

84A - Energy Sustainability Program

Original Project Total Cost: \$ 18,309,000

Total Operating Cost: \$ (1,300,000)

Alternate Project Total Cost: \$ 10,755,000

Alternate Total Operating Cost: \$ (754,000)

Project Description: Our alternate proposal is to request \$10 million for renewable energy infrastructure projects as described in our original proposal. This is 58.8% of our original proposal. Our projected renewable energy usage totals after projects are completely installed would be reduced from 15% in our original proposal to 8.7% of ACC's total energy usage. The net savings to Athens-Clarke County's operating costs would decrease from \$1.3 million dollars per year over the life of the projects to \$754,000 per year.

Our proposal is unique in that the SPLOST funds can be returned after 14 years to the city's general fund in the form of operating cost savings. Decreasing the amount invested in renewable energy will decrease these municipal savings.

Reducing the investment will make the transition to renewable energy take longer, which exposes our community to greater risk as climate change begins to make our weather patterns unstable and central-grid power outages and heatwaves that stress the centralized grid system become more frequent.

Moving to renewable energy carries benefits beyond the economic savings and functional benefits. Right now, there is no federal action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, but there are multiple warnings from the world's scientists that the reduction needs to be drastic and needs to start right now. We have the opportunity to become leaders in our state and region by not only committing to 100% clean, renewable energy, but also by reserving funding to get started on a fair and equitable transition. We're lucky to have the opportunity to use the 2020 SPLOST to make a significant difference, not just in our community, but in our region. And not just in our own lives, but in the lives of our children and grandchildren. The safety and security of future generations of Athenians is priceless. We believe that it is therefore well worth the investment of the full \$17 million that we originally requested.