

JORDAN COUNCIL VOTES TO GO SOLAR

City Council Highlights Significant Cost Savings, Commitment to Cleaner Environment as Key Drivers for Unanimous Vote

The Jordan City Council Monday voted unanimously to replace 100% of its Xcel-generated electricity (about 95% of its overall consumption) with solar energy, locking in its rate for 25 years at a competitive rate that is likely to save significant money for Taxpayers over the life of the project.

“The City looked into the possibility of solar, and quite frankly were stunned at the potential for energy cost savings” said Tom Nikunen, Jordan’s City Administrator. If Xcel’s utility costs increase by 4% per year on average, the Council’s action will save over \$1.6 Million in electric energy costs by 2040.”

Average Xcel rate increases have been closer to 5% per year over the last ten years. Just one day after the council’s decision, Xcel announced plans to increase rates 10% over 3 years, according to the utility.

“With the utility’s announcement, we will save taxpayer money literally from day one” continued Nikunen.

Environmental concerns were also raised in council discussion.

“We’re very excited and proud that our decision will save taxpayer money at the same time as we are doing our part on our resident’s behalf to clean our environment” said Mayor Mike Shaw.

A SunShare analysis determined that the City’s action will offset over 81,500,000 pounds of Carbon Dioxide, the gas emission most closely linked with Climate Change, as well as over 16,000,000 gallons of water used in coal electric generation.

The City’s power will be generated as part of a “Community Solar” project being built by Minnesota company SunShare, with the physical 5MW array being built outside of Blakeley Township. The city’s share is 1.25 MW.

“By choosing community solar, we have almost entirely eliminated any risk to the City and its Taxpayers” continued Nikunen. “Assuming the project is permitted by the Public Utilities Commission, It will be owned and operated by SunShare, and our price is locked on and cannot change. In the unlikely event the project goes bust, the City simply reverts to being a regular utility customer as we have been, with absolutely no penalty.” Nikunen said.

City staff and the Council entertained several solar energy proposals, some of which would have be owned and/or operated directly by the city.

“In the end, staff and Council thought the best allocation of risk and reward was with the SunShare proposal, although many options were attractive.” Nikunen closed.

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