to May 2022. Texas saw the largest year-to-year increase in electricity generation (17.7%) due to experiencing the second warmest May on record.”

ECONOMIC IMPACT & CONSEQUENCES:

The El Paso Chamber’s study has a variety of incorrect assumptions and flaws.

In Figure 1, Page 8, of the study, the Chamber creates a negative image of growth in our city government, decrying new positions that have never existed, and denying the positive change that will come from the Climate Department. They will show costs but refuse to show all the benefits we’ll receive from the Climate Charter.

- Purchase of additional equipment and software.
 - This is a very positive move forward since El Paso is 20 years behind most big cities in Texas and America in many respects. They are trying to convince you that we should not have the software and databases to track real time accurate data and that we should not update our basic tools to run the city and collect the data. We need a 21st Century city that is forward thinking so we can continue to compete with other large cities and improve the quality of life for all El Pasoans.
- They claim there will be more bureaucracy, which is not the case in other major cities enacting climate charters or climate action plans. Change can be hard for some, but we are lucky to have great examples of how this works well today in other big Texas cities.

- They claim there will be reduced staff productivity. This is critical work that is important for the city and its residents. These are basic process changes, and the city will adapt.
- They claim all homes will have to convert from natural gas to electric. This is a lie, not stated anywhere in the Charter, and blatantly false.
- There will be no business closures or compliance issues. The Charter sets policy for the City Government, NOT for businesses and homeowners. Power won't be shut off.
- They claim an increased cost of electricity. Once installed, solar and wind turbines pay themselves back. Without them, you have electric bills for life, no payback, and electricity costs will only go up due to fossil fuel pricing volatility. Solar and wind will save the city millions of dollars per year, which goes back toward city operations.
- They also claim a loss of jobs and shutting down of utility companies. The firm from Idaho who wrote this misinformation piece doesn't understand that El Paso Electric makes \$300 Million to \$400 Million per year in gross profit and ships it directly to JP Morgan and Wall Street in New York City. There will be no jobs lost but jobs could be shifted, and new jobs will be created.

El Paso could be a top employer destination since we are "The Sun City". The Chamber wants you to believe it won't work here but it works all over Texas and across the United States. **No city has failed due to implementing these plans. Never, not one! This is fear mongering.** We need these jobs to lift our community! The jobs will go to cities who support these plans.

Solar and Wind prevented an even worse outcome from the blackouts in 2022 across ERCOT that killed 100+ Texas and destroyed businesses. Natural Gas was the number one reason the ERCOT grid failed.

- "During the February 2021 winter storm, transmission companies inadvertently cut power to parts of the natural gas supply chain when ERCOT ordered the utilities to reduce power demand or risk further damage to the grid. That decision aggravated the problem as natural gas producers were unable to deliver enough fuel to power plants. At the same time, some wells were unable to produce as much natural gas due to the freezing conditions." [Article Link](#)
- "... some wells were unable to produce as much natural gas due to the freezing conditions." [Article Link](#)

Now the Texas legislature wants to add more failed natural gas power plants and hinder the growth of solar and wind. This is the opposite response that is needed to fix the state's energy problems. Oil and gas money is flowing directly into Texas Republican politicians' pockets and their decisions will kill Texans and destroy businesses when this happens again.

- "Lawmakers pitched the bills as a way to increase energy reliability in response to the catastrophic 2021 blackout. But the proposals rely on discouraging Texas' fastest growing energy sources – wind and solar power – while incentivizing the construction of

natural gas power plants that will take years to build. Failures at gas plants in freezing weather were the primary cause of the 2021 blackout.” [Article Link](#)

Over 101,036 jobs have been created since the Inflation Reduction Act was passed and most of those jobs went to Texas and 6 other states. Over the next 10 years over 9 million clean energy jobs will be created, and hundreds of thousands will come to Texas. The Chamber of Commerce and their hit piece on the Climate Charter will push most of these jobs to other major cities in Texas. **Why would the Chamber purposely create a negative environment for the clean energy industry and signal to businesses that we are not open for business, but the rest of Texas will take those jobs? The Chamber has already harmed our city by publishing their hit piece!**

- “The IRA is the biggest climate bill ever passed by Congress and provides \$369 billion in funding for initiatives like cutting emissions, manufacturing clean energy products and advancing environmental justice initiatives. The bill also includes tax credits for zero-carbon energy production.
- The bill’s climate provisions are also projected to cut domestic carbon emissions by about 40% by 2030. Early in his presidency, Biden pledged to reduce U.S. emissions from 2005 levels at least in half by 2030 and achieve net-zero emissions by 2050.
- Plans include 40 new battery manufacturing sites in states like Arizona, Michigan and South Carolina, according to Climate Power. So far, 22 companies have unveiled plans for new or expanded EV manufacturing in Alabama, Oklahoma and Michigan. And an additional 24 companies have released plans to expand wind and solar manufacturing in Colorado, Ohio and Texas.
- The legislation is projected to create more than 9 million clean energy and climate-related jobs over the next decade, according to an analysis by the Political Economy Research Institute at the University of Massachusetts Amherst.” [Article Link](#)

