

UTILITY ADVISORY BOARD

Thursday, April 16, 2026

8:30 – 10:00 am

AGENDA

1. Approval of Minutes – March 19, 2026
2. Public Comments on Agenda Items
3. Approval of Agenda
4. Residential Hydrant Connection Program – Giffel
5. Add-to-Tax Summer Tax Option - Giffel
6. Updates
 - a. 2026 Water/Sewer Report (March) – McCaul
 - b. Quarterly Financials (Q3) – Verbrugge
7. Public Comments
8. Items from Members
9. Next Meeting – May 21, 2026
10. Adjournment

UTILITY ADVISORY BOARD

Thursday, March 19, 2025

MINUTES

Members Present

Mike DeVries, Jared Grabinski, Wayne Jernberg, Doug La Fave, Shay Gallagher, Jeff McCaul, Alison Nugent, James Ouzts, Lindsay Sagorski Munsell, Julius Suchy, and Tai Verbrugge

Alternates Present

Alan Avitia, Brian Bigorowski, Scott Connors, and Wayne Harrall

Others Present

Kolene Allen, Dan Taber, and Reina Watanabe

Call to Order

Mr. Jernberg called the meeting to order at 8:30 am.

Approval of Minutes – February 19, 2025

Motion to approve the minutes made by Mr. Suchy and seconded by Mr. Ouzts.

MOTION CARRIED.

Public Comments on Agenda Items

There were no public comments.

Approval of Agenda

Motion to approve the agenda made by Mr. La Fave and seconded by Mr. Ouzts.

MOTION CARRIED.

History of East Grand Rapids Water/Sewer

Mr. La Fave provided a brief presentation on the history of the water and sewer system in East Grand Rapids. He noted that the current meeting room was formerly part of the City's water storage tank system. He also explained that the area overlooking Reeds Lake once housed a 24-inch and 16-inch water intake and pump house. East Grand Rapids transitioned to the City of Grand Rapids Water System in 1962 to improve public health, safety, and water quality. He further shared that East Grand Rapids previously operated a wastewater treatment plant located at the corner of Plymouth Avenue and Hall Street. The facility included a digester tank, sand filter beds for sludge, and discharged treated effluent into Silver Creek. He also noted that

the new high school, which is currently in progress, will be over the top of the old transmission mains.

The presentation included historical photographs and maps.

Connection to Public Water/Sewer System, Hardship Adjustment Consideration

Mr. Jernberg reported on a recent situation in Grand Rapids Township involving a septic system failure and the requirement to connect to the municipal sanitary sewer system. He noted that, following discussions between the resident and the Township, a financial hardship was identified. The resident worked with Kent County Community Action (KCCA) to seek assistance with connection costs.

Mr. DeVries explained that the Township requires private developers connecting to the system to fund necessary infrastructure improvements, which supports long-term system capacity. Developers are eligible for reimbursement through a 10-year payback period. After that period, frontage fees collected are retained by the municipality and applied to the system, helping offset costs and stabilize rates.

Mr. DeVries further shared that the Township partnered with Corewell Health (formerly Spectrum Health) to construct a sanitary sewer main near the corner of Dunnigan Avenue and 3 Mile Road. The project was intended to serve older homes, many built in the 1940s, with failing or aging septic systems, some are 55-gallon drums. The Township contributed funding to the project so that the burden was not put solely on Corewell and also installed laterals to each property.

He noted that one property, located on a parcel slightly over one acre, experienced a septic system failure. The estimated cost to connect to the sanitary sewer system was approximately \$35,000. The property owner sought assistance through county's community development block grant funding who thought \$35,000 was too much to spend and that they should install a new septic system instead.

Mr. DeVries stated that, historically, the Township has relied on the Kent County Health Department to enforce state law requiring connection to a sanitary sewer system when a property is within 200 feet of municipal sanitary sewer. In this case, the property met that requirement; however, the county told them to install a new septic system if they could not afford to connect to the system. He noted this was the first instance of this kind in his 27 years with the Township.

The broader question was raised for member communities regarding existing ordinances and requirements for mandatory connection to water and sanitary sewer systems.

Mr. Jernberg directed members to the agenda packet, which included relevant sections of the City of Grand Rapids Municipal Code, the Water and Sanitary Sewer Service Agreement, Water System Rules and Regulations, and the Front Foot Charges Lien Contract (also referred to as the 10-pay plan).

Mr. Jernberg noted that the City of Grand Rapids requires connection to the municipal system when a private well or septic system fails.

