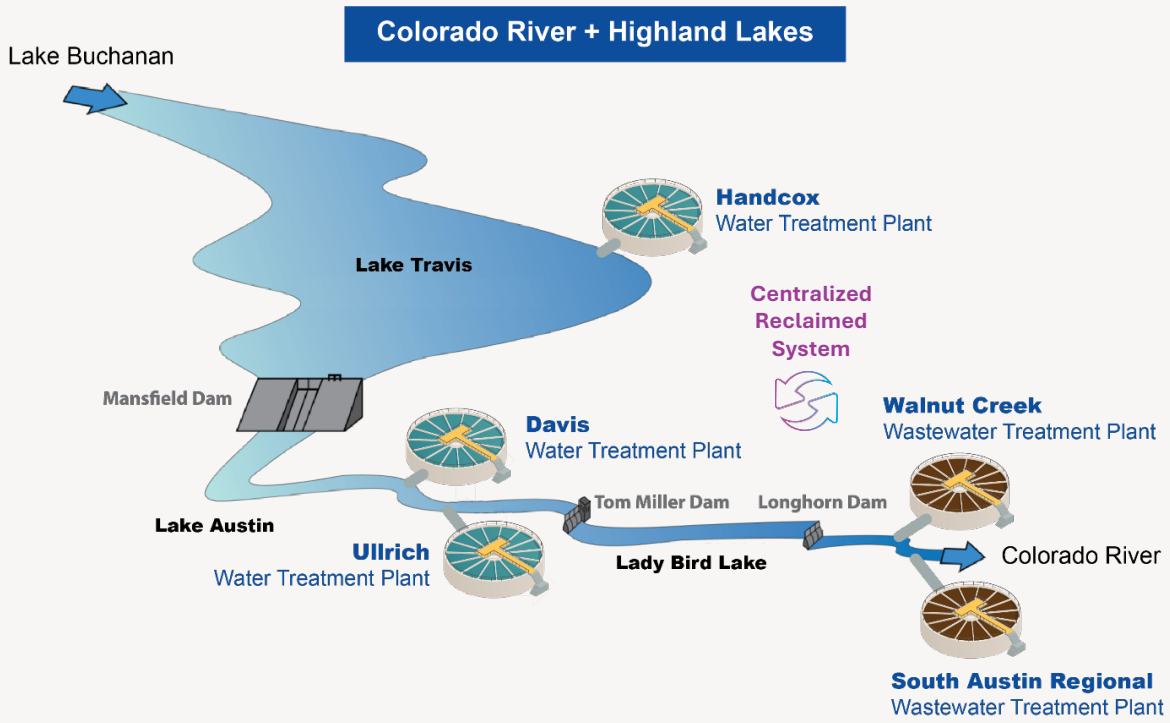
Large Water User Overview

Climate, Water, Environment and Parks Committee

Austin Water | May 18, 2026

Current Water Supplies

Austin's Water Supplies



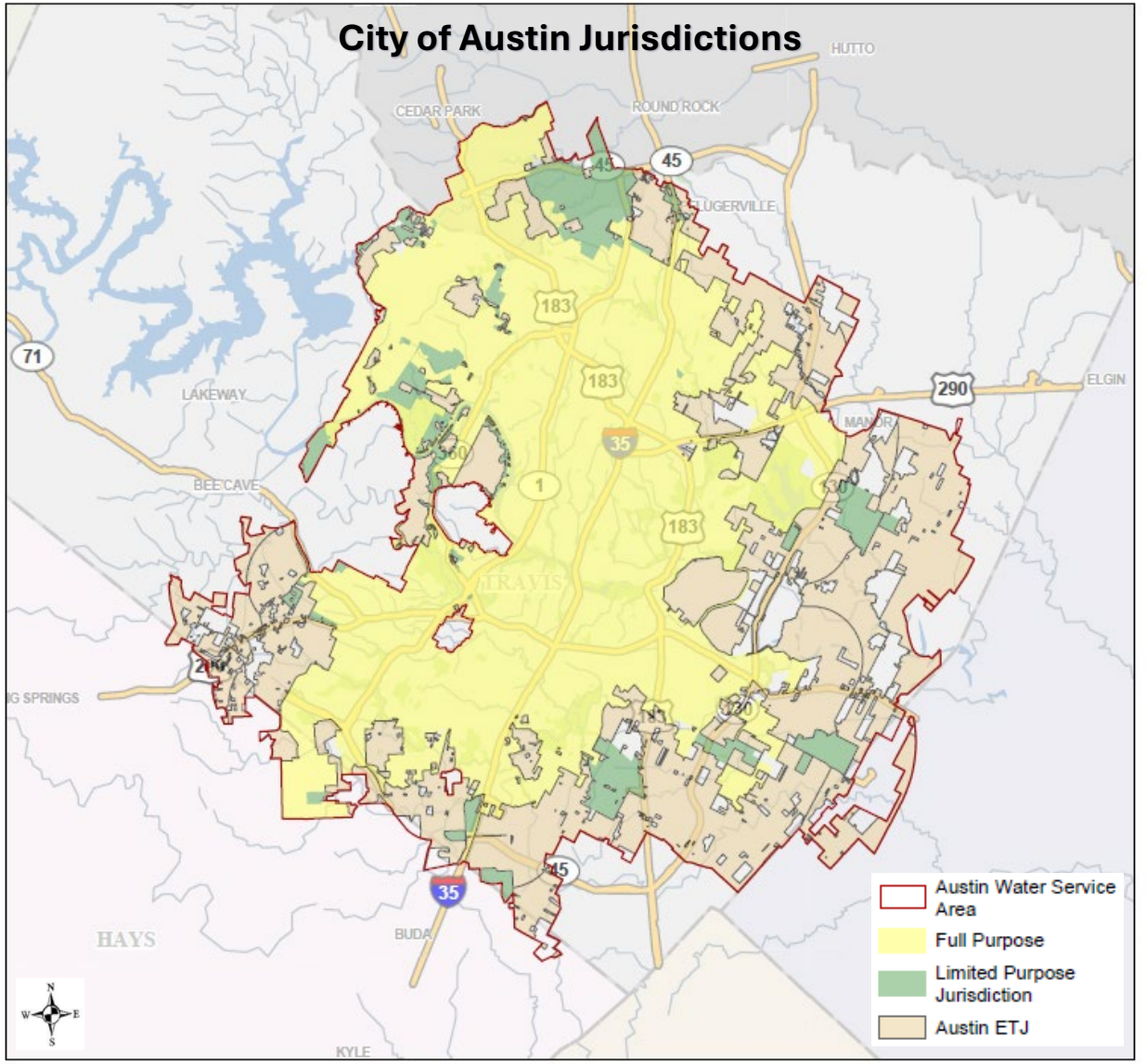
- State-granted water rights to the Colorado River and a contract with the Lower Colorado River Authority (LCRA) for Highland Lakes stored water
- Total supplies of up to 325,000 acre-feet per year
- LCRA reservation and use fees pre-paid in 1999
- Additional use payments trigger when average for two consecutive years exceeds 201,000 AFY

