



Sudbury CWMP *Frequently Asked Questions*

- **What are the cost estimates for Phase One and Two areas of the Comprehensive Wastewater Plan?**

It is too early in the planning process to develop detailed cost estimates. The information which is currently available is about what can be done to protect the environment, Sudbury's water sources, and safeguard water quality. The Town is also exploring funding options including grants and earmarks that could lower the project costs to be borne by the Town. As the next phase of the CWMP begins, cost estimates will be developed and shared accordingly.

- **What exactly is happening in the Phase One and Two areas? Does this entail performing construction in the roadways and installing sewer lines to homes?**

The CWMP recommends that once the CWMP planning is complete, the Town moves forward with design and construction in defined Needs Areas of the Town. Future construction activities recommended to be performed include the design and installation of sewer lines, pump stations, a wastewater treatment plant, and the groundwater discharge treatment system. Nearly all of this work is within the street right of way and on Town-owned properties. It is possible that easement(s) may be needed for certain areas, but that will be determined during a Preliminary Design Phase and after a survey of the proposed areas is complete. As part of the overall design, a sewer lateral stub is to be provided to each property at the edge of the right-of-way to allow property owners to connect to the new sewer system. A portion of a property's frontage is part of the right-of-way, which will involve minor excavation to install the lateral out to that point, the lateral is then capped, and a witness marker is placed at the end of the lateral to easily locate it in the future when a connection is made. All areas that are disturbed by the construction will be returned to their original condition.

As part of the public portion of the project, construction typically does not enter onto private property. The stub (the pipe) is left at the end of the public way and does not encroach onto private lands. This is especially true if the project is financed through state and or federal funding, specifically when funded through the State Revolving Fund (SRF) Program as state and federal monies cannot be spent for benefit on privately owned lands. In the case of SRF and most federal and state funding initiatives, Certificate of Title to the land must be in the State or Town's jurisdiction either by outright ownership or permanent easement. Property owners would ultimately be responsible for all work on their property, which includes the connection to the sewer

stub that is left at the edge of their property. As the project progresses, this location will be worked out between the Town and landowner for the most advantageous location for the property owner.

- **For property owners that have a FAST septic system who are required to have multiple inspections by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) – will that go away if they are connected to the sewer system?**

Property owners with any onsite wastewater system that chooses to connect to the new sewer system would decommission the existing system per local Board of Health Regulations and therefore would no longer be required to maintain that system.

- **Is this project a part of the Town of Sudbury's existing Capital Improvement Plan?**

[The Comprehensive Wastewater Management Plan](#) is currently a stand-alone project and not part of the Town's existing Capital Improvement Plan as it is not fully approved and accepted by the Town at this time. The goal, however, is to continue to move the CWMP forward and once accepted and approved, be included in the overall CIP for the Town's budgeting and scheduling purposes.

- **How does Sudbury compare to the surrounding communities pertaining to sewer vs. septic?**

- The Commonwealth does not want cities and towns to rely solely on a public sewer system for the entire community. In fact, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts would prefer that cities and towns address areas that pose a threat to the environment and public health to allow groundwater sources the opportunity to recharge in areas safe to do so. As is recommended in Sudbury's CWMP, most of the Town is recommended to continue to maintain on-site wastewater systems for the long-term under a local Septage Management System. The abutting communities are detailed as follows:
 - **Framingham:** A small portion of Framingham near the Wayside Inn maintains on-site wastewater/septic systems; the majority of Framingham has public sewer service, which is collected, treated, and discharged at the Deer Island Treatment facility operated by the MWRA.
 - **Wayland:** There is a wastewater treatment plant in the center of Wayland that treats effluent from the downtown area which has multiple discharge locations.
 - **Concord:** A substantial section of Concord is serviced by a public sewer at the Concord Wastewater Treatment Facility located at 509 Bedford Street in Concord.
 - **Marlborough:** Almost the entire community is serviced with public sewer at the Westerly and Easterly Wastewater Treatment Facilities.

