

AGENDA
CITY OF STEVENSON COUNCIL MEETING
February 22, 2024
6:00 PM, City Hall and Remote

Call-in numbers 253-215-8782, 669-900-6833, 346-248-7799, 312-626-6799, 929-205-6099 or 301-715-8592, Meeting ID 889 7550 7011, Zoom link <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88975507011> or via YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC4k9bA0IEvsF6PSoDwjJvA/>

Items with an asterisk (*) have been added or modified after the initial draft publication of the Agenda.

1. CALL TO ORDER/PRESENTATION TO THE FLAG: Mayor to call the meeting to order and conduct roll call.

2. COUNCIL BUSINESS:

a) Sewer Ordinance Discussion - Staff presents the results of the committee and the proposal included in the January and February council packets for council discussion and direction.

3. ADJOURNMENT - Mayor will adjourn the meeting.

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UPCOMING MEETINGS AND EVENTS:

- Saturday, March 2nd, 9am-1pm, Council Retreat
- Monday, March 11th, 6pm, Planning Commission Meeting
- Thursday, March 21st, 6pm, Regular City Council Meeting
- First Public Hearing on Proposed Changes to the Sewer Ordinance



City of Stevenson

Leana Kinley, City Administrator

Phone (509)427-5970
FAX (509) 427-8202

7121 E Loop Road, PO Box 371
Stevenson, Washington 98648

To: City Council
From: Leana Kinley, City Administrator
RE: Sewer Ordinance Committee Update
Meeting Date: January 18, 2024

Executive Summary:

After presenting an initial set of proposed sewer ordinance changes at the September 21st City Council meeting to address issues related to enforcement of the current ordinance, a committee was formed including members of the community, local business owners, elected officials, and city employees to gain greater understanding of these issues and brainstorm alternative solutions. The committee met five times in the past three months. The themes of these meetings are included in the attached report by Tracy Grotto. One result of committee discussions is that the ordinance regulations alone are insufficient to address underlying issues and a more comprehensive program is necessary. Commitment to the regulatory changes should spur commitment to the other (capital improvement, rate setting, etc.) aspects of the program also.

Additional notes and presentations are available on the city website at:

<https://www.ci.stevenson.wa.us/publicworks/page/committee-proposed-sewer-ordinance>

Overview:

Reason for the change:

Staff looked at the current sewer ordinance requirement to connect to public sewer to address the following goal elements within the current council strategic plan:

- Vision: "...natural beauty...high quality infrastructure...location on the Columbia River...recreation along the waterfront."
- Mission: "...improved infrastructure, stewardship..."
- Housing
 - Reduce System Development Charges
- Financial Health
 - System Development Charge and Rate Restructuring
- Utilities (Maintenance of current & new growth)
- Strategic Land Use Planning and Development
 - Develop Infrastructure Investment Areas

Summarizing these perspectives, the overarching goal is to provide equity of service, including availability of public sewer to all lots within city limits, in a fiscally responsible manner. The existing

code, codified in 1972 and with the burden solely on developers to fund new public sewer extensions, has not been successful in facilitating the extension of public sewer to city limits. To achieve the overarching goal of equity of services and effect change for the next 50 years, policy updates are necessary.

Committee Recommendations on Sewer Triggers:

Action	Potential Impact
Definition of “available” – Public sewer is “available” if a lot can connect without further extension of the public sewer.	Does not allow/require developer to extend public sewer, unless through specific actions further described below. City-led and funded extension projects will increase the financial burden on rate payers. WAC 246-272A-0025 requirement for sewer connection falls under the jurisdiction of the Health Department.
Existing Single-Family Residence on Septic	
System Development Charge (SDC) waived if connected within 3 years of public sewer becoming available.	May not legally be allowed to implement – confirmation requested. May need to be a tiered discount for incentive. WA State Law prohibits the gifting of public funds, except for the benefit of the poor and infirm. Able to implement for low-moderate income property owners.
If/when public sewer is available, 50% of the monthly base sewer fee is charged if not connected.	Penalty for not complying with a requirement to connect is allowable. Consideration should be provided for how this fee is determined. One idea is to calculate the monthly sewer base fee without the usage/flow component. The percentage (50% of monthly base sewer fee) may change.
After 3 years of public sewer becoming available, 100% of the monthly rate is charged whether connected or not.	May not legally be allowed to implement – confirmation requested.
Existing Multi-Family Residence on Septic	
System Development Charge (SDC) waived if connected within 3 years of public sewer becoming available.	May not legally be allowed to implement – confirmation requested. May need to be a tiered discount for incentive. WA State Law prohibits the gifting of public funds, except for the benefit of the poor and infirm. Able to implement for low-moderate income property owners.

