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# CITY OF WHEATLAND

## CITY COUNCIL MEETING STAFF REPORT

October 24, 2023

**SUBJECT:** Consideration and Adoption of Resolution Receiving Findings of the Water and Sewer Rate Study, Declaring Intention to Adjust Water and Sewer Rates, Setting a Public Hearing Date and Directing Staff to Proceed with Mailing the Required Notice of the Proposed Adjustments

**PREPARED BY:** Bill Zenoni, City Manager

### Recommendation

Staff recommends that the Wheatland City Council consider adoption of a resolution receiving findings of the Water and Sewer Rate Study, declaring intention to adjust water and sewer rates, setting a public hearing date, and directing staff to proceed with mailing the required Notice of the Proposed Adjustments.

### Background

The City of Wheatland provides domestic water, and sewer collection and treatment services to its residents and businesses. The last utility rate study was completed in January 2019. In March 2019, the City Council approved a series of adjustments to water and sewer utility rates beginning in April 2019. The last rate adjustment was implemented in October 2022. A summary of those rates increases is provided below.

Rate Adjustment		
Effective Date	Water	Sewer
April 1, 2019	6.75%	3.00%
October 1, 2019	6.75%	3.00%
October 1, 2020	6.75%	3.00%
October 1, 2021	6.75%	3.00%
October 1, 2022	5.69%	5.69%

### Discussion

Periodic review and adjustment of the City's water and sewer utility rates is required in order to ensure rates are fairly calculated and that sufficient funding is available to meet operating, debt



service and capital funding needs of the water and sewer utilities. The City Council, in November 2022, approved an agreement with ClearSource Financial Consulting to prepare an updated analysis of the City's water and sewer utility rates. City staff from the Engineering, Public Works, Finance and City Manager Departments have worked with ClearSource Financial Consulting over the past ten months to review the current rate structure, identify current and projected future revenue requirements and to develop a rate structure which will generate sufficient revenue to cover the water and sewer utilities expenses, while minimizing the fiscal impact to the City's ratepayers. The City Council Utility Rate Review Ad Hoc Committee (Mayor West and Councilmember Teter) reviewed the preliminary results of the water and sewer rate analysis with ClearSource Financial consulting on September 11, 2023. The Ad Hoc Committee met again on September 26, 2023, with City staff to develop a recommendation to bring forward to the City Council for discussion. The recommendation of City staff and the Council Ad Hoc Committee is a five-year water and sewer rate adjustment strategy beginning in March 2024 as follows:

Recommended Rate Adjustment		
Effective Date	Water	Sewer
March 1, 2024	2.75%	4.00%
March 1, 2025	2.75%	3.00%
March 1, 2026	2.75%	3.00%
March 1, 2027	2.75%	3.00%
March 1, 2028	2.75%	3.00%

The recommended rate adjustments will yield some capital funding capacity, assuming favorable economic factors prevail. However, it is important to emphasize that the proposed rate plan for both utilities does not intentionally account for financing of a formal capital improvement plan or explicit reservation toward long-term capital replacement.

At the October 10, 2023 City Council meeting, Terry Madsen from ClearSource Financial discussed the results of the recently completed utility rate analysis. At that meeting, Council member McIntosh requested information on the impact of increasing the fixed charge allowance from 1,200 cubic feet to 1,500 cubic feet. Increasing the consumption allowance in the fixed water charge would compromise the standard of proportionality demanded by Proposition 218 in establishing the rates by shifting a higher average cost burden to customers with lower consumption. Correcting this dynamic was part of the rate restructuring of the 2018 rate study, which included reducing the fixed charge allowance from 1,500 cubic feet at the time to the current allowance of 1,200 cubic feet. At 1,500 cubic feet, the water utility collected over 90% of its annual revenue from the fixed charge, which was well out of line with industry standards, such as those from the American WaterWorks Association, which looks for utilities of Wheatland's scale to target a revenue composition of 60% fixed and 40% variable. Wheatland's current fixed charge with a 1,200 cubic feet monthly allowance is currently generating just over 60% of annual rate revenue from fixed rates.

At the October 10<sup>th</sup> meeting, the City Council directed staff to prepare a Notice of Intent to Adjust Water and Sewer Rates advising those parties responsible for paying the City water and sewer utility bills of the proposed rate adjustments and of their right to protest the proposed action. Proposition 218, which was approved by California voters in 1996, requires government



agencies to notify property owners/ratepayers in writing of proposed rate changes at least 45 days prior to a scheduled public hearing and to provide the opportunity to protest the fee increase in writing. In accordance with the requirements of Proposition 218, the City Council is asked to adopt a resolution receiving the findings of the utility rate study, declaring their intention to adjust water and sewer rates, setting a public hearing for January 9, 2024, and directing staff to mail the required notice to all property owners/rate payers. The Notice of Intent is attached to this staff report.

If the City Council takes the recommended action on October 24<sup>th</sup>, staff will proceed with the process of mailing the Notice of Intent. This notice must be mailed no later than November 24, 2023 in order to meet the minimum 45-day notice for the January 9, 2024 public hearing.

At the January 9, 2024 City Council meeting, the City Council will conduct a public hearing on the proposed rate adjustments. At the conclusion of the public hearing, and assuming written protests have not been received from a majority of the property owners or rate payers, the City Council may consider adoption of a resolution adjusting water and sewer rates effective March 1, 2024.

#### **Fiscal Impact**

Periodic rate adjustments are necessary in order for public utilities to generate sufficient revenue to cover operating and debt services costs while maintaining a prudent level of reserves.

#### **Attachment**

1. Resolution
2. Notice of Intent to Adjust Water and Sewer Rates
3. Water and Sewer Rate Study Report



**WHEATLAND CITY COUNCIL  
RESOLUTION NO. 38-23**

**RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WHEATLAND  
RECEIVING FINDINGS OF THE WATER AND SEWER RATE STUDY, DECLARING  
INTENTION TO ADJUST WATER AND SEWER RATES, SETTING A PUBLIC  
HEARING DATE, AND DIRECTING STAFF TO PROCEED WITH MAILING THE  
REQUIRED NOTICE OF THE PROPOSED ADJUSTMENTS**

**WHEREAS**, based on the findings of the water and sewer rate study recently completed, water and sewer rate adjustments are necessary to achieve break-even in operations, cover debt service and establish a prudent reserve; and

**WHEREAS**, these rate adjustments will help ensure the health and safety of the community while protecting the City's financial health and being sensitive to impacts on the rate-payer; and

**WHEREAS**, the City Council intends to adopt adjusted water and sewer rates following the procedures required by Proposition 218, article XIII D, section 6 of the California Constitution.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED AND DETERMINED** by the City Council of the City of Wheatland:

1. The foregoing recitals are true and correct; and,
2. The City Council hereby initiates proceedings to adopt adjusted water and sewer rates with scheduled adjustments in March 2024, March 2025, March 2026, March 2027 and March 2028; and,
3. The City Council hereby fixes the 9<sup>th</sup> day of January 2024 at 6:00 pm at the regularly scheduled City Council meeting held in the Wheatland Community Center, 101 C Street, Wheatland, California, as the time and place for a public hearing ("Public Hearing") on the proposed water and sewer rates.
4. The City Clerk is hereby instructed to provide notice of the proposed water and sewer rates in conformity with Proposition 218, article XIII D, section 6 of the California Constitution.
5. At the Public Hearing, the City Council shall consider all objections or protests, if any, to the proposed rates, and any person shall be permitted to present written or oral testimony. Although oral comments at the Public Hearing will not qualify as a formal protest, the City Council welcomes community input during the Public Hearing.
6. At the conclusion of the Public Hearing, all written protests submitted will be tabulated in conformity with the City's adopted guidelines for the submission and tabulation of protests in connection with rate hearings conducted pursuant to Article XIID, Section 6 of the California Constitution.





7. A majority protest exists if protests are submitted in opposition to the proposed water and sewer rates by a majority (50% plus 1) of parcels served by the water and sewer utilities.
8. If there is a majority protest against the adoption of the water and sewer rates, the City Council shall not adopt the proposed rates.

\* \* \* \* \*

**PASSED AND ADOPTED** by the City Council of City of Wheatland on this 24<sup>th</sup> day of October 2023, by the following vote:

- AYES:**
- NOES:**
- ABSTAIN:**
- ABSENT:**
- APPROVED:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Mayor of the City of Wheatland**

**ATTEST:**  
  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**Jessy Johnson, Acting City Clerk**



## WHAT ARE THE CURRENT AND PROPOSED SEWER RATES?

Fiscal Year (July 1 to June 30) Initiated:	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
Utility Billing Period Initiated: (Continues until next approved rate change)	Current as of Oct. 2022	Effective Mar. 2024	Effective Mar. 2025	Effective Mar. 2026	Effective Mar. 2027	Effective Mar. 2028
<b>Sewer Base Charge per Month</b>						
Residential per EDU*	\$ 65.06	\$ 67.66	\$ 69.69	\$ 71.78	\$ 73.93	\$ 76.15
Apartment per Unit**	\$ 37.90	\$ 39.42	\$ 40.60	\$ 41.82	\$ 43.07	\$ 44.36
Commercial per EDU***	\$ 65.06	\$ 67.66	\$ 69.69	\$ 71.78	\$ 73.93	\$ 76.15

\* 1 house = 1 EDU.

