



PROPOSALS TO ADDRESS UNUSUALLY HIGH CUSTOMER WATER BILLS

HOUSTON PUBLIC WORKS
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PURPOSE

together we create a strong foundation
for Houston to thrive

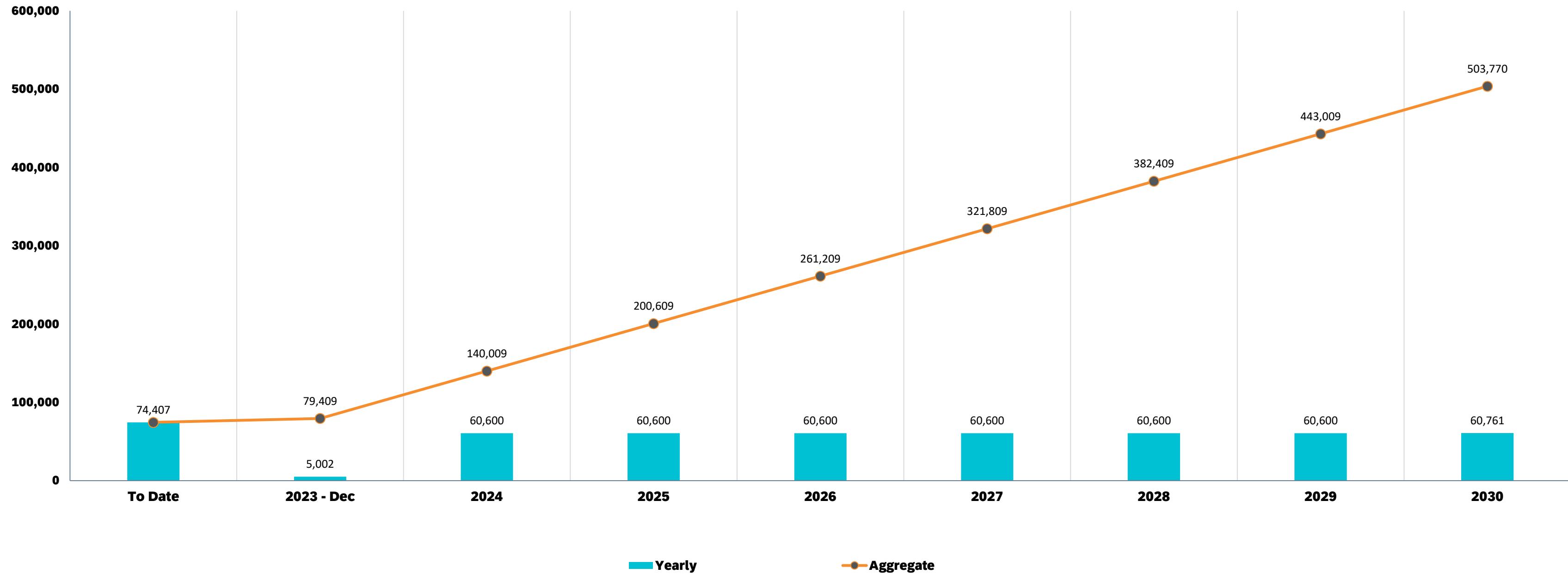
5 TO THRIVE VALUES

respect | ownership | communication | integrity | teamwork

AGING READING DEVICES | REPLACEMENTS

NEW AMR DEVICES INSTALLATION

Revised as of November 2023



❖ The original deployment plan has been revised to catch-up the lost 2 - 3 years due to COVID-19 supply chain issues.



ORDINANCE CHANGE – 47-74 (C)

PROBLEM: CUSTOMERS EXPERIENCING LEAKS ARE LIMITED TO A...



- **MAXIMUM OF 2 LEAK ADJUSTMENTS PER YEAR**
- **50% CREDIT FOR WATER AND WASTEWATER USE**

RECOMMENDED SOLUTION: ORDINANCE CHANGE



- REMOVE LIMITATIONS ON NUMBER OF ADJUSTMENTS AVAILABLE
- PROVIDE **100% WASTEWATER ADJUSTMENT BACK TO AVERAGE USE WITH LEAK ADJUSTMENT**
- QUICK LEAK REPAIR INCENTIVE:
 - **1ST BILL CYCLE - 100%**
 - **2ND CYCLE - 75%**
 - **AFTER 2ND - 50%**

ADDENDUM TO LEAK BALANCE REMAINING (LBR)

ORDINANCE 47-74.1 AND UNUSUALLY LARGE BILL CREDIT (ULB) ORDINANCE 47-75

PROBLEM:



- CUSTOMERS WITH UNUSUALLY HIGH BILLS OR WHO USE THE LEAK ADJUSTMENT STILL HAVE A SIGNIFICANT BALANCE REMAINING

RECOMMENDED SOLUTION: ORDINANCE CHANGE



- REDUCE UNUSUALLY LARGE BILLS: 150% AVERAGE TO 125% AVERAGE USAGE
- LOWER ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL CUSTOMERS: \$2K TO \$1K SENIORS AND LOW-INCOME \$250 TO \$100
- REDUCE LEAK BALANCE THRESHOLD

EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES ADJUSTMENT (ECA) ORDINANCE 47-75.1

PROBLEM:



- LIMITED NUMBER OF CUSTOMERS QUALIFY FOR EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES ADJUSTMENT.
- ALLOWABLE ADJUSTMENT DOES NOT PROVIDE ENOUGH RELIEF.

