

Gwinnett County Government NEWS RELEASE

Charles E. Bannister, Chairman
Board of Commissioners

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STIMULUS FUNDS TO SAVE ENERGY

(Lawrenceville, Ga., Sept. 15, 2009) – Commissioners voted on Tuesday to accept \$7.3 million in federal stimulus funds through the U.S. Department of Energy. Gwinnett is one of 2,300 counties, cities, states, and Indian tribes in the nation that will share a total of \$3.2 billion in Energy Efficiency and Conservation block grants, which are funded this year by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act that was passed by Congress earlier this year.

“Our proposal includes energy audits, energy-efficient equipment retrofits, conversion of traffic signals to LED lights and a methane gas waste-to-energy project,” said Gwinnett’s Engineering Coordinator Dennis Baxter. “We reviewed ideas from various departments and submitted the ones that have the largest environmental and economic impact.”

The methane gas project will leverage \$3.5 million through the Energy Efficiency and Conservation block grant and \$5 million through the Georgia Environmental Facilities Authority. This project will use sewer gas to power an electric generator that will help power the F. Wayne Hill Water Resources Center. Specifically, the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant will pay to install a receiving facility there for fats, oils and grease removed from grease traps at area restaurants and food processing facilities. The grease will produce additional methane gas to power the plant and provide an economical option for disposal that also reduces sewer clogging.

“This is another great example of our County staff, Board of Commissioners and Congressional delegation members working together to get much-needed stimulus money for Gwinnett,” said Commission Chairman Charles Bannister. “We’re pleased to be one of the recipients of these Department of Energy funds that will help us reach our goal of reducing annual energy consumption by 20 million kilowatt-hours and lowering greenhouse gas emissions by 15,000 to 20,000 metric tons.”

Gwinnett County expects to produce 1.6 megawatts of electricity and save or retain about 100 jobs with this stimulus money.

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