<p>If/when public sewer is available, 50% of the monthly rate is charged if not connected.</p>	<p>Penalty for not complying with a requirement to connect is allowable.</p> <p>Consideration should be provided for how this fee is determined. One idea is to calculate the monthly sewer base fee without the usage/flow component.</p> <p>The percentage (50% of monthly base sewer fee) may change.</p>
<p>After 3 years of public sewer becoming available, 100% of the monthly rate is charged whether connected or not.</p>	<p>May not legally be allowed to implement – confirmation requested.</p>
<p>New Construction Single-Family Residence</p>	
<p>Connect to Public Sewer if available, septic if not available.</p>	<p>Does not allow/require developer to extend public sewer, unless through specific actions further described below.</p> <p>City-led and funded extension projects will increase the financial burden on rate payers.</p> <p>Creates a difference in public infrastructure funding requirements based on development type. Because this development type requires the least investment, it may be the most often pursued by a developer.</p> <p>May depress overall housing supply.</p>
<p>When sewer becomes available, same requirements as existing SFR.</p>	
<p>New Construction Multi-Family Residence</p>	
<p>Connect to Public Sewer if available, septic if not available.</p>	<p>Does not allow/require developer to extend public sewer.</p> <p>City-led and funded extension projects will increase the financial burden on rate payers.</p> <p>Creates a difference in public infrastructure funding requirements based on development type. Because this development type requires less investment, it may be more often pursued by a developer.</p> <p>May depress overall housing supply.</p>
<p>When sewer becomes available, same requirements as existing MFR.</p>	
<p>Remodel with Addition</p>	
<p>All remodels with addition on septic must have the septic system inspected and approved for condition and capacity before permitting.</p>	<p>Ensures functioning septic system.</p>

<p>If septic is in poor condition or undersized for addition, sewer connection becomes mandatory provided it is available.</p> <p>Public sewer system development charge paid for by owner.</p> <p>Septic system may be expanded if sewer is not available.</p>	<p>Does not allow/require developer to extend public sewer.</p> <p>City-led and funded extension projects will increase the financial burden on rate payers.</p> <p>Incentivizes connection when available.</p> <p>Allows the continuation of existing septic.</p>
New Short Plat Development	
<p>Treat all lots as new construction.</p> <p>If sewer is available to any portion of the property, the plat will require all lots to connect.</p> <p>Septic when sewer is not available.</p>	<p>Does not allow/require developer to extend public sewer.</p> <p>City-led and funded extension projects will increase the financial burden on rate payers.</p> <p>Creates a difference in public infrastructure funding requirements based on development type. Because this development type requires less investment, it may be more often pursued by a developer.</p> <p>May depress overall housing supply.</p>
New Long Plat Development	
<p>Treat all lots as new construction.</p> <p>Developer funded line extension required to make public sewer available.</p>	<p>Creates a difference in public infrastructure funding requirements based on development type. Because this development type requires the greatest investment, it may be the least often pursued by a developer.</p> <p>May depress overall housing supply.</p>
Commercial	
<p>Same as Long Plat. Developer funded line extension required to make public sewer available.</p>	<p>Public sewer is widely available in the commercial zones, minimal impact.</p>

The above triggers have been put into the attached table which will be part of the revised ordinance. There are some areas included which were not part of the committee decisions above and further direction is needed.

Additional Ordinance Change Clarification Needed

Appeal Process guidelines - State law requires an appeal process to address the following at a minimum (from MRSC article <https://mrsc.org/stay-informed/mrsc-insight/september-2015/administrative-appeal-process-must-now-be-offered>):

- Whether it is cost-prohibitive to require the owner to connect to the public sewer system.
- The public health or environmental impacts from allowing the replacement or repair of the septic system, particularly on surface water and groundwater.
- The impacts on public sewer system performance or financing from the replacement or repair of the septic system.

- If there are financial assistance programs or latecomer agreements available to the owner by the town, city, county, or state.

Are there additional items council wants to include when evaluating appeal requests?

Do these appeals go through the Public Works Director or the City Council?

Action Needed:

Direction on proposed changes and areas needing clarification.

Table 13.08.070-1: Sewage and Wastewater Disposal Options		
New Development	Public Sewer Available	Public Sewer Not Available
Commercial or Industrial	Connect to public sewer	Extend and connect to public sewer
Subdivision	Connect to public sewer	Extend and connect to public sewer
Short Plat Subdivision	Connect to public sewer	Install OSS ^{1,2,3} or Extend and connect to public sewer ^{4,5}
Multi-Family	Connect to public sewer	Install OSS ³ or Extend and connect to public sewer ^{4,5}
Two-Family	Connect to public sewer	Install OSS ³
Single-Family	Connect to public sewer	Install OSS ³
Alteration of Existing Development	Public Sewer Available	Public Sewer Not Available
Alteration of any Commercial, Industrial, or Multi-Family development type which necessitates expansion of existing OSS	Connect to public sewer	Continue use of existing OSS ³
Alteration of any Single-Family or Two-Family development type which necessitates expansion of existing OSS	Continue use of existing OSS ⁵ or Connect to public sewer ⁵	Continue use of existing OSS ³
Conversion of any Single-Family development to a Two-Family development which necessitates expansion of existing OSS	Continue use of existing OSS ⁵ or Connect to public sewer ⁵	Continue use of existing OSS ³
Alteration of any development type which does not necessitate expansion of existing OSS	Continue use of existing OSS ⁵ or Connect to public sewer ⁵	Continue use of existing OSS
Existing Development	Public Sewer Available	Public Sewer Not Available
All Development Types	Continue use of existing OSS ⁵ or Connect to public sewer ⁵	Continue use of existing OSS
<p>1 – Lots shall be proportioned to facilitate future land divisions. [Drafter’s Note: This statement currently exists with the 1977 subdivision code for lots served by septic. A similar statement has been drafted to amend the 1993 short plat code. As an alternative to this footnote, the short plat code could be amended to provide alignment.]</p> <p>OR</p> <p>All short plats shall demonstrate how public sewer service can be made available to all lots within the division.</p> <p>2 – When sewer becomes available to any lot within a short plat subdivision approved after the effective date of this ordinance, it shall be deemed available to all lots within said short plat subdivision.</p> <p>3 – Installation or expansion of an OSS will not be approved unless the lot owner waives their right to “Something about SDC waivers/monthly bills/phase-in”</p> <p>OR</p> <p>...agrees to pay a proportionate share of the cost to make sewer available to the property.</p> <p>4 – Connection to public sewer is the only option when, according to the Capital Facilities Plan adopted and periodically amended by the City Council, public sewer will be available in the calendar year a complete development application is submitted or within the subsequent calendar year.</p> <p>5 – The lot is eligible for a Phase-in Allowance under SMC 13.08.074-----Something about SDC waivers/monthly bills/phase-in (50% of base rate for first 3 years. 100% of base rate thereafter)</p>		

