

MEETING MINUTES
PUBLIC SERVICES COUNCIL COMMITTEE

Monday, January 22nd, 2024

City of West Des Moines Training Room

In Attendance:

Council Member – Matthew McKinney
Council Member – Kevin Trevillyan
Deputy City Manager – Jamie Letzring
City Attorney – Greta Truman
Finance Director – Tim Stiles
Parks & Recreation Director – Ryan Penning
Principal Engineer – Nick Rentel

City Engineer – Brian Hemesath
Public Services Superintendent – Gary Rank
Deputy Public Services Director – Joe Cory
Principal Engineer – Jason Schlickbernd
Principal Engineer – Ben McAlister
Transportation Engineer – Jim Dickinson
Transportation Engineer – Eric Petersen

Guests in Attendance:

None

Meeting was called to order at 11:33 AM by City Engineer, Brian Hemesath.

1. Sidewalk Construction Along North Side of Mills Civic Parkway (JMS)

Issue Summary:

City Staff are currently working with HR Green on design of the Mills Civic Parkway Widening from South 81st Street to South 88th Street. Construction is tentatively planned to take place throughout the 2024 construction season with completion in Spring 2025. Trail is already installed on the south side of the roadway. None of the sidewalk on the north side of the roadway has been constructed to date. City Council has the authority to mandate the sidewalk construction through City Code 9-3-11 Sidewalks Required:

A. The intent and purpose of this section is to establish the regulations regarding the installation of public sidewalks and pathways in the City to ensure the orderly and harmonious development of a Citywide sidewalk system in existing and new developments in such a manner as to provide a comprehensive sidewalk system that will safeguard the public's health, safety and general welfare.

B. Notwithstanding any other provisions of this Code, all dwellings, nonresidential buildings and uses, whether occupied or unoccupied, shall have, after adoption hereof, a permanent sidewalk built for the entire width and/or length of the lot or lots upon which the dwelling, nonresidential building or use is located, and the sidewalk(s) shall be built for the entire width and/or length of all sides of any lot or lots which abut a public street.

C. At such time that eighty percent (80%) of a plat or subdivision is developed, the property owner(s) of any undeveloped parcels, upon written notification by the City, shall install the required sidewalk(s) on their property within one hundred twenty (120) days of the notification by the City. After expiration of the one hundred twenty (120) day period, the City may take any legal action necessary to proceed with the installation of the sidewalk(s) and assess the cost of the installation and any legal expenses, as allowed by law, as a lien against the property.

D. In the event that no grade has been set or there is no curb and gutter on the street upon which the sidewalk(s) is to be placed, the Council may defer the sidewalk requirement on

application of the affected property owner(s) and upon the affected property owner(s) signing an agreement to install such a sidewalk(s) within one hundred twenty (120) days after the property owner(s) has been notified that a curb and gutter has been installed and/or that the grade has been set. The agreement shall be verified and placed on record in the Office of the County Recorder of the applicable county, and shall be a covenant running with the land, and shall be binding upon the heirs, assigns, and successors of the property owner.

Sidewalk associated with the Picket Fences development from South 88th Street to South 85th Street will be completed as part of the subdivision work.

Sidewalk adjacent to the Eilers Subdivision (3 lots from 8305-8415 Mills Civic Parkway) east of future South 85th Street meets the criteria stated above for installation.

Sidewalk adjacent to the Heritage Bend Plat 1 subdivision from the Eilers Subdivision to South 81st Street meets the criteria stated above for installation as well. Heritage Bend Plat 1 HOA is obligated to install sidewalk on the south side of their development. City Staff can instruct them to install when the Mills Civic Parkway Widening is complete, or we can work with the HOA on a reimbursement agreement (similar to what we did for Glen Oaks HOA recently on the Grand Avenue Reconstruction) and construct the sidewalk with the project. Staff is researching the validity of the bond that exists for this sidewalk from the original development of Heritage Bend.

