

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

Thursday, November 15, 2018

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## **City of Denton Signs on Two More Solar Contracts**

**Denton, Tex.** - This week, Denton Mayor Chris Watts and his city council colleagues unanimously approved two new solar contracts, pushing Denton closer to a 100% renewable goal and signaling the end of reliance on the 35-year-old coal plant known as Gibbons Creek.

Denton's new solar contracts are unique in that they are part of a joint effort with several other public utilities, including Greenville Utilities Commission, Bryan Texas Utilities, Garland Power & Light, New Braunfels Utilities and the City of Kerrville. These utilities asked for a request for proposals (RFP) back in March, and the response led to more than 37 solar companies offering over 100 different projects in more than 60 counties.

The decision to invest heavily in solar could be an indication that Gibbons Creek located northeast of Bryan-College Station is nearing its retirement. The 485 MW coal plant is currently mothballed. Owned jointly by the Cities of Garland, Bryan, and Denton, the plant has only operated during the summer months in recent years, and there has been an attempt by the cities to sell the plants but there have been no bidders.

In response, **Cyrus Reed, Conservation Director of the Sierra Club**, released the following statement:

“These recent solar investments by Denton and the other public utilities will not only help clean our electric grid, produce jobs and build the tax base, they will help these same cities transition away from the use of dirty coal. We look forward to working with all cities to increase their use of renewables on the grid, and also invest in local energy solutions like community solar, energy efficiency, storage, and demand response.”

In response, **Ed Soph, Denton resident and Sierra Club volunteer**, released the following statement:

“While we remain disappointed in the decision of our city council to invest in a new gas plant last year, we are excited that they continue to invest in new wind and solar resources. Once these projects come online, our hope is that we can finally retire our dirty coal plant, limit the use of our gas plant and work toward a clean energy future.”

In response, **Chrissy Mann, Senior Campaign Representative with the Texas Sierra Club's Beyond Coal campaign**, released the following statement:

“We look forward to working with the city councils and utility boards of the other cities to bring these solar projects online in the near term. Solar energy won't use important water resources, and it does not produce smog or dangerous carbon pollution like coal. We hope the cities that own Gibbons Creek will agree to permanently retire it as soon as possible, begin reclamation, and work with the local community for a just transition for its workers.”

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