



# MEMORANDUM

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**To:** Mayor and Members of the City Council

**From:** Rich Olson, City Manager  
Angela Cole, Assistant to the City Manager

**Date:** June 20, 2016

**Re:** Consideration - Nexgrid Pilot Project Request for Additional Funds

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***BACKGROUND:***

During your February 23, 2016 Work Session, the City Council authorized staff to proceed with the pilot project with Nexgrid with an encumbrance not to exceed \$50,000. For the past year, City staff has been working on a pilot advanced metering infrastructure fixed area network using Nexgrid technology and product. The pilot has been reasonably successful to date as staff has learned a great deal about the advantages *and* limitations of establishing a wireless communications grid. In so doing, staff has received both meter installation training and increased the number of communication devices making up the "daisy chain" type network.

***ANALYSIS:***

In February 2016, Nexgrid technicians visited Elizabeth City to conduct a two-day hands-on training with both Electric and Public Works Department crews. On another day, City IT and Customer Service Division staff were also trained to use the MyecoOne software interface. Both training sessions were necessary in order for frontline staff to better liaison with City of Elizabeth City electric and water customers included in the AMI FAN pilot. Additionally, after realizing the maturation of our downtown area tree canopy this spring, staff agreed with Nexgrid for the installation of three additional ecoNet SL devices within the pilot area. The additional communication devices were installed so as to improve the "daisy chain" communication within the pilot area. These unplanned expenditures exceed the amount of the original purchase order requisition and Council authorization is needed to cure the debt incurred under the pilot project. Staff does not anticipate additional expenses on this pilot project.

***FINANCIAL:***

The Finance Committee discussed this matter during their meeting of June 22, 2016. Upon motion made by Mayor Peel, seconded by Councilman Donnelly, the committee unanimously recommended approval.

***STAFF RECOMMENDATION:***

By motion, authorize staff to expend an additional \$1,792.92 to pay and close out expenditures for the Nexgrid pilot project.