Service Area and Requirement to Provide Service

Austin Water Service Area

AW's Service Area is the Council-adopted water and wastewater impact fee service area

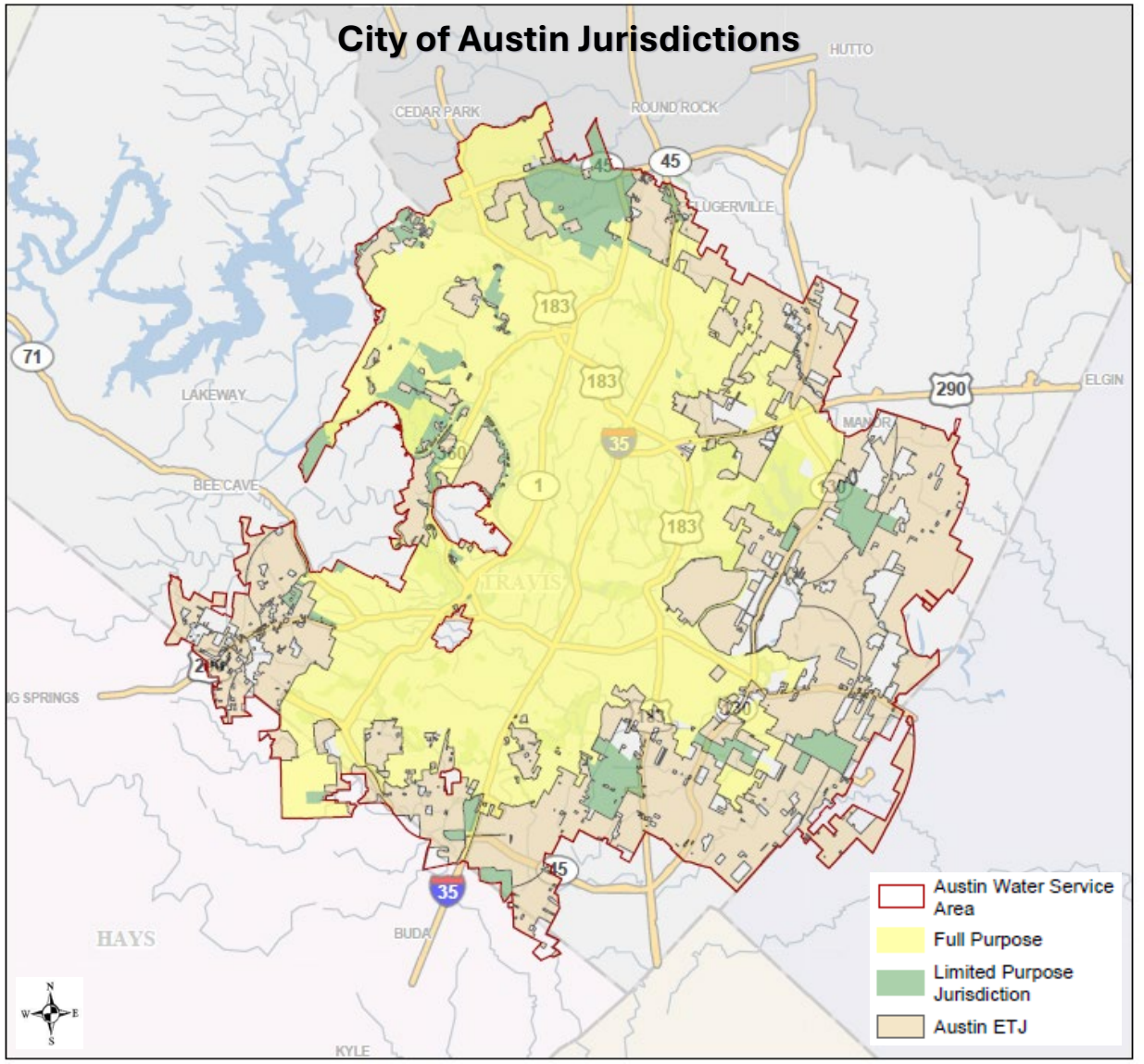
- Approved/amended by Council at 5-year cadence
- Service outside the Service Area is prohibited, unless authorized by Ordinance
- Water & Wastewater impact fees are assessed within the Service Area