- **Hudson:** The Town is serviced by public sewer at the Hudson Wastewater Treatment Facility on One Municipal Drive in Hudson.
 - **Maynard:** There is a sizable portion of Maynard that is serviced by public sewer at the Maynard Water Pollution Control Facility located on 18 Pine Hill Road in Maynard.
 - **Acton:** A large portion of Acton is serviced with public sewer at the Acton Wastewater Treatment Facility located at 20 Adams Street in Acton.
 - **Sudbury:** There are 3 existing small, private wastewater treatment facilities currently operating in Sudbury. These include Meadow Walk (Avalon), the Lincoln-Sudbury High School, and Longfellow Glen. There is a new wastewater facility being constructed for Cold Brook Crossing in North Sudbury.
- The proposed wastewater flows identified in the CWMP are larger in size than the existing treatment facilities in Sudbury, as the areas to be serviced are larger. The major goal of the CWMP is to preserve and protect the Town's major drinking water supplies from potential contamination from on-site wastewater systems that leach into the groundwater. Properties located along Route 20 and in the Raymond Road neighborhoods are within the zone of influence of the Raymond Road wells, leaving more opportunity for pollutants to enter the Town's drinking water supply through impacted groundwater.
- **Is there evidence of septic impacts from Route 20 in our water?**
 - Presently, there is no documented evidence of septic impact on the Town's drinking water supplies. The concern about the density of on-site wastewater systems and their impact on the environment and Sudbury's water quality has been developing since the 1980s, when studies on this topic began. It is recommended that the Town be proactive versus reactive as once there is any impact, it will be very difficult and costly to correct. Woodard & Curran has reviewed historical data dating back to the 1980's when the Town was less developed, both residentially and non-residentially, and the area of concern was mainly farmland, which has now had significant residential and business development.
- **What is the percentage of Town residents who will have the option to connect to the sewer?**
 - The CWMP includes a Phased approach for implementing the recommendations of the CWMP. The first two phases including a portion of residents within the Raymond Road South neighborhood, and the non-residential/commercial district along Route 20 will have the option to connect to the proposed sewer system. Subsequent phases could include a portion of Raymond Road North, Goodman's Hill, and Route 20 East to Wayland. In total, this is a small percentage of Sudbury but includes higher density uses than the majority of the remainder of Town.

- **When effluent is discharged in the proposed area for the treatment are there any concerns about the impact on the schools or the abutters that live near the treatment plant?**
 - The proposed groundwater discharge is proposed to be in the ball field area at the Curtis Middle School. Hydrogeological studies have been performed to ensure that nothing is discharged that would have an adverse impact on the environment or on public health and safety. The Town would be responsible for obtaining and maintaining a groundwater discharge permit from MassDEP, which requires monthly testing and compliance with specific discharge parameters to maintain the permit and thus safe conditions. There is currently an onsite septic system discharging beneath some of the fields at the school, similar to each home in Sudbury. The proposed subsurface discharge system would be comparable to this, although substantially larger, but would be a highly treated clean effluent.
 - The proposed treatment plant is recommended to be constructed at the Department of Public Works facility located at 275 Old Lancaster Road. The proposed facility will include vegetative screenings and will be designed to avoid any impacts on the community. Operations would be comparable to what is currently in use at DPW.
- **Would there be a connection fee to the Town of Wayland or is it more cost-effective overtime to install a sewer infrastructure further up Route 20?**
 - Only limited discussions have taken place regarding an inter-municipal Agreement with the Town of Wayland. These have been limited to the technical feasibility of such a connection. There would likely be a connection fee to Wayland, which would be negotiated in the future should the Town approach this solution. The lack of property density along Route 20, including the length of pipe to connect to the existing system, would likely make connecting to the Sudbury system more costly.
- **Moving forward, would there be a wastewater fee for properties that are placed on the system, and will there also be a town-wide fee?**
 - Ultimately the wastewater system would include an enterprise fund operated by the Department of Public Works. All options are presently being explored to have cost estimates available in the future. Costs to property owners can be categorized as Capital or operation and maintenance. The Capital costs, costs to construct the project, could be funded by the property owners along with the sewer, the Town, Grants, Legislative Earmarks (an earmark is a provision directing funds to be spent on specific projects), other funding sources, or most likely a combination of several of these. At this early stage, we don't know exactly how the project would be funded. In regard to the operation and maintenance costs, also known as user fees, once a property connects to the system, they would receive a bill, similar in nature to the public water bill most of Sudbury receives from other public utilities.
- **Has the proposed leach field (under the Curtis Middle School ball field) been coordinated with Sudbury Public Schools?**

- o The Department of Public Works will coordinate all activities with the Sudbury Public Schools.

