



TO: GCS D Board of Directors

FROM: Pete Kampa, General Manager

DATE: October 12, 2021

SUBJECT: Agenda Item 6G. Consideration of an Appointment for a Standing Committee to evaluate the options and need related to the extension of public sewer in areas currently served by private septic systems

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Should the Board desire to further evaluate and receive public input on the extension of public sewer in areas currently served by private septic systems, it is recommended that the Board appoint a standing committee of two Board members that meets on a regular basis until a recommendation can be made to the full Board. If desired, a motion could be worded: I move to appoint directors _____ and _____ to a standing committee to evaluate and receive public input on the extension of public sewer in areas currently served by private septic system.

BACKGROUND:

The State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) currently has surplus funding specifically for connection of properties to public sewer systems, that are served by private septic systems. The surplus funding must be incorporated by 2024 and the project must be constructed by 2026, which is a pretty tight timeline. The District could use these funds to provide public sewer service to currently unsewered areas and to fund a portion of the cost of a complete wastewater treatment plant and state permit upgrade.

Currently, the Groveland CSD has approximately 3,254 active water service connections but only approximately 1,500 sewer connections. As the Groveland CSD sewer customer base is small, and its sewer collection system is vast and contains 16 lift stations; capital replacements and mandatory improvements to the system introduces high sewer rates to the Groveland CSD residents. If the sewer service area and customer base were to increase, the Groveland CSD sewer rate could likely be decreased.

State policy regarding private septic systems has changed drastically over the past several decades, especially with the rise in failures of “growth era – 1950 to 1970’s” septic systems. The state Water Code now considers the use of private septic systems a “public nuisance” when public sewer is available in the area. In some areas of the state with high septic failure rates and/or degrading

local surface water quality tied to septic system failures, the State Water Board has prohibited the issuance of building permits in the area until the problem is solved.

Several times in the past, the Groveland CSD sewer infrastructure was examined, and a plan was developed to potentially transition the current private septic systems to be served via the GCSD sewer collection and wastewater treatment facility. A plan of the draft conceptual septic to sewer expansion is attached. As sufficient funds were not previously received, the Project was abandoned. With the new septic to sewer funding that is coming out, the Groveland CSD can reduce connection cost impacts to septic system owners who connect to the GCSD system. A large number of properties can be served with the public sewer by extending a few lateral sewer mains. However if the project is not supported by the public and the number of locally failing septic systems, as well as the cost/benefit of the project; then the District should not proceed until such time as septic failures and public support increases. The committee would work with staff to identify some of these issues.

Evaluation of the current wastewater treatment plant has revealed that a major upgrade will likely be needed to meet current waste discharge standards. With the increased flows anticipated by the concept of new sewer service connections being added, the Groveland CSD WWTP would need to be replaced with added capacity to meet the new wastewater demand. As the Groveland CSD WWTP is a very unique treatment system that requires a lot of attention and nearing the end of its useful life, it is proposed that the Groveland CSD construct a completely new treatment facility that is capable of meeting ever tightening State regulations, as well as develop a new disposal method for the treated effluent. A portion of the cost of the treatment plant replacement could be funded with this same state money, which would ultimately offset cost to existing customers.

Currently, the Groveland CSD WWTP has two disposal methods, Pine Mountain Lake golf course and the irrigation spray fields. The irrigation spray field do not currently have a disposal capacity equal to the effluent flow of the plant and for this reason, the primary disposal method is to the Pine Mountain Lake golf course. If state regulations were to restrict the recycled water discharge to the Pine Mountain Lake (PML) golf course or if something were to happen to the force main connecting the WWTP to the golf course, it would leave the Groveland CSD without ability to adequately dispose of treated effluent, resulting in state violations and fines. By constructing a new treatment facility, it would allow the Groveland CSD to meet new and growing regulations, develop a system that has redundancy, has sufficient capacity for the growing community/seasonal peak flows and create a sustainable treatment facility that, if designed correctly, could produce a high-quality recycled water for use in park facility irrigation, and will have less electrical and chemical expenses.

Enclosed is a drawing that shows all of the existing sewer infrastructure and conceptual additional infrastructure that would be needed to transition all lots in PML from septic to sewer.

Due to the immediate availability of large amounts of grant funds for these projects, we would like to explore this more in depth but would like to receive the Boards opinion on the matter before pursuing this thought any further. Again, to be clear the request for a committee is NOT an effort to push forward a septic to sewer plan; simply to determine the level of need and support to take the next steps. We are simply not certain when the state will further enforce restrictions and requirements on existing septic systems.

