



City of Austin

Recommendation for Action

File #: 26-1760, **Agenda Item #:** 23.

5/28/2026

Posting Language

Authorize an amendment to the contract for engineering services for the Aquifer Storage and Recovery Pilot and Program Management Project with HDR Engineering, Inc., in the amount of \$15,726,269, for a revised total contract amount not to exceed \$21,726,269. Funding: \$15,726,269 is available in the Capital Budget of Austin Water.

Lead Department

Austin Financial Services.

Managing Department

Austin Water.

Fiscal Note

Funding is available in the Capital Budget of Austin Water.

Procurement Language:

Contract Amendment.

MBE / WBE:

This contract was awarded in compliance with the City Code 2-9A (Minority-Owned and Women-Owned Business Enterprise Procurement Program). Current participation to date is 5.66% MBE and 0.84% WBE.

Prior Council Action:

August 27, 2020 - Council approved a professional services agreement with HDR Engineering, Inc. for the Aquifer Storage and Recovery Pilot and Program Management project.

For More Information:

Direct questions regarding this Recommendation for Council Action to the Austin Financial Services - Central Procurement at: FSDCentralProcurementRCAs@austintexas.gov or 512-974-2500.

Council Committee, Boards and Commission Action:

May 20, 2026 - To be reviewed by the Water and Wastewater Commission.

August 21, 2020 - Reviewed by the Water and Wastewater Commission with Commissioners Penn and Turrieta recused and Commissioners Moriarty, Castleberry and Williams absent; no recommendation made due to lack of quorum.

Additional Backup Information:

This engineering services contract amendment will advance the City's Aquifer Storage and Recovery (ASR) Program from broad regional screening to detailed field testing in the Trinity Aquifer on City-owned property in Travis County. This work will verify aquifer conditions, evaluate potential treatment requirements, and establish the scientific basis for a future small-scale pilot ASR project.

ASR is one of several water supply strategies in the Water Forward Plan, Austin’s 100-year water plan. It is a proven water-supply strategy in which treated drinking water is stored in an underground aquifer when supplies are plentiful and later recovered during droughts, emergencies, or periods of high demand, functioning like a “water savings account.” Storing water underground protects supplies from evaporation, improves reliability in drought, reduces surface impacts, and provides a secure, resilient water source for the community.

After extensive scientific study through a desktop analysis phase that began in 2022, Austin Water identified a portion of the Trinity Aquifer in Travis County as a location to conduct exploratory field testing for an ASR project. The selected location is on City-owned land, reducing access barriers, providing greater environmental oversight, and simplifying project logistics for sample collection and monitoring. Additionally, the site’s proximity to Austin Water infrastructure supports future integration should a pilot or full-scale ASR system proves feasible. Testing at this location will also support early-stage evaluation of brackish groundwater desalination, another supply strategy in the Water Forward plan. Brackish groundwater desalination could be co-located with an ASR wellfield to help meet projected supply needs.

Field testing is planned to begin in 2027 and will include collecting groundwater and soil samples for the laboratory analysis, with no water injected during this phase. Austin Water will continue outreach efforts through the establishment of an ASR Technical Advisory Group and ongoing engagement with community partners, neighborhoods, and stakeholders. These efforts will support and guide the phased development of the ASR Program and any future pilot or full-scale implementation.

There will be no impact to the public as all work will be performed on City property not open to the public.

Project testing is proposed to be conducted in Council District 1 and in the City’s extra territorial jurisdiction near District 1. The field-testing phase covered by this contract amendment is anticipated to conclude by Spring 2029.

AUTHORIZATION HISTORY

AMOUNT	DATE	DESCRIPTION
\$6,000,000.00	08/27/2020	(Council) - Aquifer Storage / Recovery Pilot Project and Program Management
\$15,726,269.00	05/28/2026	Proposed (Council) - Aquifer Storage / Recovery Pilot Project /PM
\$21,726,269.00	<i>Total Contract Authorization</i>	

CONTRACT HISTORY

AMOUNT	DATE	DESCRIPTION
\$3,049,583.14	03/09/2021	Initial MA - Phase 1A - Aquifer Storage and Recovery (ASR) Pilot Project and Program Management (Part 1 of 2)

\$0.00	03/19/2021	SA#1 - Contract Administrative Change
\$13,951,274.74	Proposed	SA#2 - Phase 1B - ASR Recovery Pilot Project and Program Management (Part 2 of 2)
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\$17,000,857.88	<i>Total Contract History</i>	