Austin Water Service Area

Jurisdictions within the Service Area

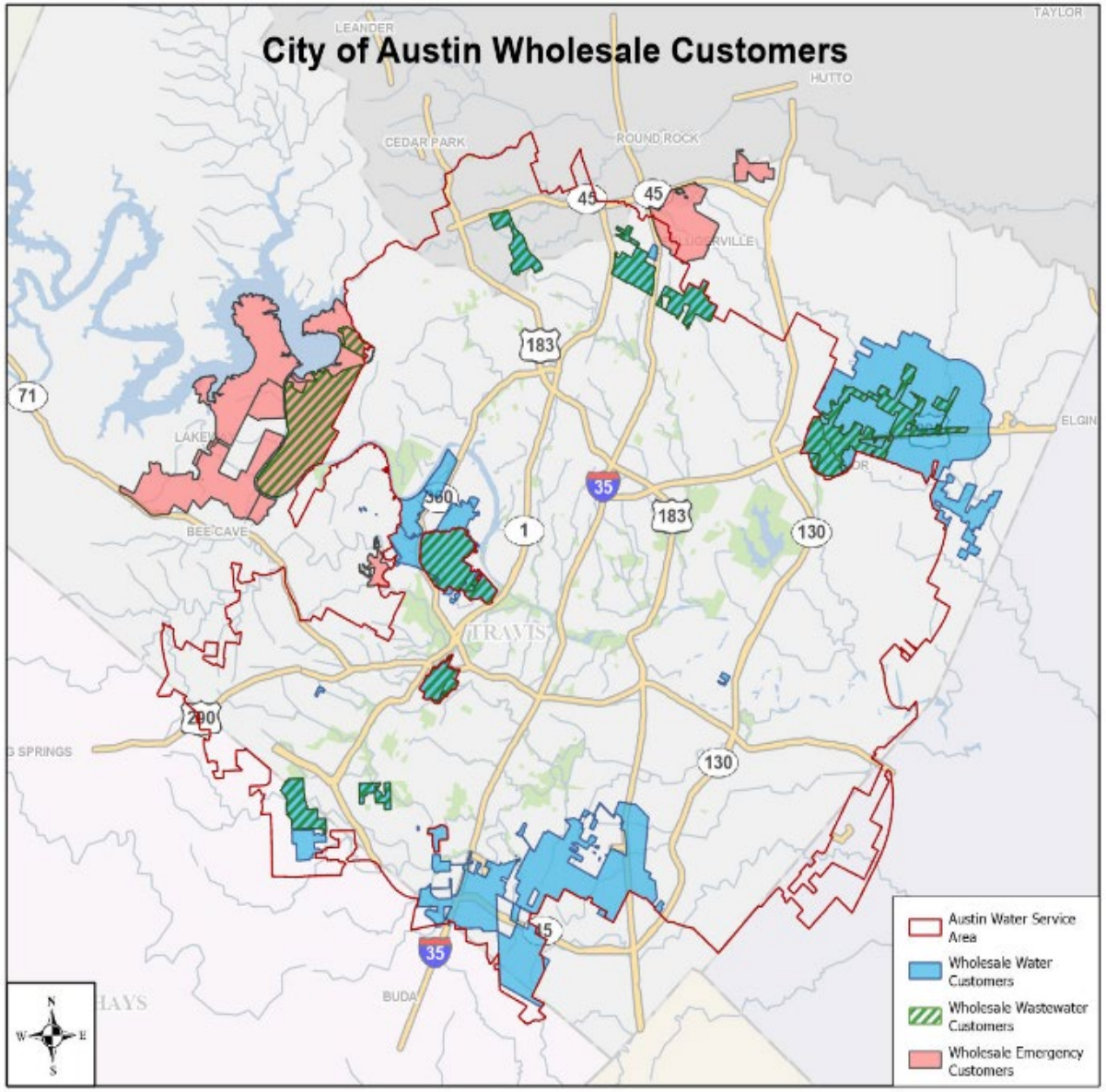
- City's full-purpose jurisdiction
- Limited-purpose jurisdiction
- Extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ)
- Unincorporated parts of the county (Travis, Williamson, Hays & Bastrop)



Austin Water Service Area

Wholesale Customers deliver retail service within their designated service area and rely on the City for water and wastewater treatment

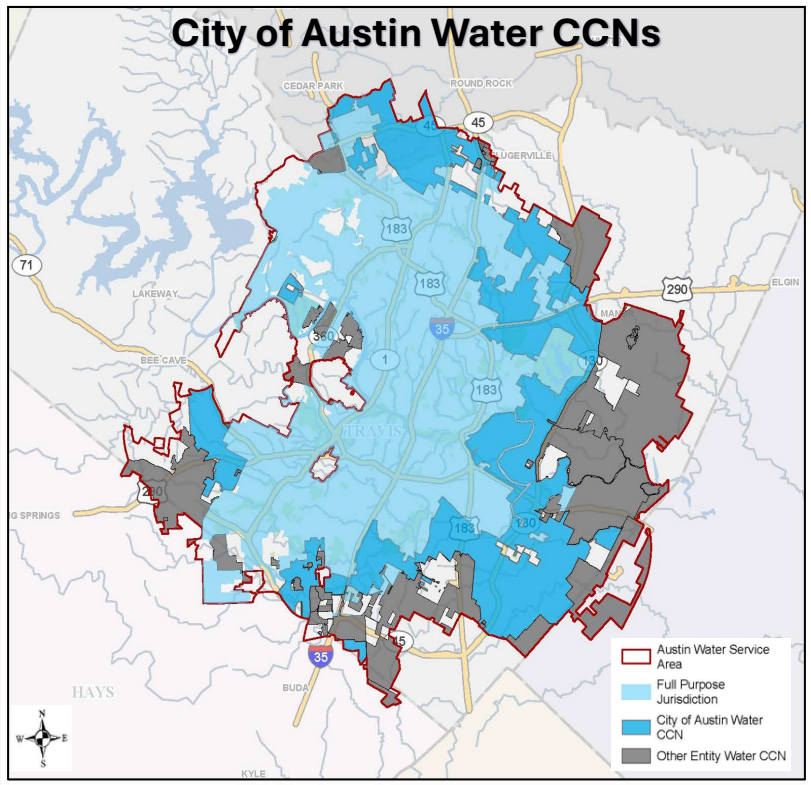
- 5 Surrounding Cities
- 5 Municipal Utility Districts
- 2 Water Control and Improvement Districts
- 5 Other Water Utilities and Water Supply Corporations

