



**Department of Utilities**  
**Council Briefing**  
November 6, 2023

# DEPARTMENT OF UTILITIES

## Vision

*To provide outstanding utility services to the Charlottesville community.*

## Mission

*The Department of Utilities is committed to providing the Charlottesville community with safe, reliable, and sustainable utility services by dedicated and knowledgeable staff.*



**14,800**  
customers served



**14,700**  
customers served



**21,300**  
customers served



**15,000**  
billable customers

# UTILITIES OVERVIEW

**Director of Utilities**  
Lauren Hildebrand

**Utilities Outreach Manager**  
Irene Peterson

1 FTE

**Management Analyst II**  
Kathryn McNannay

**Utilities Administration Manager**  
Mary Kay Kotelec

6 FTEs

**Stormwater Utility Administrator**  
(Vacant)

2 FTEs

**Operations Deputy Director**  
Tim Morris

**Kenny Vanner**  
Gas Maintenance  
21 FTEs

**Larry Perry**  
Water / Wastewater /  
Stormwater  
Maintenance  
31 FTEs

**James Harris**  
Gas Service/metering  
12 FTEs

**Gas Regulatory  
Compliance**  
3 FTEs

**Gas Line Inspection**  
2 FTEs

**Gas Line Welder**  
1 FTE

**Regulator Mechanic**  
1 FTE

**Utilities Engineering Manager**  
(Vacant)

**Roy Nester**  
Utilities Engineering  
4 FTEs

**Chuck Drennen**  
Gas Utility Engineering  
1 FTE

**Utilities Safety  
Coordinator**  
2 FTEs

**Paul Richardson**  
GIS/Asset Management  
3 FTEs

**Anthony Allard**  
Regulatory Compliance  
Administration  
1 FTE

**Contract Manager**  
1 FTE

**99 FTEs**

# UTILITIES OVERVIEW

## CORE PROGRAMS & SERVICES – DEPARTMENT WIDE



**MAINTENANCE AND REPAIR OF INFRASTRUCTURE**



**EMERGENCY OPERATIONS**



**SAFETY TRAINING**



**24/7 UTILITY CALL CENTER**



**GIS / ASSET MANAGEMENT**



**METER READING AND MAINTENANCE**

# UTILITIES OVERVIEW

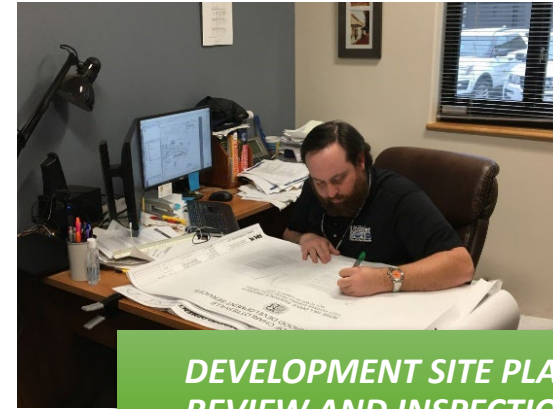
## CORE PROGRAMS & SERVICES – DEPARTMENT WIDE



**CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT TO INFRASTRUCTURE**



**COORDINATION WITH RWSA AND ACSA**



**DEVELOPMENT SITE PLAN REVIEW AND INSPECTION**



**BUDGET PLANNING/UTILITY RATE DEVELOPMENT**



**REGULATORY COMPLIANCE**



**UTILITIES OUTREACH AND CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT**

# UTILITIES OVERVIEW

- ✓ Each utility is funded by rates/fees – enterprise funds
- ✓ Shared resources among the four utilities during emergencies
- ✓ Customer service driven – high level of satisfaction measured by the Annual Customer Satisfaction Survey

## Customer Ratings

Experience interacting with the Department of Utilities staff (% Satisfied/Neutral)\*

How satisfied you are with the new Utility Billing Online Payment Portal?