Stevenson City Council
Report on Sewer Ordinance Committee
January 12, 2024
Submitted by: Tracy Gratto Consulting, Committee Facilitator

This document outlines the goals, main themes expressed and final recommendations of the Sewer Ordinance Committee. Additionally, it provides details about the process, evaluation results, notable challenges encountered and next steps.

Process

During the council meeting on September 21, 2023, an ad-hoc committee was formed to examine potential amendments to the sewer ordinance. Comprised of 15 members carefully chosen to represent diverse perspectives on the issue, including three Councilmembers, the committee convened four times. City staff provided background information on the topic, actively seeking input during these sessions. The final recommendation comprises elements or “triggers” that would inform the updated sewer ordinance and will be presented by committee member Wes Huston on January 18, 2024. City staff will also present a policy and legal analysis of those recommendations, potentially offering alternatives for consideration. Additionally, the survey findings and proposed edits to the Financial Policy will be presented by city staff.

Charter: Goals of Committee

1. Create a shared understanding of the sewer and septic trends in our community.
2. Validate or identify the need to alter the 1972 Sewer Ordinance assumptions/decisions, 2013 Land Use/Development assumptions/decisions and 2019 Rate assumptions/decisions.
3. Surface the potential impacts of proposed changes to the 1972 Sewer Ordinance.
4. Recommend a proposal with the least negative impacts.

Results

1. Fair Infrastructure Improvement and Expansion

A significant majority endorsed the necessity of expanding sewer lines within the city boundaries by 2040. Success entails ensuring a fair distribution of financial implications that avoids imposing excessive costs on residents transitioning from septic to sewer and extending sewer lines. The emphasis was on addressing the needs of low-income property owners and individuals interested in small-scale private development was noted. "Equitable" has been defined to encompass the financial contributions of all residents living within Stevenson city limits.

2. Final recommendations for triggers related to the sewer ordinance

Method: Two meetings were conducted to gather input regarding the criteria for mandatory connection to the city sewer system and the associated financial expectations. Next, the committee was asked to participate in an online survey addressing "triggers" to inform the development of an ordinance and proposed edits to the Finance Policy. On December 18, 2023, two committee members hosted an informal

meeting with an attempt to reach consensus on a set of "triggers" and a definition of "Available." Following the meeting, the identified triggers were circulated via email to members who were not in attendance, accompanied by an invitation to meet with Wes Huston.

The method of collecting final votes was unconventional yet deemed necessary. Seven members voted in person during the January 8, 2024 meeting, with an additional proxy vote included. Three members submitted their votes through email. As of now, one member has not yet cast their vote. 11 of 12 members voted.

Next steps: City staff will conduct a policy and legal evaluation of all recommendations, specifically noting areas of alignment and potential concerns. To foster transparency, this document will be publicly available throughout the entire process, ensuring documentation of the committee's recommendations in comparison to the final decisions made by the Council. A revised sewer ordinance will be presented to the Council on January 18, 2024.

The committee requested increased public awareness and education. Suggestions were social media, posters, fliers in businesses, committee members sharing information and ads in the newspaper are all methods the city should use to inform the public about the upcoming changes and hearings.

3. Financial Policy Recommendation

Method: Numerous efforts were made to gather opinions and ideas for modifying the existing Financial Policy, both through discussions in meetings and using a [Financial Survey](#). The survey remained open for a month and received three responses. Additional input was collected in the final meeting. Unfortunately, due to limited participation, staff couldn't present and collect votes on conclusive recommendations for the final meeting. As of January 9, 2024 we have 6 of 12 responses.

Next Steps: Staff will advance their recommendations to Council on January 18, 2024. The committee members who attend the Listening Session will have a chance to comment at that time.

4. Themes from the Committee's discussion and member presentations

- Stevenson should have a standard level of wastewater services and extend sewer lines to all city limits using a phased approach with a majority of the extensions being grant funded.
- Spread the cost to "everyone" and aim for a "fair share" approach.
Individual recommendations: rates, GO Bond, assessing fees, property tax, business tax, majority grants, commercial fair share, etc. There is concern about the negative financial impacts on property owners, including lower-income and those developing single-family homes or smaller developments.

- Hire a grant writer. Staff clarified grants can only fund a certain percentage of the cost of the lines, and the City has access to grant writers.
- Change the “available” definition of 300 feet. Recommend “immediately available,” or 0 feet.
- Failure of septic with no repair options available should result in hook-up to sewer lines.
- When the sewer is immediately available, hook-up is the ultimate goal. Assess fees if property owners choose not to connect and consider waiving System Development Charge (SDC) fees to encourage connection.
- The moratorium was not viewed positively and staff responded swiftly to concerns. Note: Moratorium lifted by City Council at the December 21, 2023 meeting.
- Development in Stevenson - there is a lack of consensus on the assumptions, approaches and processes related to development. Individual comments: no desire for growth, growth is coming and we should be planning better, people developing vacant lots need easier processes and regulations, development is not friendly in Stevenson, growth is not coming.

