

Company to invest up to \$125 million in 2 power plants in Victoria

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Agilon Energy will invest up to \$125 million into Victoria County to build two electric power plants.

The company will be one of the top five taxpayers in the county once the plants are running, said Dale Fowler, Victoria Economic Development Corporation president.

Ryan Castleman, Agilon Energy's Chief Operating Officer, announced the company's decision to invest in Victoria at the economic organization's semiannual meeting Wednesday. The lender is Prudential Capital.

Castleman said that traditional utility construction methods would typically result in a total cost for both projects of approximately \$125 million, but "Agilon has developed some techniques and is using technology to keep costs much lower."

The company bought the city's former water treatment plant site near Willow and Senecio streets from the city of Victoria and is leasing Port of Victoria land, Castleman said. One plant will be on Willow Street and the other on the leased land. Company officials have considered Victoria since 2015.

"During construction there will be a total of approximately 100 temporary jobs," Castleman said. There will be "additional tax revenues the state and local governments will receive from the projects (and) two permanent jobs."

The two plants will provide power during peak demand, specifically during hot summer days and cold winter days, Castleman said. About half the state's power comes from the wind, he said, but how much power the wind generates can't be controlled.

"They (the plants) come on when the wind is not blowing," he said. "There is so much wind power in Texas. There has to be something that comes on when the wind does not blow."

Construction began in April and is set to finish by the end of March 2019, Castleman said.

"The construction is relatively simple," he said. It "involves foundation and assembly of the power equipment on site."

The plants will operate during about 10 percent of the year during times of market scarcity.

Agilon is a private company based in Houston and will fully own the the two plants, Victoria Port Power and Victoria City Power plants.