If City Council is interested in having the sidewalk constructed with the City's project, we would need to execute a reimbursement agreement with the Heritage Bend Plat 1 HOA and/or any Eilers Subdivision property owners in advance of construction. They would be responsible for all costs of construction. Or City Staff could look to send letters to any affected property owners without sidewalk indicating it will be their responsibility to construct the sidewalk once the project is complete. City Staff wish to seek direction from PSCC members.

Principal Engineer Jason Schlickbernd stated a similar situation occurred with the Glen Oaks development regarding the sidewalk along the north side of Grand Avenue, which was brought to this committee for direction previously. Staff are looking to take a similar path with this project and work with the property owners and/or Home Owners Association (HOA) to create a reimbursement agreement. The City could either construct the sidewalk as part of the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) project or wait until the project is complete and send each property owner a letter stating that the sidewalk must be constructed.

City Engineer Brian Hemesath added Staff discovered that the previous City Attorney, Richard Scieszinski had called the performance bond for the length of sidewalk along Mills Civic Parkway adjacent to Heritage Bend Plat 1. Noting that because the bond was called in early 2000 and costs have changed, the bond may not cover the entire costs to construct the sidewalk, but the HOA would be responsible for any additional costs.

Councilmember Kevin Trevillyan stated he was in favor of proceeding with the performance bond and requesting any additional costs from the Heritage Bend Plat 1 HOA.

There is no performance bond to call for the Eihler's subdivision, so each of the three property owners would be responsible for construction costs for their portion of sidewalk. Mr. Hemesath explained in this situation the best option would be to construct the sidewalk with the project and work with the property owner's regarding a reimbursement agreement in advance.

Councilmembers Kevin Trevillyan and Matthew McKinney both stated the sidewalk should be installed as part of the City’s project.

Councilmember McKinney asked Staff, when communicating with the property owners, to provide them with the options but make sure they are aware of their obligation to construct the sidewalk.

Mr. Schlickbernd pointed out that right-of-way and easements will need to be acquired from the three properties within the Eiler’s subdivision, which includes some compensation that those property owners could in turn use to reimburse the City for the construction of the sidewalk.

Direction: Committee members preference was for the sidewalk adjacent to the Eiler’s subdivision and Heritage Bend Plat 1 to be included as part of the City’s CIP project and seek reimbursement as necessary. The committee members were supportive of Staff using the performance bond to complete the Heritage Bend Plat 1 portion of sidewalk and contacting the HOA regarding any outstanding costs. Committee members would like Staff to work with the three property owners within the Eiler’s subdivision to create reimbursement agreements.

2. Barnes Heights Sanitary Sewer Connection Fee District Resident Survey (BJM)

Issue Summary:

At the December 11, 2023 Public Services Council Subcommittee meeting the committee recommended staff update costs and resurvey the properties in the district to gauge interest in the project. Below are updated fee district calculations for each alternative. Construction costs were adjusted from the November 13, 2014 V&K memo using the January 2024 ENR index. Construction costs have increased approximately 40% since the original estimates were generated and the number of lots served by the district has decreased due to Council approved out-of-district connections to existing sewers, resulting in individual lot fee increases near 70% for most options.

	Description	Total Project Cost	Lots	Current Estimated Connection Fee	Original Estimated Connection Fee	Connection Fee Change
Alternative 1	Rear Yard Gravity Sewer from 65th Street	\$ 636,660	15	\$ 42,440	\$ 24,732	72%
Alternative 2	Front Yard Gravity Sewer from 65th Street	\$ 712,150	15	\$ 47,480	\$ 27,024	76%
Alternative 3	Front Yard Gravity Sewer from Pemberley Hills	\$ 584,320	15	\$ 38,950	\$ 23,371	67%
Alternative 4	63rd St Gravity Sewer, Ashworth Rd Low Pressure w/Pumps	\$ 555,010	15	\$ 37,000	\$ 22,055	68%
Alternative 4A	63rd St Gravity Sewer	\$ 269,850	6	\$ 44,980	NA	NA

