

Memorandum



CITY OF DALLAS

DATE June 6, 2025

TO Honorable Chair and Members of the Quality of Life, Arts, and Culture Committee

SUBJECT **WRR 101.1 FM Broadcast Tower Lease Renewal**

On June 11, 2025, City Council will consider authorizing an amendment to an existing lease agreement with American Tower Corporation, to use the one five-year renewal options for each of the primary and the auxiliary radio broadcast towers, the Cowboy Tower, and the Milton Tower for an amount not to exceed \$1,045,845.79. Financing: Enterprise Fund 0140 with total reimbursement by vendor (see Fiscal Information)

Historical Context

WRR 101.1FM officially began broadcasting in 1921, initially licensed for municipal and police transmissions for the City of Dallas. It later expanded its programming to include comedies, dramas, news, and sports, before eventually focusing on classical music in 1964. WRR became the first licensed radio station in Texas and the second in the United States. Making it the second oldest radio station in America, WRR is now 104 years old as of 2025.

WRR is an integral component of the City's commitment to supporting our local arts organizations and providing information about arts experiences to Dallas residents and the nearly eight million North Texas residents capable of receiving the station's signal.

On June 8, 2005, City Council passed Council Resolution 05-1722 which authorized two (2) twenty-year leases with American Tower, with one five-year renewal option for each, the primary and auxiliary towers, Cowboy Tower and Milton Tower not to exceed \$3,174,332.

In 2021, the City of Dallas explored alternative operating models for the station due to eight consecutive years of lower-than-expected revenue. They concluded that private management would be better suited to operate the station

On June 3, 2022, The Dallas City Council approved an agreement between North Texas Public Broadcasting Inc., ("NTPB") and the City of Dallas to manage Dallas-based classical music station WRR 101.1 FM. In this agreement, NTPB agreed to pay for all City-incurred expenses for operation of the station, including the leases of the two (2) broadcast towers.

This amendment permits the continued broadcasting of WRR 101.1 FM. WRR, a Class C full-time classical FM radio station, transmits 100,000 watts to the Dallas-Fort Worth area from Cowboy Tower in Cedar Hill.

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This amendment would include a five-year renewal option for each primary and auxiliary tower, with a lease cost totaling \$1,039,845.79. An additional \$6,000.00 is allocated for Common Area Maintenance reimbursement charges over the same period, making the combined cost \$1,045,845.79.

The five-year renewal will begin on July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2030.

FISCAL INFORMATION

FUND	FY 2024-25	FY 2025-26	FY 2026-27	FY 2027-30
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4 & 5
WRR Enterprise Fund:	\$63,142.93	\$192,715.32	\$199,460.22	\$590,527.32

This action has an initial cost to the City funded through dedicated WRR enterprise fund 0140.

Please contact Jesse Geiger, WRR Business Analyst or the Director of Arts and Culture, Martine Philippe, with any questions.

Sincerely,



M. Elizabeth (Liz) Cedillo-Pereira
Assistant City Manager

c: Kimberly Bizer Tolbert, City Manager
Tammy Palomino, City Attorney
Mark Swann, City Auditor
Billerae Johnson, City Secretary
Preston Robinson, Administrative Judge
Dominique Artis, Chief of Public Safety
Dev Rastogi, Assistant City Manager

Alina Ciocan, Assistant City Manager
Donzell Gipson, Assistant City Manager
Robin Bentley, Assistant City Manager
Jack Ireland, Chief Financial Officer
Elizabeth Saab, Chief of Strategy, Engagement, and Alignment (I)
Directors and Assistant Directors