Facilitator Note and Challenges

Scope: The financial aspects related to financing the current and future needs related to wastewater infrastructure in Stevenson is a complex issue with an intricate array of solutions, as evident in the education offered by staff and witnessed in discussions at the meetings and survey outcomes. The group frequently tried to expand beyond the committee's initial scope on defining the city's financial policy to alleviate the impact on individuals compelled to connect. There was strong interest to identify the funding mechanisms for line extensions. It was communicated that financing solutions for sewer line extensions would be formulated as the lines are prioritized in the Capitol Improvement Program (CIP).

Who will pay: A key challenge emerged in striking a balance between addressing the concerns of individuals burdened by sewer line extensions within the city limits and the potential rise in rates if individuals are not expected to contribute. While there was limited discussion about the effects of Stevenson's rates on low-income individuals, it was acknowledged as a concern.

Assumptions: The methodology of promoting hook-ups to mitigate rate increases was considered invalid. Frustration was noted about the limited availability of information regarding the rate study.

Disruptions: Unfortunately, one committee member and her husband, who is now an elected official, made multiple attempts to disrupt and undermine the committee. For example, there were numerous out-of-scope public records and data requests, which not only confused committee members but also necessitated staff to provide extensive documentation to address straightforward inquiries. On December 4, 2023, the newly elected councilmember expressed concerns in an email, stating, "The fact that this committee operated in secrecy taints whatever

conclusion or recommendation it makes." Following this email, several committee members discontinued their involvement. There were two committee members who voted against an open meeting format, and all meeting notes were consistently posted after each meeting.

Evaluation Results Six of thirteen members filled out the evaluation, indicating mostly positive feedback. Opportunities for improvement were less process, more clarity on the financial aspects and uncertainty in identifying the need to alter the 2019 rate assumptions/decisions. Please review the results and comments.

Committee-specific materials are online [here](#).

Thank you for the opportunity to support this important committee process.

Facilitator hours:

Paid: 33 hours

Volunteer: 58 hours

Total: 91 hours

Appendix 1

Members of the Committee

Staff: City Administrator Leana Kinley, Public Works Director Carolyn Sourek, Community Development Director Ben Shumaker

Facilitator: Tracy Gratto

Name	Perspective
Adam Miller	Extended line/Former septic
Brian McKenzie	Developer
Chuck Oldfield	Sewer
Dave Cox	Councilmember-Sewer
Gail Collins	Former PWD/Septic
Jeff Breckel	Sewer/PC Chair/Environmental Aspect
Jenny Taylor	Sewer/Septic/Former Council Member/Port Commissioner
Karen Rutledge	Sewer/Septic conversion cost concern
Mark Peterson	Septic/History of issue
Michael Johnson	Councilmember-Sewer
Rick Jessel	Septic
Rick May	Former Septic/Sewer/Developer
Scott Anderson	Mayor-Sewer
Shawn Van Pelt	Septic/Developer/Business Owner
Wes Houston	Property Owner-Septic

Appendix 2: Stevenson Wastewater Clarifiers January 8, 2024 Meeting

Final Vote for Recommendations on Sewer Triggers

The assumptions...

With cooperation between the City of Stevenson Council, Staff and its Residents, all properties within city limits can add enjoying sewer connection availability to the already long list of amenities being enjoyed by those who live, work and play here. This is assuming the following.

1. Current estimated extension benchmarks are provided with dates and associated costs when adopting any of the following.
2. Future financial goals are met, aimed at eliminating the need to raise to system development charges and causes for spikes in rates for current and new rate payers with regards to the funding of current sewer treatment plant upgrades, future sewer line extensions as well as regular maintenance of the entire system.
3. There will be a future public process with respect to these future extension costs and the effects on rates.

The triggers...**red indicates edits made during January 8, 2024 meeting**

- Available defined

Public sewer to which a lot can connect without further extension of the public sewer.

Same as "Immediately Available" definition that has been previously used.

(7) As Is

- Existing Single Family Residence on Septic

System Development Charge (SDC) waived if connected within 3 years of public sewer becoming available.

If public sewer is currently available or when available, 50% of the monthly rate is charged.

After 3 years of public sewer becoming available, 100% of the monthly rate is charged whether connected or not.

(5) As Is

(2) More Flexible

- Existing Multi Family Residence on Septic

System Development Charge (SDC) waived if connected within 3 years of public sewer becoming available.

If public sewer is currently available or when available, 50% of the monthly rate is charged.

After 3 years of public sewer becoming available, 100% of the monthly rate is charged whether connected or not.

(7) As Is

- New Construction Single Family Residence

Public sewer if available.

Septic if not available.

When public sewer becomes available then same as Existing Single Family Residence.

(7) As Is

- New Construction Multi Family Residence

Public sewer if available.

Septic if not available.

When public sewer becomes available then same as Existing Multi Family Residence.

(7) As Is

- Remodel with Addition

All remodels with addition on septic must have the septic system inspected and approved for condition and capacity before permitting. If septic is in poor condition or undersized for addition, sewer connection becomes mandatory provided it is available. Public sewer system development charge paid **for by owner.** **Septic system may be expanded if sewer is not available.**

(7) As Is

- New Short plat development

Treat all lots as new construction. If sewer is available to any portion of the property, the plat will require all lots to connect. **Septic when sewer is not available.**

(7) As Is

- New Long plat development

Treat all lots as new construction. Developer funded line extension required to make public sewer available.