A brief discussion followed.

Members were asked to provide feedback within the next month.

Mr. Jernberg will coordinate a meeting with the Kent County Health Department to further discuss this issue and will include interested members. The goal would be for all communities to have their own ordinances to enforce connection to the system when relevant.

Updates

2026 Water/Sewer Report (February)

Mr. McCaul presented the Water/Sewer Report for February.

A copy of the report is on file.

RNG Skid

Mr. Ouzts reported that approximately seven months ago, the City entered into an agreement with the City of Wyoming to accept its sludge for processing in the digesters. He said the arrangement has been mutually beneficial and has increased gas production on one digester tank by four times, fully utilizing the capacity of the two existing RNG skids.

Mr. Ouzts further reported that the City Commission approved a 30% down payment for a new RNG skid to accommodate the increased production. He noted that the lead time for the new skid is approximately 42 to 52 weeks.

In the interim, staff are redrafting the agreement with the City of Wyoming so that calculations are based on dry tons rather than gallons, which will better align with Wyoming's accounting system.

Mr. Ouzts also noted that certain mechanical upgrades are needed to allow the digester to receive thicker sludge.

Finally, Mr. Ouzts reported that the EPA approved the City's request on March 12 to qualify the third digester tank for D3 RINs. He noted that D3 RINs carry approximately five times the value.

Public Comments

There were no public comments.

Items from Members

- Ms. Sagorski Munsell reported that Caledonia Township switched over to the City's water system on March 10 and so far, everything is working great.

- Mr. Verbrugge reported that the City Commission will be voting to approve utility service districts in June and if anyone is thinking about making any change, let Mr. Jernberg know as soon as possible.
- Ms. Nugent said that the residents of Caledonia Township have been happy with the new system. There was one water softener company contacting residents telling them they should still use water softeners. They have let residents know this is not true.
- Mr. Conners reported that he has taken on a new role with the City of Walker, focused on public works and engineering to better support sewer and water.
- Mr. Jernberg thanked East Grand Rapids for hosting the meeting. He also encouraged members to review their contracts and the UAB's policies and if they have any concerns, they should bring them up so they can be addressed. He also said that he asked Tai to put together notes regarding potential changes in the rate study to bring to the group. These have to do with zoned assets.

Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for April 16, 2026.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:35 am.

MEMORANDUM

CITY OF GRAND RAPIDS

DATE: April 16, 2026

TO: Utility Advisory Board (UAB), Members

FROM: Samarhia Giffel, Administrative Service Officer II

SUBJECT: Elimination of Residential Hydrant Connection Rentals

After careful consideration, and due to safety concerns and the risk of damage to fire hydrants, the City has decided to eliminate residential fire hydrant connection rentals effective January 1, 2027.

The 2026 season, beginning in April, will be the final year this service we will be an option to residential customers.

For most residents, filling a pool using a standard garden hose is more cost-effective. A typical 17,280-gallon pool equals approximately 23 units of water. At a rate of \$2.74 per unit, the average cost would be \$63.02. In comparison, hydrant rental costs include a \$50 connection fee, a \$75 weekly minimum usage fee, and the additional expense of renting a fire-sized hose from a third-party vendor.

For residents who use a professional pool service to maintain and fill their pools, contractors will continue to have access to commercial hydrant connection rentals. The contractor is responsible for managing the entire process with the City.

The Grand Rapids Water System has notified previous seasonal customers via email and USPS, included messaging on residential bills, and scheduled supporting social media communications.

If you have any further questions, please contact 311 Customer Service by dialing (616) 456-3000, or email water@grcity.us.

MEMORANDUM

CITY OF GRAND RAPIDS

DATE: April 16, 2026

TO: Utility Advisory Board (UAB), Members

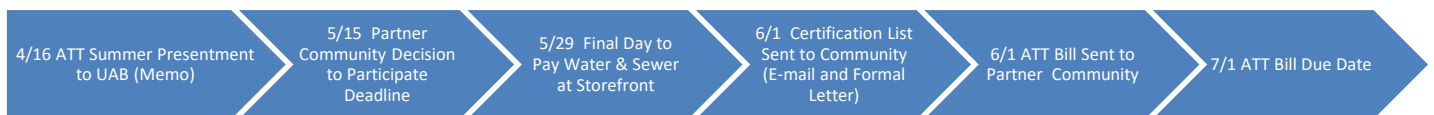
FROM: Samarhia Giffel, Administrative Services Officer II

SUBJECT: Add-to-Tax (ATT) Summer Tax Option

Section 13 of the retail water and sanitary sewer service agreement provides for the collection of delinquent water or sanitary sewer accounts. Per the agreement, the City of Grand Rapids is allowed to certify and assign any account that is delinquent for a period of at least ninety (90) days. For the 2026 Summer Tax Roll, the City desires to certify and assign to each respective partner community all eligible accounts that have been reviewed and processed for collection. The City of Grand Rapids respectfully requests the voluntary agreement of each retail partner community for the use of the annual (summer) add-to-tax collection cycle to collect significantly delinquent (currently defined as 203 days or more) water and/or sanitary sewer charges.

