



AGENDA INFORMATION SHEET

DEPARTMENT: City Manager's Office

CM: Sara Hensley

DATE: December 3, 2024

SUBJECT

Receive a report, hold a discussion, and give staff direction on pending City Council requests for:

- 1) Installation of rooftop and wall gardens and solar panels with batteries on City buildings.
[Estimated Presentation/Discussion Time: 30 minutes]

BACKGROUND

During the work session discussion on August 20, 2024, Council directed staff to draft an ordinance for consideration that would reflect a revised process to improve the current two-minute pitch process (as outlined in Section 2-30 of the Code of Ordinances) with better information, increased engagement of the community through the elevation of involvement of boards and commissions, and budget alignment. The attached ordinance reflects this change in Section 2-30(c) (**Exhibit 2**).

Staff will review one outstanding request for information per elected official during each work session. The work session process will include staff introducing the requested topic followed by the requesting elected official having up to two minutes to describe and justify their request. The remaining elected officials will then have up to one minute to provide feedback and indicate their support for the use of staff time to respond to the request. Staff will respond to all requests where a consensus of at least four elected officials is established with an Informal Staff Report (ISR) or Legal Staff Report (LSR) outlining estimated cost to implement, estimated timeline for implementation of, and determination of strategic alignment of the request.

If the requesting elected official's request is satisfied with the report, the request will be concluded with no further action. If the request is not satisfied, the request may be submitted to the Agenda Committee to enter the Council Committee Process as defined in Section 2-30(c)(5). If there is a consensus of six (6) Council Members, a resolution or ordinance may be placed on a future City Council agenda without going through the Council Committee Process.

The Agenda Committee will use the ISR or LSR to determine if there are any existing committees, boards, or commissions whose defined scope includes the request. If any such committee, board, or commission exists, the Agenda Committee will direct the staff liaison(s) for any appropriate committees, boards, or commissions to find the soonest feasible date and add the request to their agenda for consideration. After review by committees, boards, or commissions, if funding is available to implement the request, as determined by the City Manager, the request will proceed to a City Council work session. A request without available funding will be scheduled for discussion by the City Manager at the next City Council Budget Workshop or Strategic Retreat. The request will either be included in the proposed budget for the next fiscal

year or concluded with no further action. Staff time will not be allowed to work on any request that is concluded with no further action unless the request is resubmitted in accordance with Section 2-30(c).

The following items will be discussed during this work session:

1.) Installation of rooftop and wall gardens and solar panels with batteries on City buildings.

a. Requestor: Council Member Beck

b. Council Member Request: “As we continue building a more sustainable and operating-cost-efficient Denton, I propose we explore implementing greenroofs (rooftop and wall gardens), as well as rooftop solar/battery installations, for all new city government buildings and existing ones where structurally feasible. This initiative will not only benefit our environment but will also save taxpayer dollars through operational savings in the long run. It will also pilot feasibility for other institutions within Denton to similarly adopt such strategies.

The National League of Cities has had extensive workshops by the DOE and the EPA describing how rooftop gardens reduce building energy costs by insulating against heat in the summer and retaining warmth in the winter, lowering utility bills. They also absorb rainwater, reducing stormwater runoff and alleviating pressure on city infrastructure, which helps taxpayers avoid costly upgrades to our sewer systems as well as mitigating street and sidewalk runoff. Plus, by improving air quality, enhancing urban biodiversity, and providing habitat for pollinator insect species, these gardens contribute to a healthier community—both reducing public health costs and enhancing wildlife.

Rooftop solar with battery storage delivers immediate and ongoing savings by generating clean energy onsite - significantly reducing energy bills for public buildings - energy that can be accessed in peak load hours or during emergencies, improving resiliency and reducing taxpayer costs. Together, rooftop gardens and solar panels work synergistically—plants cool solar panels, increasing their efficiency by 10-25% thus driving even more savings.

This dual strategy represents a cost-effective, forward-thinking investment. By reducing operating expenses for city buildings, taxpayers will see real, tangible savings year after year. Furthermore, the combination of green roofs and solar panels can extend the lifespan of roofing materials, cutting down on costly repairs and replacements. Strategies similar to this have already been implemented at the Embassy Suites Complex.

To advance this idea, I request an informal staff report (ISR) to analyze feasibility, projected savings, and cost-benefit impacts for taxpayers. Following that, we can discuss the findings in a council work session and chart the best path forward. This initiative is about saving money while creating a healthier, more sustainable Denton for generations to come.”

c. Date Requested: November 25, 2024

d. Format for Response: ISR

EXHIBITS

Exhibit 1 – Agenda Information Sheet

Exhibit 2 – Ordinance No. 24-1725

Exhibit 3 – Presentation

Respectfully Submitted:

Jesse Kent

Assistant to the City Manager