\*\* 1 Unit = 0.583 Residential EDU.

\*\*\* 1 EDU = 900 cubic feet, measured from prior year average winter water consumption.

## HOW DO I PROTEST THE PROPOSED RATE ADJUSTMENTS?

If you are the owner of record for a parcel or a tenant directly liable for payment of the fees subject to the proposed rate changes, you may submit a written protest against each proposed rate adjustment (water, sewer). If written protests are filed by a majority of the affected customers, the proposed rate change will not be imposed.

### IT IS IMPORTANT TO FOLLOW THESE INSTRUCTIONS IN ORDER FOR YOUR PROTEST TO BE VALID:

1. Any owner of property served by the water or sewer utility, or a tenant (who is the water and/or sewer utility customer responsible for payment of the account), may submit a protest on any original written document to the City Clerk, either by mail or delivery to the City Clerk's Office, 111 C Street, Wheatland CA 95692 or by submitting the protest at the public hearing. Protests must be received by the end of the public hearing. No postmarks will be accepted.
2. Each protest must identify the affected property (by assessor's parcel number or street address) and include the original signature of the record property owner or tenant (who is the water and/or sewer utility customer responsible for payment of the account) and date of signature. The protest must identify if the signature is from the tenant or property owner. Email or facsimile protests cannot be accepted. Although oral comments at the public hearing will not qualify as a formal protest unless accompanied by a written protest, the City Council welcomes input from the community during the public hearing on the proposed fees.
3. A protest by a property owner that is a trust must be signed by the Trustee and identified as such with the signature (i.e., John Smith, Trustee for Smith Family Trust). Protests by property owners that are corporations, partnerships, or similar entities must be signed by a person authorized to execute documents on behalf of the property owner.
4. If a parcel served by the City is owned by one or more record owners or has more than one tenant (who is the water and/or sewer utility customer responsible for payment of the account), each owner or tenant (who is the water and/or sewer utility customer responsible for payment of the account) may submit a protest, but only one protest will be counted per parcel and any one protest submitted in accordance with these rules will be sufficient to count as a protest for that property.
5. In order to be valid, a protest must bear its date, designation of parcel address or parcel number, printed name, and original signature of the record owner or tenant (who is the water and/or sewer utility customer responsible for payment of the account) with respect to the property identified on the protest. Except as set forth in paragraph 3 above protests not bearing the original signature of a record owner or tenant (who is the water and/or sewer utility customer responsible for payment of the account) shall not be counted. Protests which have been altered by someone other than the person who signed them shall not be counted.

Pursuant to California Government Code section 53759, there is a 120-day statute of limitations for challenging any new, increased, or extended fee or charge.



# NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

## PROPOSED RATE ADJUSTMENTS FOR WATER AND SEWER SERVICE

A public hearing regarding proposed adjustments to water and sewer rates will be held on:

DATE: JANUARY 9, 2024

TIME: 6:00 PM

PLACE: WHEATLAND COMMUNITY CENTER

101 C STREET

WHEATLAND, CALIFORNIA 95692

This notice is provided to all property owners and customers who currently receive either of these services provided by the City of Wheatland. If adopted, the proposed rate adjustments will become effective March 1, 2024.

*This Notice of Public Hearing provides information about proposed rate adjustments to the City of Wheatland's water and sewer service customers pursuant to the requirements of Article XIII D Section 6(a) of the California Constitution (a portion of Proposition 218, which was adopted by voters in 1996). The proposed rate adjustments will be presented to the City of Wheatland City Council for adoption on Tuesday, January 9, 2024, at 6:00 PM, in the regular meeting location of the City Council at the Wheatland Community Center. This notice provides information on (1) how rates are calculated, (2) reasons for the rate adjustments, (3) how customers can receive more information on the effect of the proposed rate adjustments on their water and sewer bills, and (4) how to file a protest against the proposed rate adjustments.*

## WHY ARE THE WATER AND SEWER RATES BEING ADJUSTED, AND WHY ARE YOU RECEIVING THIS NOTICE?

The City's water and sewer utilities are intended to function as self-sustaining enterprises, with revenue collections sufficient to support the costs of ongoing operations, required improvements to the system, and repair and replacement of existing utility assets. In order to maintain alignment of revenues and expenditures, periodic adjustments to water and sewer rates are required.

The proposed rate adjustments were developed to help ensure the health and safety of the community and meet current legal standards, while protecting the City's financial health and being sensitive to impacts on the rate-payer. They are based on the findings of a recently completed water and sewer rate study that examined the City's cost of providing water and sewer services, the sufficiency of revenues generated from current rates, and the rate structures applied to water and sewer customers.

Based on current customer usage patterns, the proposed rate adjustments would allow the City to meet the day-to-day operating costs of utility operations, meet debt service obligations, and establish prudent reserves. In order to maintain sensitivity to impacts on the rate payer, additional funding for rehabilitation and improvement of capital assets is not built into the proposed rate adjustments.

*For questions regarding the City's water and sewer operations and maintenance programs, or inquiries about specific water or sewer projects, please contact City Hall at (530) 633-2761.*

## HOW CAN I FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THE PROPOSED RATE ADJUSTMENTS?

For further details regarding the proposed rate adjustments, or for any questions you may have regarding the proposed fees to be imposed on your parcel, please contact the City of Wheatland, City Hall, at (530) 633-2761 for assistance.





## HOW ARE THE WATER AND SEWER RATES CALCULATED?

The proposed water and sewer rates are based on financial plans developed for each utility. The financial plans compare projected sources of funds (revenues) to projected expenditures to determine the sufficiency of current rates and any future rate adjustments required. Revenue from rates is intended to assist the City in meeting current and forecasted financial requirements and obligations of the water and sewer systems. Requirements and obligations can include: annual expenses to operate, maintain, and manage the utilities; targeted capital expenditures related to utility infrastructure, facilities, and equipment; repayment of outstanding debt; satisfaction of legal covenants; and attainment of targeted financial performance metrics. The City also works to maintain rates that are affordable to the community and, when possible, follow a consistent pattern of incremental rate increases. Achieving this goal involves making deliberate choices regarding service levels, timing of expenditures, and timing of water and sewer rate adjustments. Any revenues received from water and sewer rates are restricted solely to meet the requirements and obligations of each utility. This notice contains tables identifying the current and proposed water and sewer rates.

**WATER.** Proposed monthly water rates for the majority of the City's customers are composed of a fixed monthly charge that includes the first 1,200 cubic feet of water supplied. 1,200 cubic feet is equivalent to approximately 8,977 gallons of water. If more than 1,200 cubic feet of water is used in a month, an additional, incremental, rate applies based on the volume of water supplied. Customers typically use more water in the summer than in the winter, so a customer could expect higher water bills in the summer due to a higher volume of water received.

**SEWER.** The proposed sewer rate structure consists of a monthly fixed charge per equivalent dwelling unit (EDU), where one (1) EDU equals 900 cubic feet. 900 cubic feet equals single family residential average winter period water use. The single-family residential charge is equal to one (1) EDU. For apartments, a single per unit charge will apply to all units equal to 0.583 EDU. Individual commercial EDUs are assigned based on prior year average winter period water usage divided by 900 cubic feet.

## WHAT ARE THE CURRENT AND PROPOSED WATER RATES?

Fiscal Year (July 1 to June 30) Initiated:	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
Utility Billing Period Initiated: (Continues until next approved rate change)	Current as of Oct. 2022	Effective Mar. 2024	Effective Mar. 2025	Effective Mar. 2026	Effective Mar. 2027	Effective Mar. 2028
<b>Water Base Meter Charge per Month</b>						
3/4 or 1"	\$ 55.22	\$ 56.74	\$ 58.30	\$ 59.90	\$ 61.55	\$ 63.24
1.5	\$ 62.95	\$ 64.68	\$ 66.46	\$ 68.29	\$ 70.17	\$ 72.10
2	\$ 74.94	\$ 77.00	\$ 79.12	\$ 81.30	\$ 83.54	\$ 85.84
3	\$ 127.90	\$ 131.42	\$ 135.03	\$ 138.74	\$ 142.56	\$ 146.48
4	\$ 164.99	\$ 169.53	\$ 174.19	\$ 178.98	\$ 183.90	\$ 188.96
6	\$ 255.53	\$ 262.56	\$ 269.78	\$ 277.20	\$ 284.82	\$ 292.65
8	\$ 362.35	\$ 372.31	\$ 382.55	\$ 393.07	\$ 403.88	\$ 414.99
10	\$ 494.63	\$ 508.23	\$ 522.21	\$ 536.57	\$ 551.33	\$ 566.49

<b>Water Consumption Charges per 100 cubic feet (per CCF) per Month</b>						
0 to 1,200 cubic feet (0 to 12 CCF)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Over 1,200 cubic feet (Over 12 CCF)	\$ 2.77	\$ 2.85	\$ 2.93	\$ 3.01	\$ 3.10	\$ 3.19

"CCF" = hundred cubic feet. Consumption listed on customer bills is expressed in CCF. Example: 12 CCF equals 1,200 cubic feet.

