



CITY OF NORMAN, OK STAFF REPORT

MEETING DATE: 01/28/2025

REQUESTER: Peter Wolbach, Staff Engineer

PRESENTER: Peter Wolbach, Staff Engineer

ITEM TITLE: CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL, ACCEPTANCE, REJECTION, AMENDMENT, AND/OR POSTPONEMENT OF CONTRACT K-2425-36: BY AND BETWEEN THE NORMAN UTILITIES AUTHORITY AND GOOGLE, L.L.C., TO RECEIVE \$500,000 IN GRANT FUNDING FROM GOOGLE FOR THE WATER RECLAMATION FACILITY (WRF) NON-POTABLE REUSE AND APPROPRIATION AS OUTLINED IN THE STAFF REPORT.

BACKGROUND:

The Wastewater Reclamation Facility (WRF) has historically used a non-potable water reuse (NPR) system to use treated wastewater instead of potable (drinkable) water for routine cleaning and maintenance of WRF equipment. The NPR system more efficiently uses treated wastewater thereby reducing demands on the water system for uses that don't need potable water.

The NPR system had operational challenges for staff during its usage. Additionally, from 2015 to 2018, significant upgrades to the WRF were completed as part of the Wastewater Treatment Plant Improvements - Phase 2 project. The NPR wasn't upgraded as part of the project and it was shut off, to eliminate the potential use of the non-potable water for potable or other uses not approved by the Department of Environmental Quality. Due to the outage period, there were water quality and quantity issues upon restarting the NPR system. For system reliability, staff continued using potable water through the plant in lieu of the NPR system since the causes for degraded water quality and quantity could not be identified.

In November 2023, City staff met with Google, L.L.C. (Google), representatives from Brown and Caldwell, an environmental engineering and consulting firm, to discuss potential sponsorship from Google to rehabilitate the NPR system. The proposed sponsorship stems from Google's Water Stewardship Strategy (Google's corporate strategy to replenish 120% of the water used in their data center and headquarter operations), which includes investment in community projects across the United States.

DISCUSSION:

Staff has evaluated the need to rehabilitate the existing NPR system at the WRF, and Google's sponsorship provides this opportunity. Key project components include:

1. The rehabilitated system is estimated to provide 0.3 to 0.6 million gallons per day of non-potable water of adequate quality to replace current potable water in WRF operations, including cleaning and maintenance, cooling water, process water, and potentially compost irrigation.
2. Project objectives include an assessment of the current system, upgrades to the system to restore operability, and installing additional flow meters to measure on-site NPR water usage.

Restoring the NPR system's functionality will offset potable water supply previously used for on-site operations.

The \$500,000 in funding will come through Google's Water Stewardship Strategy, which includes:

1. A 2021 corporate pledge to replenish more water than consumed across Google's data centers and offices, targeting 120% replenishment by 2030.
2. Project identification and implementation support from Brown and Caldwell to scope and vet potential partners and projects.

The City of Norman/Norman Utilities Authority was selected for this voluntary program based on its water conservation leadership, demonstrated by the "Water for 2060 Excellence" Award, received in 2022. Through discussions with City/NUA staff, Brown and Caldwell identified the NPR project as optimal for the current funding cycle. Google's Water Stewardship program is not regulatory-driven and supports innovative utilities implementing impactful water conservation projects.

Ongoing requirements for the NUA and staff will include:

- NUA and staff will communicate with Google staff or affiliates through email at the end of each year of project implementation (2025) confirming and summarizing implementation efforts and results.
- Monitoring of project performance and complementary benefits over a period of at least 10 years.
 - NUA and staff to provide a brief report for each year of monitoring during the first quarter of the following year. The schedule for tendering implementation and monitoring reports is displayed in the table below.
 - The annual Monitoring Report will describe project results, including the metered volume of water reused, and any remedial measures recommended to ensure continual function of the NPR system.
- NUA and staff will provide Google, L.L.C., hyperlinks to any new press coverage related to the project.
- As applicable, NUA and staff will identify and communicate to Google any changes to the project (e.g., total project cost) and the reason for change and any additional funders. Any change to the total project cost must be approved by Google in writing.
- NUA and staff will provide updates on the quantification of the project benefits resulting from the monitoring and implementation verification of the project. These updates will follow the same schedule as the implementation and monitoring reports.

Project Reporting Period	Organization Email to Google
Year 1 (2025) Implementation Report	Q1 of Following Year
Years 2-11 (2026-2035) Monitoring Report	Q1 of Following Year

Upon approval, the sponsorship will be accepted as a private grant, funds will be received through the Wastewater Reclamation Fund, Miscellaneous Grant Reimbursement (Account 329-331346) and allocated to WRF Non-Potable Reuse Grant, Design (Account 32993394-46201; Project WW0211).

RECOMMENDATION 1:

Staff recommends that the NUA approve Contract K-2425-36 with Google, L.L.C., to receive funding for WRF Non-Potable Reuse Grant.

RECOMMENDATION 2:

Upon approval of K-2425-36, staff recommends that the NUA receives the \$500,000 in funding through revenue account Miscellaneous Grant Reimbursement (Account 329-331346).

RECOMMENDATION 3:

Staff recommends that the funding received is then appropriated to WRF Non-Potable Reuse Grant, Design (Account 32993394-46201; Project WW0211).