



CITY OF NORMAN, OK STAFF REPORT

MEETING DATE: 2/11/2025

REQUESTER: MICHELE LOUDENBACK, ENVIRONMENTAL AND SUSTAINABILITY
MANAGER

PRESENTER: CHRIS MATTINGLY, DIRECTOR OF UTILITIES

TITLE: CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL, ACCEPTANCE, REJECTION,
AMENDMENT, AND/OR POSTPONEMENT OF CONTRACT K-2425-94: A
SERVICE AGREEMENT BY AND BETWEEN THE CITY OF NORMAN
AND NORMAN ARTS COUNCIL, FOR THE 2025 ARTFUL INLETS
PROJECT.

BACKGROUND:

The City of Norman (City) was designated by rule under 40 CFR §122.32(a)(1) as a Phase II Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) City subject to the 1999 Phase II Stormwater Final Rule promulgated by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). On September 9, 1997, EPA delegated responsibility for stormwater discharges associated with construction sites, industrial sites, and Phase I and II MS4s to the Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ). Under this delegation authority, DEQ issued General Permit OKR04 for Stormwater Discharges Associated with Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems in Small Cities, Urbanized Areas, and Other County Areas in the State of Oklahoma on February 8, 2005. On March 17, 2017, Authorization No. OKR040015 was reauthorized by DEQ and required that the Stormwater Management Program and all associated activities must be fully implemented by the end of the 5-year permit term.

The Stormwater Management Program outlines the activities that the City will implement during the permit cycle to reduce pollution in stormwater runoff. One of the ways that the City does this is through public education. The Stormwater Division conducts public education in a number of different ways, including distributing utility bill inserts with a stormwater message to residents, conducting workshops, and participating in community events and festivals such as 2nd Friday Art Walk and Downtown Fall Festival.

Stormwater education can also be done with posters, videos, and public art. One way that cities across the country have combined public art and stormwater education is through storm inlet art programs. These programs bring together stormwater experts and the arts community to draw attention to often hidden stormwater infrastructure, such as storm drains and inlets, to raise awareness of stormwater pollution and the actions the general public can take to reduce the amount of pollution that is discharged to local creeks and streams by using the infrastructure as

the canvas for artwork. Several cities in Arkansas and Oklahoma including Fayetteville, Springdale, Rogers, and Bentonville, AR, and Muskogee, OK, have implemented inlet art programs with great success.

At the request of Councilmember Bierman and with support from Mayor Miller, the Public Works Department, Stormwater Division, developed an inlet art program in consultation with the Norman Arts Council, now referred to as the Norman Arts Council (NAC) in the fall of 2019. The first set of five (5) Artful Inlets were installed in April 2019 as part of Earth Month and 2nd Friday Art Walk. The inaugural year was such a great success and received so many positive responses from the community that the City and NAC agreed to partner again in 2020. Despite the pandemic, 5 additional Artful Inlets were installed in October 2020 and were showcased during the October Virtual 2nd Friday Art Walk. Examples from the most recent installation, April 2024, are included for reference.

Given the success of the Artful Inlets program thus far, the City and the NAC desire to partner again in 2025 to facilitate the selection, location, and installation of public art on five (5) additional pieces of stormwater infrastructure in Norman as part of the Artful Inlets Program.

DISCUSSION:

In order to continue the Artful Inlets Program and select artists to install storm inlet art, the City and the NAC wish to enter into Services Agreement, Contract K-2425-94. The NAC, Public Arts Board, and City will invite artists to submit designs that will transform city storm drains into works of public art. These artful inlets will educate and raise awareness that pollutants that go down storm drains have a devastating impact on our local water quality.

Five (5) pieces of stormwater infrastructure have been identified for this project. They will be located in Campus Corner along Buchanan Avenue, Asp Avenue, and Boyd Street. The artwork will have a stormwater and/or water quality theme and must be adaptable to any of the five specified pieces of infrastructure. Each selected artist will incorporate their original design into the prescribed area around the stormwater infrastructure.

This Council action is to approve Contract K-2425-94 between the City and the NAC for implementation of the 2025 Artful Inlets Program. The NAC will provide \$3,750 in Public Arts Board funding for the project in order to pay a stipend to the selected artists. The City will provide \$3,750 in funding for materials and supplies needed for the selected artwork as well as in-kind services to ensure the inlets are properly prepared and protected for art installation. Funding for this project is available in the Stormwater Quality budget, Other Supplies and Materials – Miscellaneous (Account No. 10110225-43199). If approved, this program will take place in April 2025.

RECOMMENDATION 1:

Staff recommends approval of Services Agreement, Contract K-2425-94, with the Norman Arts Council for implementation of the 2025 Artful Inlets Program.

Examples from April 2024:

