



# What about Weaverville's Water?

## FACT SHEET REGARDING THE WEAVERVILLE WATER SYSTEM

### ***"I've heard that the Town is expanding its water system. Is this true?"***

Yes. The Town routinely expands its water system with the construction of water lines. The most recent proposed project involves the construction of a water line along Clark's Chapel Road and Ollie Weaver Road in order to provide for redundancy and improve water quality within the system.

### ***"Why does the Town need to expand its water system?"***

Water system infrastructure projects require long-term planning. In fact, the N.C. Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) requires the Town to be actively planning for an expansion at the point that water usage reaches 80% of capacity and taking action to expand the capacity of the water treatment plant at the point that the plant reaches 90% capacity. As of September 2018, the Town is at approximately 70% capacity, including actual usage and commitments, and routinely receives new water commitment applications.

### ***"Is the Ivy River sufficient as a water resource?"***

Yes. DEQ has determined that the Ivy River can support up to a 4.0 million gallon per day safe withdrawal by the Town and has permitted that amount of water.

### ***"What amount of water can the Town's water treatment plant currently process?"***

1.5 million gallons per day of the 4.0 million permitted.

### ***"Can the water treatment plant be expanded?"***

Yes. The water treatment plant was designed and built to be expanded as the system and its customer base grows. A DEQ permit is in place to allow an

expansion of up to 4.0 million gallons per day of withdrawal, which will allow the doubling of the current plant capacity.

### ***"Why doesn't the Town buy water from the City of Asheville instead of expanding its system?"***

Town leaders are protective of the Town and its water needs and wish to make decisions independent of Asheville's decisions regarding its water system. Purchasing water from Asheville would result in uncertain water charges, capacity and availability over the long-term.

### ***"Do Town residents' tax dollars go to support the water system?"***

No. The water system is a public enterprise fund and must be self-supporting. This means that the water rates must be calculated to cover the operating expenses of the water system. General tax dollars are not used for operating expenses for the water system.

### ***"How is new development paying into the existing water system?"***

Water System Development Fees are assessed for all new development and represent a new water customer's "buy-in" to the system. The amount is based on a recent study by an engineering firm and Town Council has elected to maximize these fees to closely align with that full "buy-in" cost.

In addition, developers are required to construct water lines at their own expense that are ultimately added to the Town's water system infrastructure – thus saving the Town from the cost of constructing needed water lines.

***“Are water rates the only revenues to support the water system expansion?”***

No. In addition to water charges based on actual usage, other fees and charges include: system development fees, availability/commitment fees, and other fees as established by Town Council.

***“How are water rates calculated?”***

Water rates are set by Town Council each year with the adoption of its budget and annual fee schedule. In setting the water rates Town Council is guided by water rate studies that are performed periodically by engineering firms which look at the operational costs and anticipated revenues based on current and projected customers.

***“Do Town residents pay the same water rates as those who live outside Town limits?”***

No. The Town is allowed to charge different rates for out-of-town water customers. It has been a longstanding policy of the Town to charge out-of-town water customers double water rates.

***“Why are existing water system customers paying for the water treatment plant expansion when developers are building outside the Town’s limits?”***

An expansion of the water treatment plant is already necessary to meet the anticipated growth within the current Town limits. Offering water to outside customers helps to spread the capital and operating costs over a greater number of users which keeps the water rates more reasonable.

***“Why should people who live in town limits have to pay for the waterline expansion?”***

The current project for constructing a waterline west of the I-26 is primarily to provide a looped system to current in-town customers in the event a waterline fails. Looped systems also increase water quality within the whole water system.



***“What would a water treatment plant expansion cost?”***

If the Town goes forward with an expansion of the water treatment plant the capital project is expected to be around \$6 million. This is in addition to the \$3 million proposed for the construction of water lines along Clarks Chapel Road and Ollie Weaver Road.

***“How much will my water rates increase if the water treatment plant is expanded?”***

To maintain the fiscal health of the water system, it is expected that water rates will continue to be increased annually. The annual increase will likely be an average of 4% over each preceding year for the next 8 years.

***“How would a water treatment plant expansion be paid for?”***

In order to minimize the financial impact on water rates, this capital project would likely be financed with long-term revenue bonds.

***“Who regulates the water system?”***

North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) is the regulating authority for all public water systems. All operations and capital projects related to the water system are heavily regulated and monitored by this agency.

