



City of Tacoma

City Council Action Memorandum

TO: Hyun Kim, City Manager
FROM: Jessica Knickerbocker, Tacoma Water Deputy Superintendent
Jackie Flowers, Director of Tacoma Public Utilities
COPY: Tacoma City Council and City Clerk
SUBJECT: Request Approval of Interlocal Agreement between the City of Tacoma and the Water Supply Forum, March 3, 2026
DATE: February 11, 2026

SUMMARY AND PURPOSE:

Tacoma Water is looking for Public Utility Board and City Council support to enter into an interlocal agreement for the Water Supply Forum, which includes the City of Seattle, the City of Everett, and the Cascade Water Alliance. The Water Supply Forum coordinates and collaborates on current and future water supply and water resource items, and projects of mutual interest and benefits. The proposed Agreement obligates Tacoma Water to provide 25% of the annual dues necessary to support the work plan and budget during the period of 2026-2035.

COUNCIL SPONSORS:

NA.

BACKGROUND:

This Departments Recommendation is Based On:

The Water Supply Forum (Forum) has served as a lead entity for regional drinking water suppliers, purveyors and associations in the Puget Sound Region since 1999. The Forum is responsible to coordinate and collaborate on current and future water supply and water resource items and projects of mutual interest and benefit to the residents of King, Snohomish, and Pierce counties.

Tacoma Water is a founding member of the Forum and serves as the Forum Funding Administrator. The Forum is governed by a Steering Committee that includes the Regional Members of City of Seattle, City of Everett, City of Tacoma, and Cascade Water Alliance. Individual water utilities, other associations, and counties also make up the Forum as Fee Members.

The Forum formerly operated as an informal association under a Memorandum of Understanding and funding agreements. In 2025 Forum members determined that an Interlocal Agreement is the most appropriate vehicle to continue collaborating. Because the existing fund balance was sufficient to cover operating costs, the Forum has not collected dues since 2020; prior to that, dues averaged \$50,000 annually. It is anticipated that the fund balance will continue to be sufficient for the next several years. However, dues estimated at less than \$500,000 may need to be collected within the duration of this agreement.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT/ CUSTOMER RESEARCH:

Community Engagement:

The residents of the City of Tacoma, and throughout our service territory benefit from regional collaboration on current and future water supply and water resource items. The Forum has engaged in projects and actions to collectively further items such as, but not limited to, water supply planning, resiliency including seismic, water quality, water conservation, education and outreach.

2025 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

Equity and Accessibility: *(Mandatory)*

Water Supply is vital to all communities experiencing deeply entrenched social, economic, and environmental inequities. The collaboration facilitated by the Forum helps to keep our rates low by sharing the cost of the work



and knowledge across members, rather than working independently. The Forum is currently working on an effort to strengthen our ability to provide drinking water services after a major regional emergency event with a specific focus on how the impacts may affect historically underrepresented populations. In 2025, the Forum developed an Equity Toolkit to provide emergency preparedness and disaster planning support to forum communities and regional partners that include tools and resources to ensure inclusive and equitable disaster preparedness, response, and recovery efforts, focusing on the needs of vulnerable populations.

Explain how your legislation will affect the selected indicator(s).

Tacoma Water’s mission is to deliver clean and reliable drinking water. The Forum helps us accomplish our mission more efficiently and effectively.

Economy/Workforce: *Equity Index Score:* Select Index Score.

NA

Education: *Equity Index Score:* Select Index Score.

NA

Civic Engagement: *Equity Index Score:* Select Index Score.

NA

Livability: *Equity Index Score:* Select Index Score.

NA

Explain how your legislation will affect the selected indicator(s).

NA

ALTERNATIVES:

Alternative(s)	Positive Impact(s)	Negative Impact(s)
1. Don't participate in the Forum		This would be a missed opportunity to be involved in regional efforts focused on Water Supply. Additionally, Tacoma would need to fund activities at 100%, rather than sharing with the other members

EVALUATION AND FOLLOW UP:

The Forum has proven to be a valuable opportunity for Tacoma Water for over two decades. Each year Tacoma Water reviews the Forum Work Plan and budget. Each project is reviewed and voted on by members. Within each project outcomes are established and documented within scope of the contract.

STAFF/SPONSOR RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the proposed interlocal agreement between the City of Tacoma and the Water Supply Forum.



FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no immediate fiscal impact as dues are not currently collected, though they may collect in the future.

Fund Number & Name	COST OBJECT (CC/WBS/ORDER)	Cost Element	Total Amount
1. 4600 Tacoma Water Fund	581000	5412030	\$0
TOTAL			

What Funding is being used to support the expense?

NA

Are the expenditures and revenues planned and budgeted in this biennium's current budget?

YES

Are there financial costs or other impacts of not implementing the legislation?

YES

Will the legislation have an ongoing/recurring fiscal impact?

YES

Will the legislation change the City's FTE/personnel counts?

No

Click or tap here to enter text.

ATTACHMENTS:

- Water Supply Forum Interlocal Agreement