Customers are able to pay the ATT amounts, through close of storefront business on May 29, 2026. On Monday, June 1, 2026, the debt will be transferred to the partner community account and the official certification list will be sent along with a bill for the community ATT debt. UAB retail partners are reminded to review Michigan’s water/sewer charges immediate lien provisions and how to best communicate outstanding delinquent utility balances, during the period of time between City of Grand Rapids certification to the community and the community’s assignment to the tax roll.

The ATT summer tax timeline for 2026 and a data table of eligibility and collections are presented hereafter.



1. 4/16 2026 ATT Summer Presentment to UAB (Memo)
2. 5/15 Partner Community Decision to Participate Deadline
3. 5/29 Final Day to Pay Water & Sewer at Storefront
4. 6/1 Certification List Sent to Partner Community (E-mail and Formal Letter)
5. 6/1 ATT Bill Sent to Partner Community
6. 7/1 ATT Bill Due Date

2026 ATT SUMMER PRELIMINARY ELIGIBLE ACCOUNTS (As of 4/06/2026)

Partner Community	Accounts Eligible	ATT Amount
Cascade	8	\$1,288.63
G.R. Township	7	\$1,660.94
Kentwood	33	\$7,472.78
Tallmadge Township	0	\$0
Walker	18	\$4,472.19
Wright Township	2	\$229.04

At this time, the City of Grand Rapids is allowing its retail partners *optional* certification/assignment to the 2026 Summer Tax Roll. Please consider the summer add-to-tax collection cycle and advise of your community's respective voluntary agreement to add delinquent water/sewer utilities balance to its summer tax rolls in writing to sgiffel@grcity.us, no later than May 15, 2026. I can also be reached at (616) 456-4531 if you have additional questions.

