City of Austin

Recommendation for Action

File #: 26-2684, **Agenda Item #:** 6. 11/5/2026

Posting Language
Authorize a contract for biomass characterization testing, used to monitor the operational health of wastewater treatment plants, for Austin Water with Hydro Solutions, Inc. d/b/a Effluency, LLC, for a term of three years in an amount not to exceed $260,000. Funding: $79,445 is available in the Fiscal Year 2026-2027 Operating Budget of Austin Water. Funding for the remaining contract term is contingent upon available funding.

Lead Department
Austin Financial Services.

Client Department(s)
Austin Water.

Fiscal Note
Funding in the amount of $79,445 is available in the Fiscal Year 2026-2027 Operating Budget of Austin Water. Funding for the remaining contract term is contingent upon available funding in future budgets.

Procurement Language:
Sole Source.

MBE/WBE:
Sole source contracts are exempt from the City Code Chapter 2-9B (Minority-Owned and Women-Owned Business Enterprise Procurement Program); therefore, no subcontracting goals were established.

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

Council Committee, Boards and Commission Action:
October 14, 2026 - Recommended by the Water and Wastewater Commission on a 6-0 vote, with Commissioners Ortiz, Penn, Trilli, and Wolstencroft absent.

Additional Backup Information:
The contract will provide essential toxicity testing, biological health assessments, and low-level propylene glycol analysis needed to monitor the operational health of the City's wastewater treatment plants and ensure compliance with Texas Commission on Environmental Quality discharge permits. These tests identify inhibitory compounds, evaluate microbial conditions, and support industrial discharge management at Austin Water facilities.

These services are sole source because Hydro Solutions, Inc d/b/a Effluency, LLC is the only laboratory that can offer biomass characterization testing that includes oxygen uptake rate, adenosine triphosphate generation rate, exocellular polymer analysis, quantification of ammonia oxidizing bacteria and nitrite oxidizing

bacteria using most probable number testing, and floc size distribution. These tests measure how healthy and active the microorganisms are that treat wastewater at Austin Water's plants, so staff can detect when an industrial discharge, such as airport de-icing runoff containing propylene glycol, or another substance is harming the treatment process before it leads to a permit violation. The required testing methods rely on specialized laboratory capabilities not available within Austin Water. These services are necessary to detect potential impacts from industrial users, identify sources of biological inhibitors, and mitigate treatment process disruptions The contract replaces a contract expiring on November 17, 2027. The contract is being replaced early due to increased demand for these services. The recommended contractor is the current provider for these services.

If a contract is not secured, the City will lose critical monitoring capacity, increasing the risk of undetected inhibiting compounds, operational instability, and potential violations of state issued discharge permits.