



**WESTMINSTER**  
COLORADO

## **Discussion of Water Costs & Rates**

Special Study Session #3

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Heather Bergman

Thursday, November 5, 2020

# Discussion of Water & Wastewater – Schedule, Tasks

Meeting Number	Date	Topics for Discussion	Status?
Special Study Session #1	10/8/20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Setting the Stage</li> <li>• Community Participation</li> <li>• Water and Wastewater Infrastructure – System Focus</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completed</li> <li>• Started</li> <li>• Started</li> </ul>
Special Study Session #2	10/20/20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continuation of Water and Wastewater Infrastructure – System Focus</li> <li>• Meter Replacement Project discussion</li> <li>• Community Engagement follow up discussion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completed</li> <li>• Completed</li> <li>• Deferred to December</li> </ul>
Special Study Session #3	11/5/20	Water Costs and Rates	
Special Study Session #4	11/17/20	Wastewater Costs and Rates	
Special Study Session #5	12/15/20	Options and Issues	

# Themes in Community Comments/Concerns

- Meters (accuracy, changes to measurement, increased cost)
- Overall rates and comparison to other areas
- Tier III rate, impacts on owners of large lots
- Billing periods (variability, length, impact on monthly bills)
- PWU available financial resources, whether rate increases are needed
- Numbers of taps, how they affect rates (growth and development)
- Impacts of hot summer weather on usage and rates

## Additional Themes in Community Comments/Concerns

- Preference for regular billing cycles
- Preference for billing based on actual gallon usage
- Request to make customer usage data available faster
- Concern about customer portal access for customers without computers / smartphones
- Concern about asset management database system
- Request to complete rates discussion and outreach before next irrigation season
- Appreciative of information provided through workshop presentations
- Offer to volunteer on community advisory / focus group

# When Topics of Concern

## Infrastructure - October 8 & October 20

- Meters – were discussed as part of the overall infrastructure presentation on October 20th

## Water Costs/Rates -TONIGHT November 5

- Overall rates and comparisons to other cities
- Billing periods
- PWU resources and the \$100M-clarify.
- Numbers of taps affecting rates (growth and development) clarify

## Sewer Costs/Rates - November 17

## Policy and Options Discussion (December 15)

- Rates generally (and relationship to all the above topics)
- Impacts of weather on usage and rates

## City Council Interests

- Protect public health safety
- Provide sustainable, efficient, and reliable water infrastructure
- Ensure affordability/lower water rates that offer a better quality of life (and do not force people to choose water over other vital costs of living)
- Conservation
- Balance structural needs with resident pricing
- Invest in a reasonable and responsible manner
- Ensure equity and that people pay their fair share
- Focus on duty of care
- Create a plan that provides for a safe, clean, and dependable water system that meets current and future needs of Westminster
- Build a strong foundation for the next generation and invest in infrastructure for the future
- Help people who are hurting financially with their water bills
- Prevent failure that could impact residents and businesses
- Ensure water quality
- Understand how much water Westminster has for complete build out

# Here's the Path for Our Discussion

## Staff presentation on evening's topics

- Answering Council questions from interviews
- New approach to sharing the information
- Unpacking of assumptions and expectations

## Council questions

- Clarifying questions to ensure we all have the same understanding
- Identification of questions that weren't answered for staff to circle back

## Council discussion

- Have your questions on this topic (if you had them) been answered?
- What thoughts do you have about this information?
- *We aren't making policy recommendations or decisions at this time.*



A  
WORKSHOP  
*DISCUSSION!*

**Use first names:** Let's talk to each other as people, not jobs, titles, and positions.

**Assume good intentions:** Everyone wants to do what's right for the city and its residents.

**Acknowledge the range of views:** Reasonable people can disagree about how to solve a problem.

**Be optimistic:** People who disagree can (and regularly do) solve problems anyway!

**Ask questions:** Work to understand the issue and how others understand it, not to convince anyone of your own opinion.

**Disagree with civility:**

- ▶ “That’s not how I understand it.” vs “That’s wrong.”
- ▶ “I remember that differently.” vs “That’s not what happened.”

**Be open and creative.**

- ▶ What if?
- ▶ Could we?
- ▶ Yes, if!
- ▶ ~~No, because...~~

# Customer Questions Since Last Workshop

- It appears that infrastructure is replaced based on industry standard life. Are operating staff involved in capital improvement planning? Can the life of infrastructure be extended with proper maintenance?
  - Infrastructure is replaced based on a number of factors including age, condition and risk of failure. Industry standard life is just one consideration.
  - Operations staff are involved with and integral to Long Term Planning for capital improvements projects.
  - Proper maintenance can and does extend the life of infrastructure. Extended useful life of many assets factors in to capital improvements planning.
- How did the sewer UCI drop by 15% from 2015 – 2017? Why is it not more gradual? Did the UCI calculation change? Can we expected a sharp decline in the water UCI?
  - The sewer UCI is calculated from three utility areas: sewer pipe, sewer pumping stations, and Big Dry Creek Wastewater Treatment Facility. The largest utility area in value is the sewer pipes and it drives the UCI. Sewer pipe installed in the 1960s and 1970s reached the end of useful life in 2015 and has not been replaced and is the primary cause of the big jump.
  - The method of calculating the UCI did not change.
  - Think about turning 21. The night before your 21<sup>st</sup> birthday, you cannot legally get a drink at the bar. On the day of your birthday you can. The UCI is a calculated number using industry standard useful life. When the end of useful life ticks over, the UCI will decline.
  - It is likely we will see a sharp decline in the water UCI. We are investing a small fraction of the total dollar amount needed to avoid a sharp decline in the water UCI. When we invest \$30M per year in a \$4B Utility, we are investing at a rate of approximately 1% per year. This means that generally, we invest in one asset one time in 100 years. Few of our assets have a 100 year life span.
- Can the customer portal be expedited? Why do we have to wait for all meters to be installed?
  - Software can't be launched until all meters are installed and billing system upgrades are implemented.
  - Customers can call to request hourly usage at 303-658-2405.
- Is the city analyzing usage data pre- and post-meter installation? Can that data be used to test the theory on social media that new water meters cause spikes in usage?
  - A number of factors influence usage including temperature and precipitation. We can account for these, but not at the level of precision needed to test the accuracy of meters. Meters are tested by manufacturer and City.
- How are rates calculated for different tiers or customers?
  - We'll discuss tonight.

## Meeting #3 Covers Water Costs & Rates

- Format is to respond to the questions identified in the Process Proposal
- Ask questions and provide comments –we will pause for questions and discussion

## What Were Your Questions about Water?

- How are water costs calculated? What is included in the cost amount that is associated with charter and funding mandates? If water infrastructure upgrades/repairs/replacements are included in those costs, please separate them.

Costs = operating expenses + debt service payments + capital improvement projects (CIP) + financial policy commitments. All are included in charter and funding mandates.

- Are water rates the same as the City's costs to produce and deliver clean water? If not, what are the additional elements that drive or determine water rates? If so, what (if any) water infrastructure upgrades/repairs/replacements are included?

Rates include current + future: operating, debt service payment & CIP costs + financial policy commitments.

## What Were Your Questions About Water?

- Is there a difference between basic maintenance repairs and capital repairs for water infrastructure? Where's the line between O&M and capital? What determines that line?

Basic maintenance = <\$20,000 asset value or as part of in-house work.

In the Operating budgets

CIP projects = >\$20,000 asset value. In the CIP budgets.

- Which of the elements that determine water costs & water rates are relatively constant and which are more variable and why?

Debt service and operating budget costs are relatively constant.

CIP costs can be both.

# What Were Your Questions About Water?

- Which of these elements can the City control or influence? Which elements are out of the City's control? Why?

There are many elements that are in City control. We'll tell you more in detail in further slides. Look for the stars.



## What Were Your Questions About Water?

- What “blue sky thinking” has staff done about ways to reduce costs to produce and deliver clean water in the short and long terms? What other ideas have you generated and discarded?

We have lots of current practices, ideas and discarded options, more in that question.

- What “blue sky thinking” has staff done about ways to increase or diversify revenues in the short and long terms? Other than raising rates, what ideas have you generated and discarded?

We have lots of current practices, ideas and discarded options, more in that question.

**Question: Why is it difficult to say how much it costs to provide 1,000 gallons of clean drinking water? What are the variables that make it challenging? What's the range of costs?**

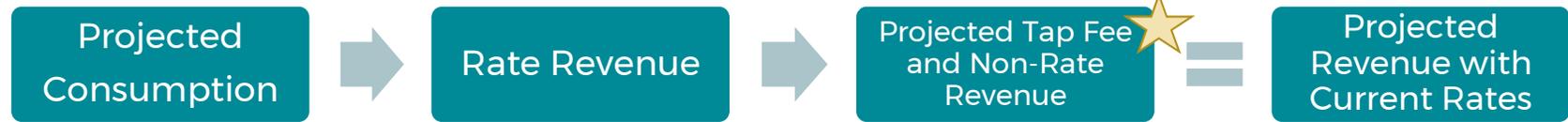
1,000 gallons of water delivered to any/all customers = \$7.92/kgal in 2020.

Why challenging:

- Which 1,000 gallons? The 1<sup>st</sup>? The 14,000<sup>th</sup>? The 100,000<sup>th</sup>?
- Which customer type?

# How Are Water Rates Calculated?

## What is our projected revenue with current rates?



## What is our plan for the future?



Rate Recommendations

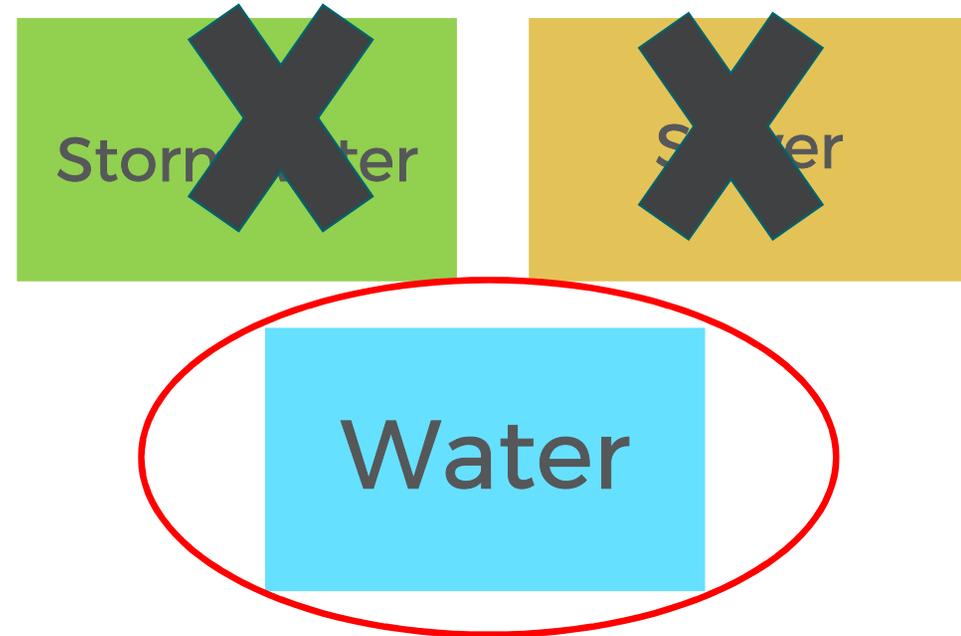
## What does this mean for our customers?



# Deep Dive Information - WATER

## What is a Utility?

- An organization that provides a service such as electricity, gas, water
- Some of these are provided through the municipality, some through another entity
- The City's three Utilities include:



These utilities are owned by City on behalf of our rate payers.

## What is an Enterprise?

Colorado's Constitution defines an enterprise as...

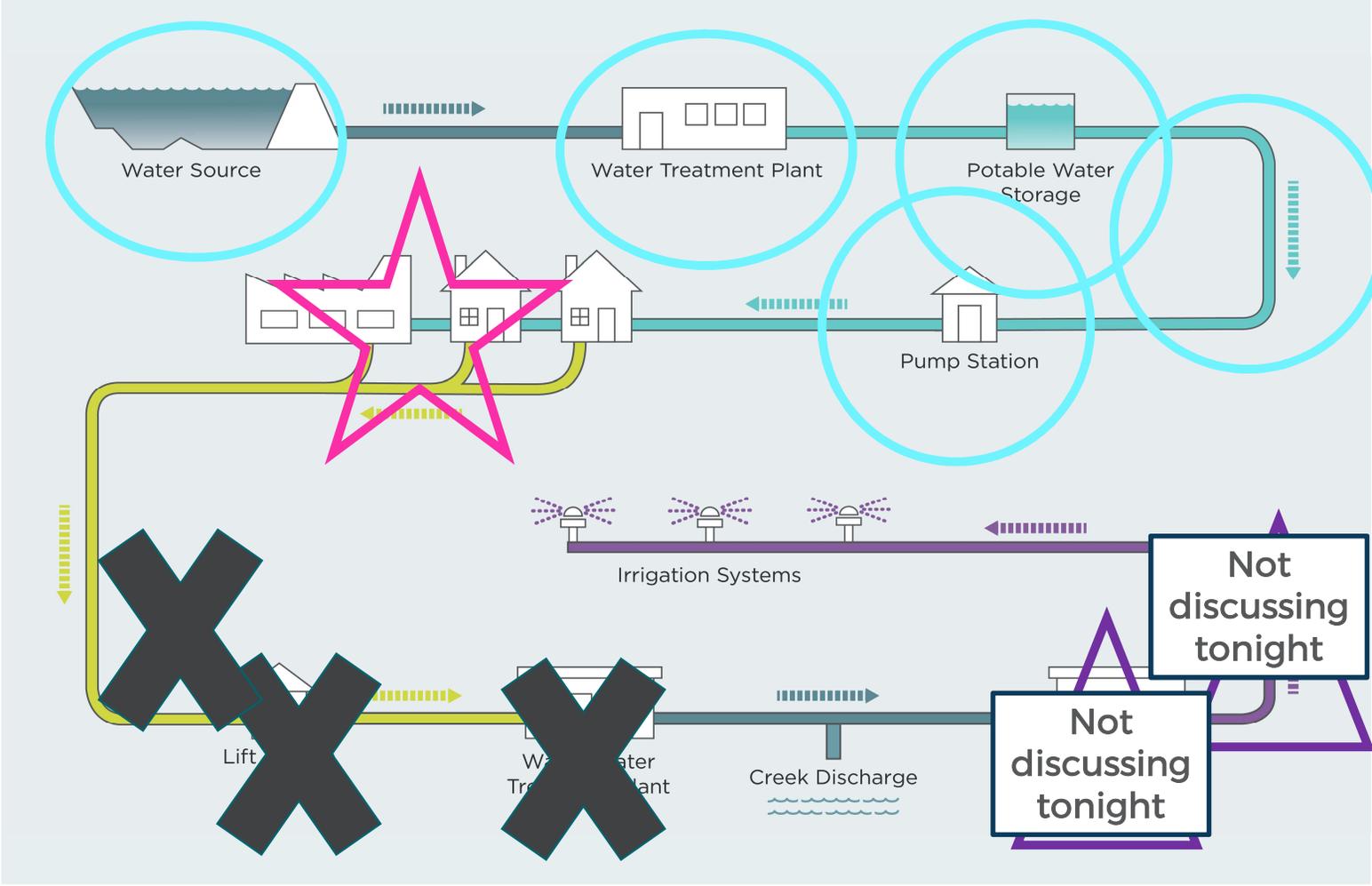
**“...government-owned business authorized to issue its own revenue bonds and receiving under 10% of annual revenue in grants from all Colorado state and local governments combined.”**

2019 charges for water services = approx. \$57 million.

10%=\$5.7 million (water)

What happens if we go over the 10% of revenue from the state/local government?

