



Written by [James Murphy](#) on December 22, 2018

Texas City Celebrated by Al Gore in Financial Trouble Over Green Initiatives

Georgetown, Texas, a city featured in Al Gore's 2017 science fiction film *An Inconvenient Sequel* because of its commitment to "green" energy, is now facing a serious financial shortfall due to those policies.

Gore, a carbon-credit entrepreneur and failed presidential candidate, copiously praised the city, saying, "I think Georgetown is already a trailblazer."



"And one thing that Georgetown demonstrates to other places that are just beginning to think about [green energy] is that the power supply is not only more affordable, the cost is predictable for at least 25 years into the future and really beyond that."

Wrong, Mr. Gore. Those costs aren't even predictable even a year into the future.

Georgetown, a city of approximately 60,000 people in the center of the state, about 30 miles from Austin, is now desperately attempting to renegotiate contracts that it currently has with two renewable energy companies from which it purchases energy.

Georgetown has signed long-term contracts with the two companies: a 20-year contract the Spinning Spur 3 wind farm west of Amarillo and a 25-year contract with the Buckthorn solar power farm near Fort Stockton. The city purposefully purchased more energy than it needed to accommodate expected growth.

The city planned to sell the excess energy back on the Texas electricity market. However, the drop in fossil fuel energy prices — particularly natural gas prices — in recent years made that plan unprofitable, to say the least. Georgetown had budgeted \$45 million for renewable energy, but ended up paying \$53.6 million. In total, the city lost a total of 6.8 million in fiscal 2018 because of the switch to "green energy."

City Manager David Morgan claims that the shortfall would have happened whether they had purchased green energy or not, and that the shortfall was more due to the long-term nature of the contracts. "We took competitive bids for all types of energy production and chose wind and solar because of the competitive nature of the pricing at the time," Morgan said.

"If we had chosen a natural gas project in 2012 for a long-term contract, we would still have the same situation, because it's all about long-term contracting and where the energy market was in 2012."

Maybe. But some residents and at least one conservative think tank believe that Georgetown's "green" initiative was more about attracting attention than dollars and sense.

Bill Peacock, the vice-president of the [Texas Public Policy Foundation](#) (TPPF), disagrees. "The city claims that this is just one of the challenges with doing business in an energy market and could have happened with any contract they had," Peacock said. "That's not the case, because what they did was



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bought more electricity than they could use almost any day of the year.... They knew they would have to buy this and sell it, and that's not the way most people work. It's more evidence that they are wanting to portray themselves as a green city rather than doing something for their consumers."

And Georgetown has definitely attracted that type of attention. Besides Gore, many mainstream media outlets have taken to calling Georgetown a "city of the future" because of its commitment to "green" energy. The Texas city has even attracted [international attention](#) for being seen as a community that is "battling Trump" on climate change.

Dale Ross, the Republican mayor of Georgetown, sold the "green" energy scheme to his constituents as not just an environmental measure, but a cost-savings measure as well. "This is a long-term pocketbook issue," Ross said in August. "It's a win for economics and a win for the environment."

It's also an attention-grabber for Ross. At a town hall hosted by socialist Senator Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.), which also included incoming socialist Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-N.Y.), Ross doubled down on his claim that "green" energy not only saves the planet but saves money as well.

"We're at a tipping point right now," Ross said. "Coal cannot compete with wind and solar on cost."

But it's definitely not just about dollars and sense for Ross, who according to the [Smithsonian is the "unlikeliest hero of the green revolution."](#)

"I think we have a duty and obligation to leave the world better than we found it," Ross told the panel. "We can do that; you just have to have bold, visionary leaders who we can elect — with ya'll's help." The line received a deafening roar from the environmentalist crowd.

But while the mayor receives adulation from Al Gore and environmentalists worldwide, the taxpayers of the city are on the hook for an additional \$7 million in energy costs because of short-sighted, attention-grabbing "green" policies.



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