Carlsborg Sewer System

Frequently Asked Questions

August 15, 2014

1) What is the current status of the project?

The amended Carlsborg Wastewater Facilities Plan has been completed as of June 2014, and submitted to the Department of Ecology for their required review and approval. This facilities plan estimates growth and wastewater quantities in Carlsborg, compares options, estimates costs, contains an environmental checklist, and provides other relevant information and data relating to the proposed sewer system.

The recommendation of the facility plan is that a mostly gravity sewer collection system should be constructed in Carlsborg and tied to the Sequim wastewater collection system via a pump station and pressure sewer line. Two pressure lines will be installed to allow for future growth in Carlsborg. Wastewater from Carlsborg will then be transported through the Sequim wastewater collection system for treatment at the Wastewater Reclamation Facility (WRF). The project consultant is currently working on the design of the collection system and is about 60% done as of this date.

The City of Sequim and the County are in the process of preparing an inter-local agreement defining the financial arrangements for using the Sequim WRF for treating Carlsborg wastewater. When completed in about a month, this agreement must come to both the Sequim City Council and the Board of County Commissioners for review, public input, and ratification.

2) How can I review and comment on the wastewater facilities plan?

The plan has been posted on the project website at:
http://www.clallam.net/PublicWorks/documents/CWFDraft2.pdf

Comments may be addressed to:

Bob Martin, Clallam County Public Works
2223 East Fourth Street, Suite 6
Port Angeles, WA 98362
bmartin@co.clallam.wa.us
The Facilities Plan, once approved by the Department of Ecology, must be adopted by ordinance as the sewer master plan for the Carlsborg UGA. This will present an opportunity for comment in a public hearing. There will also be an opportunity to comment during the SEPA review that will be conducted by the County Department of Community Development. For details of the SEPA review process contact Kevin LoPiccolo, (360) 417-2322.

Additionally once the sewer connection policies and sewer use ordinance are drafted they will each come to the Board of County Commissioners for adoption as County ordinances. Each ordinance will be the subject of a public hearing before the County Commissioners prior to adoption.

Finally, once the Department of Ecology has reviewed and approved the plan it will be presented to the County Board of Commissioners for formal adoption as the master sewage plan for Carlsborg. Before considering the plan for adoption the Board will seek public comment through a public hearing which will be publically advertised in advance.

3) Why is treatment of Carlsborg wastewater in Sequim the recommendation of the facilities plan?

The main reasons for recommending treatment of Carlsborg wastewater in Sequim are: reduced cost, lower environmental and operational risk, availability of unused treatment capacity in Sequim, and less time required for implementation.

As can be seen from the table below, there is a considerable savings in cost with the Sequim Alternative. This savings results in lower costs for the future users of the system.
The Sequim water recovery facility (WRF) has a proven track record of successful operation. The WRF has received recognition from the Department of Ecology for meeting permit limits 100% of the time in recent years. The Sequim WRF also has the advantage of a marine outfall, which can be used if wastewater is not treated to meet class A standards. A new treatment system in Carlsborg would start out with new operators, and would not have a marine outfall available. This means that if the facility experiences operational problems and does not produce adequately treated wastewater, the effluent would have be disposed into the ground, possibly resulting in fines and/or groundwater contamination.

Because a specific site for a treatment plant in Carlsborg is not now available, time for selecting and evaluating a potential site is required. Time would also be necessary to acquire the site, perform environmental test and studies, and resolve any conflicts or objections from neighboring properties. It is estimated that this could add two to three years to the project timeline.

4) Where will the sewer mains be located in the initial phase?

The initial collection system identified in the facilities plan is shown in figure E-2 (attached) of the facilities plan. As we learn more about which specific properties desire connection, this plan may be adjusted somewhat. For example some of the property
owners on Winterhawk St. have expressed the desire not to be included in the initial system. If that turns out to be the decision of the homeowners association that owns Winterhawk Street, then that sewer main will not be provided, since the street is not a County road. Alternatively additional lines may be included if it appears property owners in a particular area or neighborhood do wish to be connected to the initial sewer system.

5) When will service be available?

The current schedule calls for construction in 2015, with the system in operation by the spring of 2016.

6) How much will the sewer system cost and how is it being financed?

The estimated capital cost for the initial system is estimated in the facilities plan as follows:

- Collection system: $5,324,500
- Lift Station and Conveyance: $6,024,000
- Capacity Purchase: $898,900
- Upgrade to Sequim sewers: $137,900
- **Total**: $12,385,300

The project financing is from a $3,500,000 appropriation from the Opportunity Fund, a $1,000,000 loan from the County Real Estate Excise Tax (REET) fund, and a $10,000,000 loan from the State Public Works Trust Fund. Both the REET loan and the PWTF loan will be repaid from future opportunity fund receipts. Thus ultimately the initial project capital cost is financed entirely from the County opportunity Fund.

7) Who will operate and maintain the sewer system?