# The Term 'Water Fund' means....



# Water Fund

## Expenses

- Operating (O&M)
- Debt Service
- Capital Improvement Program (CIP)

## Revenues

- Rates/Fees
- Tap Fee Sales
- Bond Proceeds
- Miscellaneous

## Reserves

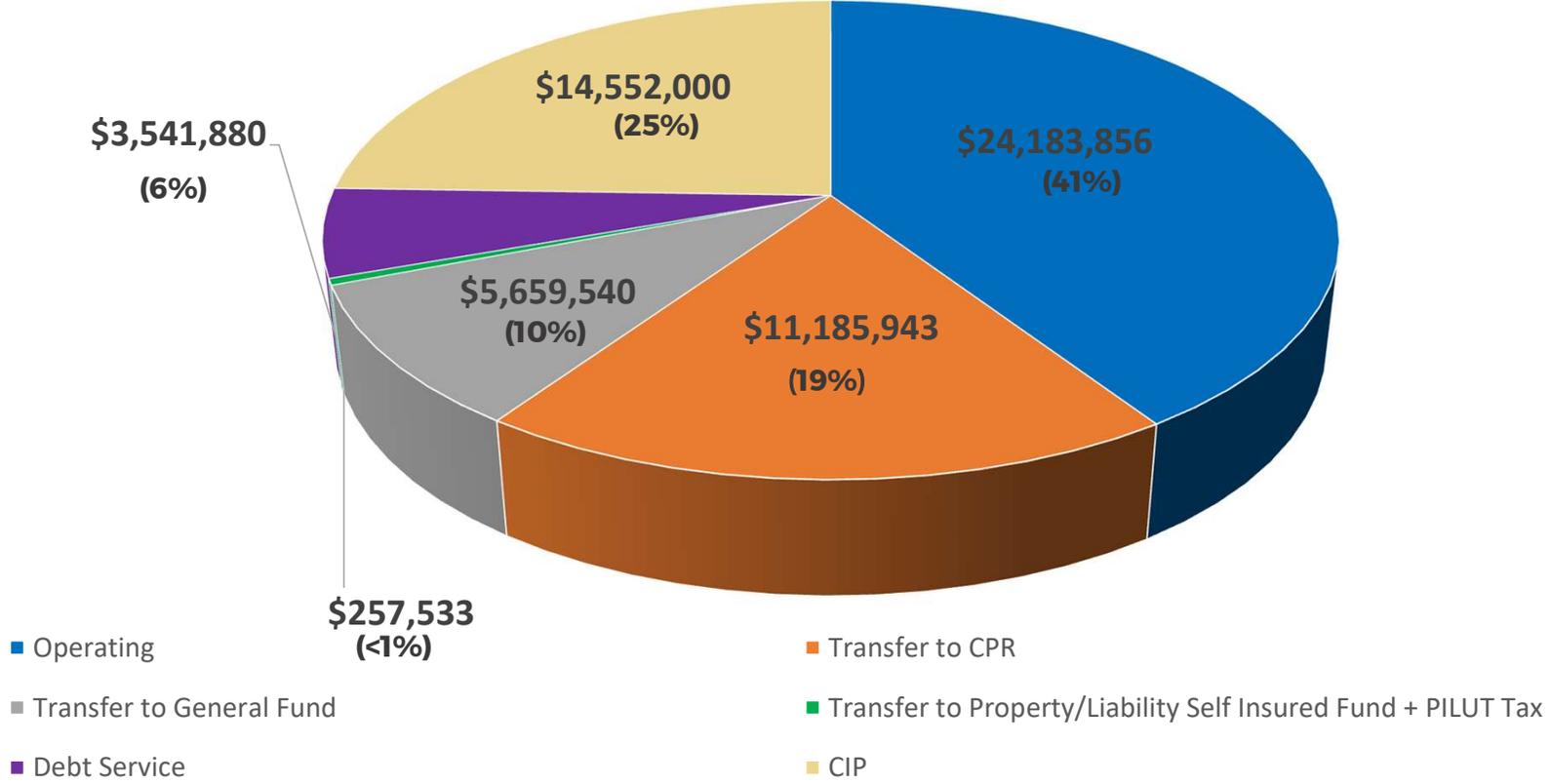
- Rate Stabilization Reserve (RSR)
- Capital Project Reserve (CPR)

# Water Fund

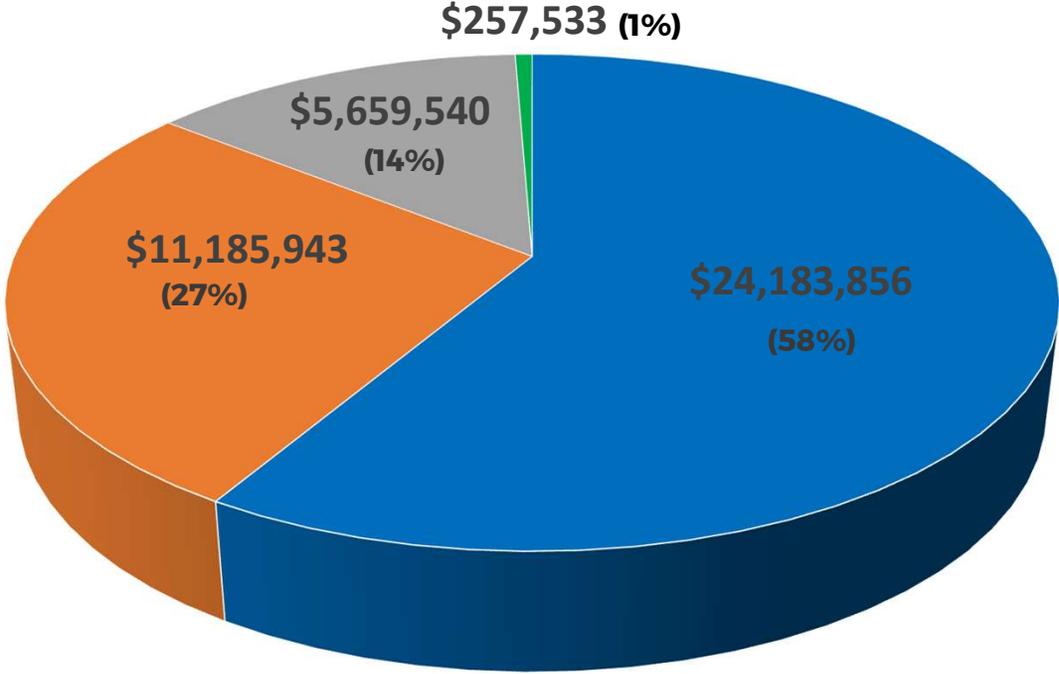
## Expenses

Operating (O&M)  
Capital Improvement  
Program (CIP)  
Debt Service

# 2021: All Water Costs = All Water Expenses = \$59,380,752



# 2021 Water Operating Expenses Breakdown = \$41,286,872



■ Operating   ■ Transfer to CPR   ■ Transfer to General Fund   ■ Transfer to Property/Liability Self Insured Fund + PILUT Tax

# 2021 Operating Budget = Costs = Expenses = \$41,286,872



- PEOPLE: salaries, benefits, retirement, training, certifications ~\$10M
- CONTRACTS: legal, engineering, equipment maintenance, partner organizations, contractual agreements ~\$12M
- PRODUCTS NEEDED TO DO WORK: equipment/parts/materials for in-house crews and in-house facility maintenance, 8" PVC water pipe, lab supplies, chemicals, fuel. ~\$2M

# 2021 Operating Budget = Costs = Expenses = \$41,286,872



- TRANSFERS: overhead costs to the General Fund, Property/Liability Self Insurance fund, Payment in Lieu of Sales Tax, planned transfers to the Capital Project Reserve account. ~\$17M
- SMALL DOLLAR VALUE ASSETS (<\$20,000 per piece): computer software/hardware, small vehicles, meters for new homes and replacements. ~\$200K

TOTAL = approx. \$41.2 Million

## **Question: Is there a difference between basic maintenance repairs and capital repairs for water infrastructure? Where's the line between O&M and capital? What determines that line?**

Basic maintenance = <\$20,000 asset value or as part of in-house work.  
In the Operating budgets

CIP projects = >\$20,000 asset value. In the CIP budgets.

# Water Fund

## Expenses

Operating (O&M)  
Capital Improvement  
Program (CIP)  
Debt Service

# WATER CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

## COSTS = EXPENSES



2021 Proposed - Project Name	2021 Proposed - Project Amount
120 <sup>th</sup> Avenue Transmission Waterline- Assessment & Pre-Design	\$2,760,000
Conservation Program: Multi-Family Water Efficient Fixture Retrofits	\$100,000
Customer Data Portal Software	\$100,000
Kershaw Pump Station Improvements	\$750,000
Northridge Water Storage Tanks Replacement	\$8,000,000
South Boulder Canal Diversion Structure	\$850,000
Utility Facilities Parking Lot Maintenance Program	\$45,000
Wattenberg Reservoir – Spillway & Bank Stabilization	\$1,523,000
Water Capital Outlay Replacement Program (Vehicles)	\$424,000
<b>2021 Total Proposed CIP</b>	<b>\$14,552,000</b>

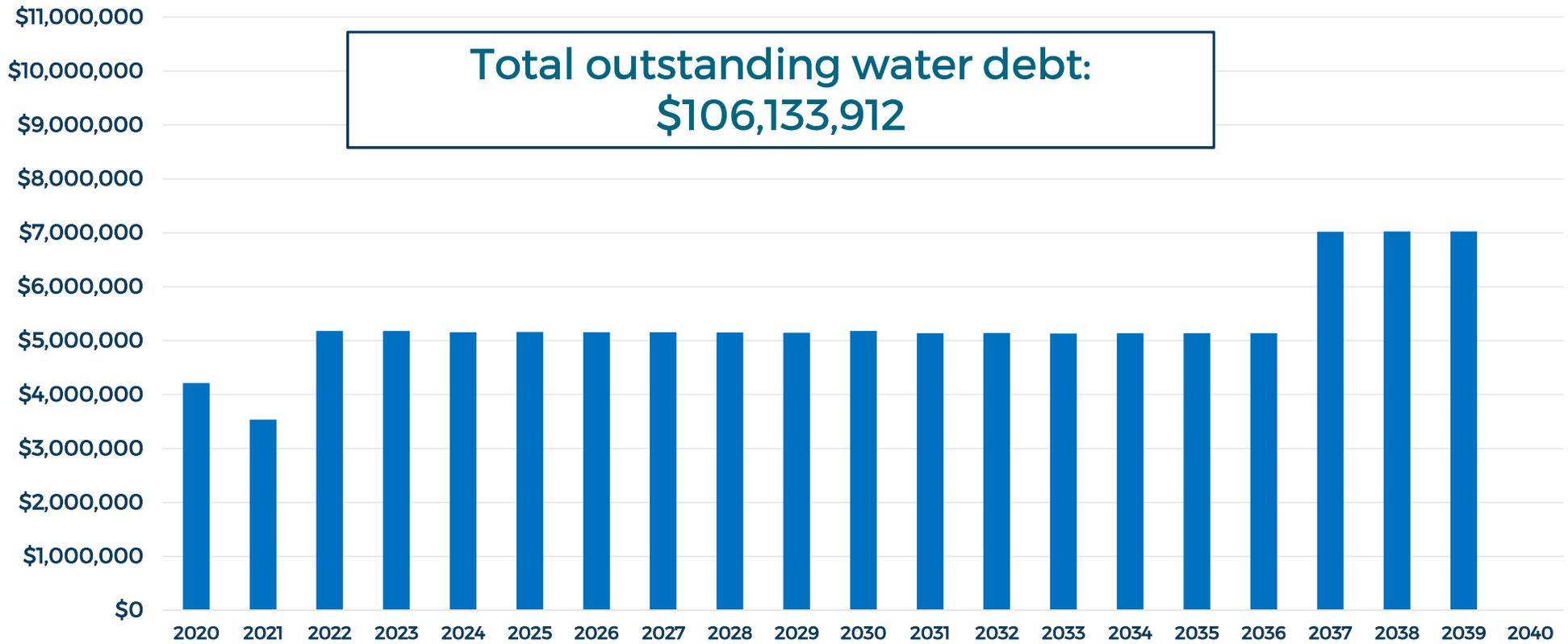
# Water Fund

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graph TD; A[Water Fund] --- B[Expenses]; B --- C[Operating (O&M)]; B --- D[Capital Improvement Program (CIP)]; B --- E[Debt Service];
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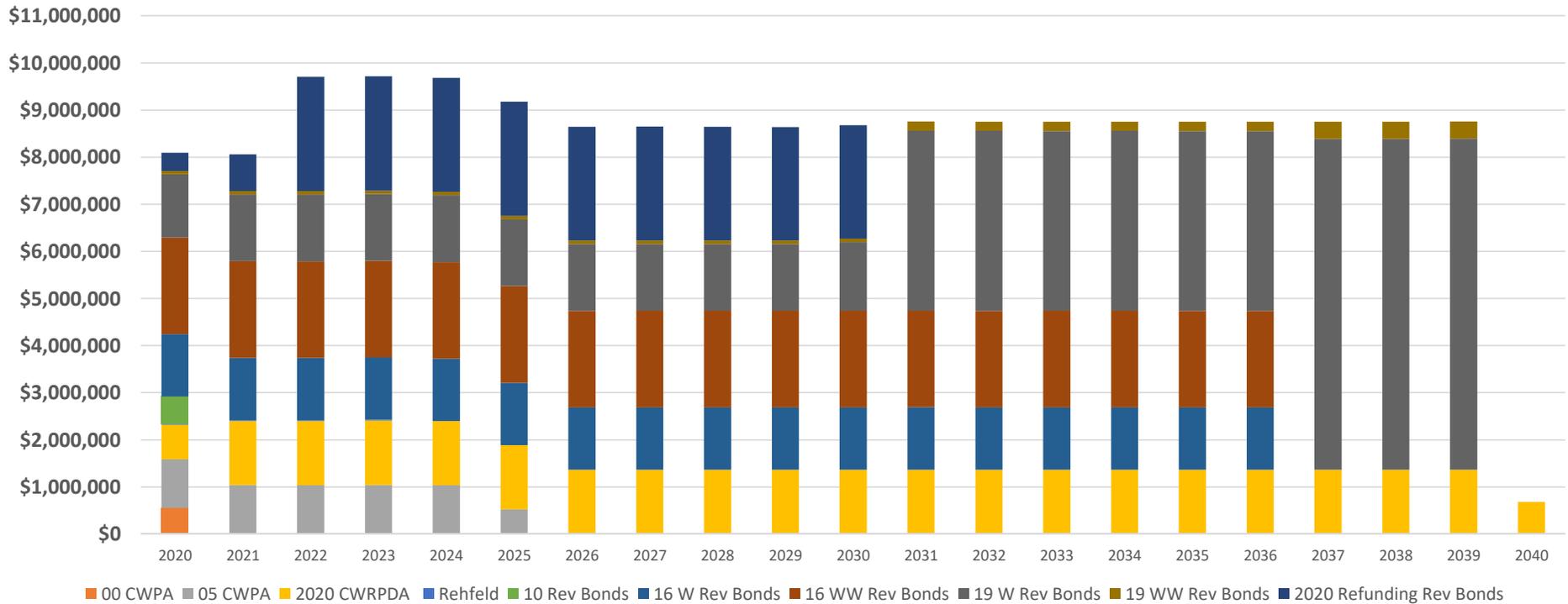
## Expenses

Operating (O&M)  
Capital Improvement  
Program (CIP)  
Debt Service

# Water Debt Service Schedule: 2020-2040



# Existing Debt Service: Water + Wastewater



# Water Debt and Loans Issued 2000-2020

Year Issued	Total Amount of Debt	Water Fund Amount	Outstanding debt (Principle + Interest)	Projects Funded
2000	\$14,898,357	\$14,898,357	\$554,586	Northwest Water Treatment Facility
2008	\$180,500	\$180,500	\$64,758	City purchased water rights from a family
2010	\$27,799,000	\$27,799,000	\$0- refunded/refinanced in 2020. See below.	12 projects, including: Reclaimed Plant expansion, waterline R&R, Pressure Zone 1, NWTF Membrane replacement, Wandering View Tanks work
2016	\$51,000,000	\$20,000,000	\$22,503,690	Pressure Zone 3, Sheridan Water Main Replacement
2019	\$43,580,000	\$41,430,000	\$59,500,422	Wattenberg Reservoir payment to Aggregate Industries, High Service Pump Station, WATER2025
2010 (Refinanced in 2020)		\$22,925,080	\$22,925,080	See 2010 projects above
TOTAL	\$104,307,857		\$106,133,912	

## **Question: What is included in the cost amount that is associated with charter mandates?**

Section 14.6 of the City of Westminster, Colorado Home Rule Charter states:

“The rates and charges for any municipal public utility for the furnishing of water, light, heat, power, gas or sewage treatment and rubbish and garbage disposal shall be so fixed as to at least meet all the operating costs of such utility.”

## **Question: What is included in the water cost amount that is associated with charter mandates?**

Charter Section 11.1(c) requires that utility bonds be paid by utility revenues.

**“The Council shall have the power to issue bonds** to finance the improvement or extension of a municipally owned and operated utility, or any other project, enterprise, works or ways, if said **bonds shall be payable solely out of revenue to be derived from the operation of such utility, project, enterprise, works or ways.** The Council shall also be empowered to combine municipally owned and operated utilities, providing for their joint operation, and having so provided, may issue revenue bonds of such jointly operated utilities, pledging for the payment thereof the joint revenue of the utilities. Such joint utilities revenue bonds may be issued to acquire, extend or improve one (1), or more, or all of the jointly operated utilities.”

## Question :What is included in the water cost amount that is associated with funding mandates?

- We've issued debt to pay for Water projects
- Lender requirements include that we have 100% of annual debt service payment + additional pledged revenues
  - Staff considers this a funding mandate
- City Debt Policy Guideline requires 100% of annual debt service payment+50%. 
  - More conservative. Provides more room if there is a significant impact to the economy and revenues.
  - This is a calculation factor in rate-setting process.

## A Debt Service Coverage Analogy

Income:	\$10,000	2019 Water Income:	\$57,947,664
Expenses (gas, food, energy, etc.):	\$ 8,000	2019 Water Expenses (Oper. + CIP expenses):	\$27,860,621
Remaining in account:	\$ 2,000	Remaining:	\$ 30,087,043
Annual Mortgage payment:	\$ 1,000	2019 Annual Water Debt Service amount:	\$5,320,896
110% amount:	\$ 1,100	110% debt service amount:	\$5,852,986
125% amount:	\$1,250	125% debt service amount:	\$6,651,120
150% amount:	\$1,500	150% debt service amount:	\$7,981,344 ★

# Cost of Borrowing for Individuals

## Personal Costs of Borrowing

- What's your credit score?
- May determine your interest rate



Higher interest rate/harder to get credit Lower interest rate/easier to get credit

# Cost of Borrowing for A Utility

## Utility Costs of Borrowing

## Westminster's Current Credit Ratings

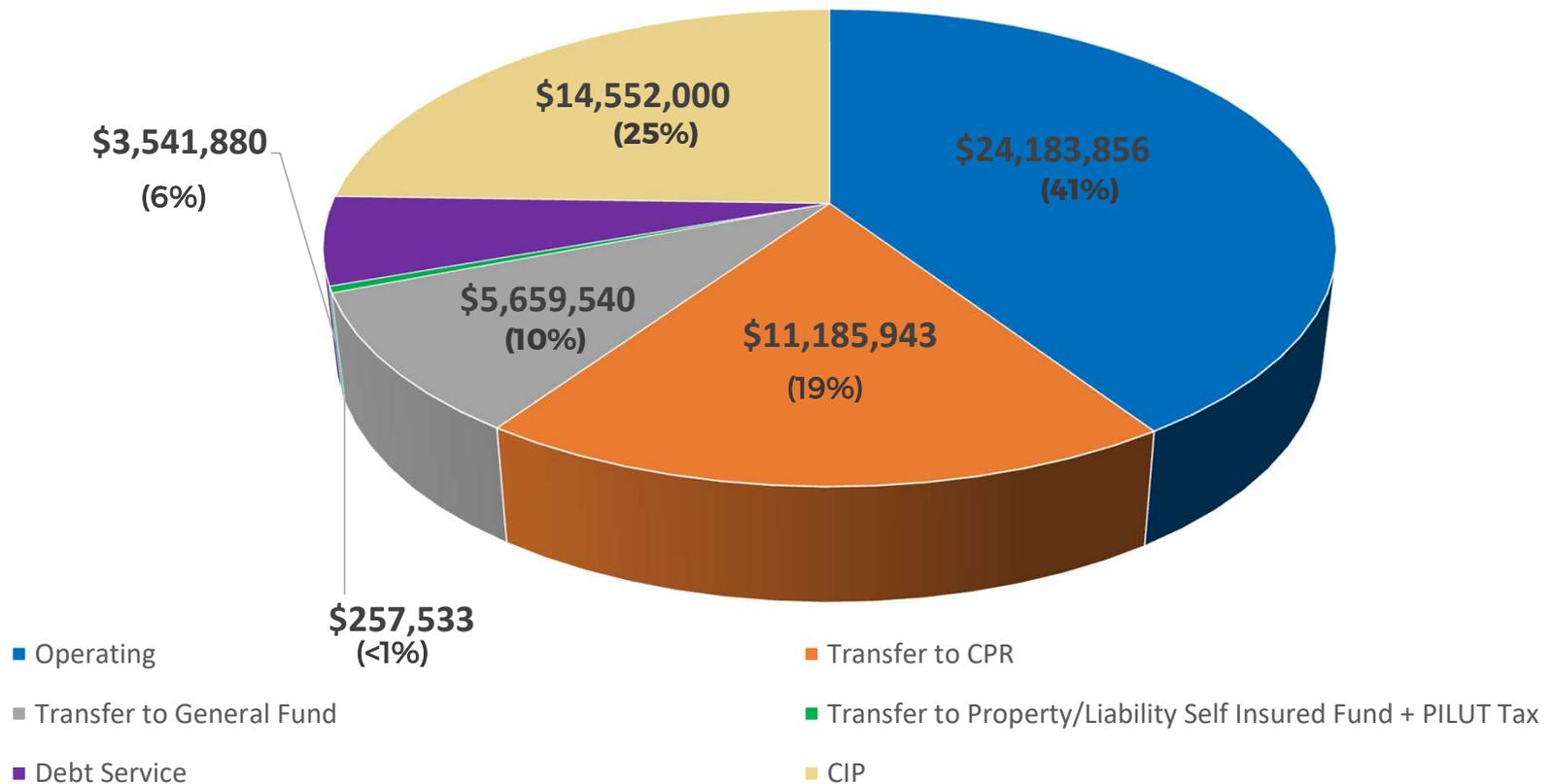
- What's your credit score?
- May determine your interest rate

AA+ (Fitch)    AAA (S&P)



Higher interest rate/harder to get credit    Lower interest rate/easier to get credit

# 2021: All Water Costs = All Water Expenses = \$59,380,752



## Question: What “blue sky thinking” has staff done about ways to reduce costs to produce and deliver clean water in the short and long terms?