## WHERE IS MY WATER CONSUMPTION LISTED ON MY UTILITY BILL?

CURRENT READING 123	PREVIOUS READING 114	USAGE 9	This value represents the customer's water usage, expressed in "CCF." This customer uses 9 CCF.
			WATER 55.22
			SEWER 65.06
			<b>CURRENT BILL \$120.28</b>
			<b>AMOUNT DUE \$120.28</b>

## SAMPLE WATER BILLS FOR SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENCES

Water Used in One Month (CCF)	Utility Billing Period Initiated (Continues Until Next Approved Rate Change)					
	Current as of Oct. 2022	Effective Mar. 2024	Effective Mar. 2025	Effective Mar. 2026	Effective Mar. 2027	Effective Mar. 2028
0	\$55.22	\$56.74	\$58.30	\$59.90	\$61.55	\$63.24
1	\$55.22	\$56.74	\$58.30	\$59.90	\$61.55	\$63.24
2	\$55.22	\$56.74	\$58.30	\$59.90	\$61.55	\$63.24
3	\$55.22	\$56.74	\$58.30	\$59.90	\$61.55	\$63.24
4	\$55.22	\$56.74	\$58.30	\$59.90	\$61.55	\$63.24
5	\$55.22	\$56.74	\$58.30	\$59.90	\$61.55	\$63.24
6	\$55.22	\$56.74	\$58.30	\$59.90	\$61.55	\$63.24
7	\$55.22	\$56.74	\$58.30	\$59.90	\$61.55	\$63.24
8	\$55.22	\$56.74	\$58.30	\$59.90	\$61.55	\$63.24
9	\$55.22	\$56.74	\$58.30	\$59.90	\$61.55	\$63.24
10	\$55.22	\$56.74	\$58.30	\$59.90	\$61.55	\$63.24
11	\$55.22	\$56.74	\$58.30	\$59.90	\$61.55	\$63.24
12	\$55.22	\$56.74	\$58.30	\$59.90	\$61.55	\$63.24
13	\$57.99	\$59.59	\$61.23	\$62.91	\$64.65	\$66.43
14	\$60.76	\$62.44	\$64.16	\$65.92	\$67.75	\$69.62
15	\$63.53	\$65.29	\$67.09	\$68.93	\$70.85	\$72.81
16	\$66.30	\$68.14	\$70.02	\$71.94	\$73.95	\$76.00
17	\$69.07	\$70.99	\$72.95	\$74.95	\$77.05	\$79.19
18	\$71.84	\$73.84	\$75.88	\$77.96	\$80.15	\$82.38
19	\$74.61	\$76.69	\$78.81	\$80.97	\$83.25	\$85.57
20	\$77.38	\$79.54	\$81.74	\$83.98	\$86.35	\$88.76
21	\$80.15	\$82.39	\$84.67	\$86.99	\$89.45	\$91.95
22	\$82.92	\$85.24	\$87.60	\$90.00	\$92.55	\$95.14
23	\$85.69	\$88.09	\$90.53	\$93.01	\$95.65	\$98.33
24	\$88.46	\$90.94	\$93.46	\$96.02	\$98.75	\$101.52
25	\$91.23	\$93.79	\$96.39	\$99.03	\$101.85	\$104.71
26	\$94.00	\$96.64	\$99.32	\$102.04	\$104.95	\$107.90
27	\$96.77	\$99.49	\$102.25	\$105.05	\$108.05	\$111.09
28	\$99.54	\$102.34	\$105.18	\$108.06	\$111.15	\$114.28
29	\$102.31	\$105.19	\$108.11	\$111.07	\$114.25	\$117.47
30	\$105.08	\$108.04	\$111.04	\$114.08	\$117.35	\$120.66
31	\$107.85	\$110.89	\$113.97	\$117.09	\$120.45	\$123.85
32	\$110.62	\$113.74	\$116.90	\$120.10	\$123.55	\$127.04
33	\$113.39	\$116.59	\$119.83	\$123.11	\$126.65	\$130.23
34	\$116.16	\$119.44	\$122.76	\$126.12	\$129.75	\$133.42
35	\$118.93	\$122.29	\$125.69	\$129.13	\$132.85	\$136.61
36	\$121.70	\$125.14	\$128.62	\$132.14	\$135.95	\$139.80
37	\$124.47	\$127.99	\$131.55	\$135.15	\$139.05	\$142.99
38	\$127.24	\$130.84	\$134.48	\$138.16	\$142.15	\$146.18
39	\$130.01	\$133.69	\$137.41	\$141.17	\$145.25	\$149.37
40	\$132.78	\$136.54	\$140.34	\$144.18	\$148.35	\$152.56
41	\$135.55	\$139.39	\$143.27	\$147.19	\$151.45	\$155.75
42	\$138.32	\$142.24	\$146.20	\$150.20	\$154.55	\$158.94
43	\$141.09	\$145.09	\$149.13	\$153.21	\$157.65	\$162.13
44	\$143.86	\$147.94	\$152.06	\$156.22	\$160.75	\$165.32
45	\$146.63	\$150.79	\$154.99	\$159.23	\$163.85	\$168.51
46	\$149.40	\$153.64	\$157.92	\$162.24	\$166.95	\$171.70
47	\$152.17	\$156.49	\$160.85	\$165.25	\$170.05	\$174.89
48	\$154.94	\$159.34	\$163.78	\$168.26	\$173.15	\$178.08
49	\$157.71	\$162.19	\$166.71	\$171.27	\$176.25	\$181.27
50	\$160.48	\$165.04	\$169.64	\$174.28	\$179.35	\$184.46

[A] Approximately 50% of bills issued in one year never exceed 900 cubic feet (9 CCF).

[B] Approximately 70% of bills issued in one year never exceed 1,500 cubic feet (15 CCF).

[C] Approximately 85% of bills issued in one year never exceed 2,300 cubic feet (23 CCF).

[D] Approximately 90% of bills issued in one year never exceed 2,800 cubic feet (28 CCF).





October 3, 2023

**CITY OF WHEATLAND**

Attention: Bill Zenoni | City Manager

City Hall | 111 C Street

Wheatland, California 95692

DIGITAL TRANSMISSION TO: BZENONI@WHEATLAND.CA.GOV

**PROPOSED WATER AND SEWER RATE PLAN FOR 2023-24 THROUGH 2027-28**

To Mr. Zenoni:

The City of Wheatland has been conducting an analysis of the financial performance of its water and sewer utility enterprise funds in order to determine the sufficiency of utility rate revenues in supporting the costs of service of each operation. After City staff review of various performance scenarios for the funds, alternative rate strategies were discussed with the Ad Hoc Committee to determine a single proposed rate management plan for City Council consideration in October 2023.

Upon its review, the City Council may:

- **Proceed with the Proposed Rate Plan:** The City Council will direct staff to initiate Proposition 218 proceedings signaling its intention to approve the proposed rate plan after a future public hearing.
- **Direct Development of an Alternative Rate Plan:** Staff will work with consultants to remodel the rate plan to target different goals and assumptions for the utilities with the aim of developing an alternative series of rate adjustments. A redesigned rate plan will be brought back to the City Council for review and direction.
- **Take No Action:** Current water and sewer rates in effect, which were last increased in October 2022, will remain as is.

**Background**

**PROPOSITION 218** | Utility rates in California are subject to what is referred to commonly as "Proposition 218." In the specific context of utility rates, this references Article XIID of the California State Constitution, which was enacted via ballot measure in 1996 and has been affirmed and refined via court decisions and subsequent related ballot measures. For the City's water and sewer rates, Proposition 218 defines the basis threshold for the charges, as well as the process by which rates can be modified by the City Council. Broadly, utility rates are intended to recover only the estimated reasonable costs of service for each utility in proportion to the estimated reasonable cost to serve the customer. When rates are intended to be increased, the City must provide advance noticing and ability to protest prior to public hearing and approval.







**PREVAILING RATES** | The City's current water and sewer rates, last modified in October 2022, are listed in Exhibit 1. Water utility bills for all customer classes are based on a combination of monthly fixed and variable rates. Fixed water rates follow the size of meter fit to the customer's service line. Variable water rates are charged based on metered consumption in excess of an allowance assumed in the fixed rate. Sewer utility bills for all customer classes are based on fixed rates linked to a calculation for each customer to determine an equivalent billing unit.