(7) As Is

- Commercial development

Same as Long Plat. Developer funded line extension required to make public sewer available.

(7) As Is

+++

Voters...

January 8, 2024 in-person vote: Wes Houston, Rick Jessel, Karen Rutledge, Jenny Taylor, Jeff Breckel, Chuck Oldfield, Adam Miller Jenny acted as Gail Collins proxy

Verbal: Brian McKenzie

Email: Rick May, Shawn Van Pelt emailed full consensus

No vote: Mark Peterson

The process...

Choose your preference on the following proposed triggers.

Choose “As Is” when you feel the trigger needs no alterations.

Choose “More Flexible” when you feel the trigger should come in to play more slowly or with less financial impact to users than described. Or a lighter touch.

Choose “Less Flexible” when you feel the trigger should come in to play sooner than or with more financial impact to users than described. Or heavier handed.

The results...

When “As Is” receives consensus vote, trigger passes as a recommendation.

When “As Is” receives majority vote with “More Flexible” as runner up, trigger passes as a baseline recommendation with further recommendation to explore options with more flexibility in timeline and or less financial impact to users in the final ordinance.

When “As Is” receives majority vote with “Less Flexible” as runner up, trigger passes as a baseline recommendation with further recommendation to explore options with a more aggressive timeline and or more financial impact to users in the final ordinance.

When “More Flexible” receives majority vote, trigger is open for discussion and adjustment by majority.


When “Less Flexible” receives majority vote, trigger is open for discussion and adjustment by majority.

Submitted by Wes Huston 1/10/24

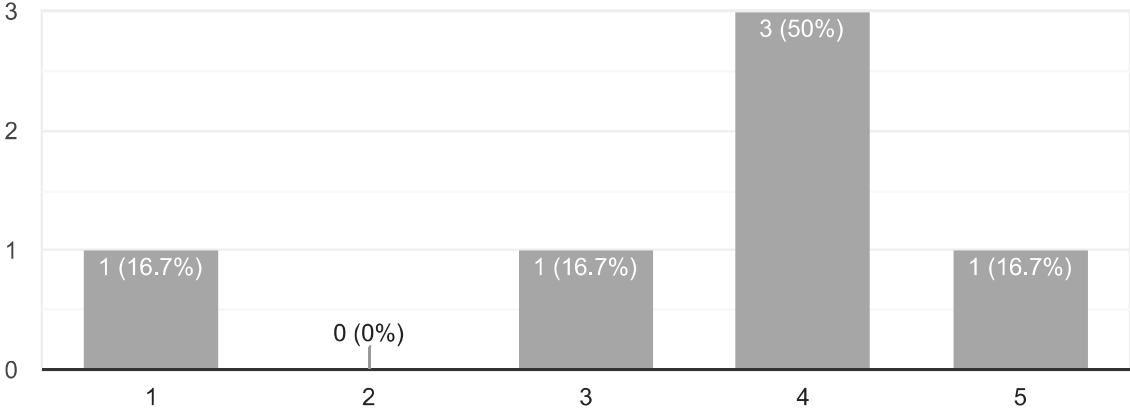
Sewer Ordinance Committee Evaluation

6 responses

Publish analytics

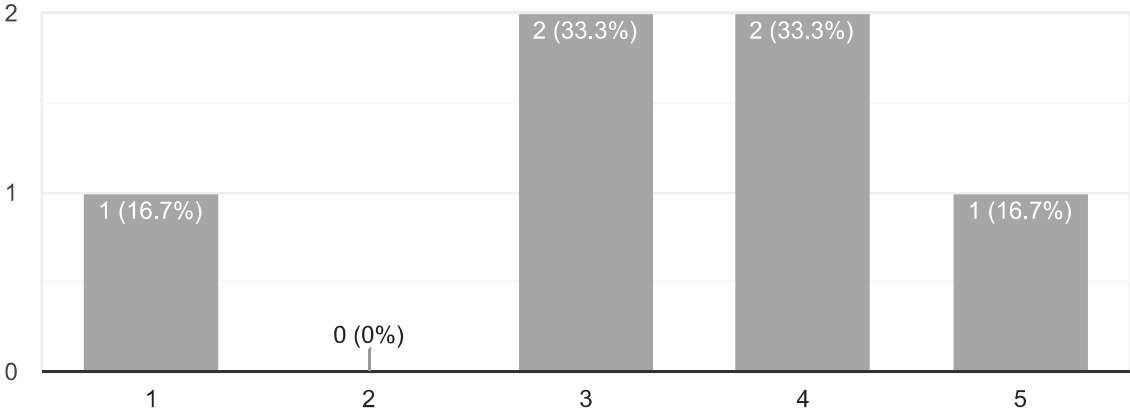
How well did the Committee create a shared understanding of the sewer and septic trends in our community.  Copy

