

# MEMO FROM THE MAYOR

**TO:** Citizens of New Franklin

**RE:** Summit County Sanitary Sewer Project

Greetings,

The County is proceeding with survey work in the areas of proposed initial development (1, 2A,2B,3,5 & 7A as indicated on the website map). Questions have arisen regarding the purpose of the project, whether mandatory participation is required, and what the costs to homeowners would be. A recent meeting with Summit County provided clarification as to some of those issues.

Regarding purpose, in a June 18, 2018 press release Michael Weant, Director of Summit County Department of Sanitary Sewer Service (DSSS), announced that the Department had completed a Master Plan and Wastewater Action Plan for a large portion of southwestern Summit County comprised of The City of New Franklin, the Village of Clinton, and a southwest portion of the City of Green. Mr. Weant further advised that “Currently this area is served mostly by septic systems with a few small wastewater treatment plants. Many areas throughout this region have a high number of failing septic systems. Further, the lack of a public sanitary sewer system is adversely affecting the development of residential, commercial and industrial properties.”

Regarding the question of mandatory participation, the citizens who live where the sewers are being considered will have an opportunity to voice and discuss their concerns, and will ultimately be asked their intentions regarding connecting to the sewer lines. In the event a majority of the homeowners indicate they would not connect, it is likely that the DSSS would not proceed to request final approval to proceed from the Summit County Council. It is the Summit County Council, and not the city of New Franklin, which is vested with the authority to approve or disapprove going forward with the project.

Issues regarding cost only come into play in two circumstances. First, if County Council gives final approval for the project, all of the property owners on the lines will be assessed a lot fee. The amount would depend on a variety of factors but would at least be in the range of \$15,000 (to be paid by assessment over 20 years with property taxes).

The second instance where fees could come into play would be a scenario where the larger plan was rejected due to lack of commitment from homeowners to tie in, but the Summit County Health Department or the EPA ordered the DSSS to install sewers in a “hot spot” neighborhood where failing septic systems caused a threat to public health. In that case, those neighborhoods would have no choice and would face significantly higher assessments since the cost of installation would not be spread over as many properties.

Regarding additional fees and mandatory requirements, generally the DSSS cannot require residents on the line to tap into the sewer line. Mandatory tap-in would be an issue for the Summit County Health Department and/or the EPA. In the event the homeowner decides to tap in (or is required to do so), there is normally a “tap-in” fee in the range of \$3,000 but it is anticipated that this fee will not be charged for those who tap in following initial installation of the lines, since the tap in would be to a new, not an existing, line. Those who decline to tap in initially but decide to do so later would likely be subject to the tap-in fee.

Finally, the previous estimate provided for the cost to run the line from the street to the home was low. It is expected that the average cost would be in the range of \$6,000 to \$8,000. While this fee cannot be spread over 20 years, there are programs available for payment of some or all of those fees based on income eligibility.

Public information sessions will be held beginning in late January, 2020. Summit County DSSS representatives will outline the plan, review the purposes and goals of the project, discuss the timelines involved and provide estimates of costs to homeowners. The City will provide information regarding past, present and future projected municipal revenues and expenses, and explain how the sanitary

sewer system would likely help to provide the additional revenue sources necessary to maintain the current level of services.

Hopefully you find additional information in this Memorandum helpful to you. The Public Information Sessions are set to begin in late January and will continue until everyone has had an opportunity to attend, discuss and be heard. Until then you can continue to direct your questions to the City and/or to the Summit County Department of Sanitary Sewer Service (DSSS), attention: Mathew Calcei, at (330) 926-2416, or by email at [mcalcei@summitoh.net](mailto:mcalcei@summitoh.net).

Paul F. Adamson, Mayor  
(330) 882-4324

**UPDATE:** A question arose regarding the expense of disconnecting/crushing and backfilling the existing septic once the sewer connection has been made. I contacted Matt Calcei at Summit county DSSS and he advised as follows:

“There is a \$100 permit fee charged by SCPH District to abandon a septic system. All other costs associated with pumping, crushing and backfilling the septic tanks are typically included in the construction of the lateral connection”. (11/21/19)