



Legislation Text

File #: 20-0467, **Version:** 1

Item:

Execution of Contract Agreement with EcoShift Consulting, LLC for the Development of a Renewable Energy Plan for County Operations

Date of BOCC Meeting: September 14, 2020

Request for Board Action:

The Board is hereby requested to authorize the County Manager to enter into a contract in the amount of \$49,955.00 with EcoShift Consulting, LLC to develop a plan for County operations to transition to 80% renewable energy by 2030 and 100% renewable energy by 2050.

The BOCC adopted a resolution in 2018 calling for a plan to transition County operations to 80% clean, renewable energy by 2030 and 100% clean, renewable energy by 2050 with the purposes of building a more resilient community, promoting job creation and sustainable economic growth, and protecting our local community and the Earth for current and future generations.

Durham County facilities, wastewater treatment, and fleet operations use four types of fossil fuels that need to be replaced to meet the stated goals - electricity, natural gas, gasoline, and diesel. There are several options for each fuel and use case and each option comes with its own set of benefits and drawbacks. Staff has sought expertise from outside consultants to evaluate the feasible options and create the renewable energy plan.

The scope of this proposal is comprehensive to address all four fossil fuels through five strategies: 1) reducing consumption, 2) building renewable energy resources, 3) switching fossil fuels for renewable fuels, 4) leveraging carbon credits or renewable energy certificates.

Plan development involves the following activities: researching and evaluating options; identifying reasonable energy efficiency targets; identify and assess renewable energy generation, storage, and fuel switching opportunities; assess funding opportunities; developing a framework for assessing renewable energy proposals; creating a descriptive path forward to achieving goals including metrics, methods, and reporting tools; identifying 5-year progress benchmarks through 2050; estimate each measures costs and benefits; estimate timeline for implementation of recommended measures; identify how actions could positively or negatively impact vulnerable populations and businesses and revise to increase benefits and decrease negative impacts; identify partnerships; and engage staff and stakeholders in the process.

As highlighted in the proposal, EcoShift Consulting and their partner Optony bring specialized renewable energy plan development and financial analysis. This specialized expertise will provide the necessary information to make sound decisions regarding the projects, programs, and policies needed to meet renewable energy goals. By engaging EcoShift Consulting, staff intends to create a plan that meets our goals while minimizing public investment and maximizing public interests. This plan may potentially result in RFPs to implement the recommended energy efficiency and renewable energy development projects.

There were no MWBE participation goals achieved on this project. EcoShift Consulting LLC is not an MWBE certified business, however, they are recognized and have been encouraged to pursue MWBE certification status as a Woman-Owned business with the NC HUB Office. Funding for this service is available in the Sustainability Division budget within the Engineering and Environmental Services Department.

Alignment with Strategic Plan: This request aligns with Strategic Plan Goal #4 (Environmental Stewardship and Community Prosperity) - by providing a plan to transition to clean, renewable energy that will help the county meet its greenhouse gas emissions reduction goals in a just and equitable way.

Resource Persons: Tobin L. Freid, Sustainability Manager; and Peri Manns, ASLA, LEED GA, Deputy Director of Engineering and Environmental Services

County Manager's Recommendation: The County Manager recommends that the Board authorize the execution of an agreement with EcoShift Consulting, LLC in the total amount not to exceed \$49,955.00.

County Manager: _____