Alternative 4A	Ashworth Rd Low Pressure Sewer w/Pumps	\$ 285,150	9	\$ 31,680	NA	NA
Alternative 5	Low Pressure Sewer w/Pumps	\$ 598,960	15	\$ 39,930	\$ 23,933	67%
Alternative 6	63rd St Gravity Sewer, Ashworth Rd Low Pressure w/o Pumps	\$ 374,890	15	\$ 24,990	\$ 14,981	67%
Alternative 6A	63rd St Gravity Sewer	\$ 269,850	6	\$ 44,980	\$ 21,985	105%
Alternative 6A	Ashworth Rd Low Pressure Sewer w/o Pumps	\$ 100,030	9	\$ 11,110	\$ 6,226	78%
Alternative 7	Low Pressure Sewer w/o Pumps	\$ 174,860	15	\$ 11,660	\$ 7,396	58%

A survey and FAQ have been drafted to be sent to the 15 property owners and are included in the packet. Staff would like to review the sewer alternatives, verify the committee’s recommendation, and review the survey documents prior to finalizing and mailing the survey. Survey results will be presented at a future Subcommittee meeting.

Principal Engineer, Ben McAlister discussed the updated fees and alternatives with each option.

He stated both options 1 and 2 are obsolete due to the fact that they were based on previous conditions and a better connection option exists today.

Alternative 3 is Staff’s preferred option. It includes a gravity sewer in front of each property from the south. Estimated connection fees are close to \$40,000 per lot.

Alternative 4 is a hybrid approach with a mix of low pressure and gravity sewer. The City would put gravity sewer along 63rd Street and use the low-pressure sewer to serve the houses fronting Ashworth Rd. He noted with this option, the fees could be distributed equally or separate the fees based on what type of sewer each property would have. He also pointed out that costs for a low-pressure pump are included with this option.

Alternative 5 includes costs for a low-pressure sewer only, including pumps.

Alternative 6 was similar to alternative 4 but did not include the costs to purchase the low-pressure pump. The property owner’s would have to install and maintain the pumps themselves.

Alternative 7 was the alternative previously selected by the residents. Mr. McAlister explained with this option the property owners are buying the low-pressure pumps, installing them, changing the electric, and maintaining the pumps. This option has the lowest connection fee but will have larger long-term costs for each property owner.

Councilmember Kevin Trevillyan asked if there were any advantage to the City in choosing a low-pressure sewer or gravity sewer.

Mr. McAlister responded that the benefit would be ease of construction if installing low-pressure sewer. Low-pressure sewer can be directionally bored and have minimal disruption where a gravity sewer would have to be trenched.

Councilmember Trevillyan stated his preference would be Alternative 7, since that is what property owner's requested previously.

City Engineer Brian Hemesath added that there can be issues with installing and maintaining the pumps necessary for a low-pressure system and referenced a low-pressure system that was used for a previous development within the City.

Councilmember Trevillyan stated he was comfortable moving forward with low-pressure sewer in this situation because the City would not be responsible for the ongoing maintenance of the pumps.

Councilmember Matthew McKinney inquired about the property owner whose septic system failure was discussed previously before this subcommittee and if the County had granted that property owner a waiver.

Mr. McAlister responded that a waiver was not granted by the County; and they have since connected to the City's sewer system. He also added that originally there were 18 properties within this proposed sewer fee district, but only 15 remain due to previously granted waivers.

Councilmember McKinney asked Staff to include language with the mailing that states connecting to City sewer is not mandatory at this time and explaining that the City is only seeking feedback to avoid any miscommunication.

Councilmember McKinney thought providing information on alternatives that have been researched by Staff should also be included. He also thought it would be beneficial to spell out the alternative of not moving forward with establishing a sewer fee district at this time.

Councilmember Trevillyan was overall in agreement with Councilmember McKinney. He suggested that in order to keep things fair the options should be either low-pressure or gravity throughout. He added that Staff could spell out the long-term maintenance for each type of system and make sure that the property owners are aware that maintenance would be 100% their responsibility.