6 responses



The engineering information presented:  Copy

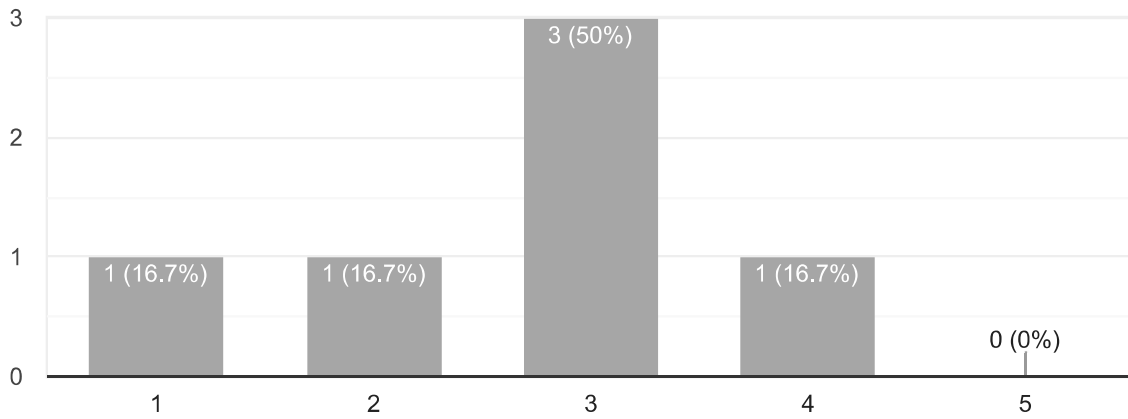
6 responses



The financial information presented:



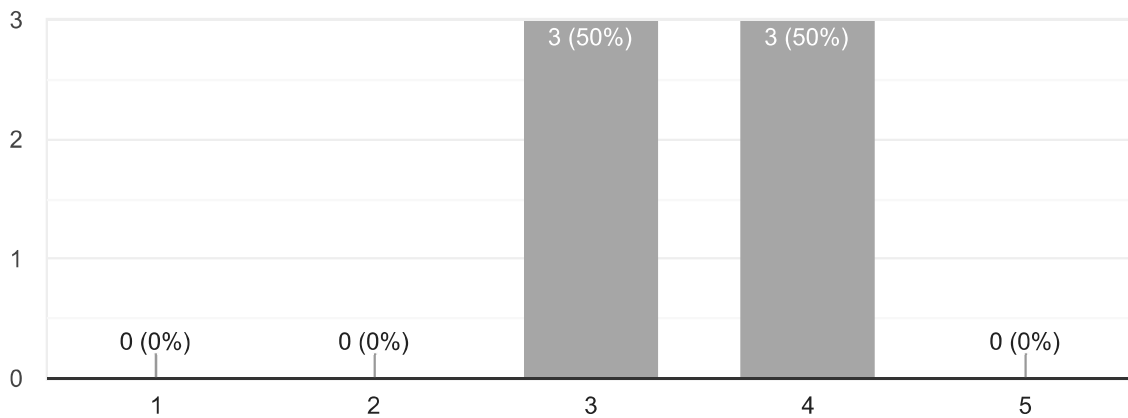
6 responses



How well did we surface the potential impacts of proposed changes to the 1972 Sewer Ordinance?



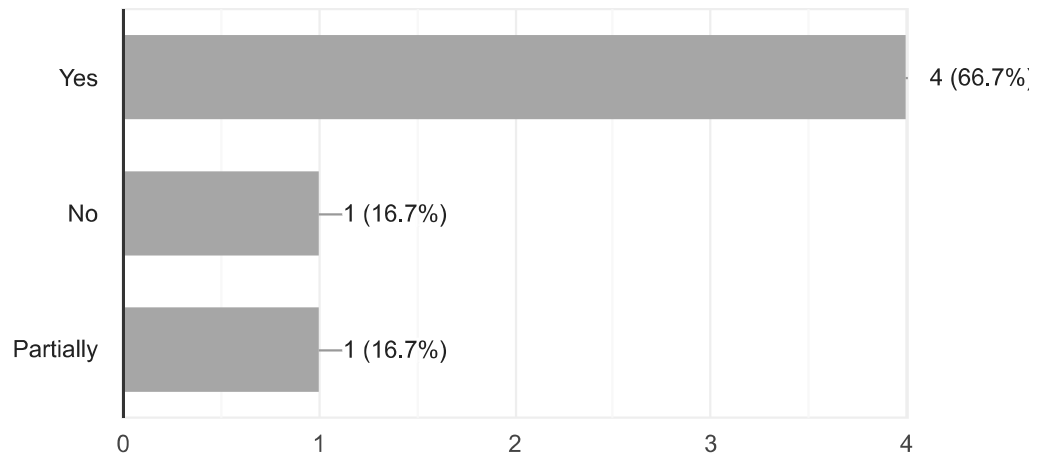
6 responses



Did we validate or identify the need to alter the 1972 Sewer Ordinance assumptions/decisions.



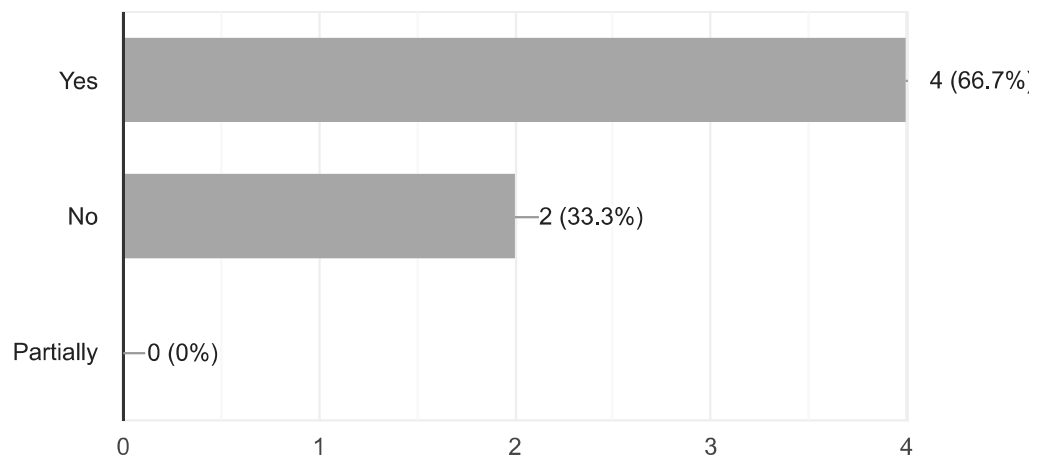
6 responses



Did we validate or identify the need to alter the 2013 Land Use/Development assumptions/decisions.