- **Have you identified a number of parcels that will be able to connect to the system?**

- o The initial two phases, Phase 1 Route 20 and Phase 1A Raymond Road South areas would include over 200 parcels that could connect to the new, public sewer. If all of the recommended CWMP phases connect to the sewer, there are between 500 and 600 properties in total that could potentially have access to connect to the public sewer.

- **What are the cost considerations?**

- o There are three types of costs: Capital, Private Property, and Operation and Maintenance Costs. These are detailed as follows:
 - **Capital Costs:** The Capital Costs include all equipment, infrastructure, engineering, administrative and legal to construct the project. These are typically funded through the public entity, in Sudbury's case, it is the Town, with a Capital Cost Recovery Program to ensure payment of all costs. These are typically funded by the property owners that abut the sewer infrastructure and per Massachusetts General Law (called Betterments), the Town's general fund/tax revenues, Grants, Legislative Earmarks, other funding sources with most large capital projects a combination of the above. At this early stage in Sudbury's case, we don't know exactly how the project would be funded and are working on preliminary estimates, but there are many unknowns on the project costs at this time. Once more detailed information is arrived at, costs can be more accurately estimated.
 - **Private Property Costs:** The private property connection costs include the actual connection of your house/building to the public sewer in the public right of way at your property line. This cost typically includes decommissioning the onsite septic system and restoration of the area. Most users will have a gravity connection, but a grinder pump may be required if your property is unable to be served by gravity sewers. This cost is highly dependent on your property configuration and restoration costs. These costs are site-specific and can be better defined once the project is further along.
 - **Operation and Maintenance Costs (User Fees):** Also known as O&M costs, these are the overall costs to fully operate and maintain the sewer system per Regulatory Permit requirements. These costs are covered as user fees. After the time of connection to the public sewer, the property owner will receive a bill, similar in nature to the public water bill most of Sudbury receives from other public utilities. This cost would be based on the number of users connected to the system and the actual operating costs.

- **Is there assistance for private property owners who wish to connect?**

Research is being done on several options to provide property owners with assistance. One option is the Community Betterment Septic Loan program, which offers property owners the option to borrow funds to connect their property to the sewer system at the lowest possible cost. This is a state-run program that also offers funding assistance to property owners that will remain with on-site wastewater systems and is typically run through the local Board of Health. Throughout the project duration, avenues of funding will be researched to be able to bring as many opportunities as possible for funding assistance to the Town.

- **What is the timeline to bring the proposed CWMP to Town Meeting?**

- The CWMP is currently in the research and public outreach phase of the project and is expected to be completed through state review by spring 2022.
- It is possible that the first Phases of the CWMP Recommendations could be included on a Warrant Article for discussion at a Town Meeting Article as a Capital Improvement Project as early as spring 2022 but is more likely to occur at a later date.

- **Would the CWMP be eligible for American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding?**

- The ARPA funds are currently available through 2024. If the proposed plan moves forward the Town could be eligible to receive funding through ARPA, earmarks, and other stimulus and grant programs. The Town is actively pursuing stimulus funds with several applications pending through both the House and Senate as Legislative Earmarks.

- **What is the risk if the Town does not act now?**

- There is no exact science to determine when an on-site septic system will fail or improperly operate to contaminate groundwater resources. Many systems believed to be operating fine could be leaching partially treated wastewater into the groundwater and reaching aquifer resources if there is not adequate separation to groundwater and or located in highly permeable soils. A municipal sewer system can provide both a high level of treatment and monitoring to ensure that tomorrow's drinking water sources are better protected. While this project is focused on protecting the environment, economic development within the commercial corridor with the ability to take advantage of potential stimulus funding are benefits of being positioned to move forward.