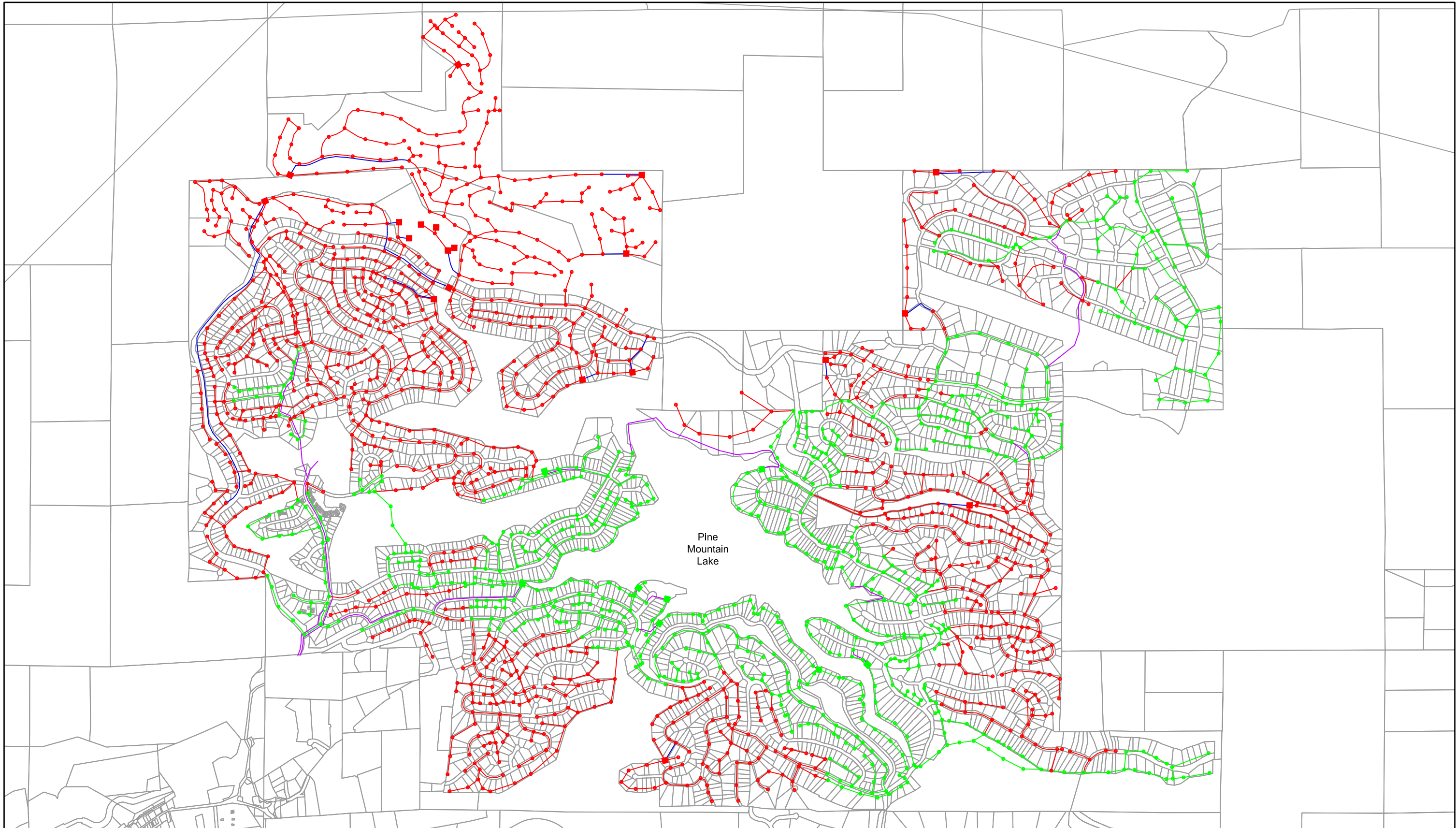
As this will need to be a very public issue to determine support, it is recommended that the committee, if appointed, be declared as a Standing Committee meaning that it will establish a meeting schedule and produce and publish meeting agendas. The committee would remain in place until a Board recommendation is made on whether to submit a grant application to the state.


ATTACHMENTS:









Map of Existing and Conceptual Sewer Infrastructure.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

None, at this time.




 SCALE: 1"=1500'

Legend			
Existing Sewer Main		Existing Lift Station	
Existing Force Main		Proposed Lift Station	
Proposed Sewer Main			
Proposed Force Main			
Existing Manhole			
Proposed Manhole			

PROJECT	Groveland CSD National Disaster Resilience Competition	
DRAWING	Pine Mountain Lake Collection System Buildout	FIGURE 1