Direction: Committee members recommended providing two sewer options to the property owners, either low-pressure or gravity sewers throughout. Committee members would also like Staff to include language to let the property owners know connecting to City sewer is not mandatory at this time and inform them of the alternative if they decide not to move forward with establishing a sewer fee district. Within the FAQ's committee members would like to see information on what maintenance would include for both low-pressure and gravity sewer options and make sure it is clear that installing and maintaining low-pressure pumps would be the full responsibility of the property owner. Staff will revise the survey packet and provide an updated version for the committee members to review with the meeting minutes.

3. Establish No Parking on Bishop Drive between 92nd Street and 98th Street (JVD)

Issue Summary:

Traffic Code Amendment 6-9-5-1 No Parking Zones

Establish no parking on the south side of Bishop Drive from 92nd Street to 98th Street

Currently on Bishop Drive between 92nd Street and 98th Street there is no parking on the north side of the street. There are no residences that have driveways onto Bishop Drive. Semi-tractor trailers have been using Bishop Drive for overnight and longer-term parking. There have been instances where trailers have been dropped and left along the street for an extended period of time.

Complaints have been received from business owners on the north side of Bishop Drive about the parking of the semi-tractor trailers on the south side of the street. In order to simplify enforcement of semi-tractor trailers not being allowed to park for an extended time along Bishop Drive, staff is recommending designating the south side of Bishop Drive as no parking between 92nd Street and 98th Street. This would make both sides of this section of Bishop Drive as no parking.

Transportation Engineer Jim Dickinson explained this change to no parking from 88th Street to 98th Street will aide in police enforcement. The City of West Des Moines Police Department has made numerous trips to this area in response to complaints of vehicles being parked longer than the 2 hours that are allowed. When the Police respond they chalk the tires and then must return after 2 hours to determine if the vehicle has been moved before they can ticket the vehicle. With this change to parking officers will not have to make numerous trips.

Mr. Dickinson pointed out that the three-lane stretch on Bishop Drive between 88th Street to 92nd Street is currently no parking. Adding no parking from 92nd Street to 98th Street will clean up the code to read Bishop Drive no parking on the south side of the street between 88th Street and 98th Street. There is currently no parking on the north side of the street so essentially there will be no parking on both sides of the street going forward.

City Engineer Brian Hemesath added that this complaint was sent to Mr. Dickinson as well as the Police Department. The police have expressed a lot of interest in removing parking from Bishop Drive and are in full support of the no parking change. Mr. Hemesath pointed out that no driveways exist along this road and there are no single-family developments adjacent to this road. He also noted that the businesses and developments have parking lots or places to park within their developments.

Councilmember Matthew McKinney inquired about parking requirements for the businesses on the north side of Bishop Drive. Specifically, if the parking spaces on the streets were used to determine parking for their developments.

Principal Engineer Ben McAlister responded that street parking was not used to determine parking requirements for those sites.

Gary Rank Public Services Director commented that during snow events the trailers parked along Bishop Drive have created traffic issues for several years. Snow events with strong winds can cause drifts which make it difficult to maneuver snowplow equipment around the parked trailers.

Councilmember Kevin Trevisan asked if this change to parking would cause the trailers to move to another section of street for parking.

Mr. Dickinson explained by making the entire stretch of Bishop Drive from 88th Street to 98th street no parking they will not be able to go further west for parking. He stated they may be able to find another street within the City, but Staff will address that issue if it arises.

Councilmember Trevisan suggested police enforcement of the new no parking zone along Bishop Drive from 88th Street to 98th Street include towing of vehicles instead of ticketing.

Direction: Committee members were in favor of establishing no parking on the south side of Bishop Drive from 92nd Street to 98th Street.

4. Weekend Work Requests

Contractors are requesting permission from the PSCC to work weekends on the following project:

- SE Fire Training Facility – Elder Corporation

Direction: The committee approved the above weekend work from 8am – 4pm on Saturdays and Sundays.