EI PASO’S OIL REFINERY:

Refineries create dirty, polluting, harmful jobs, and they have been destroying our region for decades. Their ownership may have changed over time, but the destruction and harm remain. Are we willing to let them destroy our ecosystem (air, land, and water) and poison our people for jobs? A Green New Deal and building a Clean Energy Economy will help us transition these refinery jobs. The refinery is part of the international fossil fuel problem and a direct contributor to massive climate change. **We allow the refinery in El Paso to pump 40 million tons of pollution into our air every year**, and a lot more than that in previous years. Our air quality is being destroyed and negative health effects are mounting every year.

The Inflation Reduction Act will create almost 10 million jobs in the next decade bringing hundreds of thousands of jobs to Texas. Let’s bring these jobs to El Paso and transition these dirty jobs of the past into a clean energy workforce of the future.

ASSESSMENT OF THE CHAMBERS APPENDIX A:

They want you to believe that pollution and more carbon in our air will help farmers with larger yields and that is worth it. That premise overlooks the overwhelming negative impacts of climate change and grasps to find positive facts from mass pollution and destruction to our ecosystem and our planet. More isn't always better, especially with pollution.

The appendix also states that shifting to renewables will be too fast. Nothing could be further from the truth, and it can't come fast enough in the face of climate change and climate disasters that we are experiencing in Texas today. Look at San Antonio for example. In 2007 they were not on the solar map and 10 years later were the 7th largest solar city in the country. 10-20+ year transitions to renewable energy is a long time but they want you to believe that it's too fast and that progress is bad.

What about when the sun isn't out, and the wind doesn't blow? That is what utility scale storage systems are for, as well as geothermal technologies, improved green building codes, and energy efficiency. Batteries can solve peak demand issues in our region. These technologies exist across Texas today and El Paso Electric is moving in that direction, but very slowly while advocating for more disastrous natural gas "peaker" plants that will receive a 50-year guarantee from the Public Utility Commission of Texas at a minimum guarantee of 10% profit even if they sit idle for 50 years. This is why they want to keep building more power plants with guaranteed profits from El Pasoans. They will likely try to convince us that future hydrogen energy created with natural gas is "clean". Don't believe the scam of natural gas hydrogen or clean natural gas. Both are myths and business as usual!

Green jobs will explode in El Paso after Prop K passes this year and will continue to grow for many decades to come. These jobs will also connect our community to the high-tech industry, which is growing rapidly to support the clean energy industry. This will lead to more educational opportunities to support the local industry.

The study goes so far to say that these high paying jobs are a bad thing for our community. When people, businesses, and government entities save mass quantities from clean energy and efficiency programs, they'll have the additional budgets to pay for these jobs.

ASSESSMENT OF THE CHAMBERS APPENDIX B:

The fictional study claims that buying El Paso Electric is a big risk and bad idea. To make it simple. EP Electric earns \$300 Million to \$400 Million per year in gross profit; over \$140 million in net profit. If purchased, that money would stay in El Paso and create a circular economy instead of shipping that wealth to Wall Street every year like we do today. It's also possible that EP Electric has increased the value of their business by almost 100% and moved from \$4+ Billion in value to close to \$8 Billion in value. Should we consider buying this wildly profitable company, regardless of a small debt payment to buy it? ABSOLUTELY! The Chamber wants you

to believe this to be a bad business investment and would be “hard”. Not only is this wrong, but it’s also a missed opportunity. Austin and San Antonio have municipally owned electricity utilities and generate large profits that those cities use for its daily operations versus wealth extraction to New York like in El Paso today.

CONCLUSION – VOTE YES TO PROP K & THE EL PASO CLIMATE CHARTER:

Thank you to Sunrise El Paso, Ground Game Texas, RREAC, and the many nonprofits, community groups, and individuals that helped get the Climate Charter amendment on the ballot. Getting 39,000+ signatures was not easy, but it was the beginning of a shift in El Paso that can’t be stopped. Vote YES to Prop K!

Our future literally depends on passing Prop K. We currently have two Chambers of Commerce that are directly opposed to this change, paid an out-of-town fossil fuel consulting firm to write a misinformation piece about the plan since no one locally would touch it, and have already damaged El Paso’s reputation in the eyes of those clean energy industry businesses who have seen how they treat this fruitful and growing industry in El Paso. They are signaling we are closed for business and never sat down with any community group before responding with a misleading and false assessment of the Climate Charter.

Prop K will save our environment while building a clean energy economy that is profitable for everyone, and not just the ultra-rich influencing El Paso today. We can all win, together, a community, El Paso Strong!

Don’t Mess With Texas!

LUCHAR PARA SOLAR!