



## Staff Analysis

# Solar Charging

**Presented by:**

Paul Folkers  
Assistant City Manager

Teresa Scott, Public Works Director  
Jesus Gomez, Transit Director  
Steve Phillips, Director PRCA

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## CITY OF GAINESVILLE STAFF ANALYSIS

**Legistar No: 160464**

**Title: Solar Charging Stations**

**Sponsor:**

**City Staff Contact: Paul Folkers, Teresa Scott, Jesus Gomez, Steve Phillips**

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**Summary of Issue** Pure Energy Solar is a local solar energy company that has developed solar charging stations and solar benches. They proposed a 6 month pilot project to partner with the City by loaning the City 10 solar charging stations/benches that would be installed at locations around the City (9 charging stations and 1 bench). These stations would primarily allow users to charge personal electronic devices such as cell phones, lap tops, tablets, etc.

An agreement was executed between Pure Energy Solar and the City earlier this year to place two solar charging stations at Rosa Parks Transfer Station; these stations have not yet been installed. Pure Energy Solar would like to include an additional 7 solar charging stations and 1 solar bench as part of the pilot project.

**History/Background Information** The potential use of Pure Energy's solar charging stations was previously discussed by the Recreation, Cultural Affairs and Public Works Committee before the Committee was disbanded. The Committee was supportive of a pilot project which was conveyed to the City Commission. On July 16, 2015 the City Commission authorized "the City Manager to establish a pilot program utilizing solar powered charging stations at locations to be determined by and at no cost to the City." This led to the execution of an agreement in earlier this year (2016) with Pure Energy solar for two solar charging stations at the Rosa Parks Transfer Station.

Pure Energy Solar has not yet installed the two solar charging stations at the Rosa Parks Transfer Station and would like to include an additional 7 solar charging stations and 1 solar bench as part of the pilot project. City staff is supportive of the pilot project and would like to proceed with the existing agreement before considering expanding to a larger pilot project.

General Issues for Consideration for a Pilot Project and Extension/Expanded Pilot Project

- **Insurance/Liability** have been addressed in the executed agreement and would be included in any extensions/expansions
- **Locations** would be determined by the City for potential traffic by users and compliance with any requirements such as ADA accessibility, zoning, etc.
- **Design** – explore any choices/options on design of the solar charging stations/benches.

- **Funding/Procurement** – if the City is interested in acquiring solar charging stations/benches, the City would need to address any funding and procurement issues including consideration of other potential vendors.
- **Signage** – any signage would need to be compliant with the City’s sign ordinance including off-premise advertising.
- **Wind/Hurricane tolerance** – any vulnerability of the solar charging stations/benches to wind/hurricane events would need to be understood and addressed.
- **Evaluation** – method of evaluating pilot project.

## Options

There are a few options available to the City regarding the pilot project.

### **A. Proceed with the pilot project covered by the existing agreement for two solar charging stations at the Rosa Parks Transfer Station.**

#### Pros

- The existing agreement has been executed and is in place allowing the pilot project to proceed immediately.
- The project would start small and gain experience before considering the feasibility of expanding the pilot project to more locations or considering other alternatives.
- A smaller initial pilot project may allow time to identify useful ways to gauge success. The charging stations/benches have no ability to track usage which staff believes is important to gauge demand for the product and success of the pilot project.
- Supports local renewable energy.
- Supports a local business.

#### Cons

- Starting with 2 versus 10 charging stations may not provide the scale necessary in the initial pilot project to gain broader community exposure to the solar charging stations.
- Pure Solar Energy prefers a single mobilization to install 10 solar charging stations.

### **B. Proceed with the pilot project covered by the existing agreement for two solar charging stations at Rosa Parks Transfer Station for a six month period. Consider expanding the pilot project to an additional 8 locations at the end of the six month period based on the results of the initial pilot project.**

#### Pros

- The existing agreement has been executed and is in place allowing the pilot project to proceed immediately.

- The project would start small and gain experience before considering the feasibility of expanding the pilot project to more locations or considering other alternatives.
- There is the opportunity to expand to the full proposed pilot project of 10 solar charging stations after the initial six month pilot project if the results are positive and any other important issues addressed.
- A smaller initial pilot project may allow time to identify ways to gauge success. The charging stations have no ability to track usage which staff believes is important to gauge demand for the product and success of the pilot project.
- Supports local renewable energy.
- Supports local business.

#### Cons

- Starting with 2 versus 10 charging stations may not provide the scale necessary in the initial pilot project to gain broader community exposure to the solar charging stations.
- Pure Solar Energy prefers a single mobilization to install 10 solar charging stations.

### **C. Expand the initial pilot project to 10 solar charging stations.**

#### Pros

- Allows broader community exposure to the solar charging stations as part of the initial pilot project.
- Allows for a single mobilization by Pure Energy Solar for installation.
- Supports local renewable energy.
- Supports local business.

#### Cons

- A larger pilot project is a more demanding undertaking for Pure Solar Energy and potentially the City in terms of determining locations, gaining approvals, installation and measuring the results of the pilot project.
- A larger pilot project may create greater expectations that the solar charging stations will remain beyond the pilot project period which would create challenges for the City to address procurement and funding issues.
- The costs shared by Pure Energy Solar are \$3,895 for a solar charging station and \$10,000 for a solar bench although they indicated that the price may be negotiable. The City has no current funds budgeted for this project. If the City were to have 9 solar charging stations and one solar bench installed for a pilot project and then desire to purchase them, the total cost would be approximately \$45,055 based on the pricing shared.

### **Staff Recommended Option**

City staff recommends Option B to proceed with the pilot project covered by the existing agreement for two solar charging stations at Rosa Parks Transfer Station for a six month period and consider expanding the pilot project to an additional 8 locations at the end of the six month period based on the results of the initial pilot project.

### **Attachments/References**

Attachment A: License Agreement for Solar Charging Station at Rosa Parks RTS Downtown Station

Attachment B: Solar Charging Station Flyer

Attachment C: Solar Bench Flyer