- Reduced water power/chemical budget. Always reviewing budget.
- 140+ item list of Innovative and Sustainable Cost Saving Practices provided to City Council in June:
  - Disposal of filter backwash sludge (\$200,000 savings)
  - In-house water quality testing and studies (e.g., whole effluent testing, in-house studies)
  - In-house water main replacement program (cost savings)
  - Converted water treatment to hypochlorite disinfection (safety and cost)
  - Dewatering program to reduce nutrients in land application (cost savings, reduced environmental impact)
- Investing in capital planning to minimize long term O&M
- The role of conservation leading to decreased demand leading to smaller pipelines, smaller treatment facilities, etc.
- Refinance existing debt when possible

## Question: What other ideas have you generated and discarded?

We discarded the following:

- Consolidating with another utility. Based on water sources + cost.
- Reducing treatment. Based on regulations.
- Keeping the existing Semper Water Treatment Facility. Per a 2015 master plan, it is more cost-efficient to build new plant.
- Entering a P3 (public-private-partnership) contract for part/all of utility operations. P3 potentially removes public input/influence, possible cost increases in short- and long-term.

**Question:**  
**Which of all of the things we've talked about can the City control or influence? Which elements are out of the City's control? Why?**

Item	City Can Change 	City Cannot Change
Level of Service - CIP and Operating budgets		X
Meeting debt service obligations		X
City debt service coverage policy		

## EXPENSES

# Questions, Takeaways & Ideas About Water Costs?

# Water Fund

## Revenues

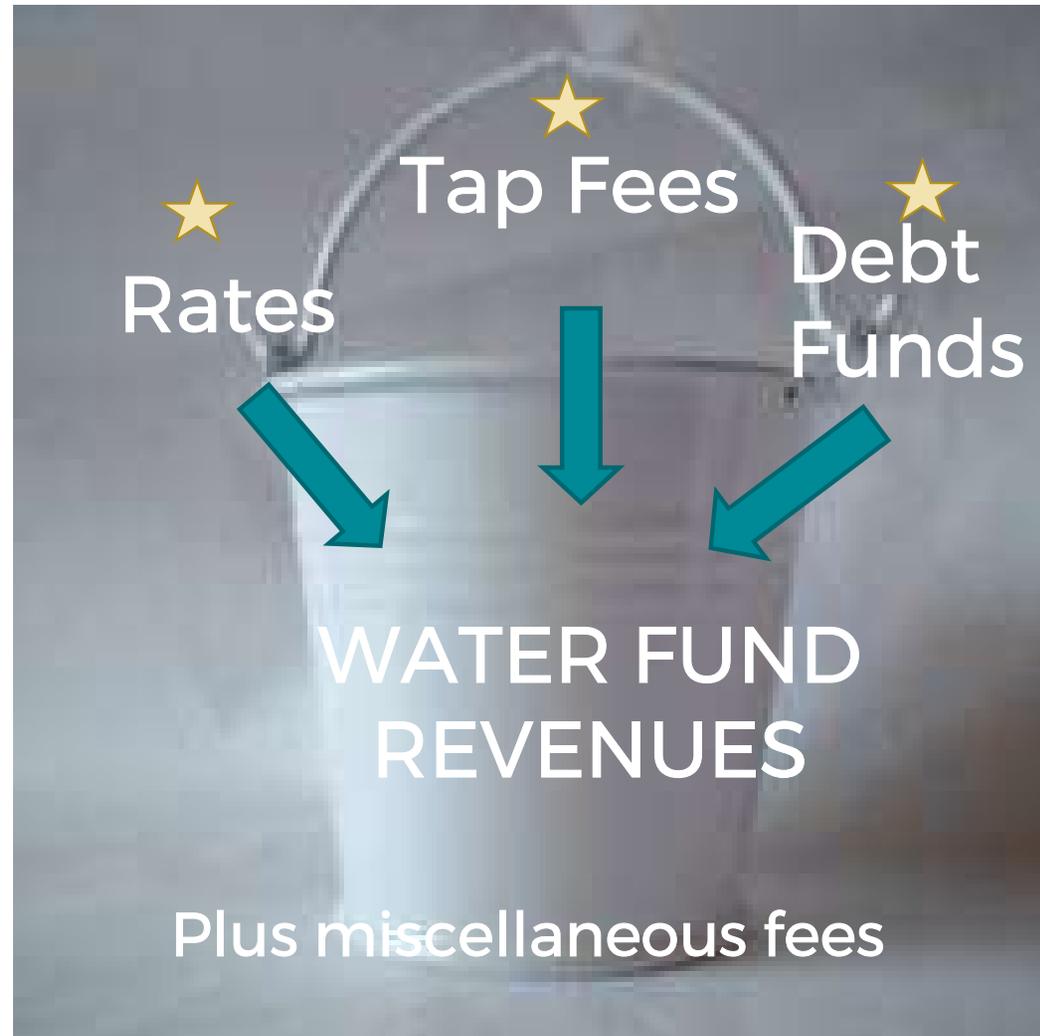
Rates/Fees

Tap Fee Sales

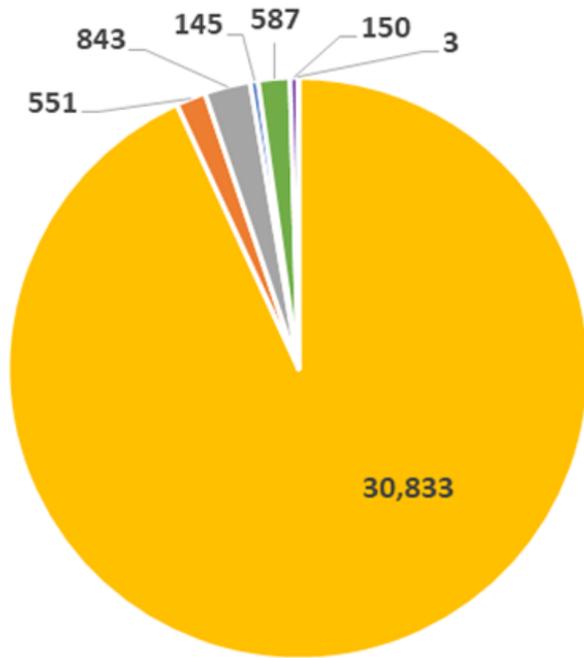
Debt Proceeds

Miscellaneous

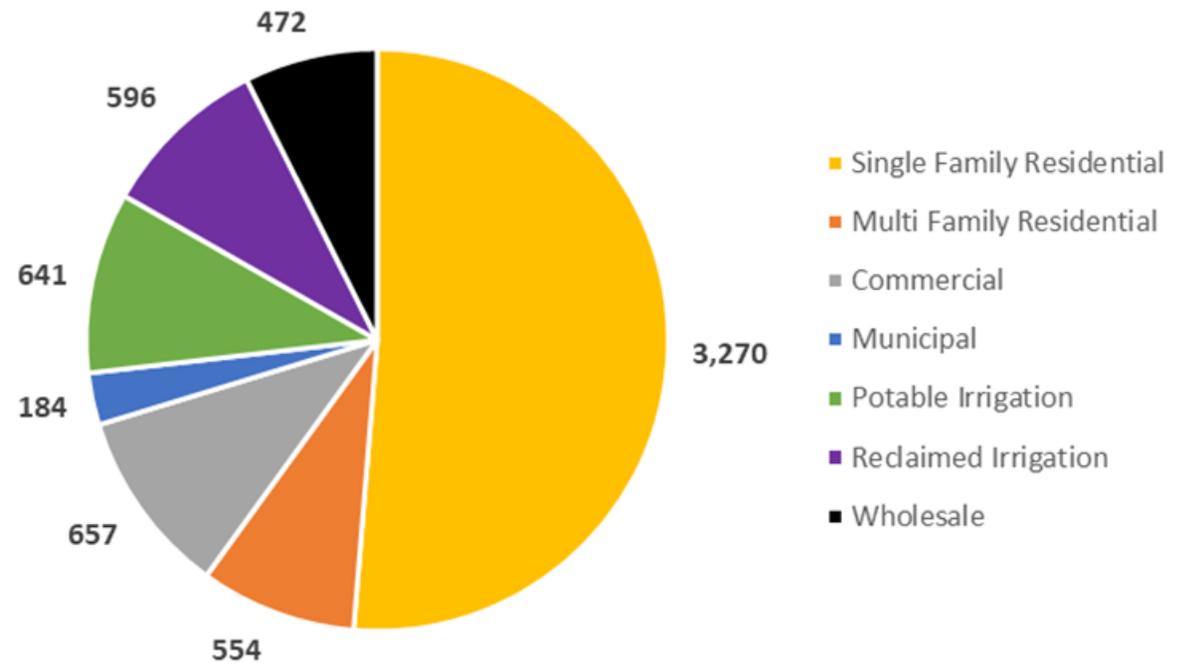
# The Water Fund Has Three Primary Revenue Sources