Samarhia Giffel

Administrative Services Officer II

Utility Business Office

Ph: 616.456.4531 Email: sgiffel@grcity.us

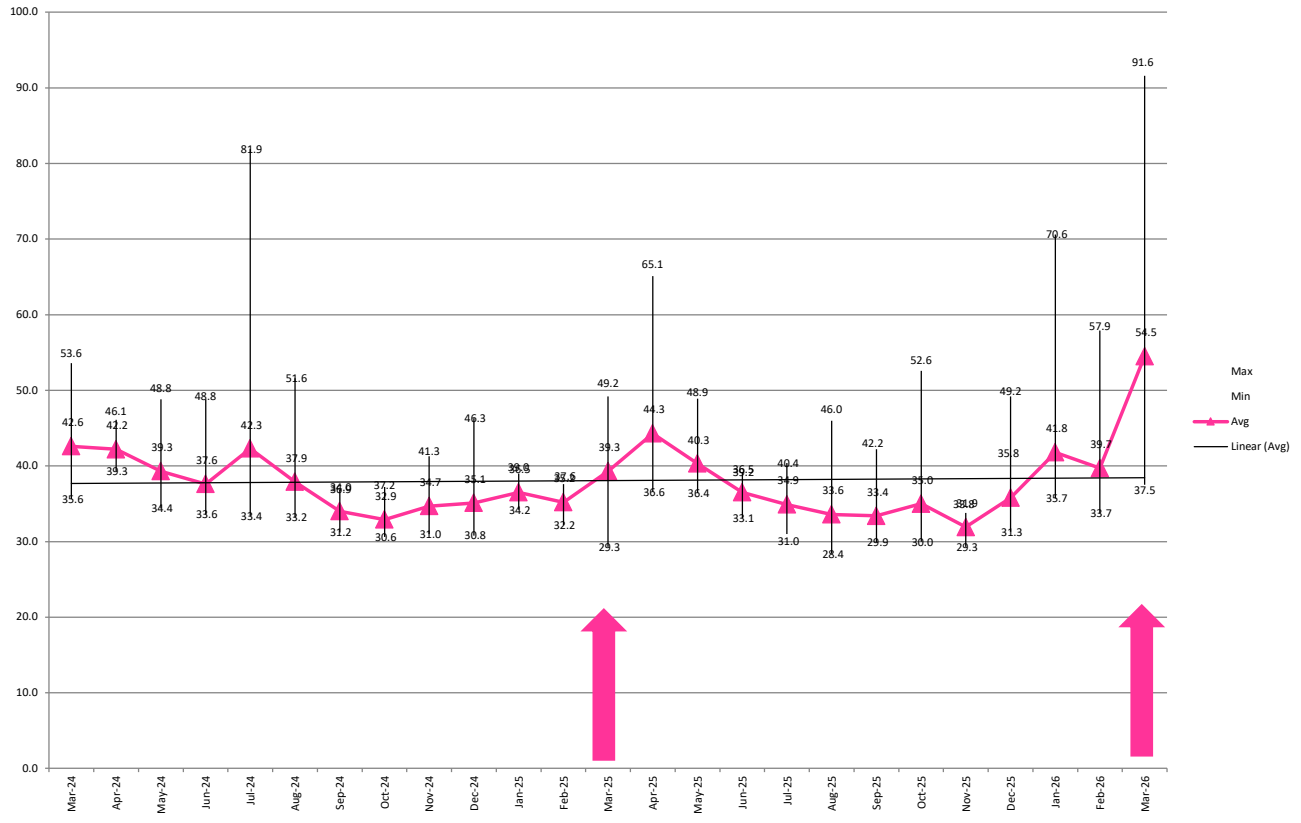
**Water/Sewer UAB Report
March 2026**

Project Name	Contractor	Award Date	Substantial Completion Date	Final Completion Date	Water Fund Authorized NTE Amt	Sewer Fund Authorized NTE Amt	Est. Year for Rates	Integrated (Y/N)
Reconstruction of BUCHANAN AVENUE from Corrine Street to Hall Street	Diversco Construction Company, Inc.	3/6/2026	6/19/2027	9/24/2027	\$2,337,835.00	N/A	2027	N (GR)
Replacement of Surge Valves at the LAKE MICHIGAN FILTRATION PLANT	Allied Mechanical Services, Inc.	3/31/2026	3/5/2027	4/9/2027	\$611,620.00	N/A	2027	Y
Reconstruction of VALLEY AVENUE from 100' N. of 1st Street to 4th Street	Anlaan Corporation	3/6/2026	10/16/2026	9/24/2027	\$553,181.00	N/A	2026	N (GR)
Replacement of Lead Service Lines at VARIOUS LOCATIONS - Contract 2026-1	Groundhawg Excavating & Landscaping, LLC	3/17/2026	10/15/2027	10/29/2027	\$2,442,300.00	N/A	2027	N (GR)

