

ITEM #: 9
DATE: 01-13-26
DEPT: ELEC

COUNCIL ACTION FORM

SUBJECT: IOWA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY'S COMMUNITY ENERGY RESILIENCE PROGRAM

BACKGROUND:

The Iowa Economic Development Authority's (IEDA) [Community Energy Resilience Program](#) provides federal grant funds for projects to purchase or develop portable renewable energy generators equipped with battery storage and train relevant staff on its usage.

A portable renewable energy generator with battery storage can be incorporated into emergency response protocols and be used to support critical needs. This generator could include the ability to charge mobile devices and/or providing backup power to remote facilities such as water wells and pumps. The equipment could also be used for a wide array of non-emergency uses, including usage at City construction sites, education events, and other remote work areas in place of a diesel generator. The attachment contains example photos of these systems.

Staff is seeking City Council's authorization to apply for a federal grant to fund a portable renewable energy generator for up to \$37,500. While the grant does not require a match, providing some match fund will increase the application's competitiveness. Therefore, the grant application proposed includes a 40% cost matching up to \$25,000. The cost match funding would come from the Electric sustainability reserve fund where there are funds available to support renewable energy projects.

Due to the limited amount of funds available for the program, the grant application proposes two equipment options. The two options are detailed in the table below along with examples of equipment that could be purchased under either option. If awarded, the equipment would be procured through a competitive bid.

Total Cost	Grant Request	Cost Match	Example Model	Solar Size	Battery Size
\$40,000	\$24,000	\$16,000	RPS Sun Titan	2.7 kW	30 kWh
\$62,500	\$37,500	\$25,000	North Star Logistics	7.5 kW	61 kWh

The equipment would be a shared community resource, meaning local public entities could request to borrow the equipment when it is not in use by the City of Ames. If the grant is

awarded, a use policy would be established detailing eligible users, priority of use, and outline what the borrowing process would be. The City would provide training to borrowers, require they hold insurance and are held liable for any damages, and the City would retain full authority to determine acceptable uses of the equipment. Emergency response and City use will be prioritized over other uses. The Fleet Department would store and administer the equipment and receive training from the manufacturer on its operation.

Letters of support were obtained from Iowa State University (ISU) and Story County Emergency Management. ISU indicated the equipment could provide valuable for research purposes. The equipment will also be made available for other cities within Story County to use in emergency situations, coordinated by Story County Emergency Management.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Authorize staff to participate and apply for the Iowa Economic Development Authority's Community Energy Resilience Program for up to \$37,500 and **provide up to \$25,000 in matching funds.**
2. Do not authorize staff to apply for or participate in Iowa Economic Development Authority's Community Energy Resilience Program.

CITY MANAGER'S RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Renewable energy and energy resilience align with City climate action goals and emergency response priorities. A portable renewable energy generator with battery storage would provide critical support in an emergency. The shared governmental asset would also be capable of serving a variety of non-emergency uses in place of other, non-renewable forms of electricity. Therefore, it is the recommendation of the City Manager that the City Council adopt Alternative No. 1, as described above.

ATTACHMENT(S):

[Portable Renewable Energy Generator Examples.pdf](#)