EXHIBIT 1 | PREVAILING WATER AND SEWER RATES LAST MODIFIED OCTOBER 1, 2022

Water Base Meter Charge per Month		Sewer Base Charge per Month	
3/4 or 1"	\$ 55.22	Residential per EDU*	\$ 65.06
1.5	\$ 62.95	Apartment per Unit**	\$ 37.90
2	\$ 74.94	Commercial per EDU***	\$ 65.06
3	\$ 127.90		
4	\$ 164.99	* 1 house = 1 EDU.	
6	\$ 255.53	** 1 Unit = 0.583 Residential EDU.	
8	\$ 362.35	*** 1 EDU = 900 cubic feet, measured from prior year average winter water consumption.	
10	\$ 494.63		
Water Consumption Charges per 100 cubic feet per Month			
0 to 1,200 cubic feet	\$ -		
Over 1,200 cubic feet	\$ 2.77		

**PRIOR RATE ACTION** | The City of Wheatland has regularly managed its rates in recent history, adjusting rates between 2009 and 2018 an average of 2.9% per year. After extensive study in 2018-2019, the City approved a five-year water and sewer rate plan, beginning in 2019 and continuing through a final rate adjustment in 2022. The approved rate plan accomplished two major changes to utility rates:

- ➔ **Increasing Rate Revenues:** Water and sewer rates were increased to generate additional revenue for each utility fund. This addressed structural deficiencies in meeting the core financial obligations of the utilities, including annual operating and maintenance expense and debt repayment. The enacted rates also established operating and capital emergency cash reserve expectations as prudent enterprise fund management tools. The adopted rates did not achieve a meaningful level of direct funding or reserving for a capital improvement program for the utilities' infrastructure. Overall rate revenue increases adopted were as illustrated in Exhibit 2.
- ➔ **Restructuring of Rates:** Water and sewer rates were redesigned to better satisfy the reasonable proportionality of costs imposed on different customers, with changes as follows:
  - Recalibrated fixed water charges to proportionality inherent through meter size in line with industry practice.
  - Redesigned variable increasing tier water charges to align with customer demands and industry practices in pricing.
  - Redefined and set equivalent dwelling units used in fixed sewer charges on different customer classes based on recalibrated volume metrics.



Because of the scale of change in rate structure during the last rate plan, which addresses individual proportionality of the costs to serve received through the rates, no redesign of rates is proposed as part of this analysis, with overall costs of service attributable to each utility the primary focus for City Council consideration. Proposed revenue increases are applied across the board to prevailing rate structures.

EXHIBIT 2 | OVERALL RATE REVENUE INCREASES 2019-2022

Effective Date	Rate Revenue Increase	
	Water	Sewer
Apr. 1, 2019	6.75%	3.00%
Oct. 1, 2019	6.75%	3.00%
Oct. 1, 2020	6.75%	3.00%
Oct. 1, 2021	6.75%	3.00%
Oct. 1, 2022*	5.69%	5.69%

\* Planned 3.0% or Engineering News Record Construction Cost Inflation Index; ENR applied.

**RATE REVENUE REQUIREMENT** | The following discussion focuses on the revenue requirement of the City’s water and sewer rates. This refers to the annual revenue needed by the utility enterprise funds to meet the financial obligations in sustaining utility service. The ongoing rates charged to utility customers represent the vast majority of revenue available to fund utility needs. The utilities are accounted for as enterprise funds, which demands that business activities be self-sufficient: utility revenues satisfy utility costs accounted for in the fund.

The revenues of each utility have an obligation to satisfy its minimum cost of service. This minimum funding level means that utility revenues cover operating, maintenance, and administrative expenses of the utility and cover debt service obligations in the form of principal and interest repayment and other covenants of the debt issuance, such as reserve funding and coverage ratios. When the minimum cost of service is not met by rate revenues, there is a structural deficit in the utility fund. This deficit draws down available cash reserves intended for emergency or longer-term needs in order to meet current needs that should be met by current income.

In optimally run utilities, the revenues of the utility target a higher cost of service. This targeted funding level provides a rate-based source of ongoing funding for capital projects: investment in the utility’s infrastructure. When adequate reinvestment in aging infrastructure is not occurring, service reliability can be compromised, while also increasing ongoing costs of operation and maintenance to keep failing assets functional. Utilities accomplish rate-based capital funding by at least adding the utility’s annual depreciation expense to its minimum cost of service to be met by revenues and then reserving the amount collected for near- and long-term capital replacement projects.

At this time, the City of Wheatland sets rates to achieve the minimum cost of service and does not set rates intentionally to support a formal capital improvement plan (CIP). Proactively addressing a CIP for the utilities would require a higher level of rate revenue than accomplished by both existing and proposed rates.



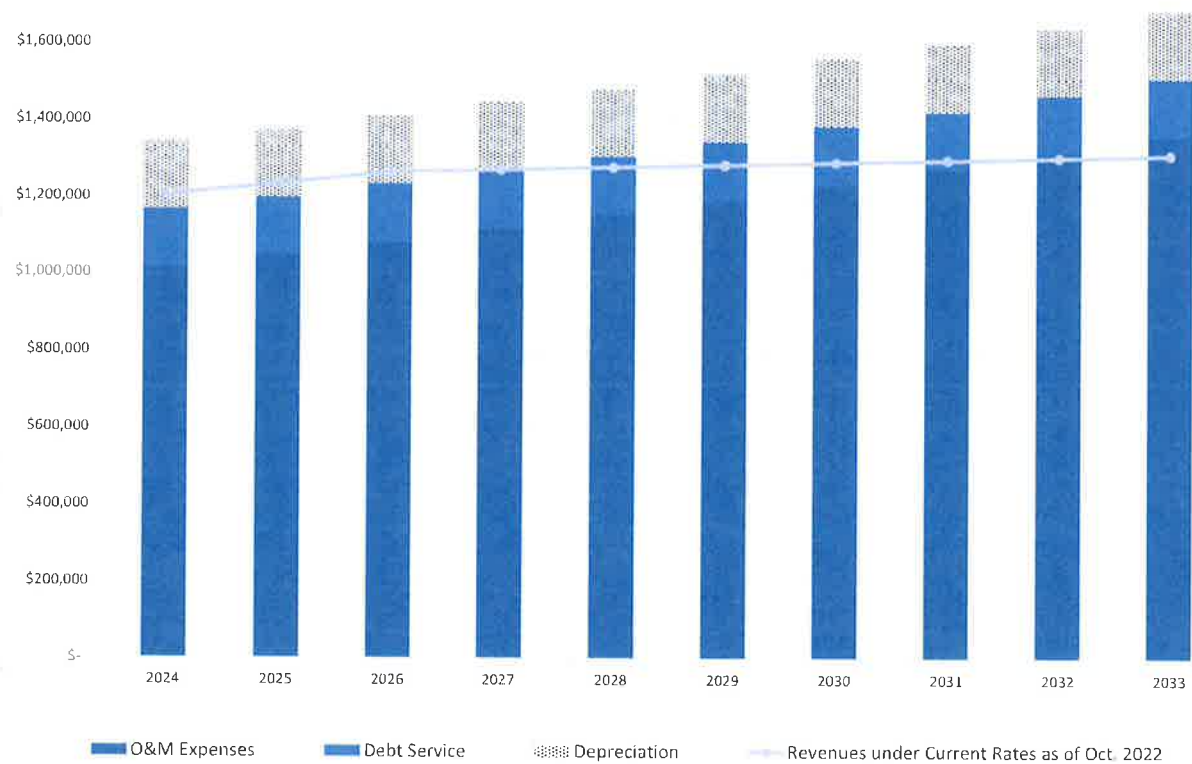
### Current Rate Performance and Financial Forecast

The following discussion summarizes the current financial performance of each utility and a forecast of available cash reserves in each fund assuming no further change to rates. Estimated future rate revenue assumes recent customer usage levels and increase only from known near-term growth in the customer base. Estimated future expense assumes recent spikes in cost inflation do not continue and moderate to a level more consistent with long-term inflation levels. (It is important to note that all of these assumptions introduce degrees of risk in the basis for the rate plan: revenue stability and growth outside of rate change, as well as expense moderation different from immediately recent economic conditions. Proposed rate strategies would need to increase if more conservatism was assumed in the analysis for these factors.)

**WATER UTILITY |** Exhibit 3 compares annual utility obligations against current rate revenue. Current rates generate approximately \$1.20 million annually against roughly \$1.17 million in annual operating expense and debt service. Current rates satisfy existing obligations and will continue to do so under planned growth for a short period. However, without minor increase to rates at a minimal level, a structural deficit in the utility fund will return by at least Fiscal Year 2027-2028, if not earlier. A structural deficit compromises satisfaction of debt obligations – principal and interest repayment and coverage requirements – as well as reducing resources for planned operation and maintenance of the system.

EXHIBIT 3 | WATER ANNUAL OBLIGATIONS VERSUS RATE REVENUE

WATER UTILITY REVENUE REQUIREMENT COMPARED TO PREVAILING RATE REVENUE  
 (PLANNED CUSTOMER GROWTH; NO RATE ADJUSTMENTS)





Through the last five-year rate plan, the water utility built and sustained prudent operating and emergency cash reserves in the enterprise fund. These reserves are intended to be available to the City to satisfy utility obligations through normal revenue instability and minor emergency. Cash in excess of these reserve levels is available for capital investment in the utility, which is made by rehabilitating, replacing, or improving utility infrastructure as it ages, fails, or requires modification to meet standards.