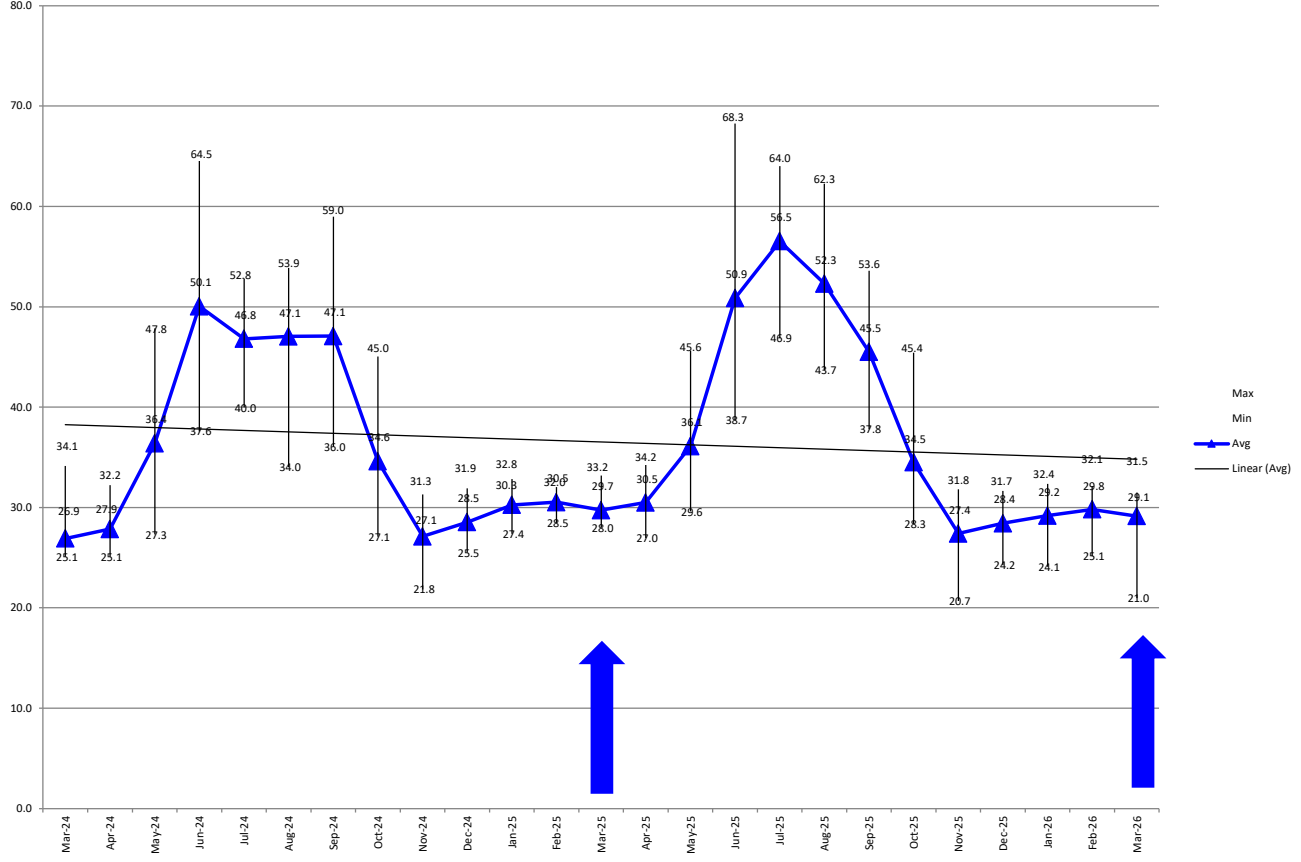
WATER SUPPLY SYSTEM			Fund:		5910
FINANCIAL REPORT*					
QUARTER ENDING 03/31/26					
<i>Description</i>	<i>FINAL FY25 BUDGET</i>	<i>AMENDED FY26 BUDGET</i>	<i>Q3FYTD-FY25</i>	<i>Q3FYTD-FY26</i>	<i>FY26/FY25 VARIANCE</i>
Retail Service Charges	\$ 47,490,405	\$ 48,960,731	\$ 32,052,409	\$ 33,969,287	\$ 1,916,878
Wholesale Service Charges	\$ 5,367,904	\$ 5,814,875	\$ 3,972,287	\$ 4,593,654	\$ 621,367
Front Footage Fees	\$ 250,000	\$ 300,000	\$ 589,318	\$ 254,100	\$ (335,218)
Integrated Connection Fees	\$ 375,000	\$ 375,000	\$ 321,181	\$ 302,015	\$ (19,166)
Sewage Disposal Fund-Customer Service	\$ 3,425,095	\$ 3,619,329	\$ 2,568,809	\$ 2,714,497	\$ 145,688
Penalties	\$ 1,000,000	\$ 1,100,000	\$ 1,059,915	\$ 926,292	\$ (133,623)
Miscellaneous	\$ 3,020,870	\$ 3,665,709	\$ 1,828,144	\$ 3,381,054	\$ 1,552,911
Total Revenue	\$ 60,929,274	\$ 63,835,644	\$ 42,392,063	\$ 46,140,899	\$ 3,748,836
Personnel Services	\$ 15,148,985	\$ 15,903,492	\$ 9,896,088	\$ 10,743,309	\$ 847,221
Supplies	\$ 5,400,749	\$ 5,263,331	\$ 2,814,786	\$ 3,148,832	\$ 334,045
Other Services and Charges	\$ 19,188,817	\$ 20,726,603	\$ 11,065,434	\$ 13,370,479	\$ 2,305,045
Capital Outlay	\$ 1,622,720	\$ 1,424,300	\$ 257,058	\$ 265,796	\$ 8,738
Appropriation Lapse	\$ (1,176,000)	\$ (1,672,000)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Transfers Out	\$ 23,069	\$ 24,635	\$ 26,802	\$ 18,476	\$ (8,326)
Total Expenses	\$ 40,208,340	\$ 41,670,361	\$ 24,060,169	\$ 27,546,892	\$ 3,486,723
Net Income (Loss)	\$ 20,720,934	\$ 22,165,283	\$ 18,331,894	\$ 18,594,007	\$ 262,113
*Operating financial report excludes debt service, cash capital transfers, & GASB 31 Market Adjustments					

