

To the Mayor and Members of the City Council

May 7, 2024

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SUBJECT: TOTAL CITY OF FORT WORTH RESIDENTIAL CHARGES

The purpose of this informal report is to provide an overview of the total standard charges paid by City residents. Aside from property taxes assessed on property owners and billed annually, residents pay all standard fees and volumetric charges for service on their monthly utility bills. Standard fees and volumetric charges do not include fees specific to optional services such as community centers or visiting City parks.

The total average annual household cost of fees and service charges for non-optional services such as water, waste collection, and miscellaneous assessed fees is \$1,183.44. In comparison, the average annual property tax bill in FY2024 is estimated to be \$1,534.52 (at property tax rate of \$0.6725 per \$100 of assessed property value). This average property tax payment is for the City of Fort Worth only; Fort Worth residents pay property taxes to several different entities, each of which provides them with specific and unique services.

Resident Billing Category	Avg Household Charges (monthly)	Fort Worth Annual Charge
Stormwater Fee	\$7.54	\$90.43
Environmental Fee	\$1.50	\$18.00
Solid Waste Fee	\$17.63	\$211.60
Subtotal Resident Charges - Total Fees	\$26.67	\$320.04
Water Charges (base plus volumetric)	\$39.91	\$478.92
Sewer Charges (base plus volumetric)	\$32.04	\$384.48
Subtotal Resident Charges - Water and Sewer*	\$71.95	\$863.40
Total Average Residential Combined Charges	\$98.62	\$1,183.44

*Charges based on usage as read by a meter.
 Customers have the ability to control their usage and lower their bill

Avg Prop Tax Pmt (2024)	\$1,534.52
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The City's property tax rate and a resident's taxable property value together determine property tax bills. Total average resident charges are a mixture of fixed fees charged to support City initiatives and charges for service. In the latter case, residents have some control over costs in that they may vary their usage as needed; Water and Sewer rates are designed to fully recover costs and are developed annually through a Cost of Service study using industry standards. Beyond just limiting water usage, residents have other avenues to lower total fees such as opting for a smaller waste cart.

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A limited survey of major Texas cities reveals how the total cost of Fort Worth residential charges compares across the state:

Resident Billing Category	Houston	San Antonio	Dallas	Austin	Fort Worth	El Paso	Arlington	Corpus Christi	Plano	Lubbock
Stormwater Fee	\$64.00	\$59.28	\$93.00	\$146.04	\$90.43	\$95.64	\$108.00	\$106.08	\$63.24	\$80.40
Environmental Fee		\$54.00		\$60.00	\$18.00					
Street Maintenance		\$236.40		\$214.44				\$64.56		
Solid Waste Fee	\$233.76	\$237.12	\$455.76	\$376.20	\$211.60	\$360.00	\$230.28	\$306.36	\$283.20	\$222.00
Subtotal Resident Charges - Total Fees	\$297.76	\$586.80	\$548.76	\$796.68	\$320.04	\$455.64	\$338.28	\$477.00	\$346.44	\$302.40
Water Charges (base plus volumetric)	\$778.82	\$259.20	\$360.76	\$757.92	\$478.92	\$459.35	\$477.48	\$502.56	\$527.74	\$648.15
Sewer Charges (base plus volumetric)	\$584.16	\$265.56	\$372.33	\$561.12	\$384.48	\$437.28	\$477.52	\$608.81	\$529.42	\$396.48
Subtotal Resident Charges - Water and Sewer	\$1,362.98	\$524.76	\$733.09	\$1,319.04	\$863.40	\$896.63	\$955.00	\$1,111.37	\$1,057.17	\$1,044.63
Total Average Residential Combined Charges	\$1,660.74	\$1,111.56	\$1,281.85	\$2,115.72	\$1,183.44	\$1,352.27	\$1,293.28	\$1,588.37	\$1,403.61	\$1,347.03

Out of the top ten cities by population in Texas, Fort Worth currently offers residents City services at the second-lowest rate.

Methodology

For City of Fort Worth total resident fees, FWLab worked with City staff to determine what is paid, on average, taking all residents into account. In arriving at the peer city combined resident charges, publicly-available information provided by each municipality was used, assuming a 2,000 square foot house, a mid-sized waste cart, and approximately 7,600 gallons of monthly water usage/4,400 gallons of monthly wastewater collection.

Street Maintenance Fee

Under consideration is a new Street Maintenance Fee which, at roughly \$110 annually for the average City resident, would carry the equivalent cost burden of a property tax rate of approximately 4.8 cents. This is with respect to out-of-pocket costs paid by an average household and does not necessarily mean the Street Maintenance Fee would raise revenue equivalent to a 4.8 cent increase on the property tax rate.

Fees are expressed in terms of what the City realizes, without taxes or other outside fees. If you have questions concerning this information, please contact Christianne Simmons, Chief Transformation Officer of the FWLab, at 817-392-6222.

David Cooke
City Manager