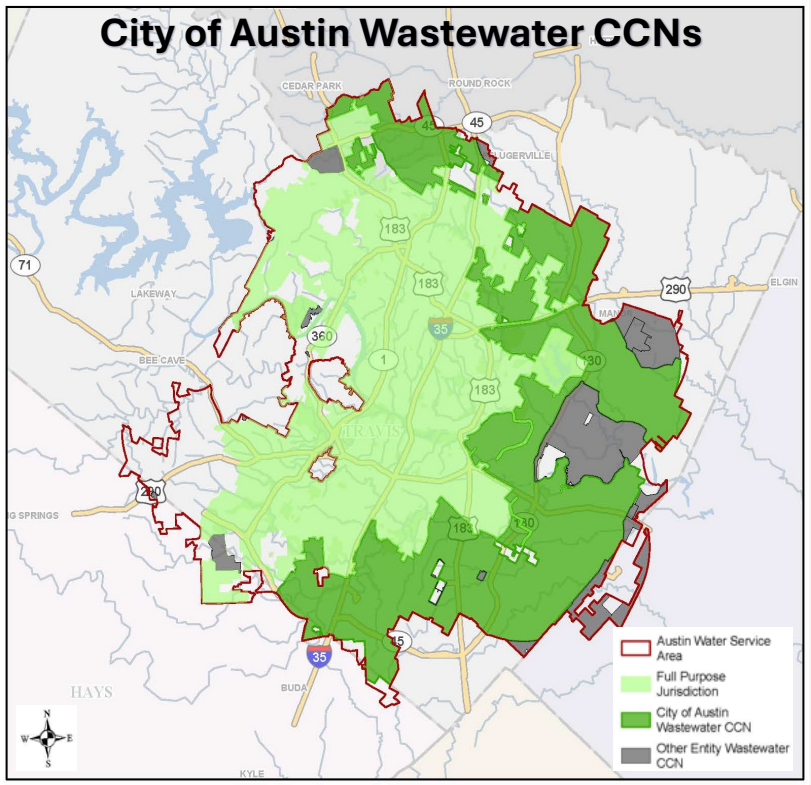


Austin Water and other Providers CCNs

Certificates of Convenience & Necessity (CCN) within the Service Area

- Administered by the Public Utility Commission of Texas
- Grants City the exclusive right to provide retail water or wastewater service
- Legal obligation to provide "continuous and adequate service" within a geographic area





Utility Planning, Development Process and Water Benchmarking

Utility Planning Process Overview

Austin

Water Forward, Integrated Water Resource Plan

Planning for a reliable water supply for the next 100 years

Long Range Infrastructure Plans

Planning for water, wastewater, and reclaimed infrastructure for the next 50 years

Capital Improvement Program Planning

Infrastructure and investment decisions for the next five and ten years

Development Process Overview

Austin

Service Extension Request

Evaluation of suitable and sufficient service for customers seeking to connect to AW systems

Land Development Review

- Subdivision Plan Review
- Site Plan Review
- Water Benchmarking Application

Engagement on water conservation and reuse requirements and incentives and applicable code provisions

Building Review

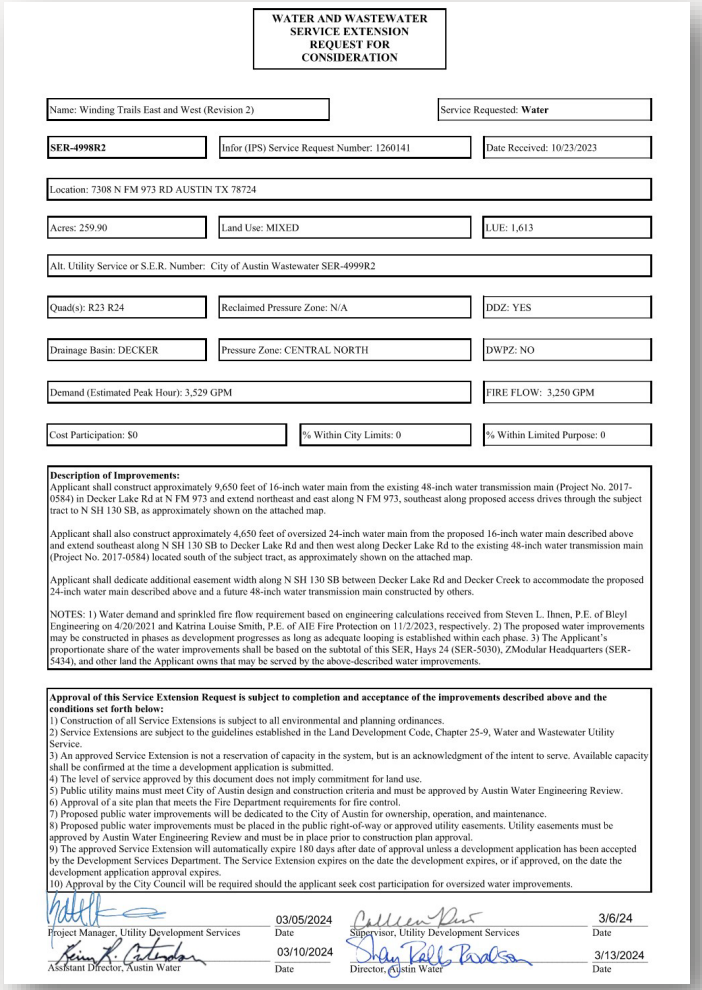
- Building Permit
- Construction Inspections

Building scale review, onsite water reuse systems, dual plumbing, and cross-connection protections

Development Process & Service Extension

Service Extension Request (SER):

- Utility needs for water and wastewater are evaluated through the SER and Site Plan Review process
- The process ensures that water, wastewater and reclaimed water systems are suitable and sufficient
- Infrastructure improvements are designed, constructed and paid for by the developer
- Proposed extensions must meet AW's infrastructure planning goals



WATER AND WASTEWATER SERVICE EXTENSION REQUEST FOR CONSIDERATION

Name: Winding Trails East and West (Revision 2) | Service Requested: **Water**

SER-4998R2 | Infor (IPS) Service Request Number: 1260141 | Date Received: 10/23/2023

Location: 7308 N FM 973 RD AUSTIN TX 78724

Acres: 259.90 | Land Use: MIXED | LUE: 1,613

Alt. Utility Service or S.E.R. Number: City of Austin Wastewater SER-4999R2

Quad(s): R23 R24 | Reclaimed Pressure Zone: N/A | DDZ: YES

Drainage Basin: DECKER | Pressure Zone: CENTRAL NORTH | DWPZ: NO

Demand (Estimated Peak Hour): 3,529 GPM | FIRE FLOW: 3,250 GPM

Cost Participation: $0 | % Within City Limits: 0 | % Within Limited Purpose: 0

Description of Improvements:
Applicant shall construct approximately 9,650 feet of 16-inch water main from the existing 48-inch water transmission main (Project No. 2017-0584) in Decker Lake Rd at N FM 973 and extend northeast and east along N FM 973, southeast along proposed access drives through the subject tract to N SH 130 SB, as approximately shown on the attached map.

