



RIVERSIDE PUBLIC UTILITIES

Board Memorandum

BOARD OF PUBLIC UTILITIES

DATE: APRIL 13, 2026

SUBJECT: BID NO. SUB-02C PROCUREMENT OF TWO GROUNDING TRANSFORMERS WITH NIAGARA POWER TRANSFORMER OF BUFFALO, NEW YORK FOR THE WILDERNESS SUBSTATION IN THE AMOUNT OF \$2,762,537

ISSUE:

Consider awarding Bid No. SUB-02C for the procurement of two 66kV Grounding Transformers for the Wilderness Substation to Niagara Power Transformer, of Buffalo, New York in the amount of \$2,762,537, with a contingency of 10% in the amount of \$276,253, for a total not-to-exceed amount of \$3,038,790.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the Board of Public Utilities:

1. Award Bid No. SUB-02C for the procurement of two 66kV Grounding Transformers for Wilderness Substation with Niagara Power Transformer, of Buffalo, New York, in the amount of \$2,762,537, with a contingency of 10% in the amount of \$276,253, for a total not-to-exceed amount of \$3,038,790 and reject bid from Waukesha of Waukesha, WI as nonresponsive; and
2. Authorize the City Manager, or designee, to execute any documents necessary to effectuate the procurement described herein, as well as the ability to make minor non-substantive changes in alignment with all purchasing policies.

BACKGROUND:

The Riverside Transmission Reliability Project (RTRP) is a joint project with Southern California Edison (SCE) that will provide Riverside Public Utilities (RPU) with a critical second connection to the state electric transmission grid. This second transmission connection will strengthen long-term capacity for Riverside's electric system.

A key element of RTRP is the proposed RPU Wilderness Substation, where power delivered from the state transmission system will be integrated into RPU's system serving the City of Riverside.

For the RTRP project, the 220kV to 66kV Wilderness Substation is the key substation that needs to be built. The scope of work for this phase includes procuring two new 66kV zig-zag connected

grounding transformers. A grounding transformer is a specialized piece of equipment that creates a neutral reference point in the electrical system. It helps the system quickly detect and safely clears the ground faults. This helps to protect costly equipment from damage, reduces the chance of wider outages, and supports continued service to homes and businesses in Riverside.

This grounding transformer is a long-lead item and early procurement is necessary to support the overall project schedule. Future project phases will include procurement of fourteen 66kV circuit breakers, thirty-four 66kV disconnect switches, steel structures, and associated hardware. Any additional procurements of materials or construction activities will be addressed in subsequent phases.



TYPICAL 66KV GROUNDING TRANSFORMER

DISCUSSION:

On October 31, 2025, RPU released Bid Sub-02C and invited six (6) prospective bidders to submit bids through an informal procurement process for equipment and materials. Bid Sub-02C included mandatory terms and conditions (City T&C's), along with a 120-day bid validity requirement. The purpose of the 120-day bid validity/price-hold period and acceptance of the City's terms and conditions were mandatory bid requirements that apply to all bidders to ensure fair competition and allow adequate time for evaluation, negotiation of final commercial and technical terms and conditions, and preparation of the contract recommendation for Board consideration.

On January 19, 2026, three (3) vendors submitted bids. Staff evaluated all bids for price and conformance with the RFB requirements. The apparent low bidder Waukesha conditioned its offer with a 30-day price-hold period and included exceptions to the City T&C's. Upon request for clarification of such conditions, bidder confirmed 30-day price-hold as well as their proposed exceptions to T&C's. Due to not meeting the mandatory specification requirements, staff determined Waukesha to be non-responsive and therefore ineligible for award. Niagara Power

Transformer of Buffalo, New York was determined to be the lowest responsive and responsible bidder. Niagara’s bid price was within the engineering estimate. The bidder’s table is below.

Vendors	City Location	Bid Amount	Rank
Niagara Power Transformer	Buffalo, NY	\$ 2,762,537.00	1
Howard Power Solutions	Ellisville, MS	\$ 2,829,951.45	2
Waukesha	Waukesha, WI	\$ 2,749,330.28	Non-responsive due to not meeting the mandatory bid requirements

➤ *Engineer's Estimates* \$3,000,000.00

The purchase of the equipment and material is covered under Section 404 of Purchasing Resolution No. 24101. Section 404 specifies specialized equipment that is particular to the needs of the City’s Public Utilities Department and provides for acquisition through Informal Procurement if it appears to the Purchasing Manager to be in the best interest of the City.

Purchasing Resolution No. 24101. Section 404. Utilities Exception. The Water, Electric and Sewer Utilities have a need for compatibility within their respective systems for uniform operation, maintenance and replacement, and this need can be met by procuring certain supplies, equipment, and materials supplies through Informal Procurement or Negotiated Procurement.

The Purchasing Manager concurs that the recommended actions comply with Purchasing Resolution No. 24101.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The total fiscal impact is \$ 3,038,790. Sufficient funds are available in Public Utilities Electrical Capital Account No. 6130000-470685 (RTRP non-reimbursable).

Prepared by: Daniel Honeyfield, Utilities Assistant General Manager/ Energy Delivery
 Approved by: David A. Garcia, Utilities General Manager
 Certified as to availability of funds: Julie Nemes, Interim Finance Director
 Approved by: Gilbert Hernandez, Interim Assistant City Manager
 Approved as to form: Rebecca McKee-Reimbold, Interim City Attorney

- Attachments:
1. Project Site Map
 2. Bid Award Recommendation
 3. Presentation