

# Master Plan

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### Re: Annexation Process

#### GENERAL

##### **Will my taxes go up if I am annexed into the City?**

No. Property taxes will not go up. Upon annexation, Yuba City will receive a small portion (16%) of the taxes that you already pay to cover the services the City will provide to you. On a house with an assessed value of \$100,000, Yuba City receives \$160 annually to provide services such as fire protection, police services, street maintenance, recreation services, and park maintenance.

##### **Will I be required to install curbs, gutters and sidewalks if my property is annexed?**

No. Curbs, gutters, sidewalks and streetlights are not required upon annexation or any time thereafter. If a neighborhood desires these types of services, Yuba City will assist them in the formation of an assessment district to fund the improvements. If your street has curbs and gutters, you will receive routine street sweeping, which is currently not available to you as a County resident.

##### **If the annexation takes place, will I still be able to burn green waste?**

The County and City Ordinances related to the burning of green waste are the same, as they are both based on the regulations of the California Fire Code. If your property meets the County criteria, it will also meet the City criteria and burning will be allowed. However, if your property is annexed a burn permit, issued by the Yuba City Fire Department is required. The purpose of the burn permit is to assure compliance with the California Fire Code and the safety of you and your neighbors. The fee for a burn permit is \$52, and it can be issued for up to one year. As part of the burn permit, Fire Department personnel will visit your property to inspect the burn site and assure that you are in compliance with the California Fire Code.

##### **I own some horses. If my property is annexed, will I be able to keep them?**

Yes. All lots that currently have animals will be “grand-fathered” in as part of the annexation. New lots larger than ½ acre may have hooved animals including horses. Lots less than ½ acre may have up to twelve small animals such as chickens (no roosters), rabbits, or guinea pigs.

##### **Are there differences in the property development standards used by the County and the City?**

Your current zoning in the County (i.e. single-family residence, commercial, etc.) will be “grand-fathered” into the City upon annexation. Both the City and the

County have adopted the Uniform Building Code and California Fire Code as the basis for building clearances and/or inspections.

**Can I park my RV or boat on the street if my property is annexed?**

Yes. The County and City codes are very similar in regard to parked vehicles on a public roadway. Passenger vehicles, inclusive of recreational vehicles and attached boat trailers, can remain on a public roadway for 120 hours without being moved. This is 48 hours longer than the State allowed minimum. The vast majority of enforcement in this area is complaint driven; however, if Police employees witness vehicles that obviously have been abandoned (e.g. glass broken out, engines missing, etc.) and the vehicle creates blight within the neighborhood, the Police Department will seek compliance from the owner to move the vehicle. If the owner refuses, the City will have the vehicle removed.

**Will I need to get a Yuba City business license if my business is within the annexation area?**

Yes. A business license is required for any person (individual, partnership or corporation) doing any kind of business activity in the City. The business license fee is comprised of a \$35 administrative fee, plus a fee based upon the "projected gross income" (PGI). The fee on the PGI is based on a range from 22 cents per \$1,000 of PGI for retail operations, to 77 cents per \$1,000 of PGI for professional businesses. For example, if your retail business' PGI is \$1,000,000 per year, your business license fee would be \$255. Revenues from the business license tax go to the City's General Fund where the majority is used for police and fire protection.

**WATER SERVICE**

**If I have my own well can I keep it?**

Yes. If a property is connected to the City water supply system, and a customer has a private well, the well can be kept and used for irrigation purposes. There is currently a requirement that a backflow device be installed on the City water supply line, and this requirement will remain. This backflow device prevents a customer's private well from pumping water into the City system.

If a property is not connected to the City system, and wants to remain exclusively on their private well, that will be permitted.

**If I am in a community water district now will the City take it over?**

If the residents vote to convert to Yuba City water the water district will no longer be in effect. If the residents choose to remain in the local water district it will continue to operate independent of the City.

### **What is the water quality of the existing water districts?**

The following information is derived from the 2005 water quality consumer confidence report prepared by the California Department of Health Services.

**Wildwood East Mutual Water Company-** The water meets all water quality standards. Arsenic levels meet the new current Federal standards. California has not yet adopted a standard. There is a possibility it may be lower than the Federal standard. Water hardness ranges from 142 to 330 parts per million and would be considered to be hard to very hard water.

**Wildwood Mutual Water Company** – The water does not meet the new Federal arsenic standard. Treatment will be required either at the well site or individual home treatment systems operated by the water district. Nitrate concentrations are high ( 25 – 41 mg/l), slightly below the standard of 45 mg/l. Nitrates are of a concern to infants less than six months of age, pregnant women, and people with specific enzyme deficiencies. The water hardness ranged between 82 and 250 parts per million.