SEWAGE DISPOSAL SYSTEM			Fund:		5900
FINANCIAL REPORT*					
QUARTER ENDING 03/31/26					
<i>Description</i>	<i>FINAL FY25 BUDGET</i>	<i>AMENDED FY26 BUDGET</i>	<i>Q3FYTD-FY25</i>	<i>Q3FYTD-FY26</i>	<i>FY26/FY25 VARIANCE</i>
Retail Service Charges	\$ 60,850,720	\$ 63,046,310	\$ 37,880,914	\$ 39,157,013	\$ 1,276,099
Wholesale Service Charges	\$ 3,511,605	\$ 3,558,243	\$ 2,280,330	\$ 2,385,606	\$ 105,277
Sewer Surcharges	\$ 2,500,000	\$ 2,334,000	\$ 1,297,448	\$ 1,844,266	\$ 546,818
Renewable Natural Gas Sales	\$ 3,000,000	\$ 2,000,000	\$ 2,229,664	\$ 1,411,593	\$ (818,072)
Front Footage Fees	\$ 200,000	\$ 200,000	\$ 102,797	\$ 226,880	\$ 124,083
Integrated Connection Fees	\$ 250,000	\$ 250,000	\$ 106,816	\$ 72,757	\$ (34,059)
Miscellaneous	\$ 2,494,794	\$ 2,950,097	\$ 1,413,678	\$ 2,264,595	\$ 850,917
Total Revenue	\$ 72,807,119	\$ 74,338,650	\$ 45,311,647	\$ 47,362,710	\$ 2,051,063
Personal Services	\$ 14,842,419	\$ 15,022,525	\$ 10,228,660	\$ 10,927,867	\$ 699,207
Supplies	\$ 3,886,566	\$ 4,101,609	\$ 1,881,775	\$ 2,157,793	\$ 276,018
Other Services and Charges	\$ 23,740,433	\$ 25,628,034	\$ 15,021,751	\$ 16,245,759	\$ 1,224,008
Capital Outlay	\$ 1,273,300	\$ 1,263,330	\$ 333,139	\$ 288,406	\$ (44,733)
Appropriation Lapse	\$ (1,942,000)	\$ (1,715,000)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Total Expenses	\$ 41,800,718	\$ 44,300,498	\$ 27,465,325	\$ 29,619,825	\$ 2,154,500
Net Income (Loss)	\$ 31,006,401	\$ 30,038,152	\$ 17,846,322	\$ 17,742,885	\$ (103,437)
*Operating financial report excludes debt service, cash capital transfers, & GASB 31 Market Adjustments					

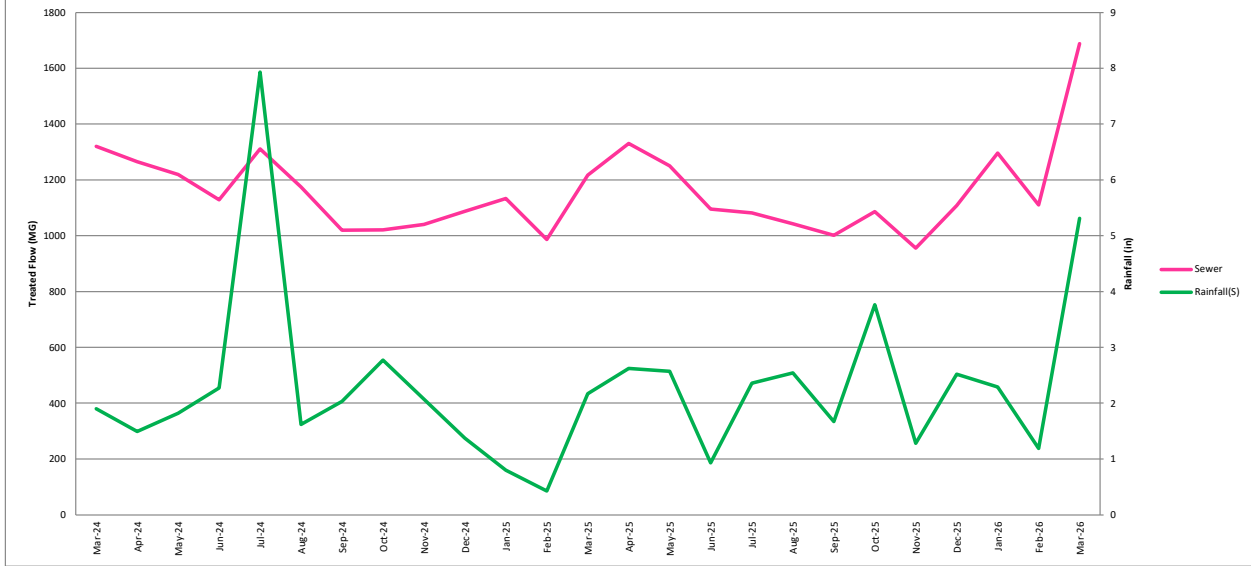
Sewer - Treated Flow (MGD)