Applicant shall also construct approximately 4,650 feet of oversized 24-inch water main from the proposed 16-inch water main described above and extend southeast along N SH 130 SB to Decker Lake Rd and then west along Decker Lake Rd to the existing 48-inch water transmission main (Project No. 2017-0584) located south of the subject tract, as approximately shown on the attached map.

Applicant shall dedicate additional easement width along N SH 130 SB between Decker Lake Rd and Decker Creek to accommodate the proposed 24-inch water main described above and a future 48-inch water transmission main constructed by others.

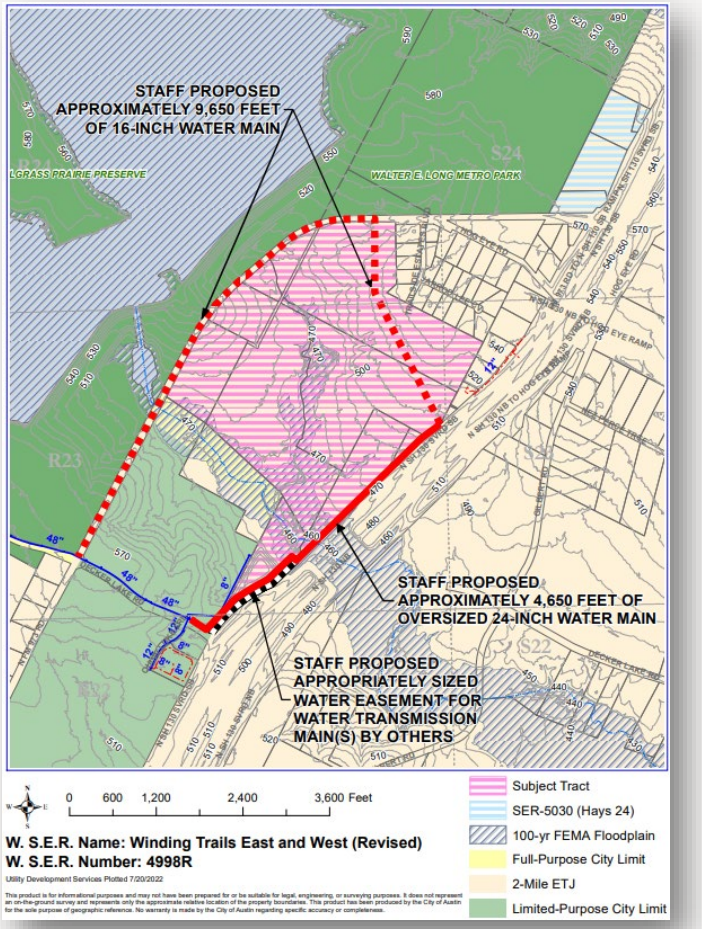
NOTES: 1) Water demand and sprinkled fire flow requirement based on engineering calculations received from Steven L. Ihnen, P.E. of Bleyl Engineering on 4/20/2021 and Katrina Louise Smith, P.E. of AIE Fire Protection on 11/2/2023, respectively. 2) The proposed water improvements may be constructed in phases as development progresses as long as adequate looping is established within each phase. 3) The Applicant's proportionate share of the water improvements shall be based on the subtotal of this SER, Hays 24 (SER-5030), ZModular Headquarters (SER-5434), and other land the Applicant owns that may be served by the above-described water improvements.

Approval of this Service Extension Request is subject to completion and acceptance of the improvements described above and the conditions set forth below:
1) Construction of all Service Extensions is subject to all environmental and planning ordinances.
2) Service Extensions are subject to the guidelines established in the Land Development Code, Chapter 25-9, Water and Wastewater Utility Service.
3) An approved Service Extension is not a reservation of capacity in the system, but is an acknowledgment of the intent to serve. Available capacity shall be confirmed at the time a development application is submitted.
4) The level of service approved by this document does not imply commitment for land use.
5) Public utility mains must meet City of Austin design and construction criteria and must be approved by Austin Water Engineering Review.
6) Approval of a site plan that meets the Fire Department requirements for fire control.
7) Proposed public water improvements will be dedicated to the City of Austin for ownership, operation, and maintenance.
8) Proposed public water improvements must be placed in the public right-of-way or approved utility easements. Utility easements must be approved by Austin Water Engineering Review and must be in place prior to construction plan approval.
9) The approved Service Extension will automatically expire 180 days after date of approval unless a development application has been accepted by the Development Services Department. The Service Extension expires on the date the development expires, or if approved, on the date the development application approval expires.
10) Approval by the City Council will be required should the applicant seek cost participation for oversized water improvements.

Project Manager, Utility Development Services — 03/05/2024 Date
Supervisor, Utility Development Services — 3/6/24 Date
Assistant Director, Austin Water — 03/10/2024 Date
Director, Austin Water — 3/13/2024 Date

Example Service Plan

Development Process & Service Extension



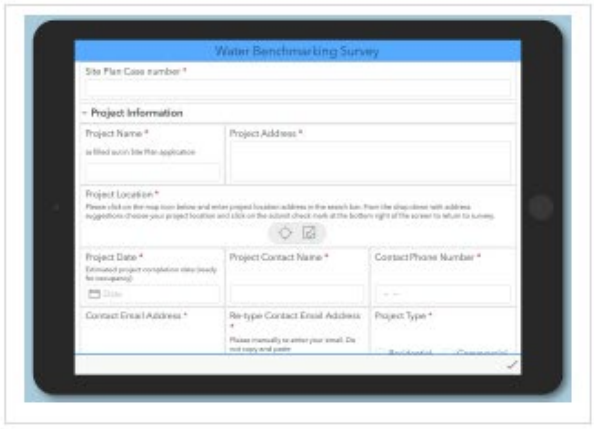
Example Service Plan Exhibit

Process Outcomes:

- AW develops a utility service plan for new development – specific to site and project needs
- Applicants gain true cost and construction feasibility for their project
- Allows orderly expansion of the water and wastewater system infrastructure
- May include oversized infrastructure with City cost participation to advance AW's long range planning goals

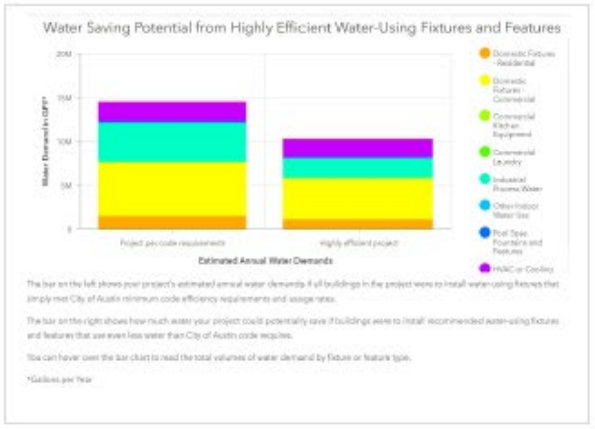
Water Benchmarking Application

- All commercial and multi-family site plan applicants identify how water will be used on site, as well as water reuse and conservation opportunities before construction begins.
- Projects with 250,000 SF or more gross floor area are required to meet with Austin Water to discuss water reuse and conservation strategies, requirements, and incentives.