Exhibit 4A illustrates the impact to available cash reserves in the utility fund under no change to rates. As of the last *Annual Comprehensive Financial Report for Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2022*, the Water Enterprise Fund reported \$1,066,382 million in cash and equivalents. Segregating debt reserve, restricted revenue held for specific uses, and the aforementioned operating and emergency reserves intended by previous rate action, the utility had \$312,289 in unrestricted cash. This value may continue to increase for a time under planned growth in water revenue, but without increasing rates at a minimal level, operating losses will return by Fiscal Year 2027-28 and begin eroding accumulated reserves that would otherwise be available for infrastructure reinvestment. From the graph in Exhibit 4A, Exhibit 4B identifies the value of the annual status of the cash reserve available for a capital program under no rate action.

**EXHIBIT 4A | WATER CASH POSITION UNDER NO RATE ACTION**

**WATER FUND BEGINNING CASH FORECAST (NO RATE CHANGES AFTER FY 2022-23)  
 \*\* NO SPENDING ON CAPITAL PROJECTS \*\***

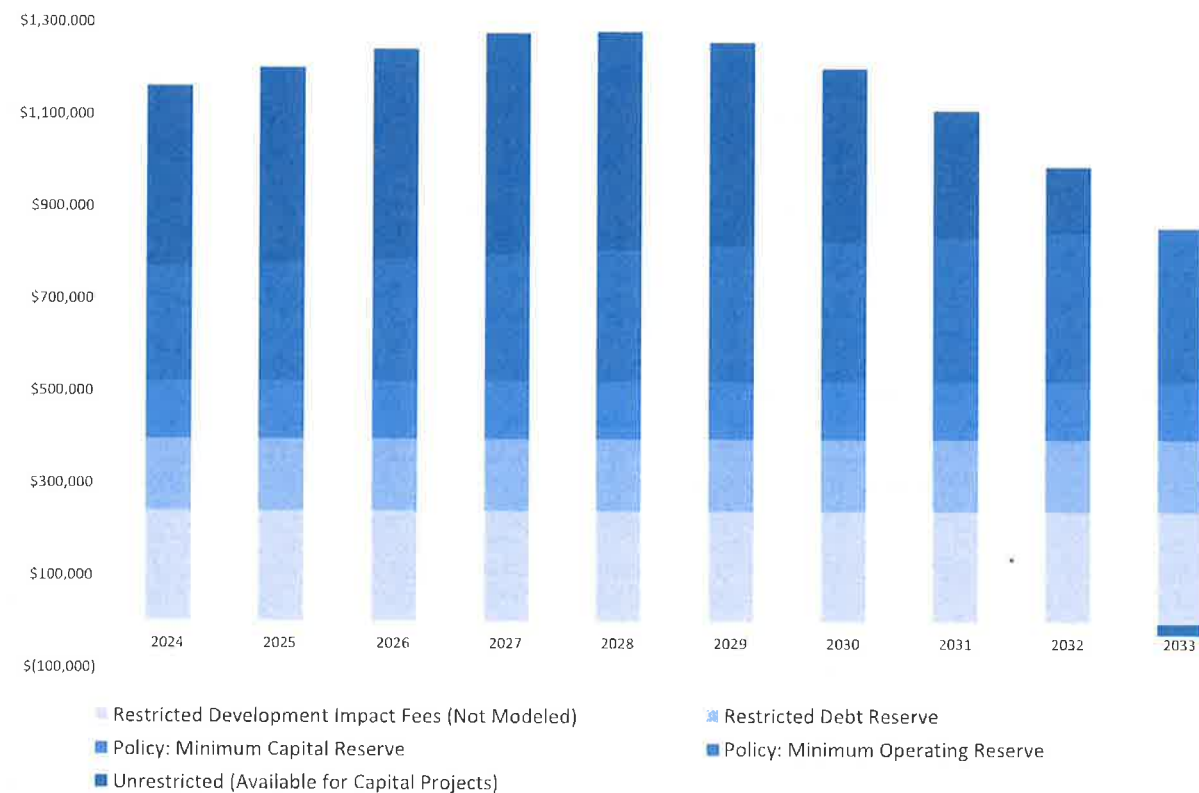






EXHIBIT 4B | WATER CASH AVAILABLE FOR CAPITAL PROGRAM UNDER NO RATE ACTION

Water Cash Resources at Beginning of Fiscal Year (No Rate Adjustments)	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033
Unrestricted Cash (Available for Capital Projects)	\$ 391,228	\$ 423,665	\$ 455,219	\$ 481,199	\$ 476,018	\$ 443,519	\$ 377,311	\$ 276,129	\$ 143,649	\$ (26,698)

**SEWER UTILITY** | Exhibit 5 compares annual utility obligations against current rate revenue. Current rates generate approximately \$1.09 million annually against roughly \$1.11 million in annual operating expense and debt service. Current rates do not satisfy existing obligations, and the sewer utility currently operates at a loss. This structural deficit compromises satisfaction of debt obligations – principal and interest repayment and coverage requirements – as well as reducing resources for planned operation and maintenance of the system.

EXHIBIT 5 | SEWER ANNUAL OBLIGATIONS VERSUS RATE REVENUE

SEWER UTILITY REVENUE REQUIREMENT COMPARED TO PREVAILING RATE REVENUE  
 (PLANNED CUSTOMER GROWTH; NO RATE ADJUSTMENTS)

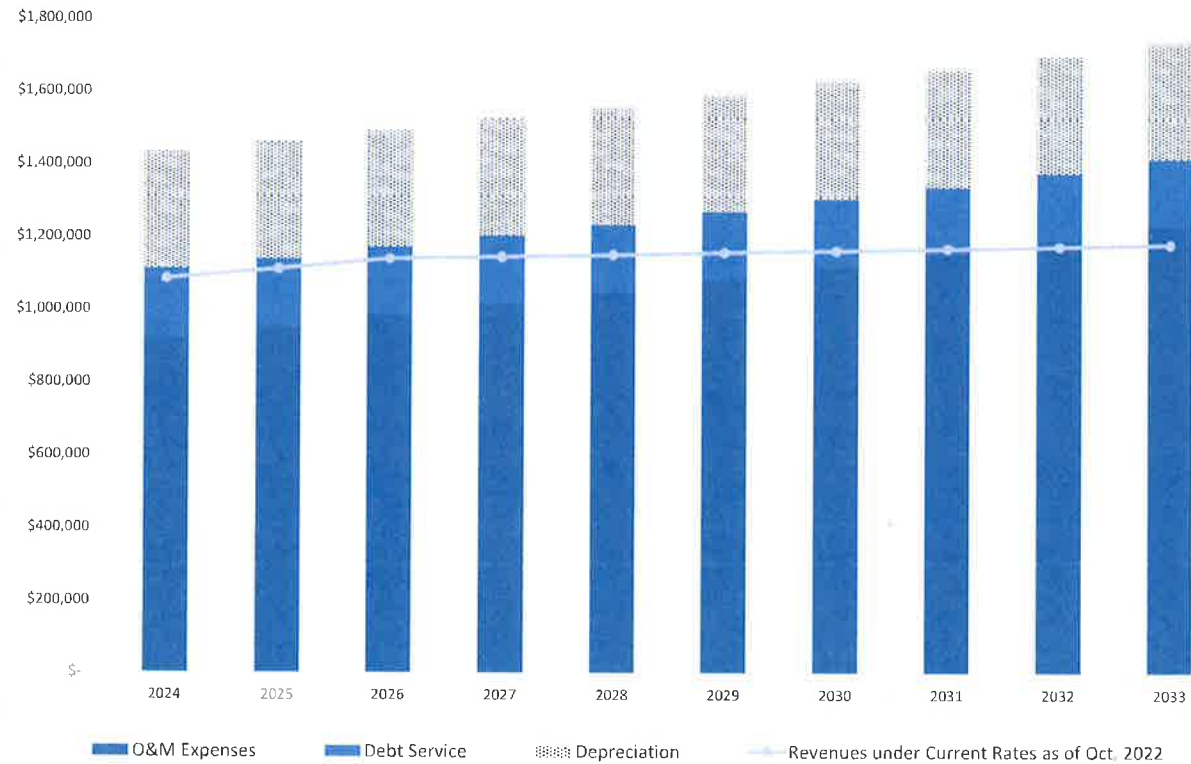


Exhibit 6A illustrates the impact to available cash reserves in the utility fund under no change to rates. As of the last *Annual Comprehensive Financial Report for Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2022*, the Sewer Enterprise Fund reported \$5,447,000 in cash and equivalents, Segregating debt reserved, restricted revenue held for specific uses, and the aforementioned operating and emergency reserves intended by previous rate action, the utility had \$777,280 in unreserved cash. This value is currently in decline, as the utility operated at a loss



in Fiscal Year 2022-23 and is currently budgeted to remain in that loss position absent rate changes. This erodes accumulated reserves that would otherwise be available for infrastructure reinvestment. From the graph in Exhibit 6A, Exhibit 6B identifies the value of the annual status of the cash reserve available for a capital program under no rate action.