The Carlsborg sewer system will be owned and managed as a Clallam County utility, just as is the case with the Clallam Bay and Sekiu sewer systems. Actual operation and maintenance work will be performed by either County personnel, or by contract with a private or public entity with the capability to perform the necessary activities.
8) Will septic systems still be allowed in the Carlsborg Urban Growth Area?

Once the Sewer system is in operation, it is anticipated that few, if any new septic systems will be approved in the Carlsborg UGA. Properties with existing septic systems that are functioning properly will be allowed to continue in use for a period of time as long as they continue to function properly, and as long as they do not have to be expanded due to change of use or change in intensity of use. How long they can remain in use has not yet been decided, but those newer systems with some ability to remove nitrates, will likely be allowed to remain in use longer (perhaps 10-15 years) than older systems that are not capable of nitrate removal (perhaps 5-10 years.) The goal is to eventually eliminate septic systems from the Carlsborg UGA, as a measure to reduce the amount of nitrates currently found in the groundwater.

9) What about water? Is there enough water available to serve the anticipated growth in Carlsborg?

Chapter 6 and Appendix A of the facilities plan address the availability of groundwater in the Carlsborg area. This analysis shows that with current growth projections in Carlsborg, the current PUD Carlsborg water system has sufficient appropriated water to serve the current service area and the Carlsborg UGA until 2054. So sometime before that year, there will have to be an increase in the PUD water right if this system is going to continue to supply water to the entire UGA. The facilities plan provides considerable detail on the methods available to mitigate for this future withdrawal and compares the cost of mitigation for both the Carlsborg and Sequim alternatives. As the analysis shows using reclaimed water in either Sequim or Carlsborg for groundwater recharge more than mitigates for the withdrawal in most streams. Those that will require additional mitigation need only relatively small quantities that should be fairly easily obtained using one or more of the strategies identified in the plan. The analysis also shows that using reclaimed water in Sequim rather than Carlsborg is advantageous environmentally as well as from a mitigation standpoint.

Since the current service area of the PUD Carlsborg water system does not serve the entire UGA, the County is asking the PUD to extend their service area to the entire UGA in exchange for a County commitment to participate financially and technically in the future mitigation for an increased water right when this becomes necessary. This will be worked out in a future agreement between the County and the PUD.
10) What will it cost to connect?

The financial plan for the Carlsborg sewer system (Chapter 8 and Appendix H) estimates a connection charge of $7,976 per equivalent residential unit (ERU) will be required. Since it will benefit the system to have as many users as possible when the system starts up, the financial plan also proposes to waive all but $500 of the connection charge for those existing residences and businesses that connect within two years of the sewer facilities becoming operational. With a higher level of use, odor control will be easier, and operating costs will be spread across a customer base that is high enough to ensure financial self-sufficiency. This compares to the estimated 2016 connection cost in the City of Sequim of $8,550 per ERU.

In addition to the significantly lower connection charge for those connecting in the first two years of operation, for those making the decision to connect during construction, the sewer lateral (sewer line from the property line to the nearest sewer main) will be provided at no cost to the property owner. Those deciding to connect after the sewer contractor is finished with construction will be responsible for the sewer lateral. Full connection costs for a typical single family residence both during the first two years and after two years are summarized below:

**Typical Connection Costs – Single Family Residence**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>First 2 Years</th>
<th>After 2 Years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Connection fee</td>
<td>$500</td>
<td>$7,976</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sewer lateral $1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>$500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County Right of way permit</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>$180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repair of County road/shoulder $1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>$500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80’ Side sewer (from home to prop. Line)$3</td>
<td>$1,375</td>
<td>$1,375</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decommissioning Septic System $3</td>
<td>$750</td>
<td>$750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Totals</strong></td>
<td><strong>$2,625</strong></td>
<td><strong>$11,281</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 – Assumes sewer main is on the same side of the road as the property
2 – Add $2,000 if County Road must be crossed
3 – Based on estimates assembled by CCAC

The sewer system is being designed to ensure as many properties as possible can connect to a sewer main by gravity. In a few instances however a pressurized system might be necessary, in which case the cost of connection could be $2,000 to $3,000 higher.
Finally, the facilities plan recommends that a “get connected” loan program be established to assist existing septic system owners, where necessary, with the cost of side sewer installation and septic system decommissioning.

11) What is the estimated monthly sewer bill?

The monthly sewer bill that users of the system will pay consists of two elements: a fixed base rate and a rate that is determined by water consumption. Currently the financial plan estimates that the base rate will be $26 per month, and the consumption rate will be $8.66 per one hundred cubic feet of water consumption per month. Thus an average family consuming 125 gallons per day would have a monthly bill of approximately $70. For comparison, the rate in Sequim is projected to be $62.25 in 2016. For those users of the sewer system that are served by an unmetered well, a flat monthly rate of $78.80 is proposed (based on an assumed water consumption of 150 gallons per day.)