5. Review of Items for Council Meeting (February 5th, 2024)

ENGINEERING COUNCIL AGENDA ITEMS:

CONSENT AGENDA

Resolution – Ordering Construction Eng Est: \$293,424.00 (Subject to Change), Bids 2/21

- **2023 Channel Repairs Program**
(0510-006-2023) WHKS & Co. 660.000.000.5250.495 *Stormwater Fee Revenue*

Resolution – Ordering Construction Eng Est: \$490,410.00 (Subject to Change), Bids 2/21

- **Grand Avenue Sanitary Sewer Abandonment**
(0510-043-2023) Kirkham Michael & Associates, Inc. 640.000.000.5250.495 *Sewer Fee Revenue*

Resolution – Ordering Construction Eng Est: \$1,303,608.92 (Subject to Change), Bids 2/21

- **2024 Street Reconstruction**
(0510-001-2024) 500.000.000.5250.490 *General Obligation Bonds and Road Use Tax*

Motion – Approving CO #4 \$74,553.15

- **2022 HMA Resurfacing Program**
(0510-003-2022) 500.000.000.5250.490 *Road Use Tax and General Obligation Bonds*

Resolution – Approving MidAmerican Energy Proposal for Overhead to Underground Electric Conversion \$620,793.69

- **Grand Avenue Reconstruction, West of I-35 to South 60th Street**
(0510-035-2022) 500.000.000.5250.490 *Mills Urban Renewal Area TIF and/or General Obligation Bonds*

Resolution – Establishing Just Compensation & Approval of Acquisition of Property

- **Mills Civic Parkway Widening, South 81st Street to South 88th Street**

(0510-035-2023) 500.000.000.5250.490 *Coachlight Drive Urban Renewal Area TIF and/or 8300 Mills Civic Parkway Urban Renewal Area TIF*

Resolution – Accepting Work \$7,908,536.13 (Subject to Change)

- **Grand Avenue, South Grand Prairie Parkway to South 115th Street**
(0510-010-2021) Elder Corporation 500.000.000.5250.490 *Grand Prairie Parkway Urban Renewal Area TIF*

Resolution – Accepting Work \$2,813,025.50

- **Grand Avenue Bridge Over Johnson Creek**
(0510-010-2021) AM Cohron & Sons, Inc. 500.000.000.5250.490 *Grand Prairie Parkway Urban Renewal Area TIF*

6. Staff Updates:

None.

7. Other Matters:

None.

The meeting adjourned at 12:16 pm. The next Public Services Council Committee meeting is scheduled for February 12, 2024.

A recording was made. Respectfully submitted by Juanita Greer, Executive Assistant to Director.

January 12, 2024

«Mailing_Name_1»
«Mailing_Address_1»
«Mailing_CityStateZip»

RE: Barnes Heights Sanitary Sewer Connection Fee District

Dear Resident or Property Owner:

The City of West Des Moines is interested in your feedback on possible creation of a sanitary sewer connection fee district to fund extension of public sanitary sewer service for the Barnes Heights neighborhood. A connection fee district was last considered in 2015. After receiving public input, the City Council voted against creating the fee district.

Several years have passed, and the City is interested in determining if there is new support for the project. Enclosed are answers to frequently asked questions about the proposed district. Please review the document and take a couple minutes to complete the survey at the link or QR code below.

<https://forms.office.com/g/99z8BmVVK6>



The City appreciates your input. If you have any questions please feel free to contact me at 515-222-3475 or ben.mcalister@wdm.iowa.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ben McAlister".

Benjamin J. McAlister, P.E.
Principal Engineer

Enclosures

cc: Mayor/City Council
Tom Hadden, City Manager

Frequently Asked Questions

- 1. *Why has sanitary sewer not previously been extended into Barnes Heights Plat 1 & 2?***

City policy only requires developers to extend sewer availability. To do so, public sanitary sewer is extended to/through new developments to plat boundaries so that future extensions can be made. This policy was enforced as part of the Wrenwood Plat 1 subdivision to the east/southeast in 1992, the Enclave of Ashworth Plat 1 subdivision to the west in 2012, and the Pemberley Hills Plat 1 subdivision to the south in 2014. Developers paid the full costs of the sanitary sewer to serve their subdivisions and will recover those costs when they sell the lots. Those developers are not obligated to construct and pay for sanitary sewer in any existing adjacent subdivisions. The City historically has not funded any sanitary sewer construction within any developments. The connection fees to provide sewer service for the Barnes Heights Plat 1 & 2 property owners are decreased because adjacent developers have extended sanitary sewer to them.
- 2. *What is the driving force behind the proposed sanitary sewer connection fee district?***