EXHIBIT 6A | SEWER CASH POSITION UNDER NO RATE ACTION

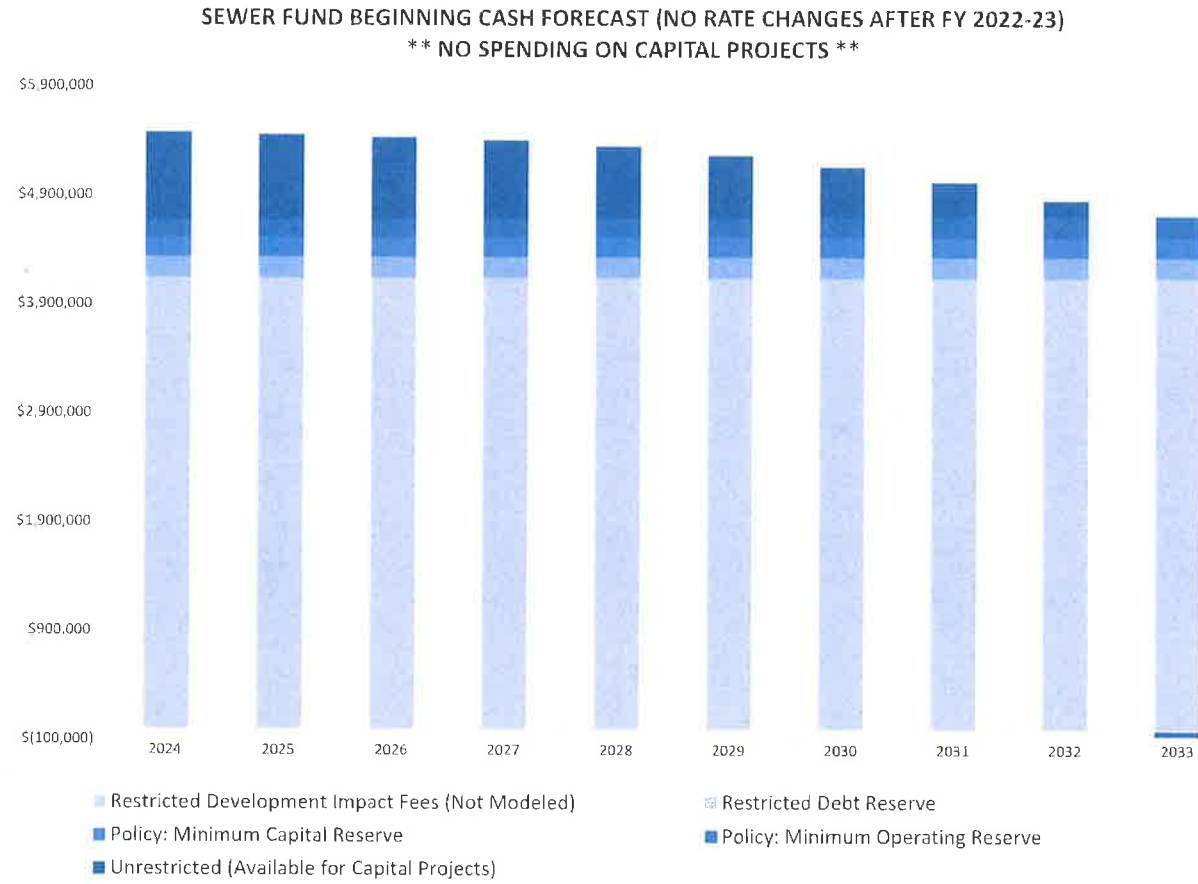


EXHIBIT 6B | SEWER CASH AVAILABLE FOR CAPITAL PROGRAM UNDER NO RATE ACTION

Sewer Cash Resources at Beginning of Fiscal Year (No Rate Adjustments)	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033
Unrestricted Cash (Available for Capital Projects)	\$ 807,244	\$ 780,018	\$ 752,505	\$ 720,144	\$ 659,929	\$ 575,877	\$ 461,777	\$ 316,577	\$ 144,592	\$ (60,456)

### Proposed Rate Increases and Financial Performance

The following discussion identifies a minimum course of rate increases to reverse and avoid forecasted financial deficits.

**WATER UTILITY |** Continuing the historical practice of regular increases to water rates is necessary to preserve the positive financial performance of the utility. Exhibit 7 identifies a pattern of minimum annual increases to water rates to avoid structural deficits and, depending on actual conditions at the time, potentially



accumulate additional cash resources for capital reinvestment, Annual rate increases of 2.75% are proposed. For context, this adds less than two dollars to the monthly base charge on a typical single family home. (Depending on meter size and actual water consumption above the fixed allowance, bill impacts will vary from that level.)

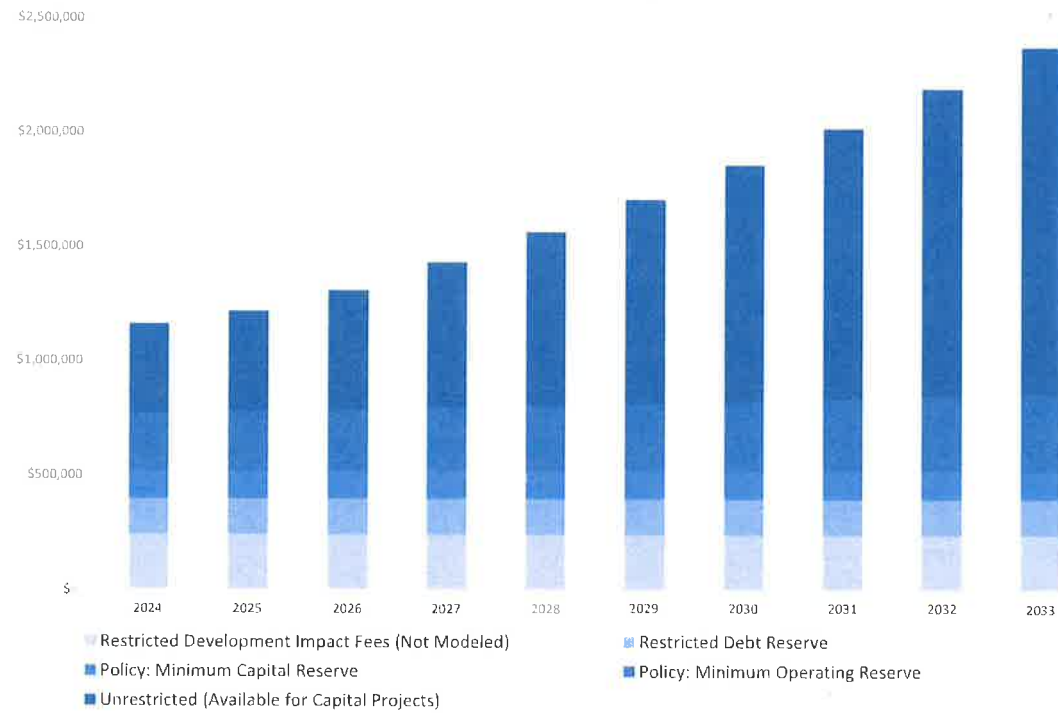
**EXHIBIT 7 | MINIMUM WATER RATE ACTION PROPOSED TO PRESERVE POSITIVE FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE**

Proposed Water Rate Revenue Increases	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028
Overall Increase to Rate Structure	2.75%	2.75%	2.75%	2.75%	2.75%

Exhibits 8A and 8B illustrate the impact of the proposed rate increases on the utility’s cash position. By the end of Fiscal Year 2027-28, the water utility is estimated to have accumulated approximate \$760,000 in cash available for a capital program.

**EXHIBIT 8A | WATER CASH POSITION UNDER PROPOSED RATE INCREASES**

WATER FUND BEGINNING CASH FORECAST (2.75% ANNUAL RATE INCREASES 2024+)  
 \*\* NO SPENDING ON CAPITAL PROJECTS \*\*



**EXHIBIT 8B | WATER CASH AVAILABLE FOR CAPITAL PROGRAM UNDER PROPOSED RATE INCREASES**

Water Cash Resources at Beginning of Fiscal Year (Under Proposed Rate Plan)	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028
Unrestricted Cash (Available for Capital Projects)	\$ 391,228	\$ 440,225	\$ 523,222	\$ 638,346	\$ 760,472



**SEWER UTILITY** | Continuing the historical practice of regular increases to sewer rates is necessary to correct current losses in the fund and then sustain positive financial performance for the utility. Exhibit 9 identifies a pattern of minimum annual increases to sewer rates to correct and then avoid structural deficits. An initial rate increase of 4.0%, followed by annual rate increases of 3.00% are proposed. For context, this adds less than three dollars initially to the monthly charge on a single family home, followed by annual increases of just over two dollars per month. (These rate increases and financial performance do not account for investments in either local or regional sewer treatment improvement solutions, which is an outstanding issue not addressed by this rate analysis.)

**EXHIBIT 9 | MINIMUM SEWER RATE ACTION PROPOSED TO ACHIEVE POSITIVE FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE**

Proposed Sewer Rate Revenue Increases	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028
Overall Increase to Rate Structure	4.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%

Exhibits 10A and 10B illustrate the impact of the proposed rate increases on the utility's cash position. By the end of Fiscal Year 2027-28, the sewer utility is estimated to have accumulated over \$980,000 in cash available for a capital program.

