

PRESS RELEASE
CITY OF BENICIA
Public Works
250 East L Street
Benicia, California 94510



Contact: Kyle Ochenduszko
Deputy Public Works Director
(707) 746-4240
pw@ci.benicia.ca.us

Staff Recommends Scenario 3 for Revised Draft Utility Rate Study

Benicia, CA (August 12, 2021) — On August 11, 2021, staff at the City of Benicia publicly released their recommendations on the revised draft water and wastewater utility rate study. Of the four possible funding scenarios for each utility, staff is recommending City Council select Water Scenario 3 and Wastewater Scenario 3 and is further recommending that Council consider a public hearing date in November.

Both Water and Wastewater Scenario 3 include fully funding operations and maintenance activities, saving appropriate amounts for reserves, while presenting a focused, critical list of capital improvement projects. If adopted, water bills could increase approximately 6.5% each year for the next five years. Similarly, if adopted, wastewater bills could increase 3% each year over the same period.

Benicia's water and wastewater infrastructure includes over 300 miles of pipe, four reservoirs, five pump stations, 23 lift stations, and two treatment plants. Much of the infrastructure is at or nearing the end of its useful life. The 2020 condition assessments recommend the City invest over \$300 million in its water and wastewater infrastructure over the next 20 years. Scenario 3 allows the City to phase in the replacement projects over the 20-year time period. "While Water and Wastewater Scenario 1 represents full funding of the condition assessments, staff is recommending Scenario 3 as a more affordable way to begin work on delayed infrastructure projects," said Kyle Ochenduszko, Deputy Public Works Director.

Last year, the City of Benicia began working with Bartle Wells Associates, independent public finance advisors, to develop a draft water and wastewater utility rate study. A public study session, with City Council Members in attendance, was held on July 27, 2021 to explain the draft rate study and receive public comments. After receiving input from the public and City Council Members, staff and City consultants drafted a Revised Draft Water and Wastewater Rate Study.

Comments on the revised draft utility rate study and staff's recommendation are requested now. "It's not too late to participate," says William Tarbox, the City's Public Works Director. Submit written comments to the City Clerk at lwolfe@ci.benicia.ca.gov. Comments can also be submitted "in person" at the next City Council Meeting on August 17, 2021, where the City Council will hold a public meeting to discuss the revised draft rate study and provide direction to staff. More information about this public meeting will be available on the City's website at <https://www.ci.benicia.ca.us/agendas>.

For more information, contact: Deputy Public Works Director Kyle Ochendusko at (707) 746-4240 or pw@ci.benicia.ca.us

###