



CITY OF NORMAN, OK STAFF REPORT

MEETING DATE: 3/12/2024

REQUESTER: Michele Loudenback, Environmental and Sustainability Manager

PRESENTER: Michele Loudenback, Environmental and Sustainability Manager

ITEM TITLE: CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL, ACCEPTANCE, REJECTION, AMENDMENT, AND/OR POSTPONEMENT OF A MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING, CONTRACT K-2324-158, BY AND BETWEEN THE CITY OF NORMAN, OKLAHOMA, AND EIGHTTWENTY, LLC, TO ESTABLISH A CITYWIDE SOLAR PHOTOVOLTAIC GROUP PURCHASING PROGRAM, THE NORMAN SOLAR INITIATIVE.

BACKGROUND:

The purpose of a solar photovoltaic system group-purchasing program is to increase education of the local community about solar photovoltaics (PV) while also accelerating installation of these systems. Group purchasing allows residents, businesses, and local organizations to pool their demand for solar installations, which allows for better material pricing and helps lower solar installers' soft costs through improved conversion rates for solar leads. These reduced costs, in turn, make solar energy more affordable for participants that encourages broader adoption within the community. These programs hold significance in several ways. Solar PV not only lowers energy bills but also reduces Green House Gas (GHG) emissions from the power sector. It contributes to enhanced grid resiliency through distributed energy generation and empowers participants by granting them more control over their energy sources.

DISCUSSION:

The City issued Request for Proposals, RFP No. 2324-20 on January 2, 2024, seeking proposals from firms interested and qualified to help lead a community group-purchasing solar energy program called Norman Solar Initiative. Two proposals were received by the deadline of 4:00 PM deadline on January 29, 2024. The RFP Response Review Committee consisted of:

1. Michele Loudenback, Norman Environmental and Norman Sustainability Manager;
2. Nathan Madenwald, Norman Utilities Engineer;
3. Sara Kaplan, Norman Chief Business and Community Relations Officer;
4. Michelle Chao, Norman Stormwater Program Specialist; and
5. Scott Martin, President/CEO of Norman Chamber of Commerce.

Interviews with respondents were held the week of February 12, 2024, and response submittals were rated independently based on the criteria listed within the RFP. The committee selected EightTwenty, LLC, to lead the Norman Solar Initiative.

A kickoff event highlighting and promoting the partnership and the initiative will start the program. Plans include a customer sign-up period lasting until August 31, 2024, with installations projected to be completed by April 30, 2025. The City's obligation in this effort consists of promoting, advertising, and helping to administer the program in collaboration with the contractor. No cash payments will be required from the City, unless the City chooses to be a customer of the initiative.

RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends approval of Memorandum of Understanding, Contract K-2324-158, between the City of Norman and EightTwenty, LLC.