

## City of San Antonio: Mission Verde Sustainability Plan

### Strategy #1: Energy Infrastructure

***Initiative #1: Build a 21<sup>st</sup> Century urban energy infrastructure in San Antonio with distributed energy.***



The hallmark of a 21<sup>st</sup> Century urban energy infrastructure will be distributed energy. This is a world where energy is generated through renewable energy sources such as solar, wind, biomass, and geothermal, originated from thousands of sources such as buildings and homes, stored until needed, and connected with a smart, multi-directional grid. This world will replace our current energy infrastructure, which is based on large, mostly fossil-fueled generating plants that transmit energy to consumers on a one-way grid.

It will be one of the most dramatic economic transitions in world history. The noted economist Jeremy Rifkin, who spoke of this new world at the CPS Energy Summit in the summer of 2008, calls this transition the “Third Industrial Revolution,” which will bring a “new era of ‘distributed capitalism’ in which millions of existing and new businesses and homeowners become energy players. In the process, we will create millions of green jobs, jumpstart a new technology revolution and dramatically increase productivity, as well as mitigate climate change.”

This transition is inevitable. It has already started in Europe, Asia, and the Persian Gulf. It is now coming to the United States. The question for San Antonio is whether we will lead,

join, or simply wait for others to make the transition while San Antonio falls irretrievably behind.

CPS Energy has spoken. It wants San Antonio to lead. On January 20, 2009, the CPS Energy Board adopted a Sustainable Energy Policy Statement that specifically endorsed the transition from a centralized power model to a distributed energy one. The Board also endorsed, as the means to achieve the transition, Jeremy Rifkin's Four Pillars approach—renewable energy, buildings as positive power plants, energy storage, and smart grids/plug-in vehicles.

It is time for the City of San Antonio to join with CPS Energy to make San Antonio a leader in this new energy world. By moving toward a distributed energy model now, San Antonio can become a flagship Energy City for the United States, create thousands of green jobs, foster new technologies and industries for San Antonio, and prepare our city to compete and lead in a 21<sup>st</sup> Century global economy. It is an opportunity San Antonio cannot miss. The question is how to begin this transformation.

On December 19, 2008, Mayor Hardberger hosted a conference call with Jeremy Rifkin, his Global CEO Roundtable, and the CPS Energy leadership. On the call representing Rifkin's team were architects, engineers, corporate CEO's, sustainability consultants, and renewable energy experts from around the world. His team included representatives from IBM, Siemens, Philips, GE, the Alliance to Save Energy, the GridWise Alliance, the US Green Building Council, CH2M Hill, and the Solar Energy Industries Association. Rifkin and his team represent a unique collaboration. Their message to San Antonio: they want to bring their unique collaboration of vision, expertise, and resources, to our city to transition San Antonio to a distributed energy model and make San Antonio, in Rifkin's terms, a flagship Third Industrial Revolution city. It is an unprecedented opportunity for our city.



### **Action**

*Move to transform San Antonio to a distributed energy system. Partner with CPS Energy to hire Rifkin and his team to develop step-by-step guidelines for implementing a distributed energy model in San Antonio.*

## **Timetable**

February 2009: Hire Rifkin and his team.  
March 2009: Bring Rifkin and his team to San Antonio.  
April 2009: Receive plan from Rifkin; begin implementation.

## **Related documents:**

CPS Energy Board of Trustees Sustainable Energy Policy Statement, adopted January 20, 2009

Jeremy Rifkin, *Leading the Way to the Third Industrial Revolution and a New Distributed Social Vision for the World in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*

Jeremy Rifkin, *A Brief Summary of the Four Pillars of the Third Industrial Revolution*