# A Small Number of Accounts Use a Lot of Water

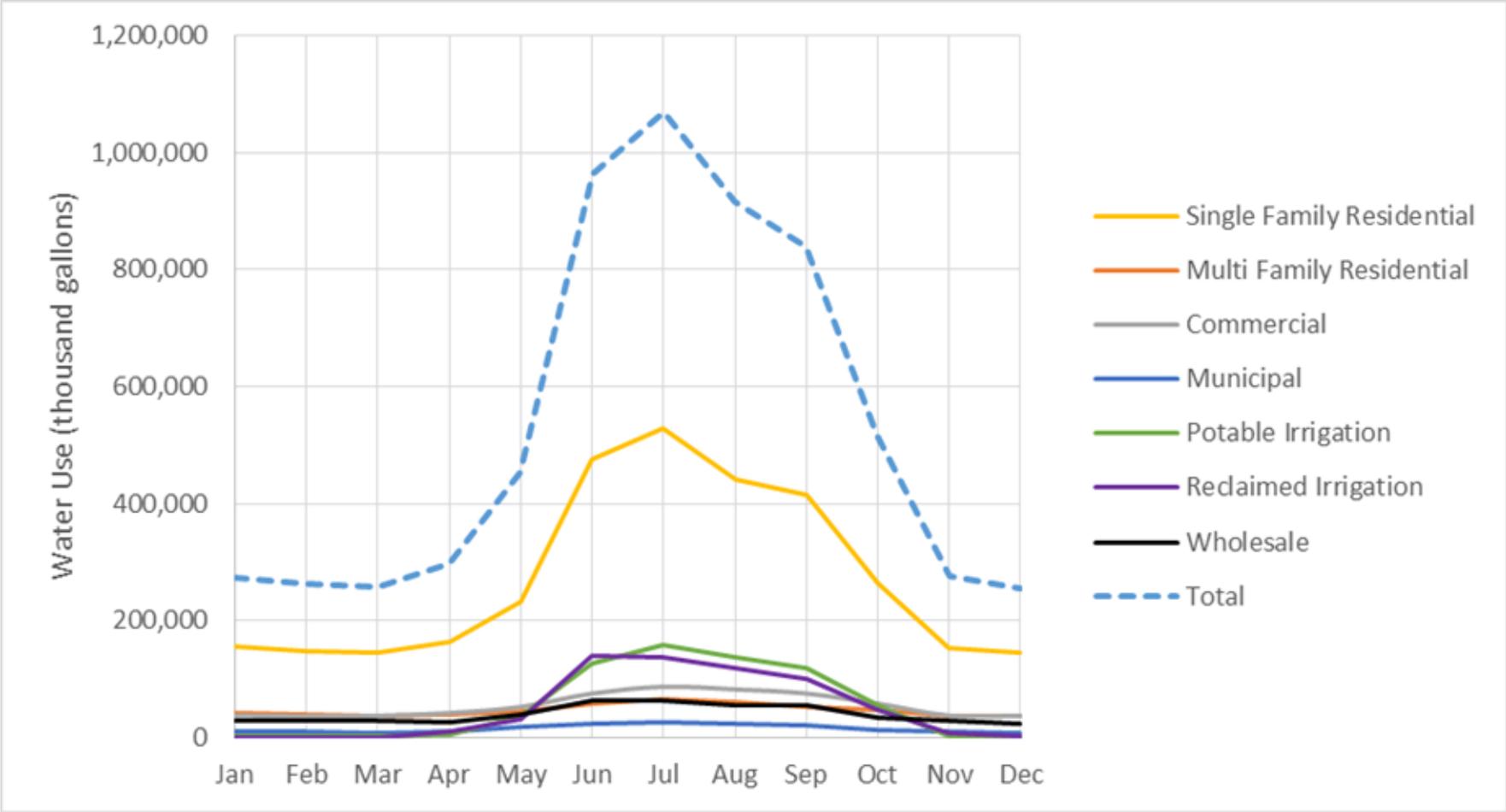


Number of Accounts

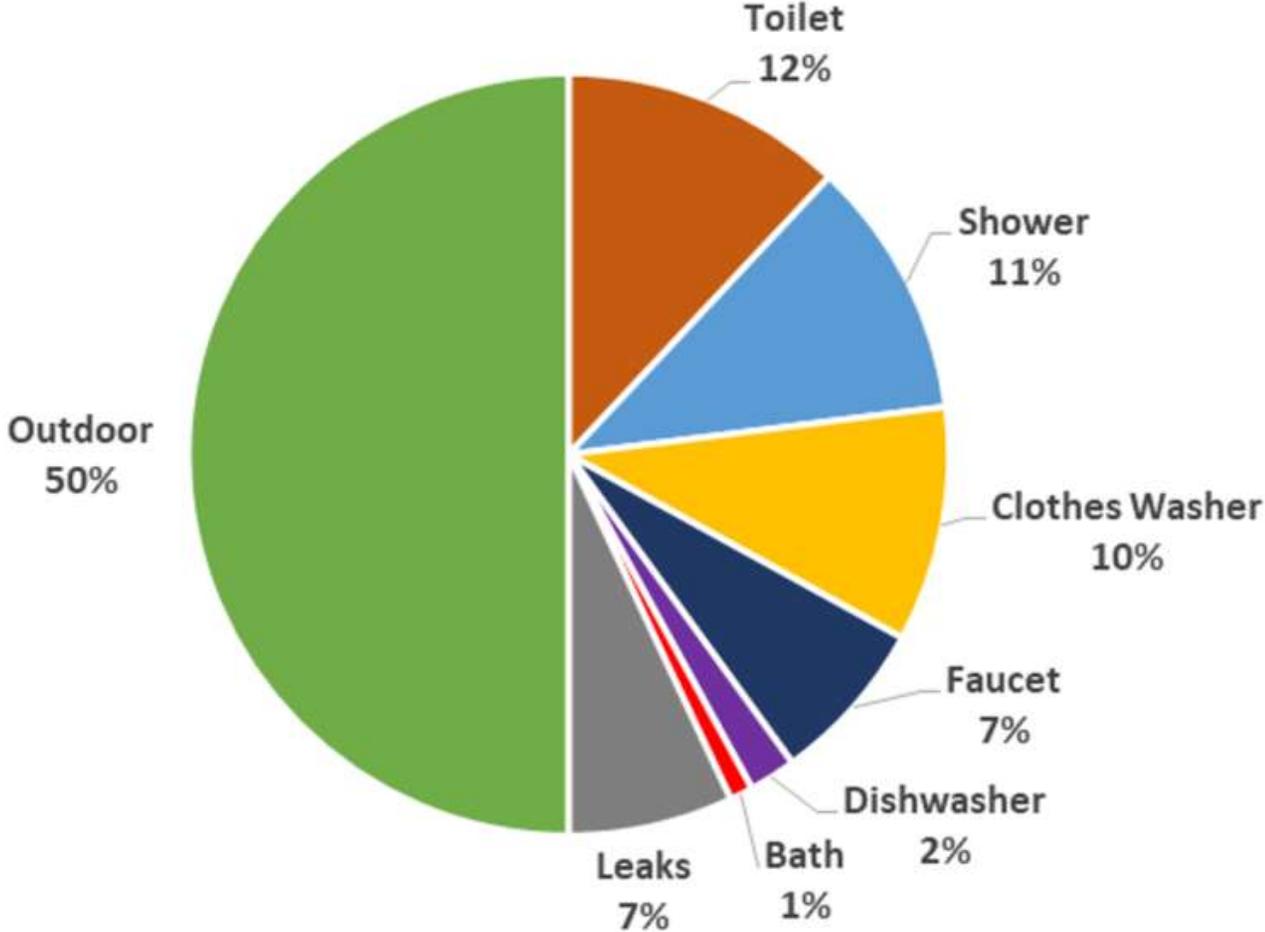


Million Gallons of Water Use

# Westminster Water Use Peaks in Summer Time



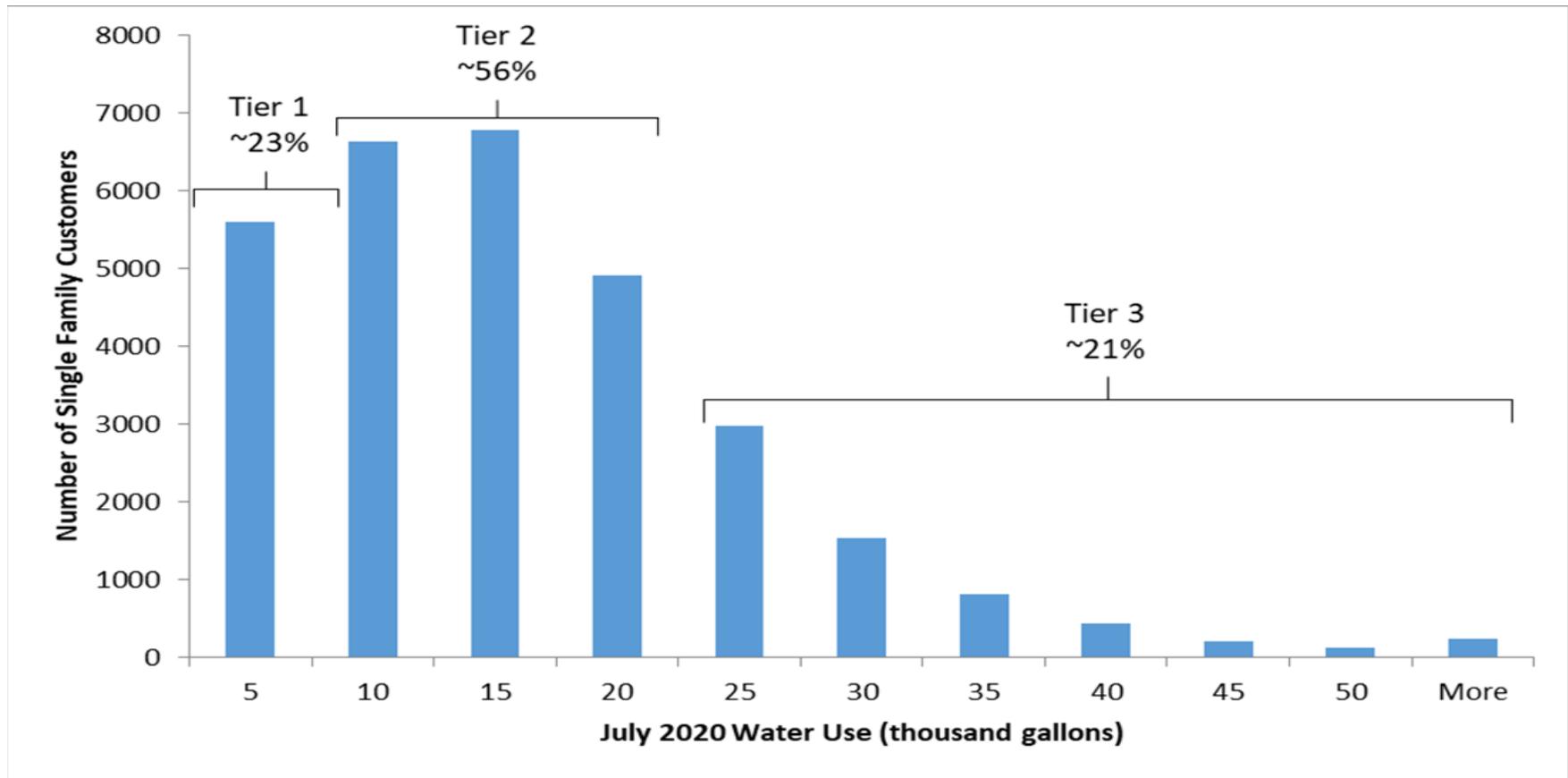
# 50% of Residential “End Use” is Outdoors



# Introduction to Water Rate Tiers for Residential Customers

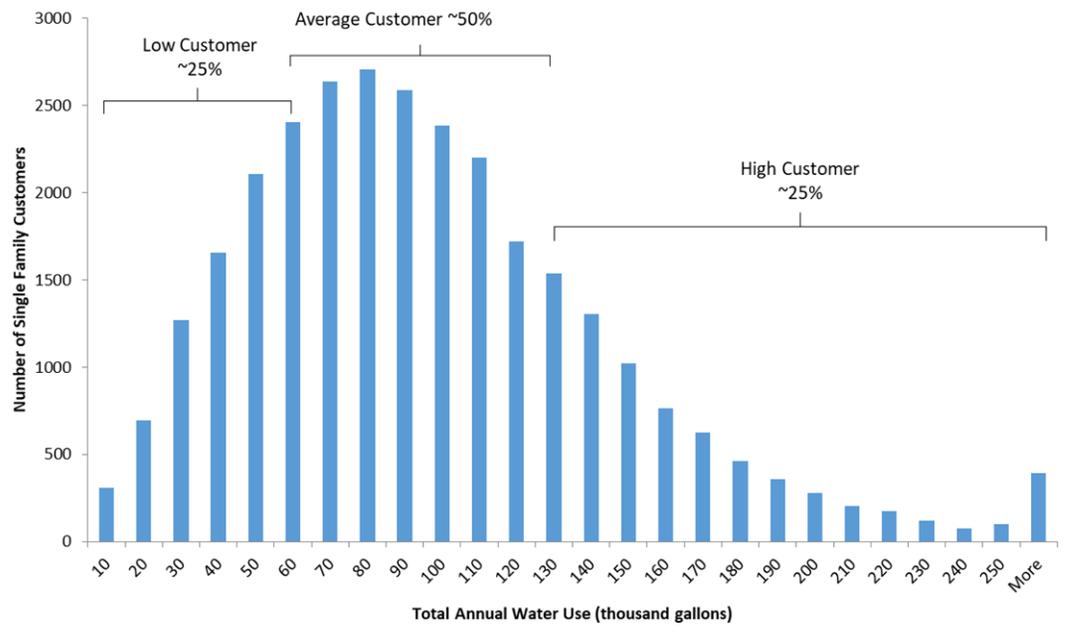
- Westminster bills customer water use based on 1,000 gallon units called Kgals. 
- These Kgals are distributed into three tiers for billing purposes.
  - Tier 1: 0-6,000 gallons (0-6 Kgal) \$3.96/Kgal 
  - Tier 2: 7,000 – 20,000 gallons (7-14 Kgal) \$8.15/Kgal 
  - Tier 3: +21,000 gallons (+21 Kgal) \$12.88/Kgal 

# Single Family Customers' Summer Water Use - JULY 2020

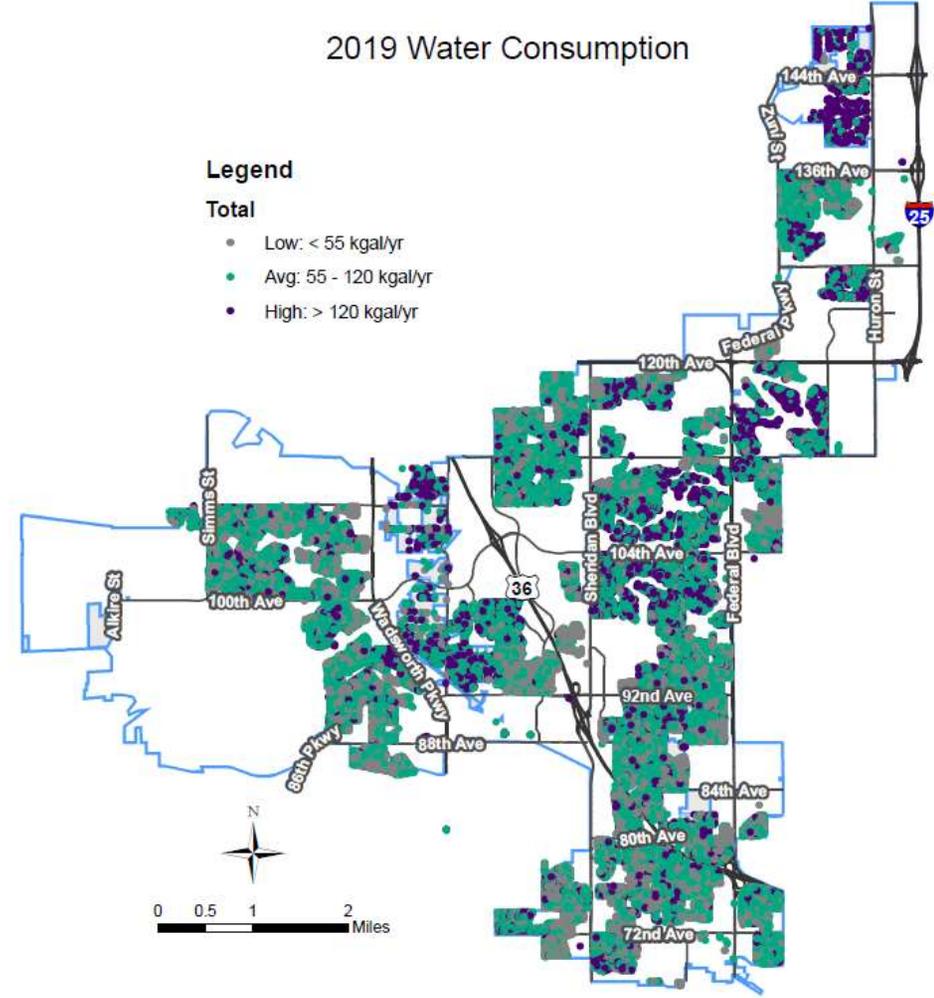


# Single Family Residential Annual Use

- Low: < 55kgal/yr (25%)
- Avg: 55-120 kgal/yr (50%)
- High: > 120 kgal/yr (25%)



2019 Water Consumption



## 2020 Water Use Tiers and Cost per Kgal

Tier Use in Kgal	Tier Cost per Kgal	Kgal in Tier	Total Cost in Tier
0-6 Kgal	\$3.96/Kgal ★	6 ★	\$23.76
7-20 Kgal	\$8.15/Kgal ★	14 ★	\$114.10
Over 21 Kgal	\$12.88/Kgal ★	Depends ★	Depends on Tier 3 water use

## 2020 Sample Customer Water Use - Average Water Use - July

Customer used 12,000 gallons in billing cycle = 12 Kgal

Tier Use in Kgal	Tier Cost per Kgal	Water Use in the Tier	Total Cost in Tier
0-6 Kgal	\$3.96/Kgal	6 Kgal	\$23.76
7-20 Kgal	\$8.15/Kgal	6 Kgal	\$48.90
+ 21 Kgal	\$12.88/Kgal	0 Kgal	\$0
Charge for 12 Kgal (12,000 gallons) of water used in billing cycle:			<b>\$72.66</b>

## 2020 Sample Customer Water Use- High Water Use- JULY

Customer used 31,000 gallons in billing cycle = 31 kgal

Tier Use in Kgal	Tier Cost per Kgal	Water Use in the Tier	Total Cost in Tier
0-6 Kgal	\$3.96/Kgal	6 Kgal	\$23.76
7-20 Kgal	\$8.15/Kgal	14 Kgal	\$114.10
+ 21 Kgal	\$12.88/Kgal	11 Kgal	\$141.68
Charge for 31 Kgal (31,000 gallons) of water used in billing cycle:			\$279.54

# How Does This Look on a Utility Bill?



## Utility Bill

ACCOUNT NUMBER:  
CUSTOMER NUMBER:

Service Address:

Bill Date 8/19/2020  
Balance Forward \$0.00  
Current Charges \$343.79  
**Total Amt Due: \$343.79**  
Due Date 9/9/2020

### Westy Message Center

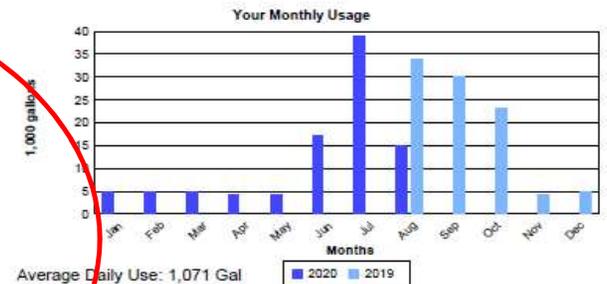
The city is offering \$50 one-time grants to residents financially impacted by the COVID-19 crisis to be applied to their utility bill. Learn more and apply: [www.cityofwestminster.us/waterbillassistance](http://www.cityofwestminster.us/waterbillassistance), [ubassist@cityofwestminster.us](mailto:ubassist@cityofwestminster.us), 303-658-2405.

31  
total

Water Meter Number	Service Dates			Meter Reading		Units=1,000Gal
	From	To	Days	Previous Meter Read	Current Meter Read	Water Used
-----	07/08/2020	07/23/2020	15	2195	2211	Units: 16
	07/23/2020	08/06/2020	14	0	15	Units: 15

### Summary Of Current Charges

Billing	240.75
Payment - Thank You	240.75CR
<b>Balance Forward</b>	<b>0.00</b>
Meter Service Charge	13.05
Water Consumption Total	279.54
Tier 1 - 6 Thousand Gal x 3.96	23.76
Tier 2 - 14 Thousand Gal x 8.15	114.10
Tier 3 - 11 Thousand Gal x 12.88	141.68
Sewer - Based on AWC 5.00 Thousand Gal x 7.84	39.20
Storm Water Management Fee	6.00
Infrastructure Fee	6.00
<b>Total Current Bill</b>	<b>343.79</b>
<b>Total Amount Due</b>	<b>343.79</b>



Want to Pay over the Phone?	Auto Pay System (303) 658-2030
Questions about your Bill?	Preguntas Sobre Su Cuenta?
Speak to Customer Service	(303) 658-2405
Business Hours	Monday - Thursday 7am to 6pm
Email Customer Service	Email: <a href="mailto:ub@cityofwestminster.us">ub@cityofwestminster.us</a>
Westminster Water Correspondence	Utility Billing - 4800 W. 92nd Ave. Westminster, CO 80031



^Please return the bottom portion with your payment^

Make checks payable to City of Westminster

# Are There Customers With \$1,000+ Water Bills? Why?



## Utility Bill

ACCOUNT NUMBER:  
CUSTOMER NUMBER:

Bill Date 8/19/2020  
Balance Forward \$0.00  
Current Charges \$1,887.34  
**Total Amt Due: \$1,887.34**  
Due Date 9/9/2020

**Westy Message Center**

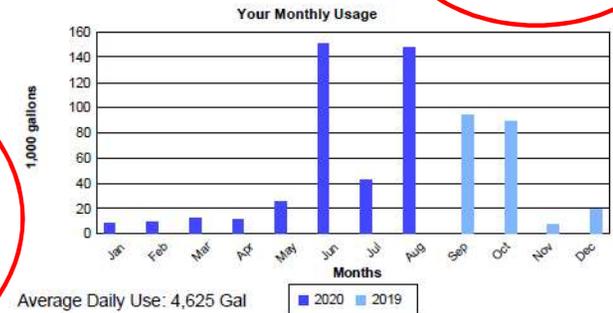
The city is offering \$50 one-time grants to residents financially impacted by the COVID-19 crisis to be applied to their utility bill. Learn more and apply: [www.cityofwestminster.us/waterbillassistance](http://www.cityofwestminster.us/waterbillassistance), [ubassist@cityofwestminster.us](mailto:ubassist@cityofwestminster.us), 303-658-2405.

Service Dates				Meter Reading		Units=1,000Gal
Water Meter Number	From	To	Days	Previous Meter Read	Current Meter Read	Water Used
	07/09/2020	08/10/2020	32	42	190	Units: 148

Yes, some customers use a lot of water.

