



Staff Report

Public Works Department

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Date: October 27, 2021

Re: City of Belgrade Policy Update for Allocation of Available
Wastewater Treatment Plant Capacity

Policy Update

BACKGROUND: The development community has requested an update to the current policy for allocation of available wastewater treatment plant capacity as the City's new Water Reclamation Facility (WRF) nears completion and is able to treat and manage additional wastewater influent from the collection system.

CURRENT POLICY: The current City of Belgrade policy for allocation of available wastewater treatment plant capacity is based on the following two conditions:

1. Properties will be considered for disposition of available remaining wastewater treatment plant capacity on the basis of City of Belgrade Public Works Department approval of construction plans for wastewater system infrastructure improvements and issuance of an Ability to Serve Letter on a first-come, first-served basis for those properties annexed prior to January 1, 2020.
2. For consideration, a property boundary must also be within 500-feet of wastewater infrastructure owned, operated, and maintained by the City of Belgrade.

WRF MILESTONE 2 COMPLETION SCHEDULE: The current tentative schedule (subject to change based on availability of materials and satisfactory completion of prerequisite items) for the WRF includes potential completion of the commissioning process by the end of September 2022 for liquid treatment start-up, pending approvals from the Montana Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ).

CURRENTLY AVAILABLE WASTEWATER CAPACITY: The available City of Belgrade wastewater treatment plant capacity is based on equivalent dwelling units (EDUs), which correlates to an estimated 175 gallons per day (gpd) of wastewater generated per dwelling unit under the City of Belgrade's current permitted deviation through MDEQ. The currently available remaining capacity in the City's wastewater treatment plant is summarized in Table 1 on the following page.

Table 1: Summary of Available Capacity in the City of Belgrade’s Wastewater Treatment Plant as of October 27, 2021

Analysis Condition	Equivalent Dwelling Units (EDUs)
Current Remaining Capacity	593
Submitted Development Pending Approval and Allocation of Capacity	242
Projected Remaining Capacity	358

POLICY UPDATE ALTERNATIVES:

- A. Maintain the current City of Belgrade policy for allocation of available wastewater treatment plant capacity.
- B. Adjust required annexation date to be prior to July 1, 2020 and maintain minimum 500-foot proximity condition.
- C. Revise policy to allocate available wastewater treatment plant capacity on a first-approved, first-served basis and pursue approval through MDEQ to allow for allocation of available wastewater system capacity based on the issuance of a building permit by the City of Belgrade. (This has not been allowed by MDEQ in Belgrade, nor the State of Montana, in the past.)

Alternative A

No change would be made to the current policy. Allocation of available wastewater treatment plant capacity would be determined as projects are approved by the City of Belgrade Public Works Department and an Ability to Serve Letter is issued.

Beyond those developments that have been submitted and are currently under review, additional developments are anticipated to be submitted within the coming months. These developments fit within the current allocation policy for annexation date and proximity to wastewater infrastructure. Their estimated wastewater demand is summarized in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Summary of Potential Future Developments as of October 27, 2021

Analysis Condition	Equivalent Dwelling Units (EDUs)
Currently Projected Remaining Capacity	358
Bridger Heights Apartments – Phase 3	84
Tracts 1, 2, & 3 of COS 2836 Phase 1 Preliminary Estimate of Commercial & Residential Development (<i>East Belgrade Interchange Area</i>)	270
Projected Remaining Capacity with Anticipated Future Development	4

Alternative B

Adjusting the annexation date to be prior to July 1, 2020 and maintaining the minimum 500-foot proximity to wastewater infrastructure requirement would enable one property west of Bolinger Road between Cruiser Lane and Golden West Drive to be able to connect to the City of Belgrade's wastewater collection system. The included property would utilize an estimated 65 EDUs of available wastewater treatment plant capacity. As shown in Table 2 on the previous page, this would likely result in capacity being unavailable for developments that are allowed to connect to the City's wastewater system under the current allocation policy.

There may be potential legal ramifications to the City of Belgrade resulting from a developer or developers seeking action against the City of Belgrade if the limited available wastewater treatment plant capacity is allocated without consideration of seniority based on date of annexation.

Alternative C

Revision to the policy to allocate available wastewater treatment plant capacity on a first-approved, first-served basis would open the ability to develop to any annexed properties within the City of Belgrade. Allocation of available wastewater treatment plant capacity for this scenario is recommended to be based on the issuance of a letter of approval from MDEQ. (This would require prior initial review and approval by the City of Belgrade Public Works Department.) Issuance of an Ability to Serve Letter for available EDUs may require additional conditions related to restrictions on the issuance of building permits based on available capacity within the existing wastewater treatment plant plus completion of the WRF.

A request has been submitted to MDEQ for consideration of allowing for installation of water and wastewater system infrastructure (mains, services, and appurtenances) for future connections that would allocate available wastewater treatment plant capacity through the City's building permit process on a first-come, first-served basis, acknowledging the City of Belgrade's current active monitoring of available wastewater system capacity. As noted previously, this has not been allowed by MDEQ in Belgrade, nor the State of Montana, in the past.