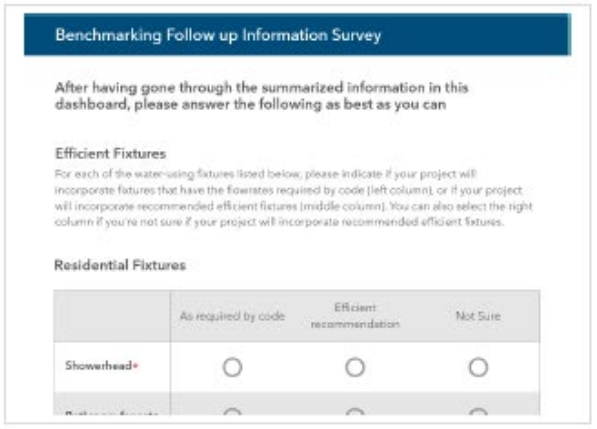
Step 1

Fill the application, link shared on webpage



Step 2

Review water use summary dashboard emailed to you



Step 3

Answer follow up questions on dashboard

See our website for more information - https://austintexas.gov/page/water-benchmarking

Conservation and Reuse Requirements and Incentives

Water Conservation Requirements

- **Commercial Irrigation Facility Assessment**
  - Required bi-annually for facilities on properties 1 acre or larger
  - Assessment of irrigation system for required components and no water waste
  - 3,000+ facilities
- **Commercial Vehicle Wash Facility Assessment**
  - Required annually for all facilities that wash vehicles
  - Assessment of required components and water use limits
  - 160+ facilities
- **Cooling Tower Efficiency Program**
  - Required for all facilities with cooling towers to register and submit annual inspections
  - Inspection of required water conserving components (Uniform Mechanical Code)
  - 250+ facilities

Water Reuse Requirements

Development Size	Requirement
Small (less than 250,000 SF)	• Connect to reclaimed water within 250 feet OR • Collect and reuse condensate for makeup water in evaporative cooling towers
Large without multifamily (250,000 SF or more)	• Connect to reclaimed water within 500 feet OR • Install an onsite water reuse system
Large with multifamily (250,000 SF or more)	• Connect to reclaimed water within 500 feet OR • Install an onsite water reuse system OR • Install dual plumbing, make ready to connect to reclaimed water and pay a fee to support reclaimed system expansion (for developments more than 500 feet from reclaimed water)

Water Conservation and Reuse Incentives

Water Conservation Incentives

- *Bucks for Business* (Performance-based rebate) – up to $100,000
- Cooling Tower and Alternative Cooling Systems – up to $100,000
- Water Efficiency Audits – up to $5,000
- Other landscape, irrigation, and equipment rebates – amounts vary
- Reclaimed Water Connection (existing customers) – up to $100,000

Go Purple Reclaimed/Reuse Incentives

- Onsite Water Reuse System pilot incentive – up to $1.5 million
- Reclaimed Water Main pilot incentive – up to $1.5 million
- Austin Water-funded expedited building permit review – up to $36,000
- Dual-Plumb Affordable Housing Incentive – up to $1million

Large Customers and Water Usage

Commercial and Large Volume Overview

- 2024 Cost of Service Study: Provides a basis for developing rates
  - Equitable cost recovery from retail customer classes
  - Engaged Residential, Multifamily, Commercial and Large Volume representation and feedback
  - Developed a cost-of-service rate model for AW's use

- Commercial Customer:
  - A place of business, such as a retail sales establishment, hotel, restaurant, or office building that uses water for commercial purposes.

- Large Volume Customer Criteria:
  - An existing commercial customer of Austin Water that purchases more than 85.0 million gallons of water during a fiscal year (October 1 to September 30) at a single service address or campus. Austin Water monitors water consumption annually to determine if any existing customers have exceeded the threshold.