Politeness & courteousness of staff



Overall responsiveness to your requests, questions or concerns



Ease of contacting department staff



Staff knowledge and technical competence

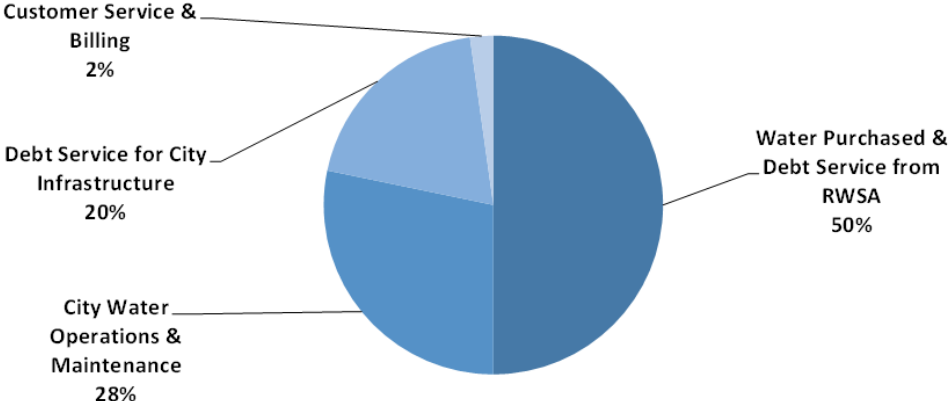


\*Department of Utilities Customer Satisfaction Survey - SurveyMonkey – February 2023