RECOMMENDED SOLUTIONS:



- REDUCE THRESHOLD FROM 5X AVERAGE USAGE TO 2X
- INCREASE ALLOWABLE ADJUSTMENT FROM \$4K TO \$10K
- CLARIFY 2 SUBSEQUENT BILLING CYCLES VS 2 MONTH TIME FRAME

BASIC SERVICE CHARGES (VACANT LOTS) ORDINANCE 47-61, 47-63

PROBLEM:



- VACANT LOTS OR METERED BUT UNUSED SERVICE CONNECTIONS ARE CHARGED MONTHLY BASE SERVICE CHARGE FEES.

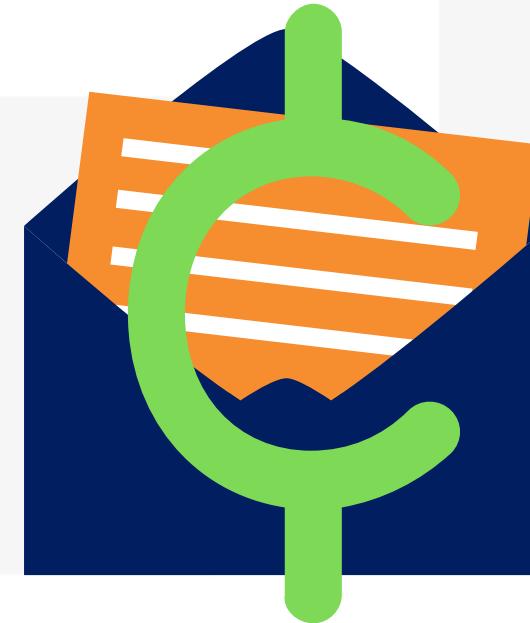
RECOMMENDED SOLUTIONS:



- CUSTOMERS MAY REQUEST METER PHYSICALLY LOCKED FOR ONE-TIME FEE (EST: \$150)
- NO DEVELOPER IMPACT FEE IF:
 - METER STAYS IN PLACE
 - ACCOUNT IS REACTIVATED IN THE FUTURE

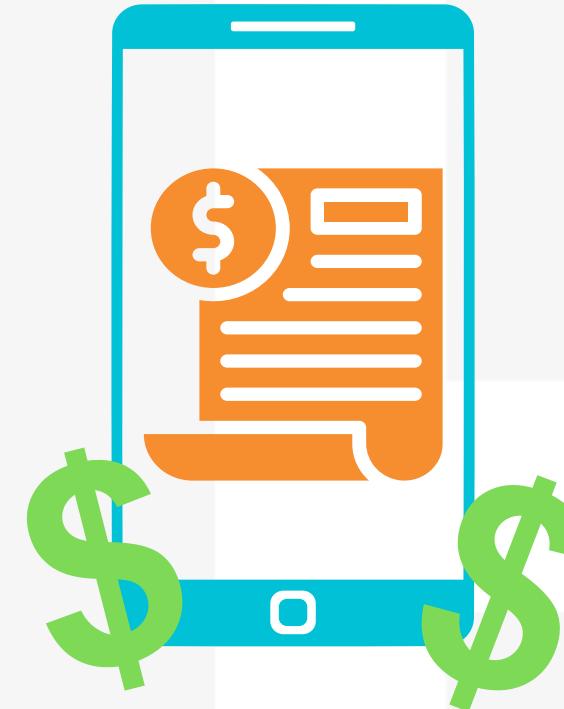


PROBLEM:



THE CITY INCURS 40-CENT COST FOR
PRINTING, POSTAGE AND ADMINISTRATIVE
COSTS FOR EACH BILL MAILED.

RECOMMENDED SOLUTION:



OFFER CUSTOMERS A 50 CENT EBILL
REBATE FOR CONVERTING TO
PAPERLESS BILLING

CUSTOMER ACCOUNT ESTIMATED FOR LONG BILLING PERIODS. THIS RESULTED IN HIGH BILLS DUE TO:



- ACTUAL READING SHOWS ESTIMATED USAGE WAS TOO LOW.
- EXCEPTIONAL HIGH BILL OCCURRED DUE TO A LEAK OR UNEXPLAINED USAGE OCCURRED AND CUSTOMER UNABLE TO KNOW BECAUSE OF ESTIMATED USAGE.

RECOMMENDED SOLUTION:



- CODIFY CURRENT PUBLIC WORKS PROCESS OF NOT BACKBILLING MORE THAN 3 MONTHS.

Thank you!



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