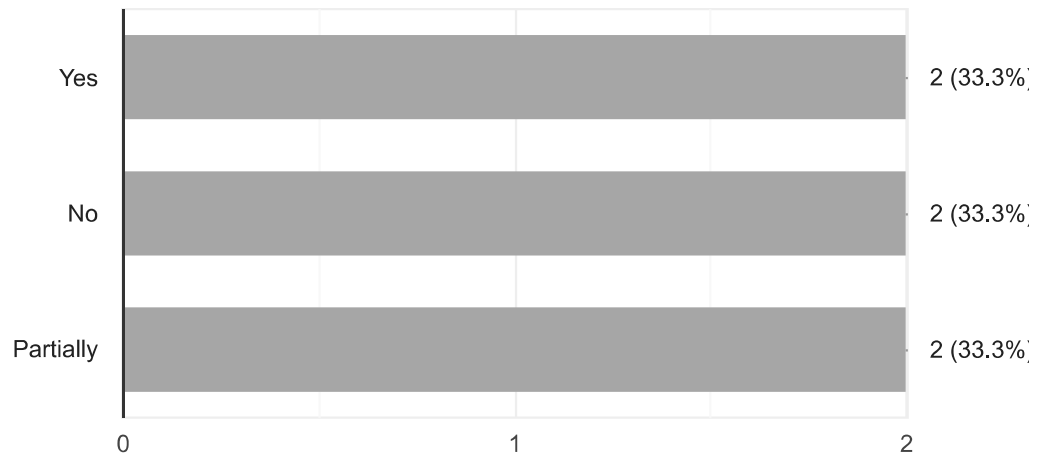
6 responses



Did we validate or identify the need to alter the 2019 Rate assumptions/decisions.



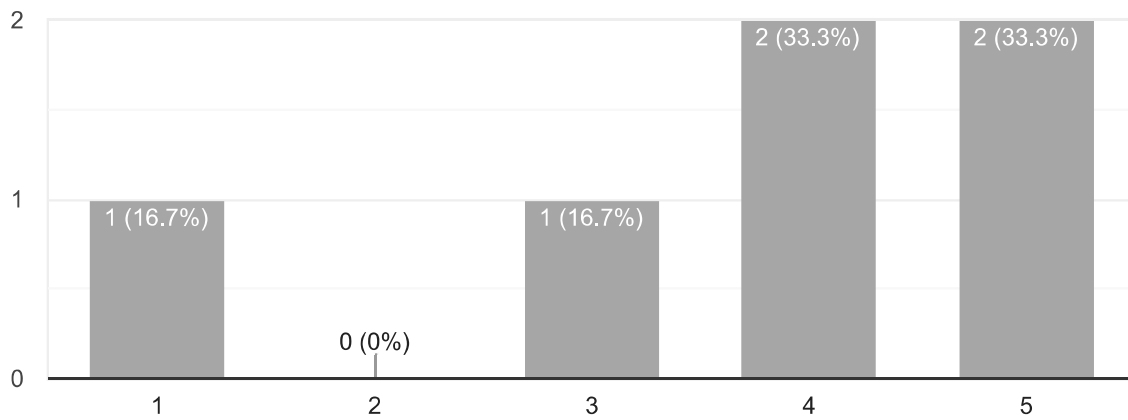
6 responses



How confident are you that city staff will use your input to recommend a proposal with the least negative impacts for all those impacted by the Sewer Ordinance (ratepayers, vacant lot builders, septic owners?)



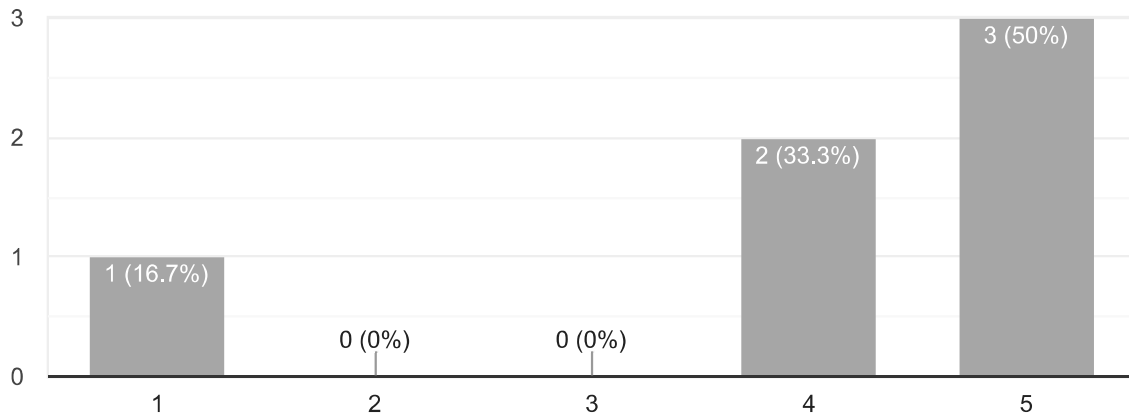
6 responses



The engagement opportunities offered through this Committee Process were:



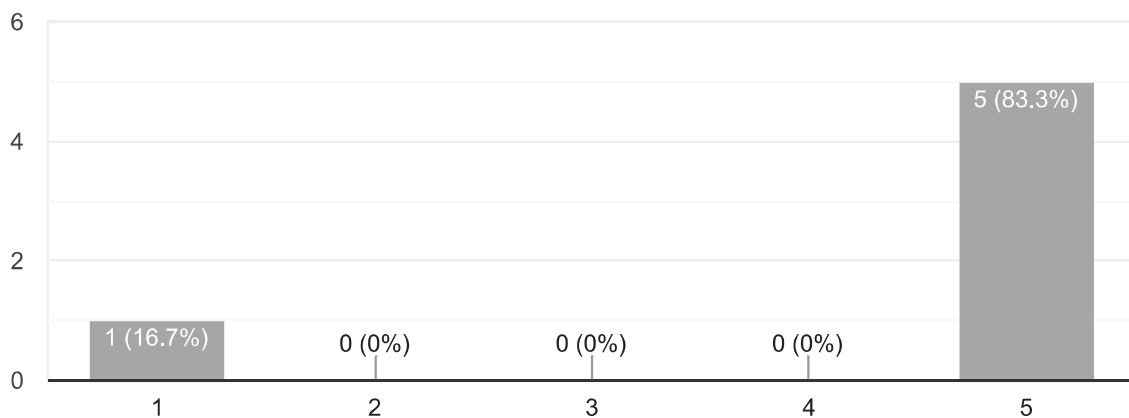
6 responses



My personal engagement with the opportunities offered was:



6 responses



The following factors contributed to my personal engagement in the committee process:

6 responses

Lack of trust of city staff, mayor and council. This was not about a Septic/Sewer issue.

Great meeting facilitator/organization

I felt change would come from work done.

Financial, environmental

small group discussions

care for my community

Please share what you think worked best in this Committee process.

6 responses

I don't feel like it worked great, however IF the recommendations are taken by council and staff, the process was worthwhile.

In my mind this is a very big if as I felt like the whole thing from the beginning was falsely brought forth in an effort to stop one persons development. I don't agree with the Council and Mayors history of using moratoriums to push their personal agendas. Moratoriums should be reserved for emergency situations. Ie: if we don't do something immediately, catastrophic consequences will entail. The moratorium here was used for no purpose as additional connections or septic installs during the 3 month process would not have had any significant affect on the sewer/septic issue, however the loss of potential developers, new home buyers/builders, business owners and general negative impacts of public opinion of the City in general and the Mayor, council, and staff in particular were a much greater and longer lasting effect.

Having friendly and engaged city staff available and part of work groups. Tracy kept meetings on tract and encouraged sharing/listening by all participants.

Education then brainstorming

open discussion

opportunities to share our personal thoughts

allowing citizens to form group and work on issues



Please share what you think needed to be improved in this Committee process.

5 responses

The city staff were not forthcoming with important information that was repeatedly asked by the committee members. When basic questions were asked that staff should have been able to answer given their position in this, ie: how many hookups does the new sewer plant support?, How many people are on septic/sewer? and most importantly Why do we need to do this now? the staff hid behind very embarrassing answers like "I don't know, I'll have to get back to you" and other vague responses to diffuse the question. Further when information was finally given at one point it came late, just before a meeting and in the form of 100's of pages of details to wade through, again presumed to create distraction from the real questions. If the staff and council desire to have committee type meetings, the expectation is that they come prepared to at least support their own proposal. If a business or developer came with such limited information and withheld vital details, the city staff would not look highly on their proposal. Same is true for the public looking at the city proposal.

I felt the finance end of the ordinance could have more detail.

I would expect more to do their homework

process: interesting word a little too much discussion of process and not enough substance

It feels like a lot of unnecessary words; it could be more focused.



What else would you like us to know?

5 responses

There is a great distrust and negative perception of the city personnel which really needs to be addressed. Many times I hear of clients who did not come away from their first interaction with staff feeling welcomed or like they were treated by helpful positive people. Generally I hear, 'can we even build here if we purchase this lot? Sounded like the city doesn't really want anybody to move here'. I can't disagree with that as all of my personal interaction over the past 4-5 years either for my own sake or my clients, has generally taken the same path, starting with a hard NO and working back from there rather than a "How can we make this work". It is definitely not a staff that makes anyone who deals with them feel anything other than an adversarial interaction even on the most minor issues. I don't believe this is something the staff can 'work on'. We just need to look at the possibility that the staff is not suited for the positions they hold in this small community. Quite possibly a much larger area where there is less or even no public interaction would be a better position for being so hard line, by the book, ruling type administration. Stevenson needs people who want to try to make things better for its residents and business rather than run people off and make those who can't leave wish they could. A complete reset of all positions in City leadership would inevitably result in fresh and new perspectives and remove the personal agendas that drive the current personnel.

Committee idea - start fund to generate revenue for sewer improvements.

thank you all

public information ordinance changes would be very helpful so every citizen knows whats going on and won't be surprised or confused.

thank you for including all of us

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