### Summary Of Current Charges

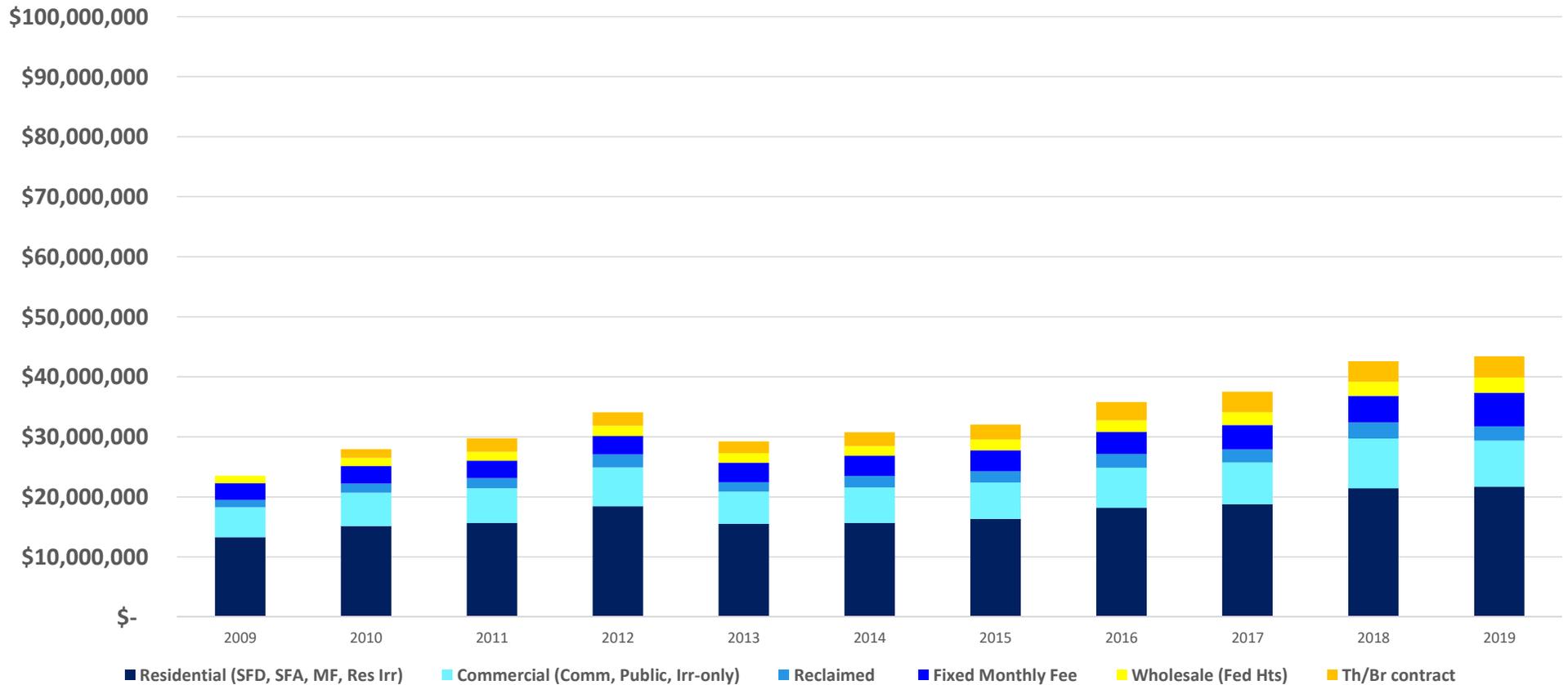
Billing	1,320.62
Payment - Thank You	1,320.62
<b>Balance Forward</b>	<b>0.00</b>
Meter Service Charge	13.05
Water Consumption Total	1,786.50
Tier 1 - 6 Thousand Gal x 3.96	23.76
Tier 2 - 14 Thousand Gal x 8.15	114.10
Tier 3 - 128 Thousand Gal x 12.88	1,648.64
Sewer - Based on AWC 9.67 Thousand Gal x 7.84	75.79
Storm Water Management Fee	6.00
Infrastructure Fee	6.00
<b>Total Current Bill</b>	<b>1,887.34</b>
<b>Total Amount Due</b>	<b>1,887.34</b>



<b>Want to Pay over the Phone?</b>	<b>Auto Pay System (303) 658-2030</b>
Questions about your Bill?	<i>Preguntas Sobre Su Cuenta?</i>
Speak to Customer Service	(303) 658-2405
Business Hours	Monday - Thursday 7am to 6pm
Email Customer Service	Email: <a href="mailto:ub@cityofwestminster.us">ub@cityofwestminster.us</a>
Westminster Water Correspondence	Utility Billing - 4800 W. 92nd Ave. Westminster, CO 80031

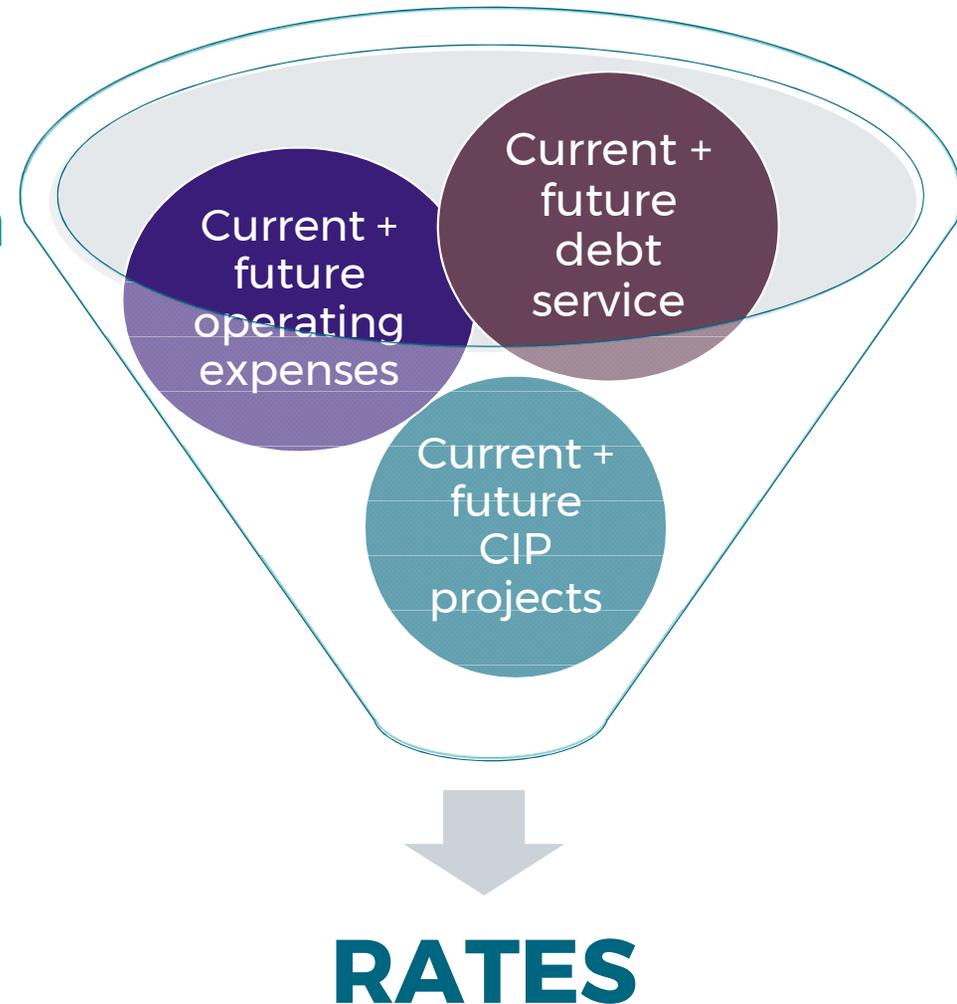


# All Water Rate Revenues (6 categories) 2009-2019

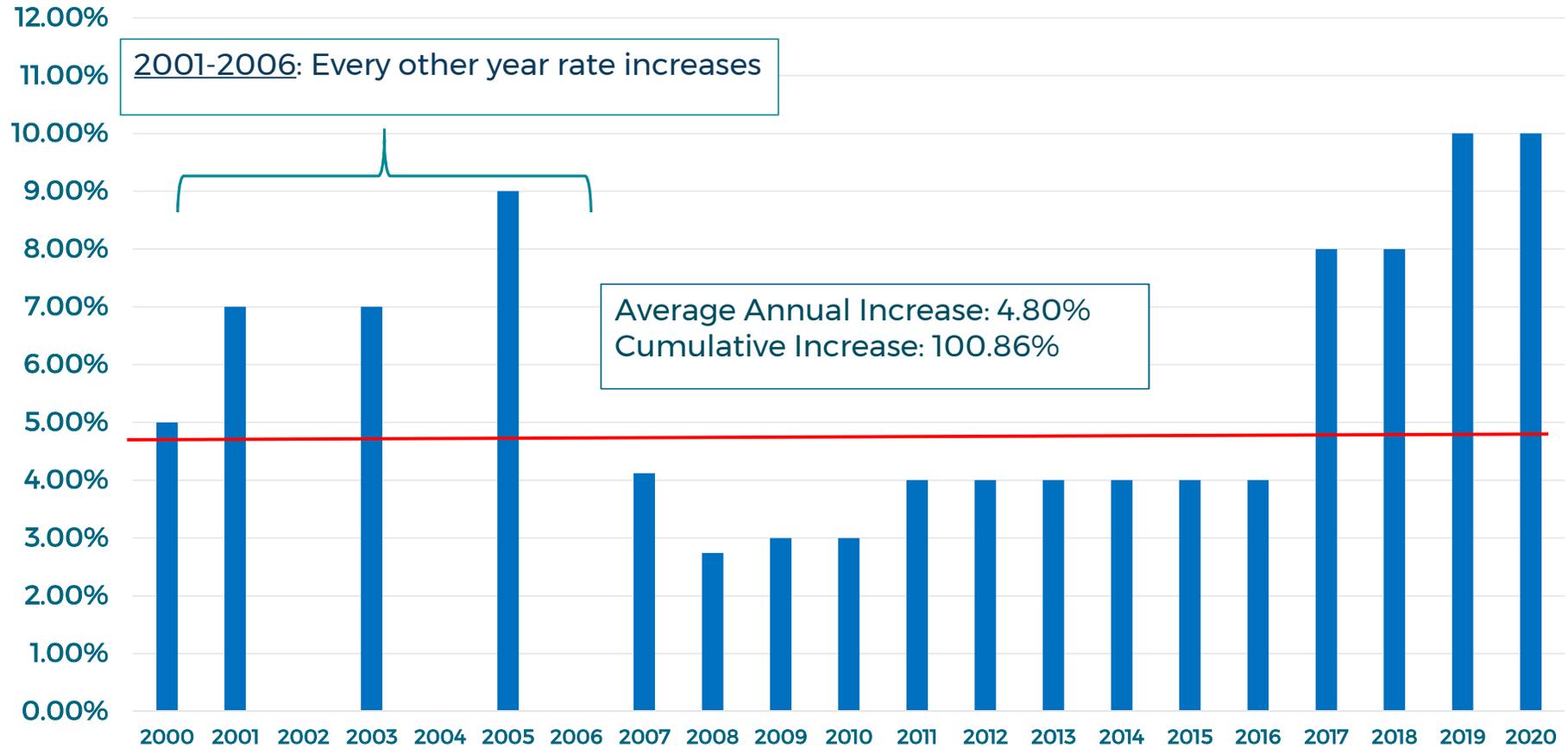


**Question: Are water rates the same as the City's costs to produce and deliver clean water?**

**If not, what are the additional elements that drive or determine water rates? If so, what (if any) water infrastructure upgrades-repairs-replacements are included?**



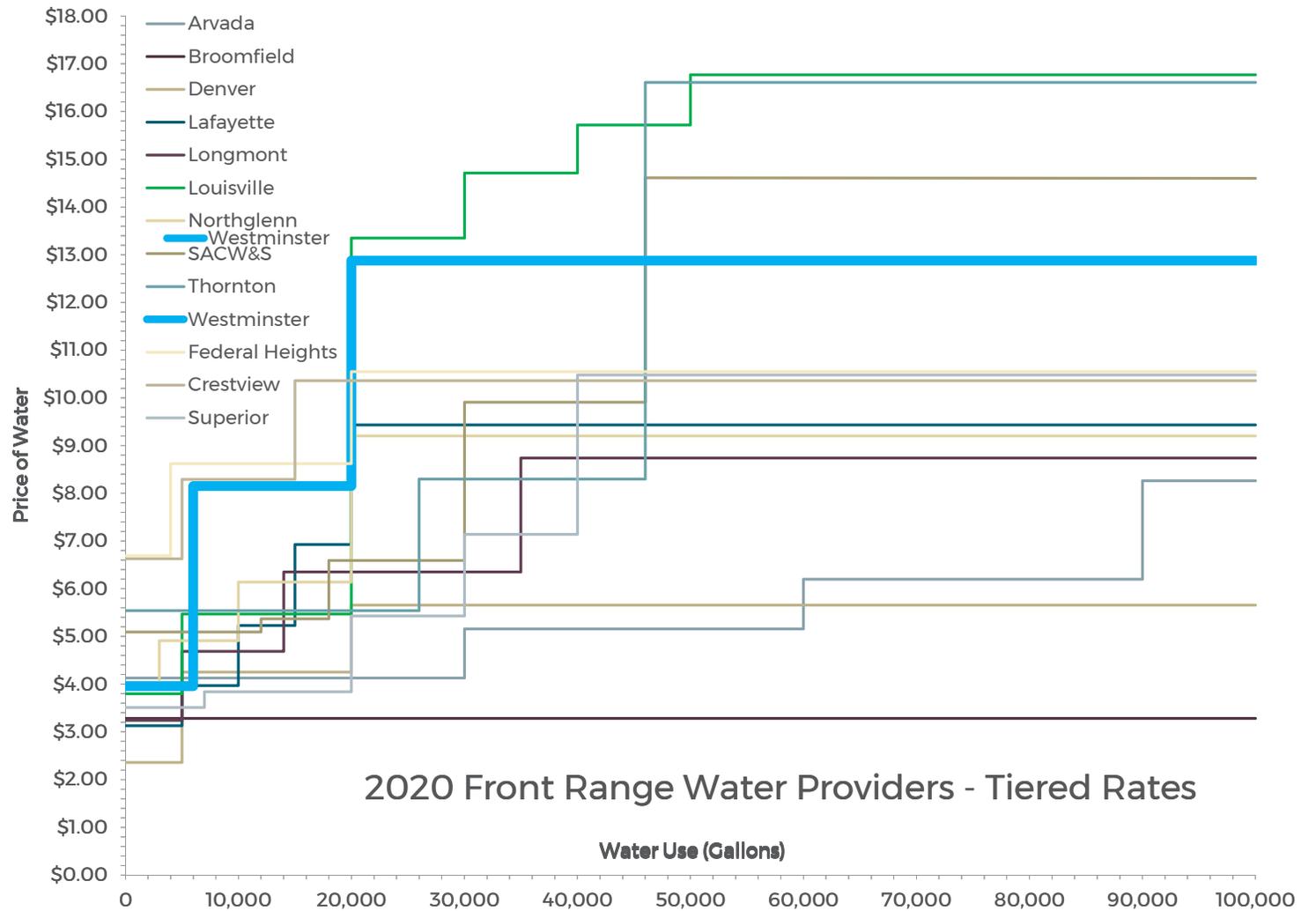
# Water Rate Revenue Increase History 2000-2020



# Front Range Water Use Tier Comparisons

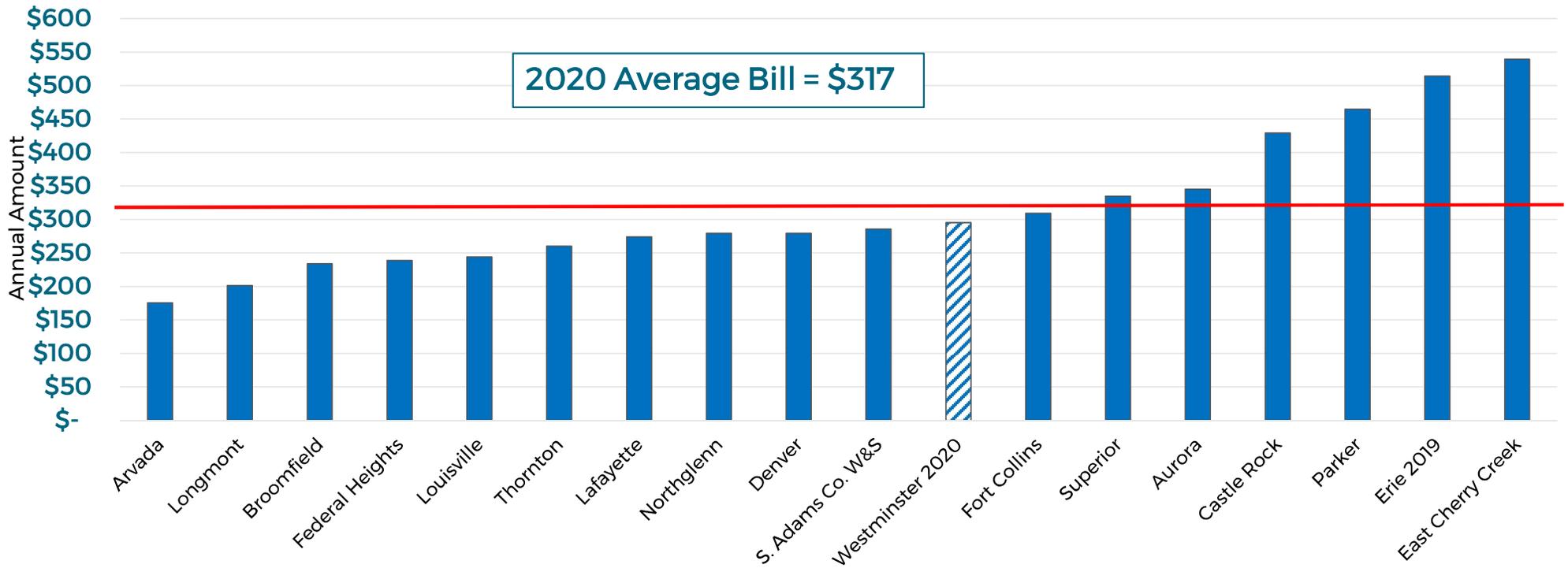
- Most Front Range utilities have tiers
- We know of one (Broomfield) that currently has a flat rate for all water volume used