Back in early 2012, City Staff were made aware that one or more property owners within the Barnes Heights Plat 1 & 2 subdivisions were experiencing issues with obtaining Time of Transfer Certificates for onsite wastewater treatment systems required for the sale or transfer of property ownership. Dallas County has authoritative control over private onsite wastewater treatment systems. Dallas County Environmental Health follows the requirements of Chapter 69 of the Iowa Administrative Code (IAC) Section 567. Property owners that need to replace or perform major maintenance on a septic tank, distribution box, or lateral field are subject to the IAC requirements for connection to public sanitary sewer if they fall within the required distance. IAC indicates public sanitary sewer is deemed available if it is located within 200 feet of the subject building. Section 7-8A-3 of the City of West Des Moines Code of Ordinances provides that a connection is required if public sanitary sewer is located within 400 feet of the subject property line. Property owners mentioned previously having difficulties obtaining Time of Transfer Certificates fell within these requirements for connection to public sanitary sewer. Three properties have since connected to the existing public sewers in Pemberley Hills and Wrenwood indicating further deterioration of the existing onsite wastewater treatment systems. The City Council directed City Staff to survey residents in the Barnes Heights Plat 1 & 2 subdivisions to determine if there was any new interest in establishing the connection fee district.

3. ***How does the proposed sanitary sewer connection fee district benefit the property owners?***

The primary benefit is the availability of a safe and reliable public sanitary sewer system. Establishment of the sanitary sewer connection fee district allows the City to move forward with the construction of the proposed sanitary sewer and be guaranteed reimbursement from property owners at the time of connection. No special assessments would be placed on the properties. Properties needing immediate connection would be allowed to do so after paying connection fees and possible transfer of property could then take place. Property owners that may need immediate connection in the future would have sanitary sewer available and would not have to wait an extended period of time to allow for construction of the sanitary sewer and possible transfer of property. For most new home buyers of properties within City limits and close to utilities, the desire to have a public sanitary sewer connection is generally high and property values should reflect that.

4. ***According to surveys, how many property owners were in favor of establishing a sanitary sewer connection fee district?***

The first survey mailed to property owners on November 29, 2012 showed that 4 of 13 were in favor, 8 of 13 were not in favor, and 1 of 13 shared no opinion. Only gravity sewer options were examined prior to this survey. As part of this survey, property owners generally preferred gravity sewer constructed in back yards.

A second survey mailed to property owners on December 8, 2014 showed that 4 of 14 were in favor, 6 of 14 were not in favor, and 4 of 14 shared no opinion. Low pressure sewer options were added to the list of alternatives prior to this survey. With 12 of 18 properties represented at the December 2, 2014 public meeting, general consensus was to establish a sanitary sewer connection fee district and construct a low pressure sewer system in City rights-of-way. At the June 1, 2015 City Council meeting the Council was presented with a petition signed by 13 of the 18 property owners within the district in opposition.

5. ***What happens if the connection fee district is not established?***

Enacting a connection fee district establishes the funding mechanism for the public sanitary sewer and enables the City to proceed with design and construction. Construction of the public sanitary sewer allows properties with failing onsite treatment systems a readily available connection when it is needed. Without the public sewer in place there could be up to a year delay before the property could be served by public sewer. This delay could impact the Time of Transfer certificate and sale of the property. Other than establishing the connection fee to be paid at the time of connection there is no financial impact to the property by creating the fee district.

