



STAFF REPORT – CITY COUNCIL MEETING

May 21, 2025

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council Members

FROM: Laura Kadlecik, Senior Project Manager

PREPARER: Mara Grow, Administrative Specialist

DATE: May 13, 2025

TITLE: **Adopt Resolution No. 245-47 Dedicating a Utility Easement to Pacific Gas and Electric Company for Electrical Upgrades for Phase 1 of the Arcata Wastewater Treatment Facilities Upgrade Project; and Authorize the City Manager to Execute All Documents.**

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Council:

- 1) Adopt Resolution No. 245-47 dedicating a 10-foot utility easement over Assessor's Parcel Nos. 503-241-013 and 503-241-015 for electrical upgrades for Phase 1 of the Arcata Wastewater Treatment Facilities Upgrade Project; and
- 2) Authorize the City Manager to execute all applicable documents.

INTRODUCTION:

The City of Arcata began construction of one of the largest capital improvement projects in the City's history—the Arcata Wastewater Treatment Facilities Upgrade Project. The total project cost for Phase 1 of the improvements is approximately \$67 million— \$2.4 million funded via the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program, a small portion via City's Wastewater Fund, and the remainder funded via the State Water Resources Control Board Clean Water State Revolving Fund (SRF) program.

As part of Phase 1 of the Arcata Wastewater Treatment Facilities Upgrade Project, the Corporation Yard facility is upgrading its electrical supply. To support the new power infrastructure, Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) requires a 10-foot easement over two City-owned parcels to allow for future maintenance. Upon Council approval of this action, City staff will coordinate with PG&E to formally record the easement. The proposed easement location and the draft recordation document are attached as Exhibit A.

BACKGROUND:

The City of Arcata (City) Wastewater Treatment Facility (AWTF) currently discharges treated wastewater to Humboldt Bay in conjunction with enhanced treatment occurring in the Arcata Marsh Wildlife Sanctuary (AMWS). Discharges are regulated by the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) through the application of the AWTF National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit, which includes requirements for operation and maintenance, treatment standards, monitoring, discharge location, and water quality standards. In the 2012 AWTF

NPDES permit, the RWQCB included requirements to make changes to the treatment system due to compliance problems associated with discharged water quality. The intent of the required changes is to improve the wastewater treatment process, protect beneficial uses, and reduce chemical disinfection usage. The City completed a Facilities Plan in 2017 for the AWTF that developed four potential options for upgrading the AWTF. Following a number of public meetings, the City Council chose to pursue an AWTF upgrade project option that retained the natural treatment systems of the current AWTF. Effective December 1, 2019, the RWQCB adopted and issued the City's latest NPDES permit for wastewater discharge. Concurrently, the RWQCB issued the City a Time Schedule Order with compliance schedules to complete the AWTF Facilities Upgrade Project to address ongoing discharge violations and treatment deficiencies at the AWTF, which mostly arise from new, stricter water quality standards and byproducts associated with chlorine disinfection. Phase 1 of the AWTF Upgrade Project will address these immediate needs by replacing aging treatment plant infrastructure and installing a new UV disinfection system.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW (CEQA):

City staff completed the required environmental review documents pursuant to both State (CEQA) and Federal (NEPA) requirements. The Notice of Determination was filed in December 2020 (State Clearinghouse 2020100483). Additionally, the California Coastal Commission approved a Coastal Development Permit for the project at their September 2022 hearing.

BUDGET/FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no cost associated with this task. The city team will work closely with PG&E to execute and record the necessary easement documents.

RECOMMENDED COUNCIL ACTION:

Motion to adopt Resolution No. 245-47 dedicating a 10-foot utility easement over Assessor's Parcel Nos. 503-241-013 and 503-241-015 for electrical upgrades for Phase 1 of the Arcata Wastewater Treatment Facilities Upgrade Project; and authorize the City Manager to execute all applicable documents. Consent Calendar vote.

ATTACHMENTS:

- A. Exhibit A: Easement Document
- B. Resolution 245-47