**El Margarita Mutual Water Company** - The water does not meet the new Federal arsenic standard. Treatment will be required either at the well site or individual home treatment systems operated by the water district. Nitrate concentrations ranged between 28 and 32 mg/l and meet the water quality standard of 45 mg/l. Customers are notified annually of the health concerns related to nitrates because the water is over one half of the health standard. The water hardness is 284 mg/l and is considered to be very hard.

### **What are the health effects of drinking water above the nitrate limit?**

The California Department of Health Services states that the health effects are immediate, “acute”, and health symptoms go away when water with nitrates is not consumed. Infants under the age of 6 months should be provided alternative drinking water, such as bottled water, or water that has been treated with reverse osmosis. High levels of nitrates can also affect women who are pregnant. Pregnant women or women who could become pregnant should consult their physician regarding drinking water that does not meet health standards.

### **What causes high nitrate concentrations?**

Typically, nitrate is not considered to be a naturally occurring compound. Sources include fertilizers (both household and agricultural), septic tanks and animal farming operations. The source of nitrates in your community is not known; however, it is common to have high groundwater nitrates concentrations in communities serviced by septic tanks.

### **Does boiling the water prior to drinking remove the nitrates?**

DO NOT BOIL WATER TO REMOVE NITRATES. THIS WILL INCREASE NITRATE CONCENTRATION. When water is boiled some water evaporates as steam, and none of the nitrates are removed. This concentrates the nitrates in the remaining water.

### **How soft is Yuba City surface water?**

Your current water supply is from groundwater – wells. Well water in the area is typically hard. Hard water ranges from 120 to 180 parts per million, very hard water is over 180 parts per million. Water was recently tested in 5 wells in the proposed annexation area. These wells averaged 660 parts per million of hardness, or 39 grains.

The Yuba City surface water system obtains its water from the Feather River. The water is naturally soft, 50 parts per million. Further softening of the water is a personal preference, but it is considered to be soft without further treatment.

### **Surface water tastes different than the well water – anything I can do about that?**

Your current water supply is from wells, and the water is hard. This hardness provides a certain amount of mineral taste to the water, and most private wells are not disinfected with chlorine. The Yuba City surface water system treats Feather River water that is naturally soft. The chlorine that is added to this water is noticeable due to lack of other minerals in the water. If customers desire, they can easily remove the chlorine taste from their drinking water with inexpensive and simple to maintain filters.

### **Is there arsenic in the private wells in the annexation area?**

President George W. Bush signed legislation that lowered the allowable concentration of arsenic in water supply from 50 parts per billion to 10 parts per billion. This new standard comes in line with most other industrialized nations of the world. The new regulation takes affect in 2006.

### **What are the treatment options for removing nitrate and arsenic from the water?**

A water softener does not remove nitrate, arsenic or bacteria. There are two treatment options:

**Reverse Osmosis** treatment of water by each home owner will remove nitrate, arsenic and soften the water.

**Ion Exchange** treatment of water by each home owner will remove nitrate, arsenic, but water will still be hard.

## **SEWER SERVICE**

### **Is sewer service currently available?**

No. Currently sewer service is not provided in the annexation area. Sewer service will be less costly in the proposed annexation area if development occurs near existing homes. When sewer does become available Yuba City will assist any neighborhood that desires sewer services. There is not a requirement to use sewer services; residents may continue to use their existing septic systems.

### **Can I keep my septic system?**

Yes. The City does not require a property owner to hook into the City's sewer system. Residents can continue to be served by their existing septic system, as long as it is operating properly. The Sutter County Environmental Health Department regulates septic systems in our county, even for those homes located within the City limits. If a septic system begins to fail, the County department will work with the property owner to identify options for repair or relocation.

### **When can I hook my home up to the City's sewer system?**

Sewer services are not currently provided to any homes in the proposed annexation area. Developed parcels within the area are served by individual septic systems. Conversion to City sewer will require the installation of pipelines under existing roads. If new development in the area were to take place pipelines would be installed to serve the new homes. These pipes could then be used by existing homes. Parcels near these new pipelines may be able to connect to the City's sewer system sooner than those a further distance. When sewer does become available, Yuba City will assist any neighborhood that desires sewer services.

The City will be happy to talk to individual homeowners or neighborhoods to determine if connecting to the City sewer system is possible for them in the near future, and to develop cost estimates for such work.