6. ***Will property owners have input regarding what kind of system will be constructed?***
Three public meetings have been conducted to date on November 15, 2012 and August 26, 2014 and December 2, 2014. Property owners have been presented with available alternatives and associated costs. Results of the first survey showed lack of interest and the project became inactive. Approval of public improvements in August 2014 for the Pemberley Hills subdivision to the south of the Barnes Heights area provided more alternatives for sanitary sewer service, and discussions amongst the neighborhood resurfaced shortly thereafter. General consensus at the December 2, 2014 public meeting was to move forward with the construction of a low pressure sewer system in the City right-of-way until the Council voted down creation of the district in June 2015. Two alternatives are currently under consideration and the City is seeking input from the neighborhood as part of this survey.
7. ***What options being are considered to provide sanitary sewer service?***
The City has developed seven different alternatives for providing public sanitary sewer service to the area. Alternatives discussed with the neighborhood to date have included gravity sewer in front yards, gravity sewer in back yards, low pressure sewer in front yards, low pressure sewer in back yards, low pressure sewer with or without grinder pump stations and service lines, and several combinations of mixed gravity sewer and low-pressure sewer. The City is currently considering two alternatives: gravity sewer in front of properties and low-pressure sewer in front of properties without grinder pump stations. Gravity sewer alternatives typically cause much more disruption to neighborhoods due to the trench needing to be deeper and wider than that required for low pressure sewer alternatives which are typically bored in place. Initial construction costs for gravity sewer alternatives are often higher than low pressure sewer alternatives, but the private costs for the low-pressure sewer alternatives are often higher than those required for the gravity sewer alternatives.
8. ***Where will the proposed sanitary sewer be located?***
The public gravity and low-pressure sewers are proposed to be constructed on the south side of Ashworth Road, the east side of 63rd Street, and the north side of Brookview Drive within existing City rights-of-way within the Barnes Heights Plat 1 & 2 area. Easements on private property will be necessary for the gravity sewer option. No easements should be necessary for construction of the low-pressure sewer.
9. ***Where will the sewer connections be located?***
The 8-inch gravity sewer main will be located within the existing public right-of-way. Six-inch service stubs will be extended to the property line for each property. With a low-pressure sewer system, the small diameter (typically 2 inches) low pressure sewer will generally be located within existing City rights-of-way. One small diameter (typically 1.25 inches) sewer service connection will be extended to the property line of each individual property for future connection and will include an isolation valve (similar to a water shutoff valve) and a backflow preventer.

10. Are there any additional costs for each type of system?

The City will be responsible for all ongoing operating and maintenance costs for the gravity sewer main within the public right-of-way. Installation and maintenance of the service line from the home to the main will be the responsibility of the property owner. Installation of a new 6-inch gravity sewer service can range from \$5,000 to \$15,000, depending on site conditions. Service lines have an expected useful life over 50 years and ongoing maintenance costs are negligible.

The public portion of the low-pressure sewer system will be maintained by the City and all operating costs associated with the public portion will be borne by the City. The grinder pump station and service line will be privately owned and installed. Costs for installation of the grinder pump, storage tank, dedicated 220-volt electric service, and discharge line from the home to the public sewer are approximately \$20,000. Maintenance costs on the discharge line are minimal. However, maintenance costs of the grinder pump station will include electrical costs (similar to 100W light bulb running all day), service calls to address pump blockages (similar to service call for any major household appliance), pump replacement costs (approximately \$800-\$1,200) estimated every 15 years or so, and possibly control panel repairs periodically (costs vary).

11. How was the proposed connection fee determined?

The cost estimates prepared in 2014 were updated to reflect 2024 pricing. Those costs divided among the remaining 15 properties in the district would be approximately \$38,950 per property for gravity sewer and \$11,660 per property for low-pressure sewer without pumps. These costs include all construction, engineering design, construction inspection, and easements.

Comparison of Alternative Costs

	Gravity Sewer	Low-Pressure Sewer
Connection Fee	\$38,950	\$11,660
Service Line	\$10,000	\$1,500
Grinder Pump and Storage Tank	\$0	\$15,000
Electrical Service Upgrade	\$0	\$3,500
Operating Cost over 30 years	\$0	\$4,700
Total	\$48,950	\$36,360

12. How is the connection fee be paid?

The connection fee established by ordinance as part of the establishment of the sanitary sewer connection fee district shall be paid in full as a lump sum payment prior to any connection to the sanitary sewer.