# 2020 Front Range Water Providers and Tiers



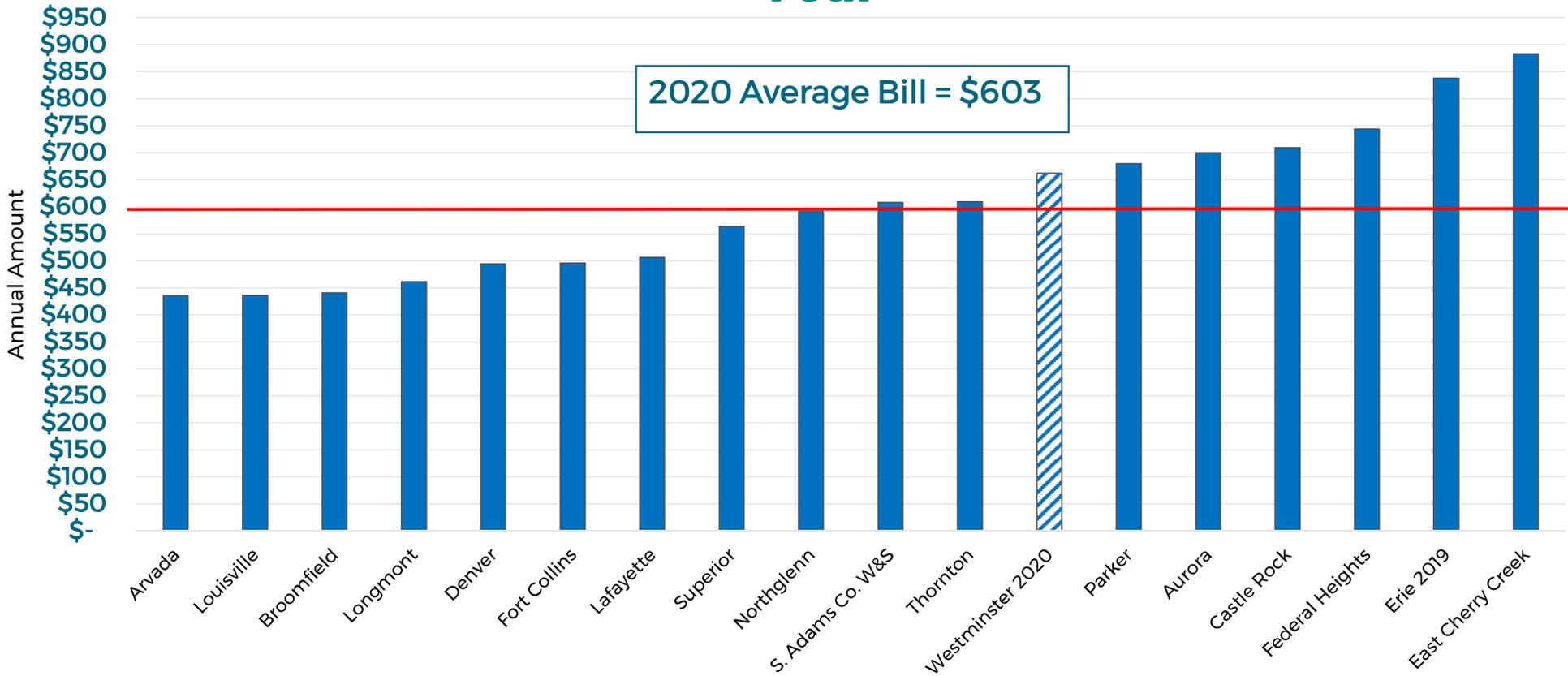
# 2020 Bill Comparison

## Low Water Use Customer- 34,000 Gallons Used per Year



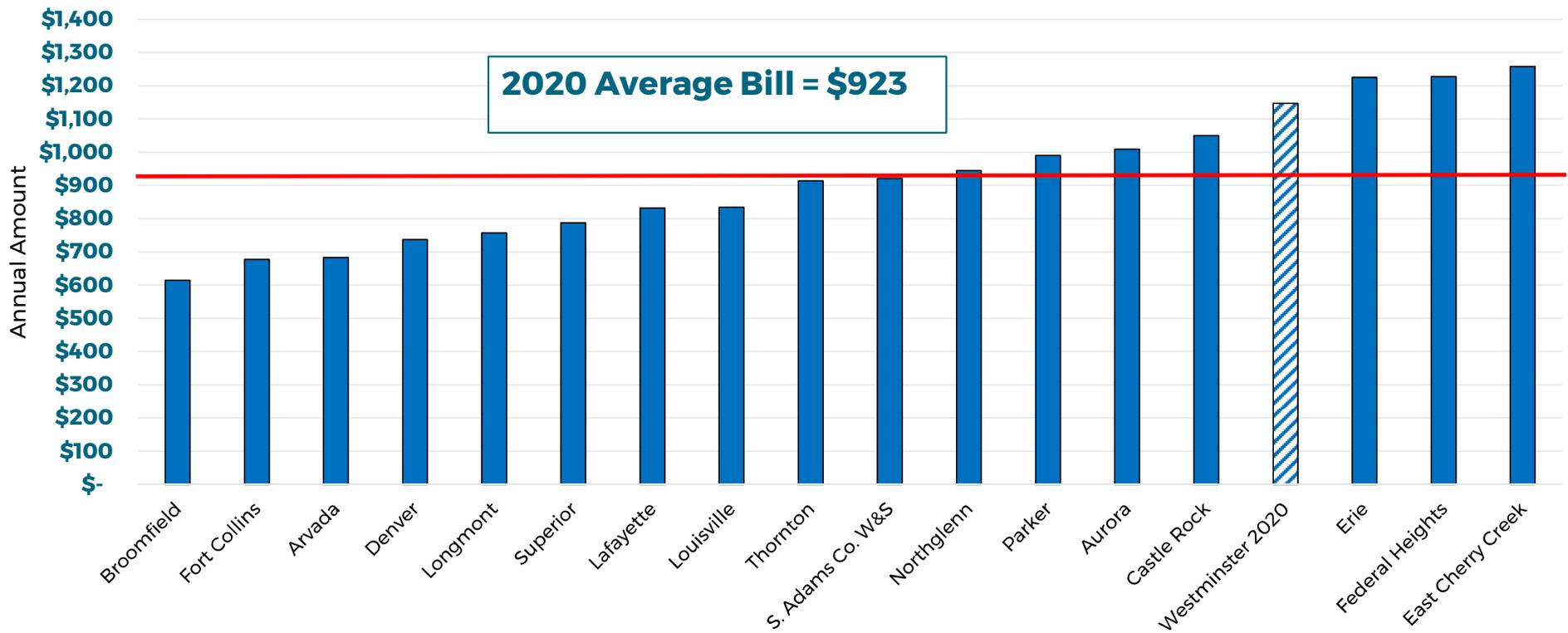
# 2020 Bill Comparison

## Average Water Use Customer - 96,000 Gallons Used per Year

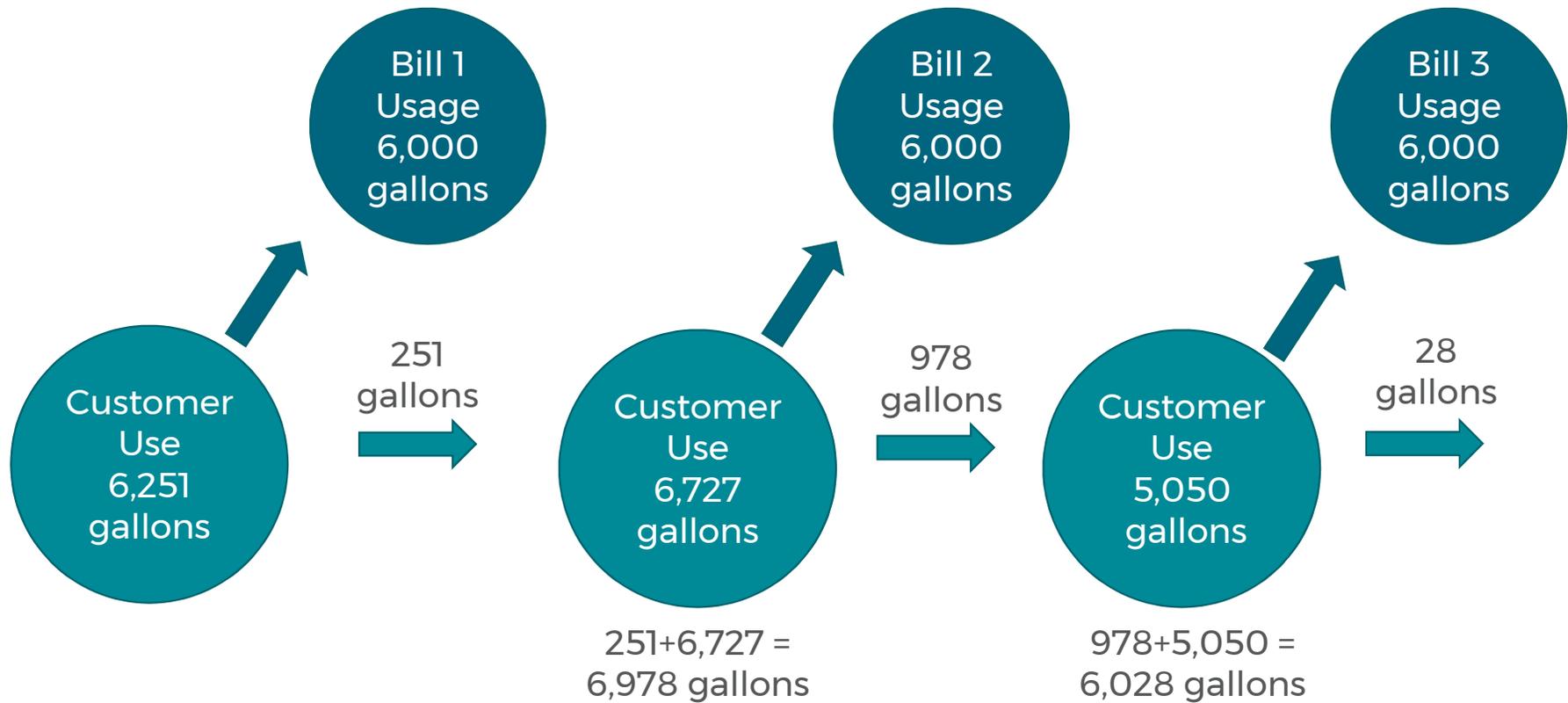


# 2020 Bill Comparison

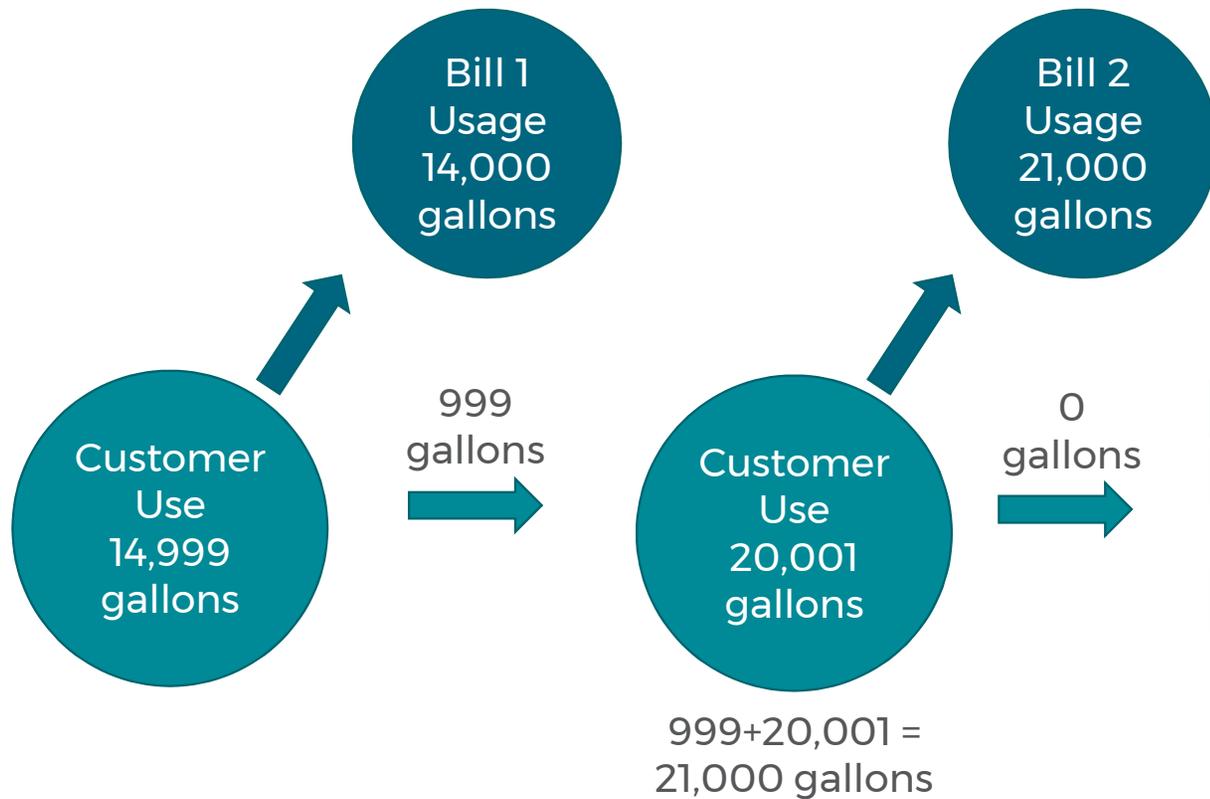
## High Water Use Customer - 150,000 Gallons Used per Year



# How is Water Use Metered and Billed?



# Are customers charged more when billing in 1,000 gallon increments?



Bill 1 + Bill 2	
Billing Method	Total Cost
1,000 gallon units	\$265.80
1 gallon units	\$261.07
Difference:	\$4.73

# Rate Adjustment Components – 2018 Cost Of Service



1. **Align** residential/commercial to cost of service
2. **Broaden** Tier 1 (indoor water use) by 50%
3. **Simplify** commercial water use tiers/implement surcharge for overuse
4. **Enhance** fixed water revenues
5. **Maintain** a single sewer rate
6. **Implement** a 2,000 gallon monthly minimum “**readiness to serve**” wastewater charge

**Question:  
Which of all  
of the things  
we've talked  
about can  
the City  
control or  
influence?  
Which  
elements  
are out of  
the City's  
control?  
Why?**

Item	City Can Change 	City Cannot Change
Level of Service – CIP and Operating budgets		X
Meeting debt service obligations		X
City debt service coverage policy		
Rate structure		
Volume of water use in each tier		
Price per Kgal in each tier		
30-day billing cycle		
Gallon-based billing		
Water affordability analysis		
Continue six policies adopted in 2018		

## REVENUES

# Questions, Takeaways & Ideas about Water Rates?

# Water Fund

## Revenues

- Rates/Fees
- Tap Fee Sales
- Debt Proceeds
- Miscellaneous

## What Are Tap Fees?

- The one-time fee that developers are charged to buy into the City's systems:
  - Water
  - Wastewater
  - Irrigation (including reclaimed water)
- Based on the value of:
  - infrastructure
  - water resources

Once a tap fee is paid, the new development becomes a rate-paying customer



# What Are Tap Fees?

## Why charge tap fees?

- New/expanded development pays the City and rate payers back for the investment in water rights and the entire system.

## How do we calculate tap fees?

- Staff interviews developer, collects data about their building
- Staff then tailors the tap fee to the impact to water supply + system
- Unique process in Front Range. Not one-size-fits-all.

## How are tap fee prices changed?

- Updated review during Cost of Service Studies every several years
- Annual updates automatically in City Code. Keeps price current
  - 2021? Staff to hold a separate discussion with City Council this fall

# Is Development Paying Its Way?

## Tap Fee Process:

1. When we know the development is coming (what's in the Comprehensive Plan?) we build the infrastructure to accommodate it in the system.
  2. This work is paid for upfront by the City.
  3. The developer then pays their tap fee, which 'pays back' the rate payer.
  4. Tap fees are used for growth-related projects.
- REMINDER: The City will be built out someday. Tap fees will decline as a revenue source.

## Is Development Paying Its Way?

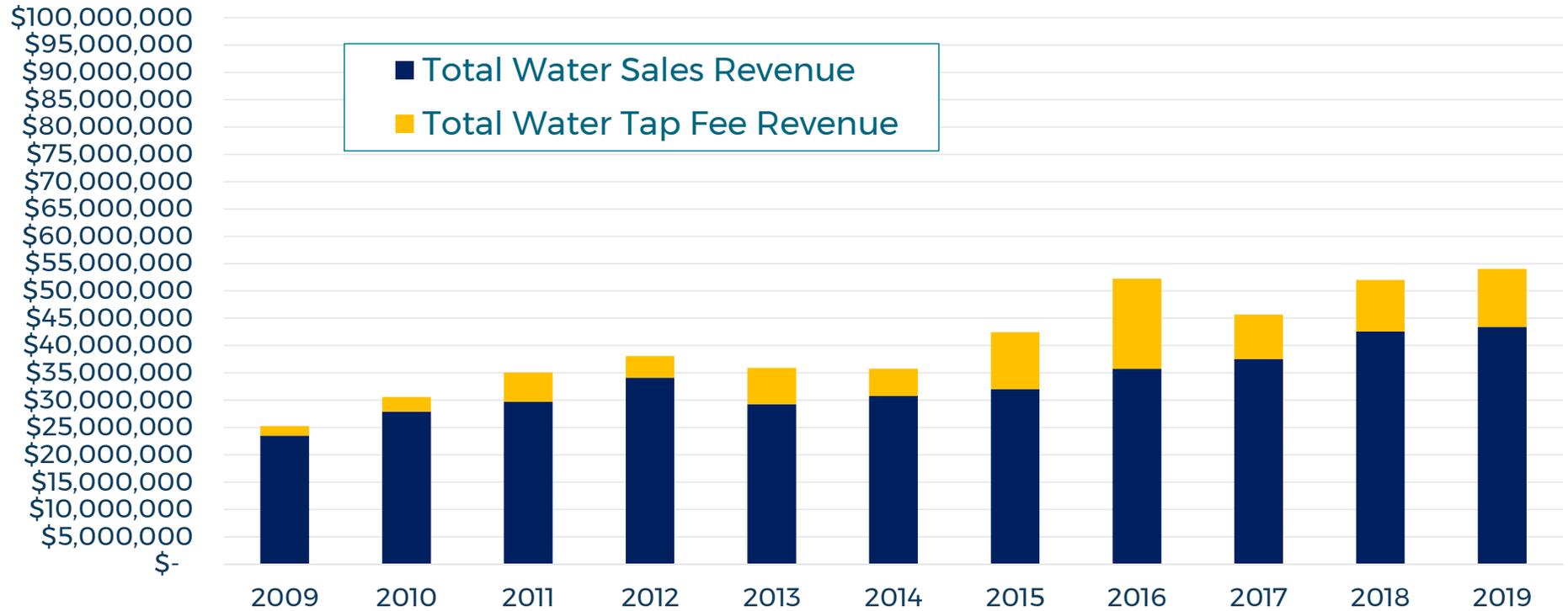
- From our 2018 Cost of Service Study, the water/sewer tap fees for development are set as high as we believe we are legally allowed to set them 
  - Irrigation tap fees need updating
- Historically: tap fees just for the development's impact to the system.
- Recent Staff measures to also require offsite improvements when there is impact. Ensures that growth is paying for growth.
  - “Offsite” definition = not on the proposed development footprint.
  - Example: larger water transmission pipeline and sewer pipeline now needed to serve the development

## Recent Developer-Paid Tap Fees

- Multi-Family (8 Buildings, 196 Units): \$4,814,007
- Hospital (338,176 sq. ft.): \$1,820,423
- Hotel (212 rooms): \$809,930

The City does not waive tap fees for new development.  
All City departments pay full price tap fees.