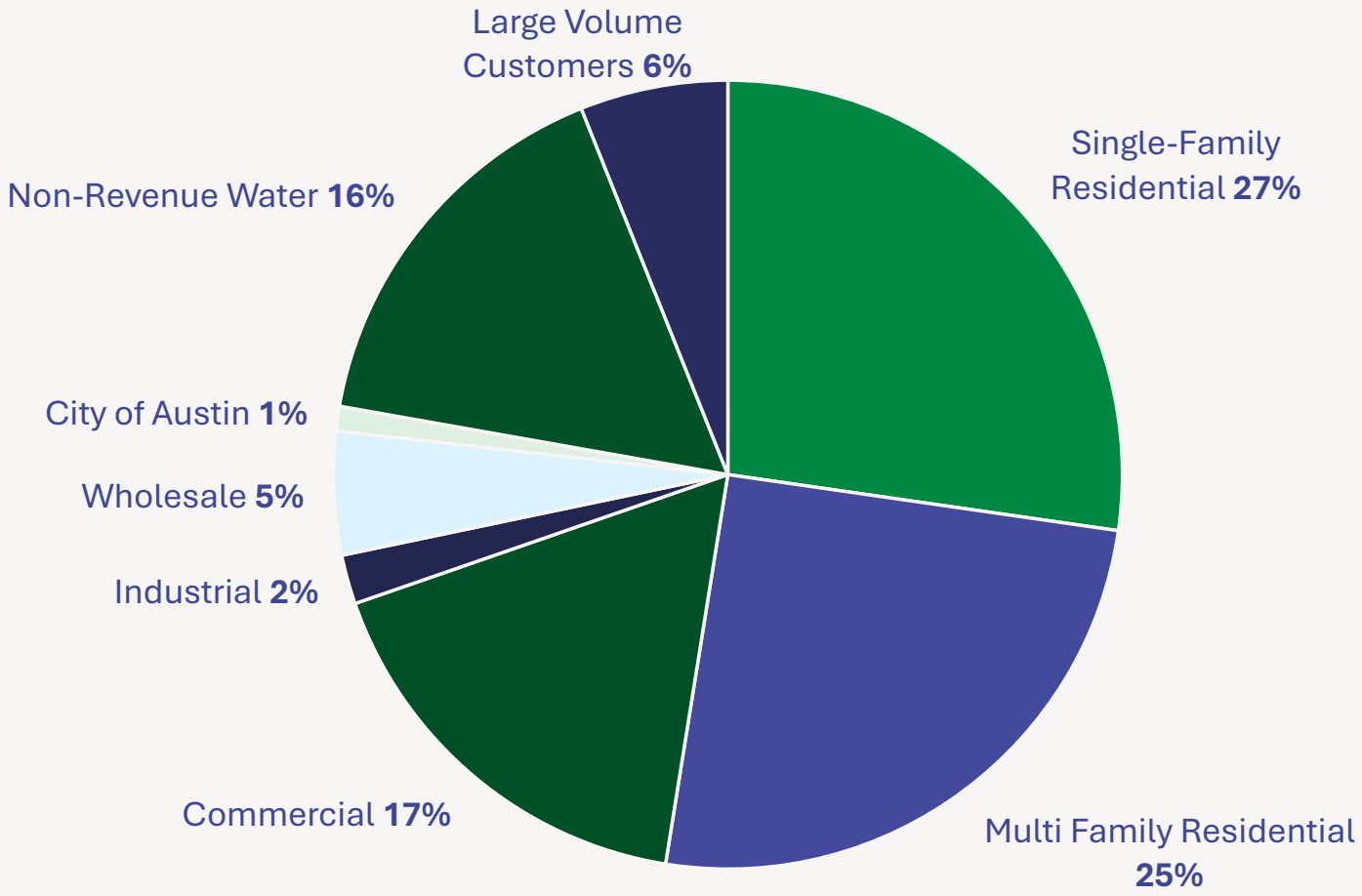
Large Water Customers

Five-Year Comparative Data (2021-2025) (in thousands)

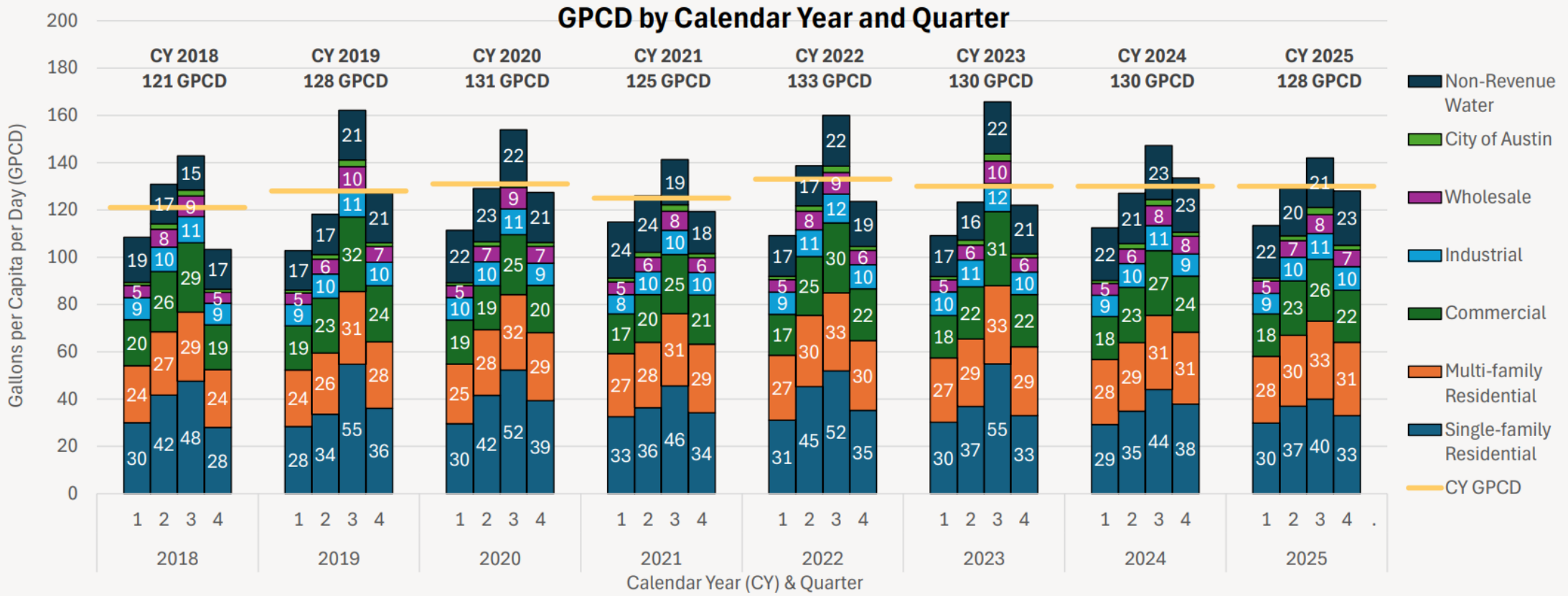
Customer	Customer Class	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
		Gallons	Gallons	Gallons	Gallons	Gallons
Samsung Austin Semiconductor	Large Volume	2,209,533	2,383,134	2,475,074	2,361,100	2,230,946
Travis County WCID #10	Wholesale	753,560	908,379	897,142	835,371	899,768
University of Texas (1)	Large Volume	520,519	650,782	846,738	976,550	858,617
NXP USA INC (Formerly Freescale, Inc.) (2)	Large Volume	648,249	745,931	740,867	665,478	547,050
Tesla Motors, Inc. (3)	Commercial	1,258	128,143	318,332	374,982	544,342
Wells Branch MUD	Wholesale	456,577	488,547	383,265	426,074	466,788
North Austin MUD #1	Wholesale	400,097	461,390	379,901	413,129	431,373
Cypress Semiconductor (Formerly Spansion)	Large Volume	332,495	348,005	391,386	357,325	353,836
Austin Independent School District (4)	Commercial	224,754	296,899	312,320	302,906	334,779
Northtown MUD	Wholesale	317,037	318,331	314,571	337,180	329,625
Mid America Apartments LP	Multifamily	241,296	233,526	203,175	183,924	196,791
Total (5):		**6,105,375**	**6,963,067**	**7,262,771**	**7,234,019**	**7,193,915**

(1) Totals for the University of Texas include all accounts.
(2) Totals for NXP USA, Inc. include their East Austin plant site and their West Austin plant site.
(3) 2023 was the first year that Tesla Motors, Inc. was a Top 10 customer. 2021 is the first-year data was collected.
(4) Totals for Austin Independent School District include all campuses and locations.
(5) Total may not add due to rounding.
Source: Austin Water.