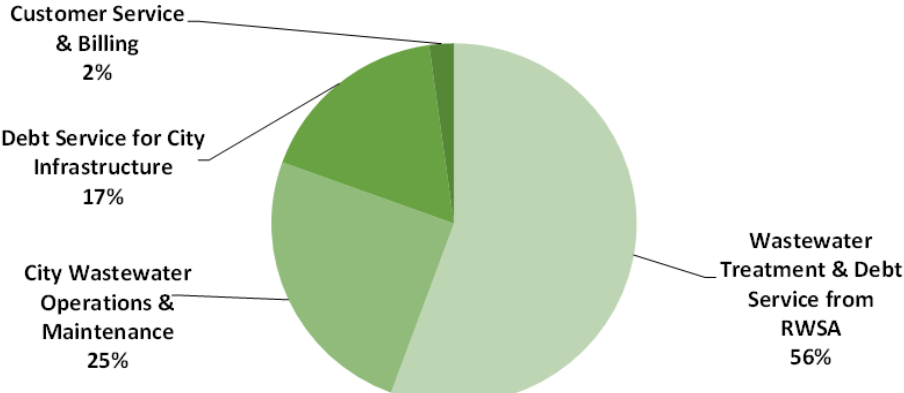
# BUDGET OVERVIEW

## OPERATING BUDGET DEPARTMENT WIDE: \$65.6M

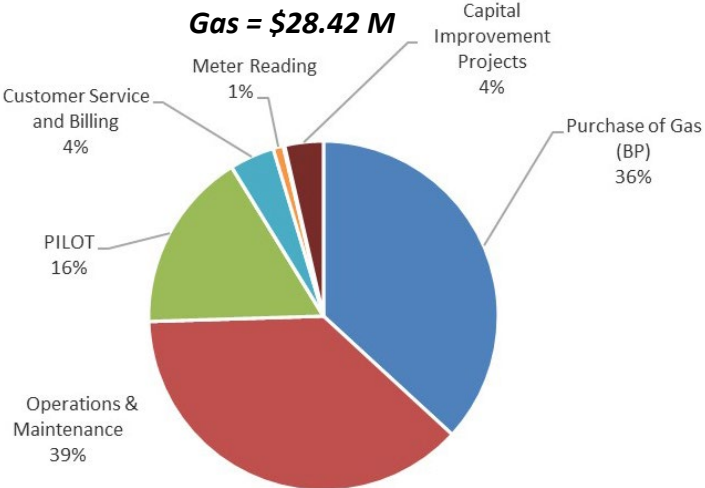
**Water = \$16.987 M**



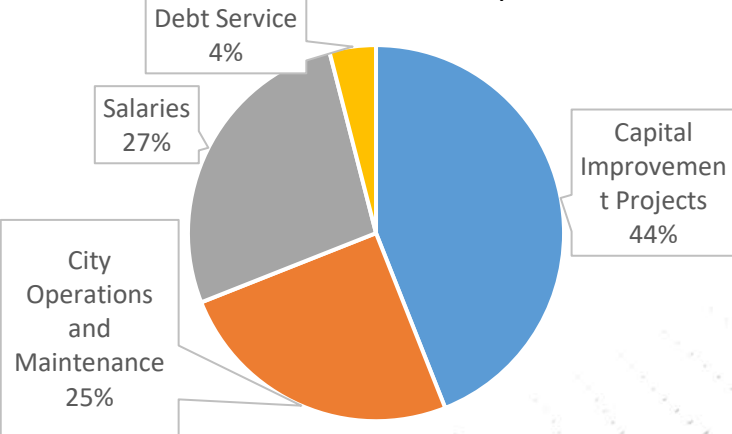
**Wastewater = \$16.719M**



**Gas = \$28.42 M**



**Stormwater = \$3.444 M**



# ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Proactive investment in infrastructure to minimize long-term operational costs and emergency expenditures.
- Balancing reliable, first-rate services with utility rates that are fair and considered a good value.

## Reliability

Reliability of your water service



Reliability of your sanitary sewer service



Reliability of your natural gas service



22.9 miles  
12.8% of the water system has been replaced  
\$30.6 million total construction cost

65.1 miles  
38.5% of the wastewater system has been replaced/rehabilitated  
\$33.6 million total construction cost

14.7 miles  
11.3% of the stormwater system has been replaced/rehabilitated  
\$11.8 million total construction cost

Rate the value that you pay for your water service



## Value

Rate the value that you pay for your sewer service



Rate the value that you pay for your natural gas service





# ACCOMPLISHMENTS

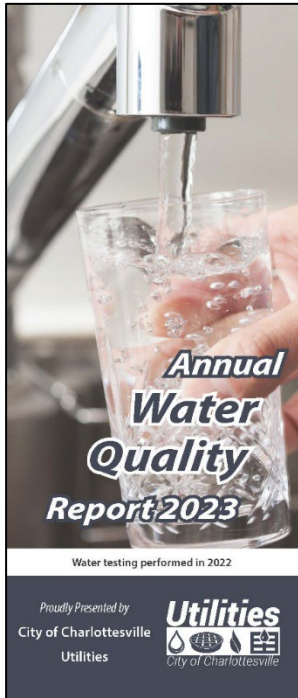


- **Cost-effective engagement initiatives done in-house**

- ✓ Monthly e-newsletter: 9,200 subscribed customers - Average open rate of 62%
- ✓ In the 2022 gas safety public awareness survey, 95% of the surveyed residents were able to identify correctly the natural gas scent (In 2006, it was 39%).
- ✓ Energy-Saving Tree Program – winner of the 2023 3CMA Award of Excellence
- ✓ Target postcards to 3,300 households to promote energy-saving programs



# ACCOMPLISHMENTS



- **Meeting and exceeding all regulatory compliance**

- ✓ Ensuring water quality exceeds standards through maintenance of the distribution system (e.g., flushing, backflow prevention, training)
- ✓ No “findings” from detailed, frequent State Corporation Commission (SCC) inspections
- ✓ EPA’s Lead Service Line Inventory - No lead service lines exist in the City’s system. About 35% of all privately owned lines have been verified with no lead found.

- **Innovative application of technology in asset management**

- ✓ Utilization of cutting-edge technology to enhance data collection and streamline data exchange between Field and Office workflows
- ✓ In-house development and implementation of 22 applications/dashboards by the GIS team
- ✓ Has improved accuracy, expanded knowledge, and increased efficiency



# CHALLENGES

## Field Worker Vacancies – 24 open positions

- More stringent regulatory compliances
  - ✓ EPA's Lead Copper Survey
  - ✓ SCC oversight

Evaluate the stormwater program to incorporate any enhancements or fee adjustments that need to be made or phased in

**QUESTIONS?**