

**Posting Language**

Recommend approval to authorize negotiation and execution of an agreement with Colorado River Alliance (the Alliance) to provide educational and engagement activities to equip Austin Water customers with knowledge and tools needed to protect the Texas Colorado River and support its long-term viability as the primary source of Austin's water supply. Funding: Funding in the amount of \$100,000 is included in the FY 25-26 Operating Budget of Austin Water. Funding for remaining contract terms is subject to availability in future budgets.

**Lead Department**

Austin Water.

**Fiscal Note**

Funding in the amount of \$100,000 is included in the FY 25-26 Operating Budget of Austin Water. Funding for remaining contract terms is subject to availability in future budgets.

**Prior Council Action:**

November 21, 2024 – Council adopted the 2024 update to Water Forward: Austin's Integrated Water Resource Plan, which supports a sustainable and equitable water future for Austin's next 100 years, as well as updates to the Drought Contingency Plan and Water Conservation Plan. A Best Management Practice identified for implementation in these plans is to expand the reach of Austin Water's public outreach and education about water conservation through partnerships with community organizations.

**Council Committee, Boards and Commission Action:**

August 20, 2025 – to be reviewed by the Water and Wastewater Commission.

**Additional Backup Information:**

Under 30 Texas Administrative Code § 288, the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) requires the City to have a program of continuing public education and information regarding water conservation as part of the City's Water Conservation Plan. In support of this requirement, Austin Water has maintained a long-standing partnership with the Alliance, dating back to 2015, to support educational outreach activities. The current agreement, near its expiration, between Austin Water and the Alliance is updated periodically to review the services provided by the Alliance and identify financial support needed from Austin Water.

The Alliance has been responsible for management of the Texas Colorado River Mobile Learning Experience, a traveling, interactive science classroom which utilizes hands-on activities and interactive exhibits to teach middle school students about vital environmental science concepts such as point-source pollution, water conservation, and natural resource protection in alignment with Texas Essential Skills (TEKS) requirements. The new updated agreement has been expanded to support Water Forward and Water Conservation Plan goals, so that the Alliance's traveling educational program will now include Dowser Dan performances (designed for pre-K through 5th-grade audiences) and ask students to make a water conservation pledge. The mobile classroom will also be utilized as a feature at a broader range of community events, supporting the expansion of the Alliance's Youth Environmental Stewardship Program. Additionally, Austin Water will seek opportunities to identify a permanent site for the Mobile Learning Experience and collaborate with the Alliance to develop a strategic plan for ongoing outreach activities beyond 2029.