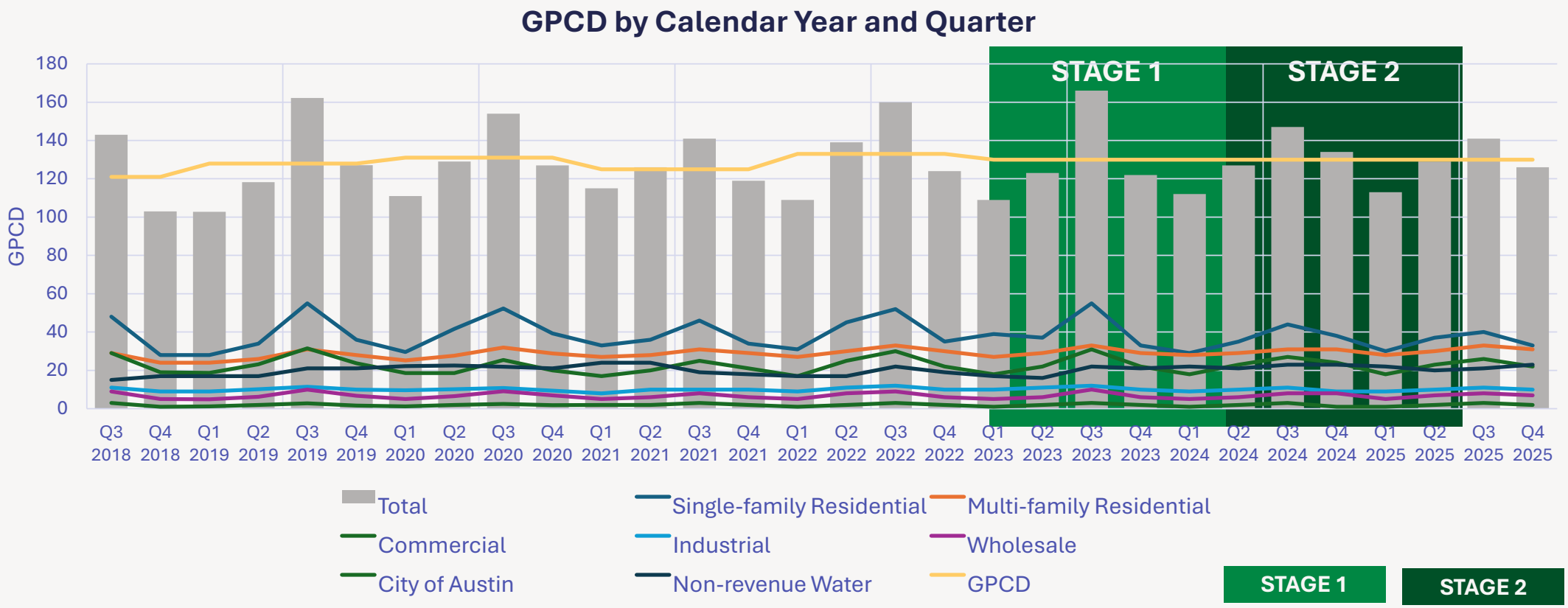
2025 Water Use Breakdown



Historic Water Use



Residential Water Use: Highest use with greatest variation



Water-Saving Practices by Current Large Customers

City of Austin Pilot Project
Onsite Blackwater Reuse

- 5,000 gallon per day onsite reclaimed water plant treats the building's wastewater and recycles it back into the building to flush toilets/urinals in a closed loop system

Wastewater Mining at Apple

- 1,500 employee campus with >3M square feet of buildings
- Corporate sustainability goals to achieve net zero water, especially in a drought-prone area
- Used AW incentive of $500k to install their own reclaimed water plant that treats campus and COA wastewater from an adjacent sewer main
- Reclaimed water is used to offset 60 million gallons per year of freshwater in toilets/urinals and cooling systems

Reclaimed Water at UT Austin

Jan 23, 2025

UT to Reduce Water Use by 40% With Nation's Largest University WaterHub®

Rendering of the UT WaterHub®, which will be located in the center of the engineering district of campus, along the southern face of Chilling Station 5. Image credit: H2O Innovations.

- UT has blended COA reclaimed water in their utility cooling systems since 2013
- They also collect condensate and foundation drain water to supplement their cooling tower evaporative losses
- Currently designing a 1 million gallon per day reclaimed water treatment plant on their campus to offset the remaining potable water used in their cooling systems

Reclaimed Water at Travis County Facilities

- Travis County started using the City's reclaimed water for many of its building HVAC systems in 2019
- In 2024, the county saved more than 13 million gallons of drinking water and saved $166,000
- The new Travis County Courthouse at 17th and Guadalupe is dual plumbed to use reclaimed water for toilet/urinal flushing, irrigation and HVAC systems pending completion of a new City reclaimed water main

Recommendations

- Austin Water is uniquely prepared to respond to new water use requests with industry best practices:
  - **Water Benchmarking** creates opportunities for water-saving features early in the development process
  - **Reuse Requirements** for onsite and connecting to reclaimed water system
  - **Go Purple** provides funding for developer incentives and expansion of reclaimed water system
- Future Initiatives
  - Water Budgeting – Set budget based on water-use data from My ATX Water and charge higher rates for water use above baseline for non-residential use
  - Consider zoning and land use category for data center developments

Building Austin's water future, together.

Austin

Climate, Water, Environment, and Parks Committee

May 18, 2026