
MEMORANDUM



Date: February 12, 2026
To: Rory Jones, P.E., Director
From: Seung Park, P.E., Senior Water Resource Engineer
Subject: Water Research Foundation Tailored Collaboration Research - #5380, Evaluating an Innovative Ion Exchange Process for Co-Treatment of Dissolved Organic Matter and PFAS

The Water Research Foundation (WRF) Tailored Collaboration (TC) Program is a cost-shared research funding initiative that enables utilities to collaborate and partner with WRF on research projects addressing challenges of broad interest and applicability. These collaborations are designed to deliver meaningful, industry-wide benefits and advance innovation across the water sector.

When the 2025 WRF TC program opened, the Water Department pursued this research funding opportunity with Carollo Engineers, Inc. as the principal investigator along with other utilities including Tampa Bay Water, Miami-Dade County, Southern Nevada Water Authority and American Water.

The research proposal, Evaluating an Innovative Ion Exchange Process for Co-Treatment of Dissolved Organic Matter and PFAS, was selected for funding by WRF.

The Water Department will participate as the sponsoring utility. The overall research project is estimated to cost \$390,610 in cash and in-kind services (sample collection, analyses, technical review, etc.). The Water Department will provide sixty-six thousand dollars (\$66,000.00) in cash and twenty-four thousand four hundred dollars (\$24,400.00) in in-kind services for the research and upon execution of the Letter of Agreement, WRF will send an invoice in the amount of \$66,000. There will not be additional future payment.

For the Water Department, the proposed research will build upon the previous and ongoing Suspended Ion Exchange (SIX) pilot testing work and will provide a greater understanding on PFAS removal capabilities of SIX by testing different resins at bench scale.

The Department's Treatment Researcher, Maria RealRobert, will serve as the City's Liaison representing the Water Department throughout the research period.

This proposed research is important to the Water Department as it will further investigate opportunities for optimizing treatment processes and reducing operational costs.

The execution of the Letter of Agreement is the next step, and we need the City Council approval for the Mayor to execute the agreement.