**EXHIBIT 10A | SEWER CASH POSITION UNDER PROPOSED RATE INCREASES**

SEWER FUND BEGINNING CASH FORECAST (4.0% IN 2024 + 3.0% ANNUAL RATE INCREASES)  
 \*\* NO SPENDING ON CAPITAL PROJECTS \*\*







EXHIBIT 10B | SEWER CASH AVAILABLE FOR CAPITAL PROGRAM UNDER PROPOSED RATE INCREASES

Sewer Cash Resources at Beginning of Fiscal Year (Under Proposed Rate Plan)	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028
Unrestricted Cash (Available for Capital Projects)	\$ 807,244	\$ 801,724	\$ 836,134	\$ 903,555	\$ 981,326

Capital Funding

It is important to emphasize that the proposed rate plan for both utilities does not intentionally account for financing of a formal capital improvement plan or explicit reserving toward long-term capital replacement via the “targeted” cost of service that includes depreciation-based reserve funding as a rate obligation. The proposed rate plan will yield some capital funding capacity in the revenue stream, assuming favorable economic factors prevail, such as normalized cost inflation and avoidance of unexpected outlays. This capital funding capacity was demonstrated in Exhibits 8B and 10B for each utility.

Evaluating the reasonableness of cash forecasted in reserve and available for capital projects benefits from comparing those values to potential projects. The City has a list of known capital projects for each utility, which is presented in Exhibit 11 for water and Exhibit 12 for sewer. In current year costs, the water utility has identified \$2.4 million in necessary projects over 11 years, while the sewer utility has identified \$2.8 million, excluding wastewater treatment improvement (local or regional). Fully funding a CIP will require a financing plan that may include additional burdens to customer rates.

EXHIBIT 11 | KNOWN WATER CAPITAL PROJECTS

Capital Projects, Current-Year Cost Estimate	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31	2031-32	2032-33	2033-34	2034-35
1 Vehicle Replacement Program	\$ 25,000	\$ -	\$ 25,000	\$ -	\$ 25,000	\$ -	\$ 25,000	\$ -	\$ 25,000	\$ -	\$ 25,000
2 Heavy Equipment Replacement Program	-	50,000	-	-	-	50,000	-	-	-	50,000	-
3 Major Building Maint and Improvements	-	-	-	30,000	-	-	-	30,000	-	-	-
4 Replace Utility Billing Software	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	75,000	-
5 Capital Improvement Plan Update	-	-	-	-	-	15,000	-	-	-	-	-
6 GIS System Major Updates	-	-	-	10,000	-	-	-	-	10,000	-	-
7 Water Model Update & Calibration	-	-	-	-	-	-	40,000	-	-	-	-
8 SCADA & Computer Hardware Updates	25,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	25,000	-
9 Well Rehab & Supply Meters	-	-	45,000	-	-	-	-	45,000	-	-	-
10 Portable Emergency Generator	-	-	-	-	-	50,000	-	-	-	-	-
11 Clean and Re-Coat Tank #2	-	-	-	400,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
12 Water Main & Service Replacement Program	-	275,000	-	-	275,000	-	-	275,000	-	-	275,000
13 Fire Hydrant Replacement Program	-	-	-	15,000	-	-	-	-	15,000	-	-
14 Fourth St. Storage Building (30'x50')	8,000	50,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
15 Replace Ancillary/Chem Well Equipment	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
<b>Total Capital Projects</b>	<b>\$ 68,000</b>	<b>\$ 385,000</b>	<b>\$ 80,000</b>	<b>\$ 465,000</b>	<b>\$ 310,000</b>	<b>\$ 125,000</b>	<b>\$ 75,000</b>	<b>\$ 360,000</b>	<b>\$ 60,000</b>	<b>\$ 160,000</b>	<b>\$ 310,000</b>
<i>Cumulative Total</i>	<i>\$ 68,000</i>	<i>\$ 453,000</i>	<i>\$ 533,000</i>	<i>\$ 998,000</i>	<i>\$ 1,308,000</i>	<i>\$ 1,433,000</i>	<i>\$ 1,508,000</i>	<i>\$ 1,868,000</i>	<i>\$ 1,928,000</i>	<i>\$ 2,088,000</i>	<i>\$ 2,398,000</i>

(Please continue to the next page.)



EXHIBIT 12 | KNOWN SEWER CAPITAL PROJECTS

Capital Projects, Current-Year Cost Estimate	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31	2031-32	2032-33	2033-34	2034-35
1 Vehicle Replacement Program	\$ 25,000	\$ -	\$ 25,000	\$ -	\$ 25,000	\$ -	\$ 25,000	\$ -	\$ 25,000	\$ -	\$ 25,000
2 Heavy Equipment Replacement Program	-	50,000	-	-	-	50,000	-	-	-	50,000	-
3 Major Building Maint and Improvements	-	-	-	30,000	-	-	-	30,000	-	-	-
4 Replace Utility Billing Software	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	75,000	-
5 Capital Improvement Plan Update	-	-	-	-	-	15,000	-	-	-	-	-
6 GIS System Major Updates	-	-	-	10,000	-	-	-	-	10,000	-	-
7 Sewer System Model	-	-	-	80,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
8 Renew Discharge Permit (WDRs)	-	-	50,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
9 SSMP Major Update	20,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
10 Rehab Lift Stations (1 every Syrs)	-	-	-	-	38,000	-	-	-	-	38,000	-
11 Sewer Collection Replace or Line	-	-	495,000	-	-	495,000	-	-	495,000	-	-
12 Replace Electrical/Mechanical Equipment	30,000	30,000	30,000	30,000	30,000	30,000	30,000	30,000	30,000	30,000	30,000
13 SCADA & Computer Hardware Updates	25,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	25,000	-
14 Replace headworks influent screen	65,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	65,000	-
15 Spare PC Control Board for Lift Stations	10,125	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
16 Replace Safety Grating at Sunrise LS	7,500	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
17 Fourth St. Storage Building (30'x50')	8,000	50,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
18 1-ton Truck Mounted Crane	25,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
19 WWTP Reliability Improvement Project	-	-	500,000	1,477,500	1,477,500	-	-	-	-	-	-
20 WWTP Emergency Generator Replacement	-	-	31,250	487,500	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
21 Replace Malone Lift Station & Generator	-	-	120,000	530,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total Capital Projects</b>	<b>\$215,625</b>	<b>\$130,000</b>	<b>\$1,251,250</b>	<b>\$2,645,000</b>	<b>\$1,570,500</b>	<b>\$590,000</b>	<b>\$55,000</b>	<b>\$110,000</b>	<b>\$560,000</b>	<b>\$283,000</b>	<b>\$55,000</b>
<i>Cumulative Total</i>	<i>\$ 215,625</i>	<i>\$ 345,625</i>	<i>\$ 1,596,875</i>	<i>\$ 4,241,875</i>	<i>\$ 5,812,375</i>	<i>\$ 6,402,375</i>	<i>\$ 6,457,375</i>	<i>\$ 6,567,375</i>	<i>\$ 7,127,375</i>	<i>\$ 7,410,375</i>	<i>\$ 7,465,375</i>
<b>Total Excluding WWTP (#19-21)</b>	<b>\$215,625</b>	<b>\$130,000</b>	<b>\$600,000</b>	<b>\$150,000</b>	<b>\$93,000</b>	<b>\$590,000</b>	<b>\$55,000</b>	<b>\$110,000</b>	<b>\$560,000</b>	<b>\$283,000</b>	<b>\$55,000</b>
<i>Cumulative Total</i>	<i>\$ 215,625</i>	<i>\$ 345,625</i>	<i>\$ 945,625</i>	<i>\$ 1,095,625</i>	<i>\$ 1,188,625</i>	<i>\$ 1,778,625</i>	<i>\$ 1,833,625</i>	<i>\$ 1,943,625</i>	<i>\$ 2,503,625</i>	<i>\$ 2,786,625</i>	<i>\$ 2,841,625</i>

Bill Impacts and Comparison

**IMPACTS TO A SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENCE** | Exhibit 13 summarizes the pattern of annual increases proposed in each utility and calculates an average bill for a single family residence under the rate plan. The first year of the rate plan, which raises water rates by 2.75% and sewer rates by 4.0%, increases the average monthly bill to a home by \$4.35 total. Thereafter, the monthly increase to the average home is \$3.82 to \$4.17, caused by annual increases on water rates of 2.75% and 3.0% on sewer rates, (Due to the tiered water rate structure varying by metered water consumption, lower than average usage months will have a lower bill impact, and higher than average usage months will have a higher bill impact than the average shown.)