# Water Rate + Tap Fee Revenues: 2009-2019

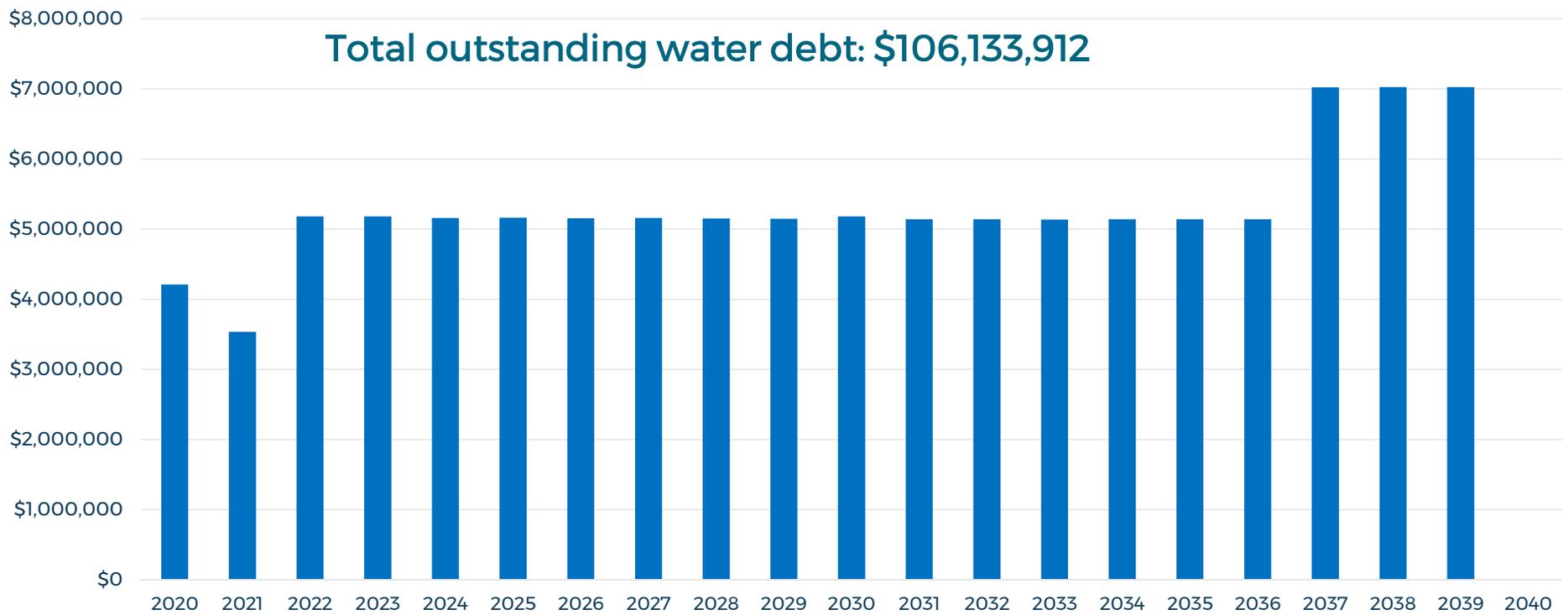


# Water Fund

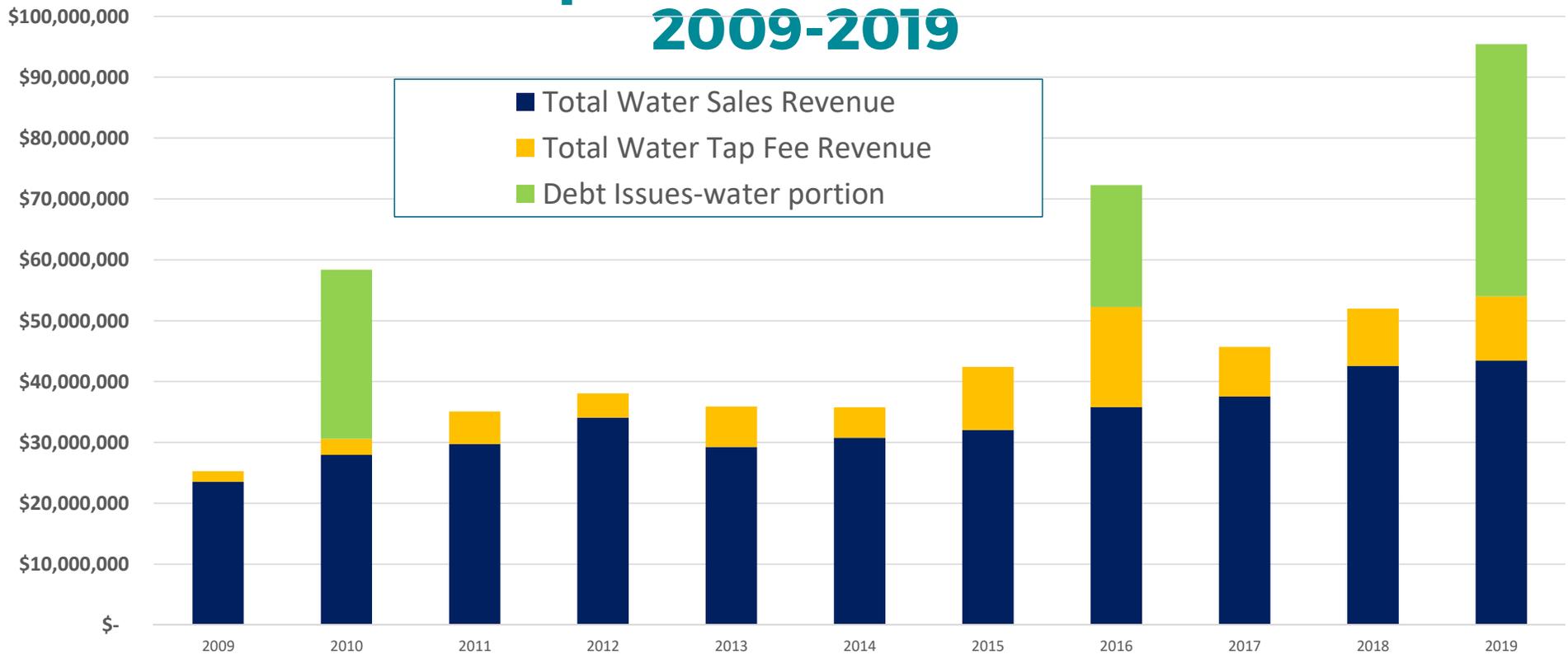
## Revenues

- Rates/Fees
- Tap Fee Sales
- Debt Proceeds
- Miscellaneous

# Water Debt Service Schedule 2020-2040



# Water Rate + Tap Fee Revenues + Debt Proceeds: 2009-2019



## **Question: What “blue sky thinking” has staff done about ways to increase or diversify revenues in the short and long terms for producing and delivering clean water? Other than raising rates, what ideas have you generated and discarded?**

Limited options based on Enterprise status. Rates + Tap Fees + Debt.

- Planning to use Urban Renewal Area funds for the N. Huron wastewater project
- Clearer language in our City standards for off-site development impacts and payment
  - Example: \$350,000 developer cost-sharing for the wastewater pipeline project at the Meade Circle/St. Marks’s affordable housing project
  - Six integrated policies from 2018, including an increase to the fixed percent of revenues over time

## **Question: What “blue sky thinking” has staff done about ways to increase or diversify revenues in the short and long terms for producing and delivering clean water? Other than raising rates, what ideas have you generated and discarded?**

We discarded the following:

- Using General Fund money. The General Fund has its own set of existing funding challenges. 
- Taxing a city income source. Concern about losing Enterprise status. 
- Moving part of rate burden to non-residential customers. Increases the costs for that category out of proportion to their impact. Could potentially have economic development impacts. 

**Question:**  
**Which of all**  
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**Which**  
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**Why?**

**REVENUES**

Item	City Can Change 	City Cannot Change
Level of Service – CIP and Operating budgets		X
Meeting debt service obligations		X
City debt service coverage policy		
Rate structure		
Volume of water use in each tier		
Price per Kgal in each tier		
30-day billing cycle		
Gallon-based billing		
Water affordability analysis		
Continue six policies adopted in 2018		
Irrigation tap fees set to cover water resources costs		
Project financing strategies		

# Questions, Takeaways & Ideas About Revenues?

# Water Fund

```
graph TD; A[Water Fund] --- B[Reserves]; B --- C[Rate Stabilization Reserve (RSR)]; B --- D[Capital Project Reserve (CPR)];
```

## Reserves

Rate Stabilization Reserve  
(RSR)

Capital Project Reserve  
(CPR)

# What Are Reserve Accounts? How Many Are There?

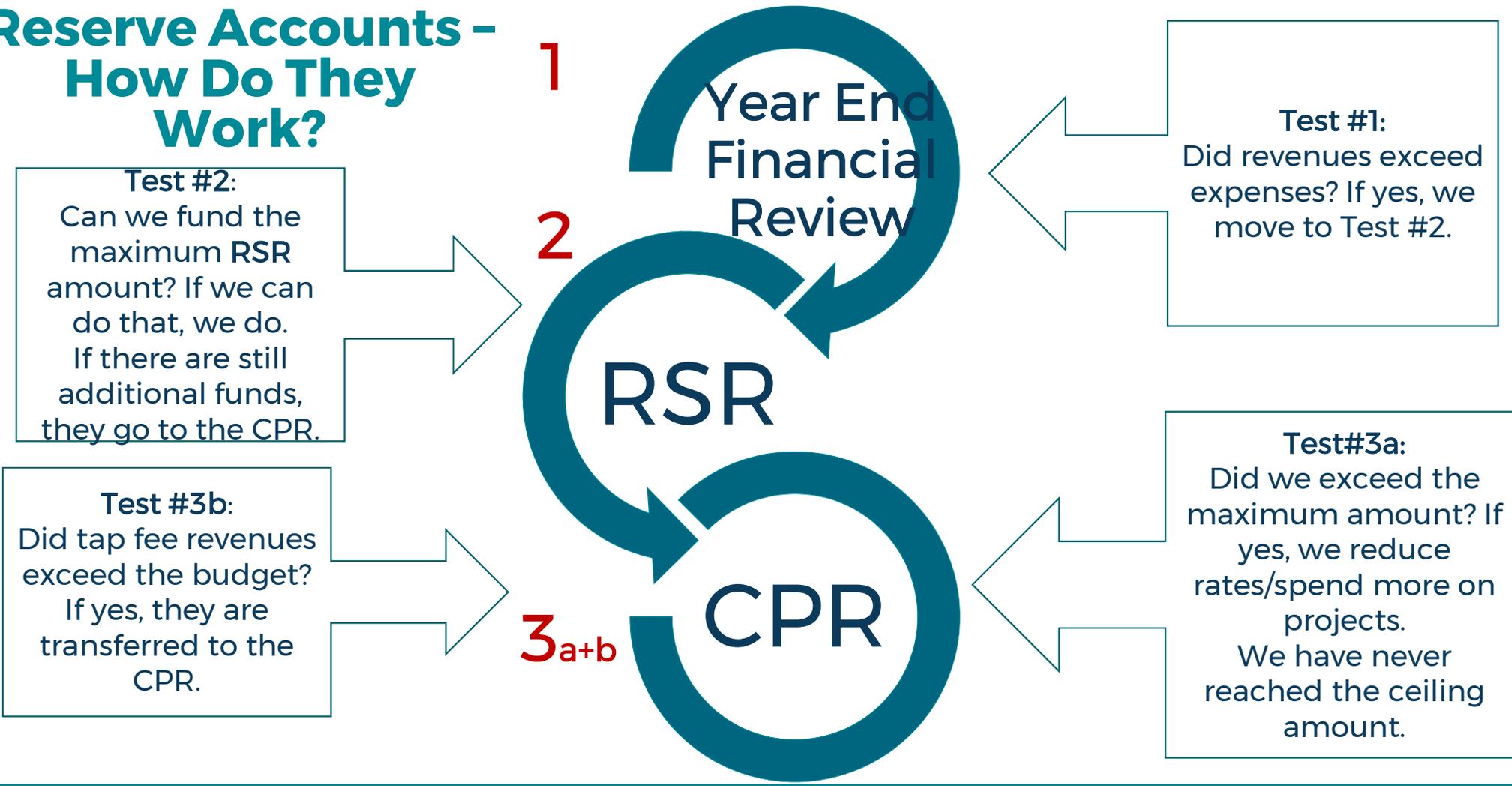
- A funding strategy intended to:
  - Cover revenue shortfalls (e.g., rainy day fund).
  - Help the utility meet debt coverage requirements and bond covenants.
  - Fund CIP projects when revenues are lower (rates/tap fees) but projects are still needed or for emergencies.
- Adopted by City Council in 2006 as part of an overall Cost of Service project
- There are four:
  - Rate Stabilization Reserve (RSR): one for Water and one for Wastewater
  - Capital Project Reserve (CPR): one for Water and one for Wastewater

## How Do Reserve Accounts Work?

Funds are intended to go both into and out of the accounts

- Funds go in when revenues  $>$  expenses
- Funds come out when revenues  $<$  expenses
- Specific calculation performed by Staff annually:
  1. Revenue and expense assessment
  2. RSR funding test
  3. CPR funding test:
    - a. RSR surplus?
    - b. Tap fee revenue surplus?

# Reserve Accounts - How Do They Work?



# WATER Rate Stabilization Reserve (RSR) Policy

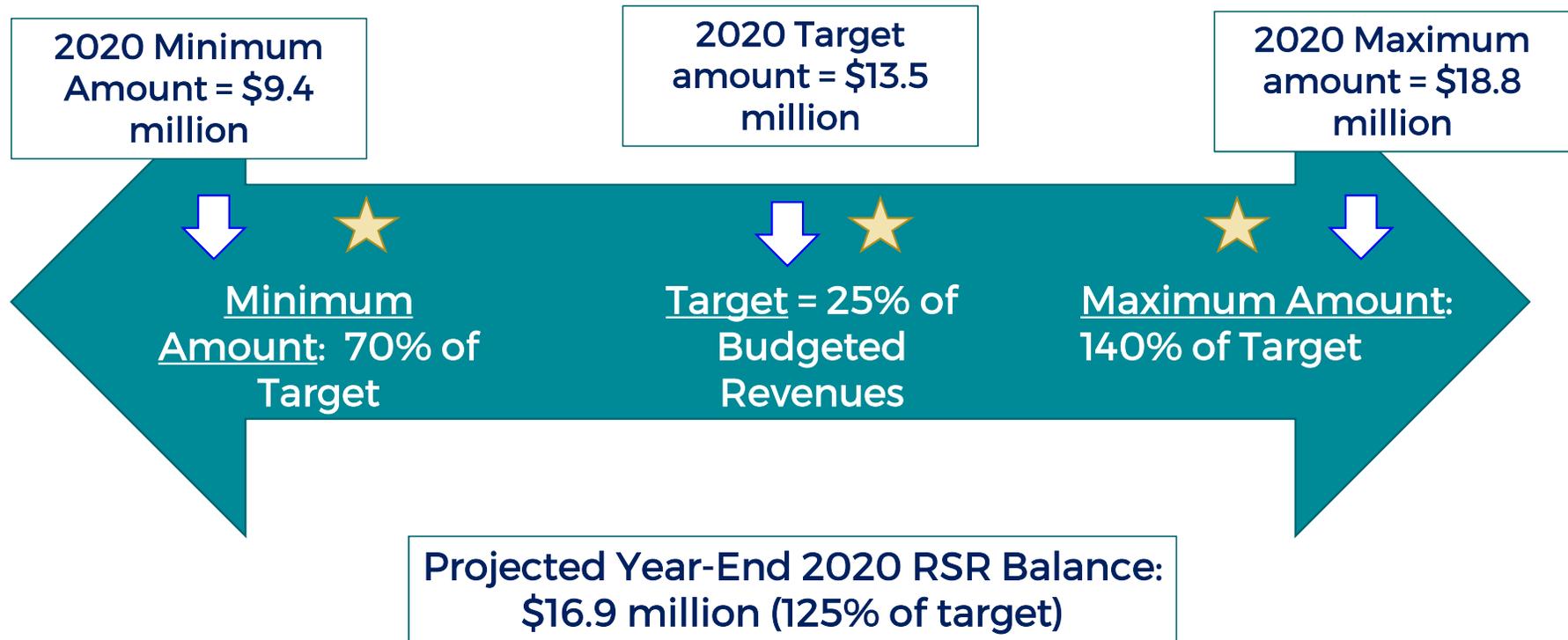
## Purposes:

- Cover shortfalls in rate revenues for the Operating Budget
- Help Utility meet debt coverage requirements
- Fund additional appropriations for unexpected operating expenses, if needed

Target amount = 25% of budgeted revenues.

- Maximum balance: 140% of the target amount
- Minimum balance: 70% of the target amount

# WATER Rate Stabilization Reserve (RSR) Policy and Balances



# WATER

## Rate Stabilization Reserve Funding & Use History

Has the Utility Rate Stabilization Reserve (RSR) ever been used to pay for expenses? What is the greatest amount of the reserve that has been used in a year?

2009: expenses were greater than revenues in the Water Fund. The City used \$1,257,083 of the Water RSR to meet that shortfall.

Since 2009, the RSR was used one other time, to cover a \$106,185 operational shortfall in the Water Fund in 2015.

