

Staff Report

TO: Board of Directors

FROM: Gabe Aronow, PE, Director of Engineering

DATE: October 14, 2026

SUBJECT: Consulting Services Geotechnical Investigations and Containment Design Project for Chicago Park Powerhouse GSU Transformer Replacement (C0019) (Consent)

ENGINEERING

RECOMMENDATION:

Award a consulting contract to NV5, Inc. for geotechnical investigations and design services for the Geotechnical Investigations and Containment Design Project for the Chicago Park Powerhouse Generator Step Up (GSU) Transformer Replacement (Project) in the amount of \$117,052, plus a contingency of \$11,705, and authorize the General Manager to execute the appropriate documents.

BACKGROUND:

The Chicago Park Powerhouse (CPPH) was constructed in 1965 and is a 39 Mega Watt (MW) hydroelectric facility located on the Bear River. The unit is a critical piece of the District's Yuba Bear Project and is situated downstream of the Dutch Flat Afterbay Dam and upstream of Rollins Reservoir.

The District is replacing the CPPH Generator Step-Up (GSU) Transformer. As part of the replacement project, the existing transformer will need to be removed from service and relocated to a properly designed containment area onsite for long-term storage.

Retaining the existing transformer onsite is a critical contingency measure for the District. The transformer represents a valuable backup asset that can be returned to service if the new transformer experiences an unexpected failure, operational issue, or other significant problem following installation. Large power transformers are specialized and long-lead-time equipment, and obtaining a replacement or returning a transformer to service can require significant time and expense. Maintaining the existing transformer onsite will provide the District with an available backup and help

minimize the potential duration and operational impacts of an unplanned outage involving the new transformer.

For this reason, it is in the District's best interest to preserve the existing transformer rather than dispose of it or move it to an offsite location where it may be more difficult and time-consuming to access if needed. The existing transformer will be maintained onsite in a secure, properly designed containment area so that it remains available as a contingency asset for the District. Because the existing transformer contains insulating oil, it cannot simply be placed in an unprotected area for long-term storage. A dedicated containment area is required to provide secondary containment in the event of an oil leak or release, protecting the surrounding soil and environment and allowing any released oil to be contained and appropriately managed. The containment area must also be designed to support the substantial weight of the transformer and account for site-specific soil and drainage conditions. Proper design is therefore necessary to ensure the transformer can be safely stored and preserved as a backup asset for the District.

The proposed consulting services contract is necessary to evaluate the project site, conduct the required geotechnical investigations, and design the containment area needed for long-term storage of the existing transformer. These services will allow the District to preserve a valuable backup transformer while ensuring it is stored safely and in accordance with applicable requirements.

On August 24, 2026, the District sent a request for proposals for engineering services to seven (7) qualified consulting firms in geotechnical investigations and structural design. The District received one (1) proposal. Four (4) firms declined to bid due to workload concerns and the small size of the project. Two (2) firms were unresponsive.

The Proposal was reviewed by Staff member independently and discussed. Staff recommends that NV5 be awarded the consulting contract in the amount of \$117,052 and that the Board of Director authorize a contingency of \$11,705.

BUDGETARY IMPACT:

The Chicago Park Powerhouse (Refurbishment) GSU Replacement Project is included in the approved 2026 CIP Budget with a budget of \$2,000,000.

TMTH/

Attachments: None