



**WORK SESSION  
RICHFIELD MUNICIPAL CENTER, BARTHOLOMEW ROOM  
APRIL 11, 2023  
6:30 PM**

Call to order

1. Public Works Administrative Analyst, Scott Kulzer, will briefly present the framework for a proposed program that would allow Richfield property owners to have charges resulting from the repair or replacement of private sanitary sewer service lines applied to the parcel's property taxes via special assessment.

Adjournment

**Auxiliary aids for individuals with disabilities are available upon request. Requests must be made at least 96 hours in advance to the City Clerk at 612-861-9739.**



## **WORK SESSION STAFF REPORT NO. 11**

### **WORK SESSION**

**4/11/2023**

REPORT PREPARED BY: Scott Kulzer, Administrative Analyst

DEPARTMENT DIRECTOR REVIEW: Kristin Asher, Public Works Director  
4/4/2023

OTHER DEPARTMENT REVIEW: N/A

CITY MANAGER REVIEW: Katie Rodriguez, City Manager  
4/4/2023

#### **ITEM FOR WORK SESSION:**

**Public Works Administrative Analyst, Scott Kulzer, will briefly present the framework for a proposed program that would allow Richfield property owners to have charges resulting from the repair or replacement of private sanitary sewer service lines applied to the parcel's property taxes via special assessment.**

#### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

- Most sanitary sewer service lines in Richfield are original to the initial build-out of the City's sanitary sewer system in the early 1960's and are becoming more prone to failure with the passing of time.
- Property owners are responsible to maintain their sanitary sewer service line in a proper working order. This proposed program aims to help property owners in the event of a sanitary sewer service line failure requiring repair or full or partial replacement anywhere between the private structure to the connection with the sanitary sewer main in the street.
- As the sanitary sewer service lines age they can crack, break, shift, collapse or become victim to root intrusion which results in the need for repair or full or partial replacement.
- Costs for repair or replacement fall wholly on the property owner and can approach or exceed \$10,000 depending on the severity of the problem.
- The City has the authority, financial capacity, and desire to assist property owners with costs associated with sewer emergencies by paying for the initial sewer repair or replacement and then recouping the entire cost over a 5-year period via special assessment plus 5% interest annually on the remaining balance until the City is made whole.
- This program will be designed and administered in the same fashion as the City's Diseased/Hazardous Tree Special Assessment Program and is not expected to create much additional work for staff.

#### **DIRECTION NEEDED:**

**Staff seeks to provide information, answer questions, and be directed by City Council to either implement or abandon the proposed sanitary sewer service line special assessment program.**

#### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

##### **A. HISTORICAL CONTEXT**

See executive summary.

**B. POLICIES (resolutions, ordinances, regulations, statutes, etc):**

- Richfield Municipal Code 700.03, subd. 2 states that "Houses, buildings, or properties used for human occupancy, employment, recreation or other purpose, situated within the City, shall connect with and use public sanitary sewers."
- A failed or deficient sanitary sewer service line if not promptly repaired can be considered a violation of the above ordinance and is cause for enforcement action up to and including the structure being deemed uninhabitable.

**C. CRITICAL TIMING ISSUES:**

If the direction is given to formalize and implement this program, it is anticipated property owners could begin using the program in Summer 2023 with the first assessments being certified to the Hennepin County tax rolls in Fall 2024.

**D. FINANCIAL IMPACT:**

- There will be initial costs incurred for the repair or replacement costs as the City absorbs the initial expenses, however, the City will recoup all these costs plus 5% interest over time.
- Once the first program users begin to satisfy their repayment obligations to the City after 5 years, the program will operate much like a revolving line of credit with new users drawing on the account as prior users repay their debts back into the fund.

**E. LEGAL CONSIDERATION:**

- If the direction is given to formalize and implement this program, staff will work with the City Attorney to ensure all legal obligations are met in the program design.
- Adoption of a new or revised ordinance(s) may be required by City Council prior to the start of this program.

**ALTERNATIVE(S):**

None

**PRINCIPAL PARTIES EXPECTED AT MEETING:**

None