RSR WATER				
Date	Explanation	Amount	Balance	Notes
12/31/2006	Beginning Balance		6,395,983	
07/26/2007	2006 Carryover	3,129,472	9,525,455	
12/31/2007	2007 Interest Earnings	547,346	10,072,801	
12/31/2008	2008 Interest Earnings	546,948	10,619,748	
12/31/2009	2009 Reserve Policy Transfers	(1,257,083)	9,362,665	shortfall this year, revenues vs expenses (RSR tapped)
12/31/2009	2009 Interest Earnings	340,920	9,703,585	
09/15/2010	CCA: 9/13/10 ITEM 8G Carryover	572,576	10,276,161	
12/31/2010	2010 Interest Earnings	129,453	10,405,614	
12/31/2011	2011 Interest Earnings	143,942	10,549,556	
07/23/2012	KSB-CCA 07/23/12 8L CARRYOVER	487,599	11,037,155	
12/31/2012	2012 Interest Earnings	117,210	11,154,365	
08/13/2013	CCA 08/12/13 8H CARRYOVER	(342,116)	10,812,249	balancing, so as no to exceed the upper limit of the reserve
12/31/2013	2013 Interest Earnings	4,322	10,816,571	
07/29/2014	CCA 07/28/14 11a Carryover	418,698	11,235,269	
12/31/2014	2014 Interest Earnings	112,744	11,348,013	
08/11/2015	CCA 8/10/15 11f Carryover	198,113	11,546,126	
12/31/2015	CCA 03/28/16-Q4 2015 Suppl App	(106,185)	11,439,941	Item 10 H: supplemental appropriation of funds to the 2015 budget
12/31/2015	2015 Interest Earnings	86,437	11,526,378	
12/31/2016	2016 Interest Earnings	111,626	11,638,004	
08/29/2017	CCA 08/28/17 11B Carryover Sup	1,415,735	13,053,739	
12/31/2017	2017 Interest Earnings	76,284	13,130,023	
08/28/2018	CCA 08/27/18 10C Carryover Sup	1,098,465	14,228,488	
12/31/2018	2018 Interest Earnings	206,956	14,435,444	
08/12/2019	CCA 08/12/19 CARRYOVER SUPPLEM	469,070	14,904,514	
12/31/2019	2019 Interest Earnings	484,741	15,389,255	
10/12/2020	CCA 10/12/20 Carryover Sup	1,202,236	16,591,491	
12/31/2020	2020 Interest Earnings (Budgeted)	279,661	16,871,152	

Transfers Out	
Deposits	

# WATER Capital Project Reserve (CPR) Policy

## Purposes:

- Fund CIP projects for timely system reinvestment
- Fund emergency or unexpected projects

## No Target Amount:

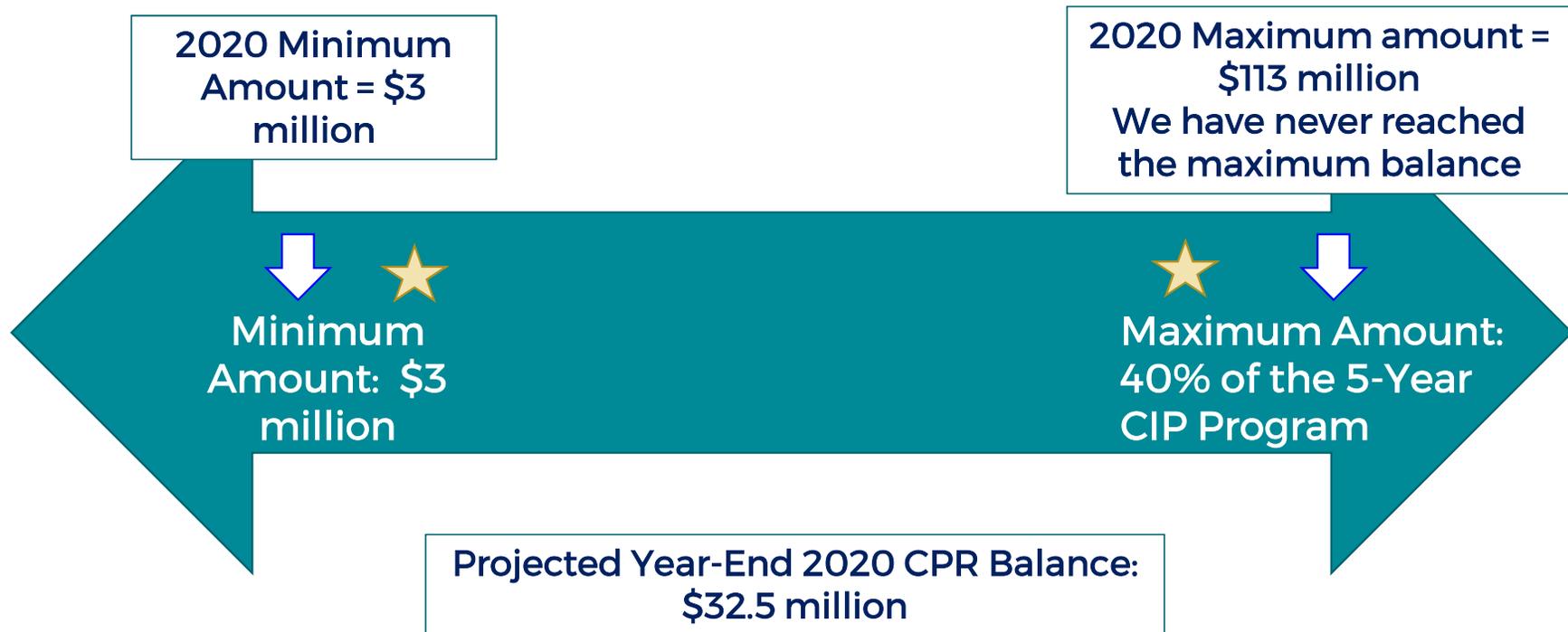
- Maximum balance = 40% of the 5-year CIP program amount
- Minimum balance = \$3,000,000

2019-2023 CIP: \$282 million

x 40% = \$113 million

We have never reached the maximum amount.

# WATER Capital Project Reserve (CPR) Policy and Balances



# WATER

## Capital Project Reserve Funding & Use History

Has the Capital Project Reserve (CPR) ever been used to pay for projects?

2016: Water rights purchase  
2017: Water rights change case work

CPR W				
Date	Explanation	Amount	Balance	Notes
12/31/2013	2013 Interest Earnings	11,966	23,018,375	
01/31/2014	2014 Original Budget	(8,619,230)	14,399,145	funding for capital projects at the beginning of the year
07/29/2014	CCA 07/28/14 11a Carryover	3,957,240	18,356,385	
12/31/2014	Q4 2014 SUPPL APPR	(2,360,563)	15,995,822	4Q Supplemental Appropriations
12/31/2014	2014 Interest Earnings	178,821	16,174,643	
08/11/2015	CCA 8/10/15 11f Carryover	585,400	16,760,043	
12/31/2015	2015 Interest Earnings	124,082	16,884,125	
01/01/2016	2016 Original Budget	(8,573,594)	8,310,531	funding for capital projects at the beginning of the year
04/11/2016	CCA 03/28/16 8j Water Supply	(670,200)	7,640,331	
09/27/2016	CCA 09/26/16 8k Carryover Supp	2,634,101	10,274,432	
12/31/2016	2016 Interest Earnings	131,994	10,406,426	
01/31/2017	2017 Original Budget	834,176	11,240,602	funding for capital projects at the beginning of the year
07/12/2017	CCA 07/10/17 8e	(1,300,000)	9,940,602	
08/29/2017	CCA 08/28/17 11B Carryover Sup	7,273,931	17,214,533	
12/31/2017	CPR Policy Transfer	(1,837,637)	15,376,896	4Q Supplemental Appropriations
12/31/2017	2017 Interest Earnings	62,342	15,439,238	
01/31/2018	2018 Original Budget	(3,351,866)	12,087,372	funding for capital projects at the beginning of the year
08/28/2018	CCA 08/27/18 10C Carryover Sup	2,092,090	14,179,462	
12/31/2018	4Q Supplemental Appropriation	(1,576,389)	12,603,073	4Q Supplemental Appropriations
12/31/2018	2018 Interest Earnings	227,548	12,830,621	
08/12/2019	CCA 08/12/19 CARRYOVER SUPPLEM	1,552,291	14,382,912	
12/31/2019	2019 Interest Earnings	458,780	14,841,692	
10/12/2020	CCA 10/12/20 Carryover Sup	8,543,642	23,385,334	
12/31/2020	2020 Original Budget	8,885,676	32,271,010	
12/31/2020	2020 Interest Earnings (Budgeted)	278,598	32,549,608	
Transfers Out				
Deposits				

## How Have Reserve Accounts Changed?

City Council adopted policy adjustments in 2011 to:

- Remove a funded Operating Reserve
- Adjust the RSR minimum amount to move from 80% of the target amount to 70% of target amount
- Set CPR minimum balance at \$3,000,000 for water and maximum balance at 40% of the 5-year CIP.
- Allow the RSR/CPR balances to be included as a cash asset for bond coverage tests
- Clarify calculation process to coincide with City year-end and carryover processes

# Does the Utility Have \$100 Million Dollar in the Bank?

2019 CAFR: as of December 31, 2019, the city's *combined* water/sewer/stormwater utility fund has just under \$103,000,000 in cash + investments:

- \$48 million for ongoing & approved capital improvement projects
  - \$17.7 million for Rate Stabilization Reserve
  - \$21.5 million for Capital Project Reserve
  - \$6.2 million for outstanding operating expense bills at the time
  - \$9.6 million was added to capital reserve
- \$103 million**

## CITY OF WESTMINSTER, COLORADO STATEMENT OF NET POSITION PROPRIETARY FUNDS FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2019

	Utility	Enterprise Funds Nonmajor Fund Golf Course	Total	Governmental Activities Internal Service Funds
<b>ASSETS</b>				
<b>Current assets:</b>				
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 15,030,547	\$ 822,116	\$ 15,352,663	\$ 3,644,185
Cash and cash equivalents with fiscal agent	—	—	—	339,539
Investments	87,918,404	1,853,514	89,749,918	21,315,992
<b>Receivables:</b>				
Accounts	7,362,600	43,441	7,410,273	496,709
Others	585,000	—	585,000	—
Interest	423,491	8,725	432,216	99,807
Inventories	1,581,327	24,687	1,826,714	—
Bond insurance and other prepaid items	97,346	—	107,499	2,700
<b>Total current assets</b>	<b>113,002,717</b>	<b>2,461,536</b>	<b>115,464,253</b>	<b>25,900,626</b>
<b>Noncurrent assets:</b>				
<b>Restricted assets:</b>				
Cash and cash equivalents	443,380	—	443,380	—
Cash and cash equivalents with fiscal agent	29,243,461	—	29,243,461	—
Investments	3,046,675	—	3,046,675	—
Notes receivable	21,720	—	21,720	—
Other assets	1,578,789	—	1,578,789	—
<b>Capital assets:</b>				
Non-depreciable assets	155,123,418	—	155,123,418	—
Depreciable assets, net	361,395,914	—	361,395,914	—
<b>Total noncurrent assets</b>	<b>568,168,323</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>568,168,323</b>	<b>—</b>
<b>Total assets</b>	<b>681,171,070</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>681,171,070</b>	<b>—</b>
<b>DEFERRED OUTFLOWS OF RESOURCES</b>				
	117,440	—	117,440	—
<b>LIABILITIES</b>				
<b>Current liabilities:</b>				
Accounts payable and other	5,871,815	—	5,871,815	—
Accrued liabilities	343,618	—	343,618	—
Unearned revenues	—	—	—	—
Bonds payable, current portion	3,345,000	—	3,345,000	—
Notes payable and certificates of participation, current portion	1,411,556	—	1,411,556	—
Other liabilities, current portion	67,587	3,425	71,012	9,131
Accrued interest	372,294	6,509	378,773	34,154
Estimated claims	—	—	—	3,269,333
<b>Total current liabilities</b>	<b>11,411,840</b>	<b>721,400</b>	<b>12,133,240</b>	<b>4,298,691</b>
<b>Noncurrent liabilities:</b>				
Bonds payable	108,942,446	—	108,942,446	—
Notes payable and certificates of participation	4,583,375	1,524,713	6,107,988	1,399,834
Other liabilities payable	1,772,481	185,453	1,957,934	41,524
<b>Total noncurrent liabilities</b>	<b>115,298,302</b>	<b>1,710,166</b>	<b>117,008,368</b>	<b>1,441,358</b>
<b>Total liabilities</b>	<b>126,710,142</b>	<b>2,431,566</b>	<b>129,141,608</b>	<b>5,740,049</b>
<b>DEFERRED INFLOWS OF RESOURCES</b>				
	94,773	11,885	106,458	—
<b>NET POSITION</b>				
Net investment in capital assets	441,279,850	13,950,747	455,230,597	5,870,870
<b>Restricted for:</b>				
Debt service	3,487,032	—	3,487,032	—
Unrestricted	109,716,813	2,145,865	111,862,479	21,999,826
<b>Total net position</b>	<b>\$ 554,483,695</b>	<b>\$ 14,096,612</b>	<b>\$ 570,580,106</b>	<b>\$ 27,870,696</b>
Adjustment to reflect the consolidation of internal service fund activities related to enterprise funds				
			1,281,199	
Net position of business-type activities				
			\$ 571,861,305	

**Cash and cash equivalents: \$15,030,547**  
**Investments: \$87,918,404**  
**Total: \$102,948,951**

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**Why?**

**RESERVES**

Item	City Can Change 	City Cannot Change
Level of Service - CIP and Operating budgets		X
Meeting debt service obligations		X
City debt service coverage policy		
Rate structure		
Volume of water use in each tier		
Price per Kgal in each tier		
30-day billing cycle		
Gallon-based billing		
Water affordability analysis		
Continue six policies adopted in 2018		
Irrigation tap fees set to cover water resources costs		
Project financing strategies		
Utility reserve account policies		
Predictable/smooth/level rate increases		
General Fund transfer to Utility Fund		

# Questions, Takeaways & Ideas About Reserve Accounts?

# Customer Questions Since Last Workshop

- Will there be a rate increase in 2022 to reflect to reflect 2021 revenues?
  - Policy question for City Council to discuss.
- Are new meters causing spikes in usage?
  - We think Stephen Gay answered that question on 10/20/20.
- What was the 2019 actual revenue v. 2019 budget? What is the projection for 2020?
  - This will be addressed at the November 5<sup>th</sup> meeting
- Should Staff provide annual actual revenue v. budget projection on a regular basis for consideration of rate changes?
  - Staff provides this information as part of annual budget conversations, and with monthly financial updates to City Council
- Does City Council want to consider changing rates in response to revenues received above the budget?
  - Policy question for City Council to discuss.
- Are rate payers charged for repairs when contractors damage pipes?
  - No, contractors are required to make those repairs.
- Why are current customers bearing the brunt of paying for all of these current and future infrastructure projects?
  - See separate slide. Also a policy question for City Council to discuss.

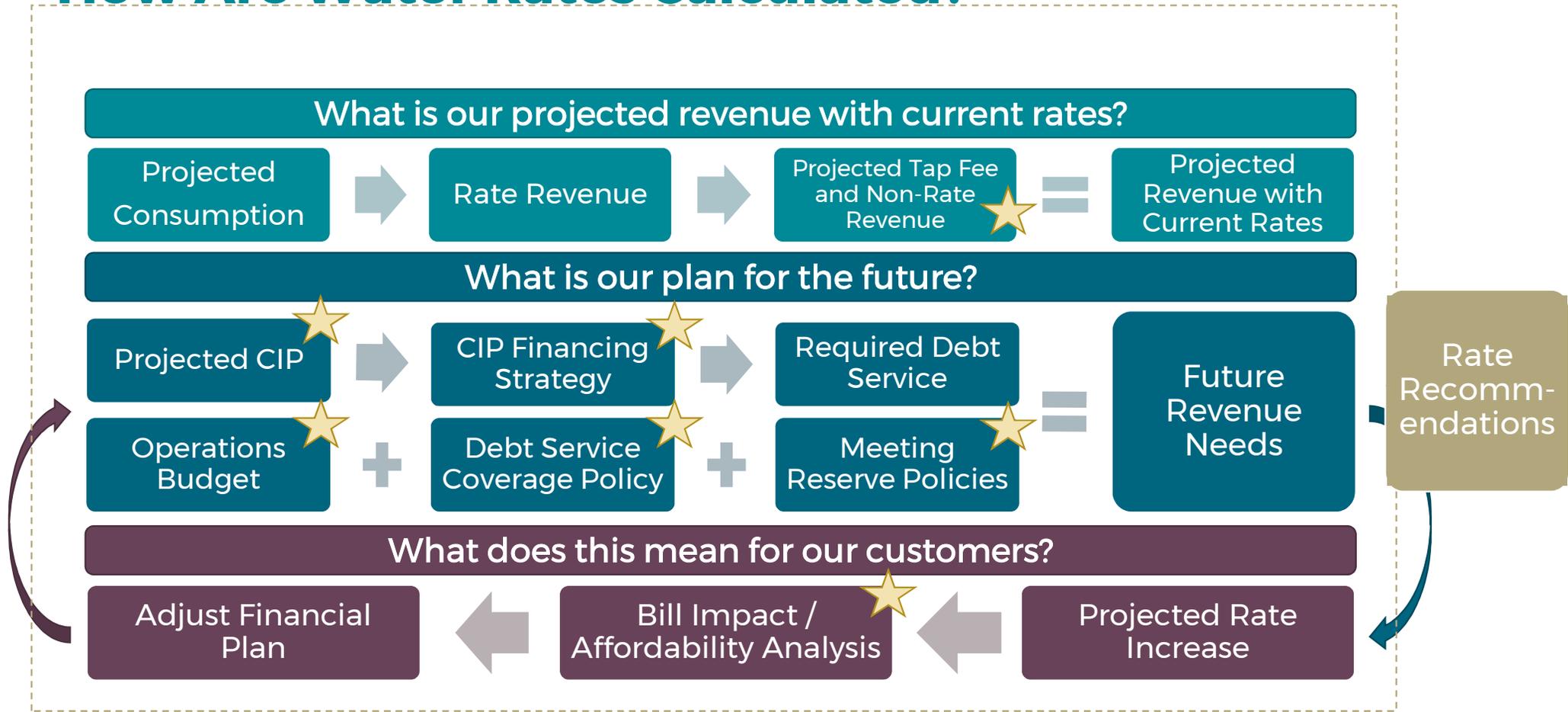
## What was the 2019 actual v. budget revenue? What is the 2020 projection?

Category	2019 Budget	2019 Actual	2019 Difference	2020 Budget
Reclaimed Water Use	\$2,713,100	\$2,381,077	-\$332,023	\$2,893,538
Residential Water Use	\$24,766,382	\$21,692,189	-\$3,074,193	\$30,078,947
Commercial Water Use	\$8,167,800	\$7,688,375	-\$479,425	\$7,557,541
Fixed Monthly Fee	\$5,389,041	\$5,576,230	\$187,189	\$5,437,383
Federal Heights contract	\$2,088,643	\$2,509,036	\$420,393	\$2,281,993
Brighton Pass-Through Contract	\$4,074,294	\$3,577,337	-\$496,957	\$2,958,331
<b>Total Water Sales + Fixed Monthly Fee</b>	<b>\$47,199,260</b>	<b>\$43,424,244</b>	<b>-\$3,442,993</b>	<b>\$53,881,926</b>

# Why are customers now bearing the brunt of paying for all of these current/future projects?

- Customers pay for the costs to deliver them the service
- Customers now pay for the costs to continue to provide them service – today and tomorrow.
- Using debt to pay for projects provides Generational Equity
- Generational Equity = customers now and into the future pay to fund the projects that benefit the current customers + future customers.

# How Are Water Rates Calculated?



**Question:**  
**Which of all**  
**of the things**  
**we've talked**  
**about can**  
**the City**  
**control or**  
**influence?**  
**Which**  
**elements**  
**are out of**  
**the City's**  
**control?**  
**Why?**

Item	City Can Change 	City Cannot Change
Level of Service - CIP and Operating budgets		X
Meeting debt service obligations		X
City debt service coverage policy		
Rate structure		
Volume of water use in each tier		
Price per Kgal in each tier		
30-day billing cycle		
Gallon-based billing		
Water affordability analysis		
Continue six policies adopted in 2018		
Irrigation tap fees set to cover water resources costs		
Project financing strategies		
Utility reserve account policies		
Predictable/smooth/level rate increases		
General Fund transfer to Utility Fund		

**End of Presentation.  
Thank You.**