



# Water and Sanitary Sewer Petition Process



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# PETITIONS FOR WATER AND SANITARY SEWER EXTENSIONS

This guide is for residents seeking to extend water or sanitary sewer.

Generally, residents request a petition (1) if they want a connection to either system and an extension is necessary, (2) other neighbors benefit and (3) they would like the City to participate.

## Step 1: Request for Petition

The City has the authority to assess properties inside and outside City limits for water and sewer. The preferred approach is using a petition.

When a petition is requested, Staff determines which parcels can be served. The project may be much larger than what is needed to serve the petitioner as it is in the best interests of the City to serve as many people as possible.

Once the project area is defined, an engineer's estimate is developed and an estimated assessment amount is determined.

The petition is assembled and sent to the requesting party (the petitioner). The petitioner circulates the petition to see who is interested in the project.

A majority of the affected parcel owners must sign the petition for it to go forward. The owner, as it appears on the deed, must sign as well as anyone else who has a legal interest in the parcel (i.e. a spouse).

If we do not have a majority, then we will determine if, by reducing the project area (serving fewer parcels), we can reach the majority threshold. This might require circulating a new petition.

A few things to note:

- Your signature indicates you are willing to be assessed at the cost in the assessment.
- Vacant, buildable, lots are assessed as well.
- If this is a sewer petition, and you are using a well for drinking water, you will have to switch to City water when you tie into City sewer.
- If this is a sewer petition, and you are outside City limits, you will be required to petition for annexation.
- If the construction bid comes in higher than the engineer's estimate, but it is no greater than 10%, then the project continues and the assessment is adjusted.
- If the construction bid comes in higher than the 10% threshold, then a public meeting is held to determine how the residents want to proceed.
- An assessment goes against the property and all affected parties get assessed. Not just those signing the petition.

Once a petition is returned to Staff, a public hearing will be scheduled. This is the residents' opportunity to address Council directly and discuss how they feel about the project.

After the public hearing, Council will determine if the project will continue.

### **Step 2: Design**

Once this step starts, you will notice markings in the street and surveyors working in your neighborhood. They may ask to come on your property so their design can consider anything special that may impact their work.

In some instances, we will need easements from homeowners to install the sewer. They will discuss this with you as well, if it is necessary.

### **Step 3: Contractor prices**

Once design is complete, we will get contractor pricing from a number of sources. When a contractor is selected, the estimated assessment is re-calculated.

If the revised assessment is no greater than 10% of the engineer's estimate, then the project proceeds to construction. Staff will inform the residents of the revised assessment amount.

If the estimated assessment is greater than 10% of the engineer's estimate, then a public meeting will be held to determine how residents want to proceed.

### **Step 4: Construction**

Construction of this nature is disruptive to nearby residents. The City and our contractor will do what we can to minimize the impact to your normal routine. We work to maintain good communications with the property owners so you can let us know as soon as you experience an issue that we can resolve.

Prior to construction, you will be asked if you want a connection (a tap). If the answer is 'yes', we will work with you to determine the best location.

When the new extension is in service, we will tell you so that you can connect. Monthly billing for the new service will start about 30 days later.

A few things to note:

- If you ask for a tap as part of construction, the cost will be ½ the prevailing rate. After construction, you will be charged the prevailing rate.
- If you are connecting to City sewer, you will be responsible for the cost to connect your house plumbing to the tap and take the septic tank out of service.
- If you are connecting to City sewer, and you are on a well, you must disconnect from the well and connect to City water. Those costs are the responsibility of the homeowner.
- If you are connecting to City water, you cannot stay connected to your well.

### **Step 5: Paying Your Assessment**

The owner of each property that is benefited by an assessment sewer is required to pay their fair share of the cost of the extension.

After the final project cost is known, the final assessment is calculated. A public hearing is held to give residents an opportunity to speak to Council. If Council approves the final

assessment, affected residents will receive a bill approximately 60 days later.

Residents can choose to (1) pay the assessment in full or (2) finance it with the City at a maximum of 8% over 10 years.

The petition process can take a considerable amount of time to complete. A significant change in any of the steps may result in having to re-start the process.

A staff member will be assigned to each petition to give all parties a point of contact. Should you have any questions at any time, feel free to contact them.

## **Contact Us**

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