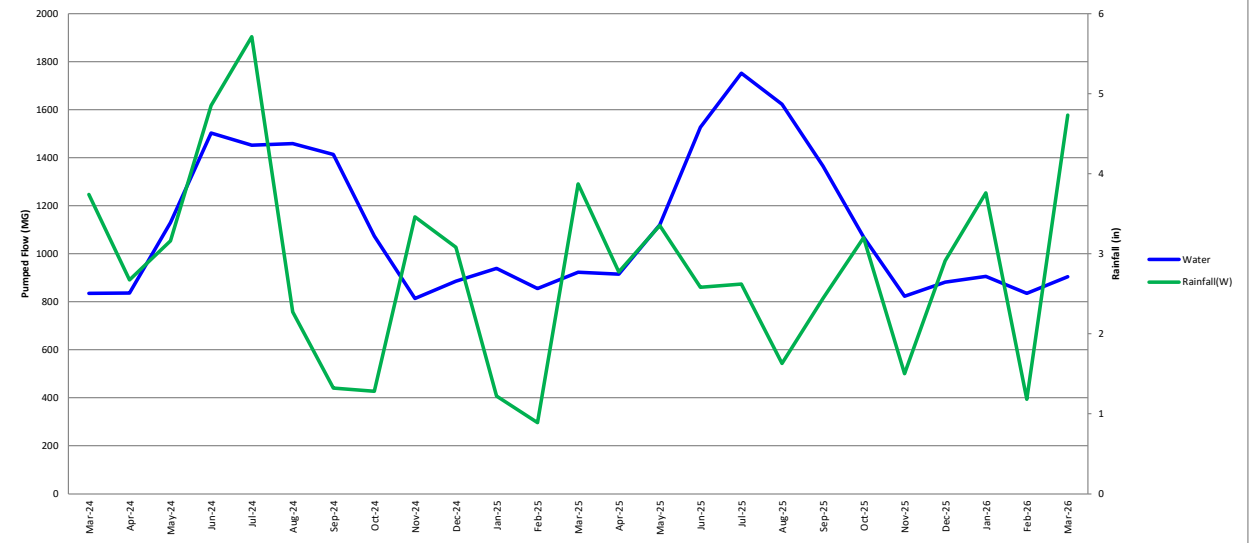
Water - Pumped Flow (MGD)



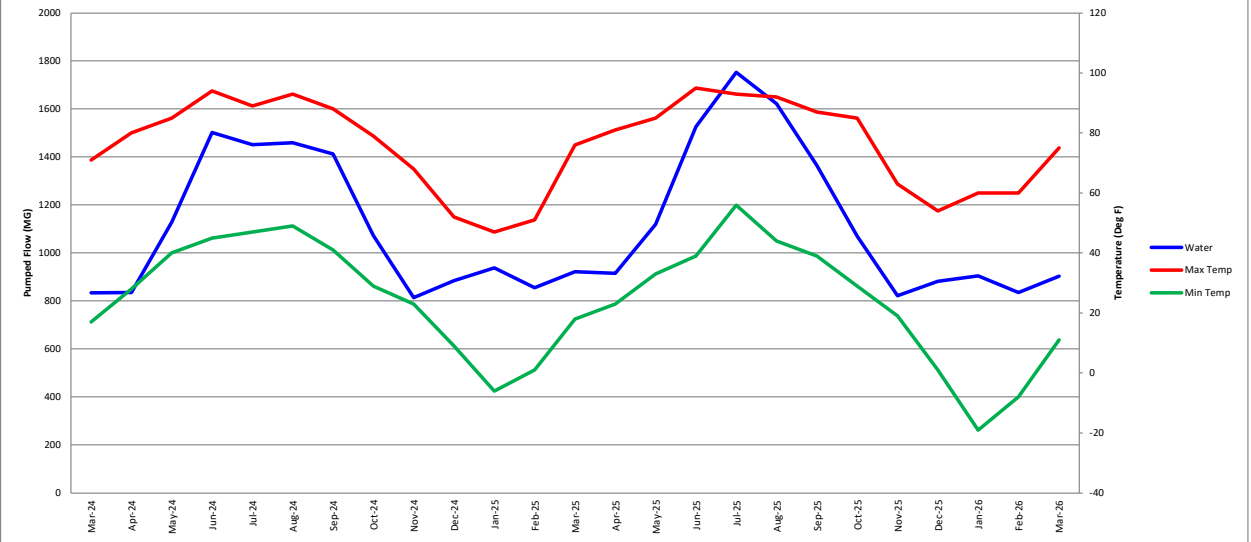
Sewer - Treated Flow (MG) Compared to Rainfall (IN)