EXHIBIT 13 | COMBINED BILL IMPACT TO A SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENCE

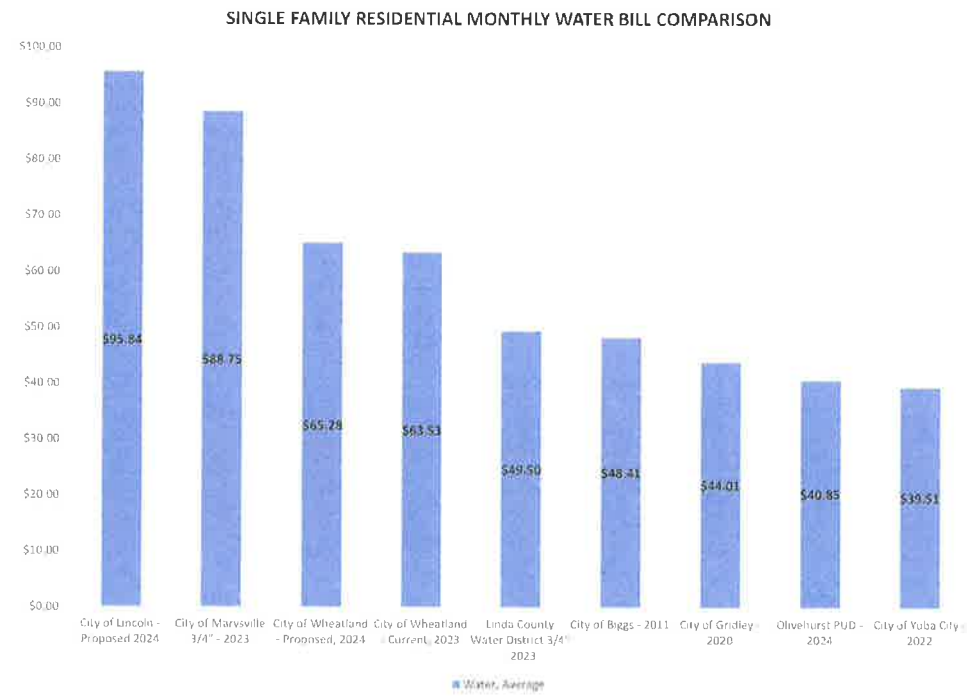
Fiscal Year Ending	Annual Rate Increase		Average Single Family Residence Bill			Change per Month			Overall Increase to Bill
	Water	Sewer	Water	Sewer	Total	Water	Sewer	Total	
2023	5.69%	5.69%	\$ 63.53	\$ 65.06	\$ 128.59				
2024	2.75%	4.00%	\$ 65.28	\$ 67.66	\$ 132.94	\$ 1.75	\$ 2.60	\$ 4.35	3.4%
2025	2.75%	3.00%	\$ 67.07	\$ 69.69	\$ 136.76	\$ 1.80	\$ 2.03	\$ 3.82	2.9%
2026	2.75%	3.00%	\$ 68.92	\$ 71.78	\$ 140.70	\$ 1.84	\$ 2.09	\$ 3.94	2.9%
2027	2.75%	3.00%	\$ 70.81	\$ 73.94	\$ 144.75	\$ 1.90	\$ 2.15	\$ 4.05	2.9%
2028	2.75%	3.00%	\$ 72.76	\$ 76.15	\$ 148.91	\$ 1.95	\$ 2.22	\$ 4.17	2.9%

Assumed water consumption of 1,500 cubic feet (15 CCF).

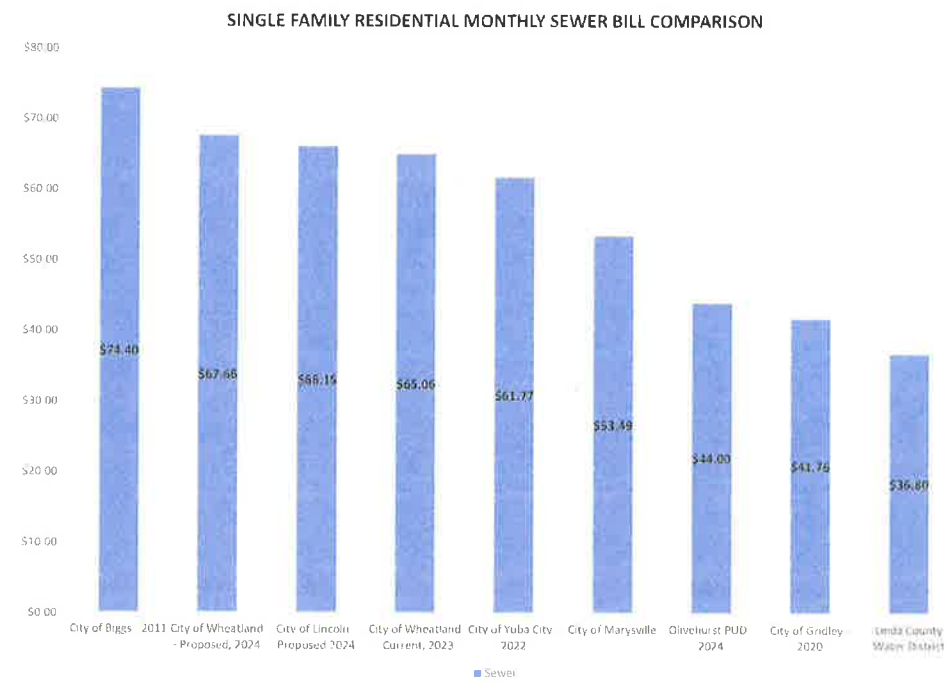


**REGIONAL COMPARISON** | Exhibits 14 and 15 illustrate the relative position of Wheatland's current and proposed rates in 2024 among those of other utilities in the region.

**EXHIBIT 14 | RESIDENTIAL WATER BILL COMPARISON**



**EXHIBIT 15 | RESIDENTIAL SEWER BILL COMPARISON**





### Proposed Five-Year Rate Plan for City Council Consideration

Under Prop 218, the City may adopt up to five years of modified rates in one formal process. Given the extent of the process and the time required to complete it, it is recommended that the City Council act on that maximum time period. Future councils may always either direct a lower rate than approved or undergo a new Prop 218 process within the five-year window to pursue a different plan. The purpose of noticing the five-year plan is to make transparent the maximum rates currently enacted, not to prevent future councils from taking alternative action.

Exhibits 16 and 17 display the proposed water and sewer rates in each of the next five years.

EXHIBIT 16 | PROPOSED WATER RATES

Water Base Meter Charge per Month	Current	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
3/4 or 1"	\$ 55.22	\$ 56.74	\$ 58.30	\$ 59.90	\$ 61.55	\$ 63.24
1.5	\$ 62.95	\$ 64.68	\$ 66.46	\$ 68.29	\$ 70.17	\$ 72.10
2	\$ 74.94	\$ 77.00	\$ 79.12	\$ 81.30	\$ 83.54	\$ 85.84
3	\$ 127.90	\$ 131.42	\$ 135.03	\$ 138.74	\$ 142.56	\$ 146.48
4	\$ 164.99	\$ 169.53	\$ 174.19	\$ 178.98	\$ 183.90	\$ 188.96
6	\$ 255.53	\$ 262.56	\$ 269.78	\$ 277.20	\$ 284.82	\$ 292.65
8	\$ 362.35	\$ 372.31	\$ 382.55	\$ 393.07	\$ 403.88	\$ 414.99
10	\$ 494.63	\$ 508.23	\$ 522.21	\$ 536.57	\$ 551.33	\$ 566.49

Water Consumption Charges per 100 cubic feet per Month	Current	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
0 to 1,200 cubic feet	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Over 1,200 cubic feet	\$ 2.77	\$ 2.85	\$ 2.93	\$ 3.01	\$ 3.10	\$ 3.19

EXHIBIT 17 | PROPOSED SEWER RATES

Sewer Base Charge per Month	2023-24	2023-24	2023-24	2023-24	2023-24
Residential per EDU*	\$ 67.66	\$ 69.69	\$ 71.78	\$ 73.93	\$ 76.15
Apartment per Unit**	\$ 39.42	\$ 40.60	\$ 41.82	\$ 43.07	\$ 44.36
Commercial per EDU***	\$ 67.66	\$ 69.69	\$ 71.78	\$ 73.93	\$ 76.15

\* 1 house = 1 EDU.  
 \*\* 1 Unit = 0.583 Residential EDU.  
 \*\*\* 1 EDU = 900 cubic feet, measured from prior year average winter water consumption.

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## Next Steps

The content of this report is expected to be presented to the City Council at a regular meeting in October 2023. Should the City Council choose to proceed with increased water and sewer rates, the next steps are required by Proposition 218:

- A date for a future public hearing on proposed rates must be directed. The public hearing must take place no sooner than 45 days from the date of public notice mailing.
- A written public notice of the intended rates and public hearing will be prepared and mailed to all property owners and payors of the utility.
- Any eligible written protests will be received by the City through the close of the public hearing.
- The public hearing will take place on the noticed date. Upon close of the public hearing, any received eligible written protests will be tabulated. If no more than a majority of parcels represented by either owner or other payor protest the proposed rates, the City Council may proceed with approval.
- Approved rates take effect not less than 30 days from approval.
- Subsequent year rate increases within the adopted five-year plan should be noticed not less than 30 days prior to effective date.

From the date at which the City Council directs the initiation of Prop 218 procedures to increase rates, the City should expect a minimum of three months to pass before new rates can become effective.

We appreciate the opportunity to continue our work with the City of Wheatland on this subject. Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



**TERRY MADSEN, PRESIDENT | CLEARSOURCE FINANCIAL CONSULTING**

PHONE: 831.288.0608

EMAIL: [TMADSEN@CLEARSOURCEFINANCIAL.COM](mailto:TMADSEN@CLEARSOURCEFINANCIAL.COM)