13. Does the connection fee increase over time?

The connection fee increases each July 1st based on the percentage of increase in the published Engineering News Record's construction cost index calculated from the previous year.

14. Are property owners obligated to participate?

Payment of the connection fee is not mandatory until the connection is made to the public sewer. No payment is required prior to or during the City's construction. The connection fees can be paid in advance of connection to the public sewer if desired by the property owner.

15. Is the fee district fee a maximum?

The connection fee is a fixed amount once the ordinance is approved establishing the sanitary sewer connection fee district. If major project cost overruns or underruns are experienced throughout the project due to unforeseen circumstances, the City Council has the authority to revise the connection fee. If project cost overruns or underruns are minor, which is often the case, the connection fee remains as originally established.

16. What other costs should be considered?

Aside from payment of connection fees and installation of private grinder pump station and sewer service line, each property owner or their contractor will be required to obtain and pay for a plumbing permit (\$52) and sewer capital charge (\$1,253). Monthly sewer charges consist of a \$3.77 availability charge (effective through June 30, 2024) and a basic rate of \$6.35 per 1,000 gallons of water used (effective through June 30, 2024). Property owners will not incur monthly sewer charges until such time that a connection to the public sanitary sewer is made.

17. Would property owners be required to connect to the sanitary sewer when they go to sell?

Connection fees only need to be paid prior to connection to the sewer. A time of transfer inspection of the onsite wastewater treatment system will need to be performed prior to selling or transferring any property with a private onsite wastewater treatment system. If the inspection gets failed results, Dallas County Environmental Health will require a connection to the public sanitary sewer and connection fees will need to be paid to the City prior to connection. Some lenders have been known to require connection for liability reasons, so that if the property were to go into foreclosure that the lender will not be held responsible to pay for the connection fees.

18. What is the City's financial responsibility?

The City will fund the entire upfront costs of the project including construction, engineering design, construction inspection, and easements. The City will recover these costs over an extended period of time until such time that the last property owner has paid for and made a connection to the public sanitary sewer. Any City Staff time and resources will be provided in-kind throughout the life of the fee district.

19. *Who will be doing the project?*

The City will contract with an engineering consultant to perform the engineering services necessary to design and construct the proposed sanitary sewer improvements. Approved construction drawings and technical specifications will be utilized to obtain competitive bids from potential bidders for the construction. The construction contract will be awarded to the lowest responsive responsible bidder. Construction inspection will be provided by either City Staff or an engineering consultant.

20. *What will be required of property owners to discontinue use of onsite wastewater treatment systems?*

Dallas County refers to Chapter 69 of the Iowa Administrative Code Section 567 which states “private sewage disposal systems that are abandoned shall have the septic tank pumped, the tank lid crushed into the tank, and the tank filled with sand or soil.”

Potential Barnes Heights Sanitary Sewer Connection Fee District

The City of West Des Moines is considering adoption of an ordinance to create a sanitary sewer connection fee district to fund extension of public sanitary sewer to the Barnes Heights neighborhood. To assist the City Council in their decision please complete the survey below to provide your input.

* Required

1. Name *

2. Address *

3. Are you the property owner? *

Yes

No

4. Do you support establishing a sanitary sewer connection fee district for Barnes Heights? *

Yes

No

5. Which of the two options under consideration do you prefer?

Gravity Sewer (\$38,950/property)

Low-Pressure Sewer without Pumps (\$11,660/property)

6. Would you be interested in paying the connection fees and hooking onto the public sewer within the next 2 years if service was available?

Yes

No

7. If not, when would you anticipate paying the connection fees (whether you hook on or not)?

2-5 years

5-10 years

10+ years

8. Would you be willing to grant permanent or temporary construction easements (for compensation) in order to construct the sewer?

Yes

No

9. Would you be willing to grant permanent or temporary construction easements (without compensation) in order to construct the sewer?

Yes

No

10. Do you have any additional comments?

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