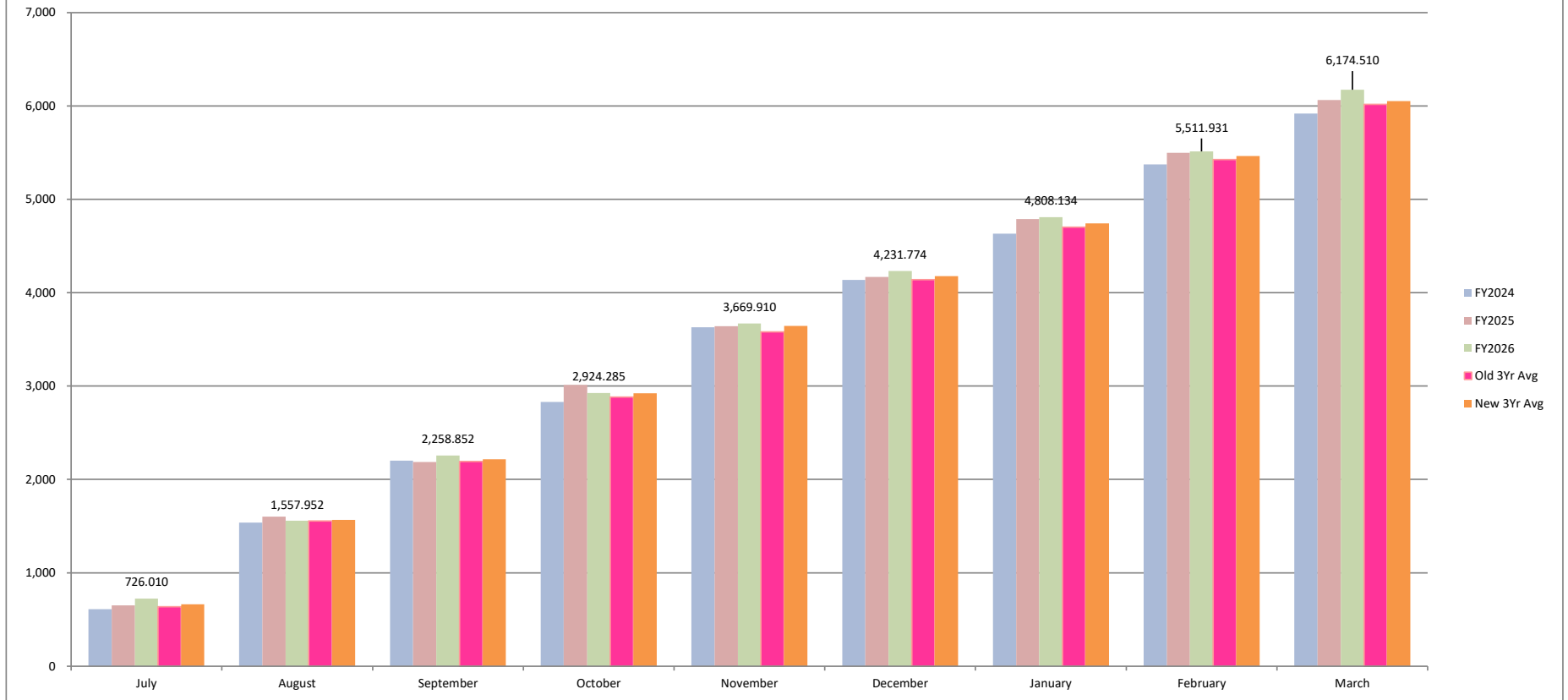
Water - Pumped Flow (MG) Compared to Rainfall (IN)



Water - Pumped Flow (MG) Compared to Temp (Deg Farenheit)



Sewer - YTD Billed Flow (MG)



Water - YTD Billed Flow (MG)

