

Cambridge Greens Septic to Sewer Project

Frequently Asked Questions:

GENERAL QUESTIONS:

1. Who is the driving force behind this project? – The state of Florida citizens by virtue of a state ballot initiative vote and specific State Legislative action to adopt Basin Management Action Plans (BMAPs) to protect Florida Waters. The Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) and the Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD) are the lead agencies responsible to implement the directive with Citrus County Water Resources.
2. Who is our contact for FDEP? Anna Kemp anna.kemp@floridadep.gov
3. Why Cambridge Greens? – Cambridge Greens was identified in the BMAP as an area with smaller lots and a high density of septic tanks. In order to obtain grant funding, the agencies required an area in the central area of the County with a minimum of 220 septic tanks.
4. When will the construction begin? April, 2023 (subject to change.)
5. Do I have to connect to the central sewer system? Yes.
6. According to the Kings Bay Springs Shed D.1.3, could nitrates be removed by another method? For example, inspection of existing septic tanks for leaks instead of mandatory hook-up? No. The issue is the drain field effluent entering local groundwater.
7. Is the design on-going? Yes. The project is at the 90% design stage.

COST QUESTIONS:

1. Is the budget up to date and completed for project? Yes.
2. Will there be an assessment? Yes. The assessment for the project will be \$6,000/lot, a connection fee of \$2,745, Activation Fee of \$35, and a sewer deposit of \$120 (Refundable after 36 months of Payment History). (This does not include costs to restore the property after the home is connected to the central wastewater system.)
3. Will the residents get a discount on the cost to hook up to central sewer? No.
4. Will I be able to pay these costs off over time? Yes, both the assessment and the connection cost can be paid out over 10 years. The assessment charge is included on the Tax Bill annually at a 6% interest rate. The connection fee charge would be included on the monthly utility bill also at a 6% interest rate.
5. Will the County charge a permit fee to do the hook up? Yes. \$100.
6. Will there be a grace period for people to perform abandonment and plumbing line? Yes, residents have one year from the completion of construction and notification by CCWR to hook-up.
7. Who is responsible for the connection to the County Sewer line? The homeowner will be required to have their plumber tie into the County sewer line.
8. What happens to our existing sept tank? The tank will be abandoned in place (holes in the bottom filled with sand caved in) or removed.
9. I am a retired plumber or handyman. Can I do the sewer hook-up myself? Individual homeowners will need to check with the County Building Department regarding the specific home improvements and permitted activities.
10. Will residents have to pay a monthly sewer bill once they hook up to the sewer system? Yes, the monthly bill will be based on their monthly water use.
11. How much will the monthly sewer bill be? The monthly sewer bill is based on the amount of water used up to a maximum of 6,000 gallons. The minimum base charge for a ¾" meter is \$24.41 per month. The use rate is \$6.97 per 1000 gallons.
12. Can residents get separate irrigation metering? No, residential irrigation meters are not allowed by the utility.
13. Are the grant writers currently looking for grants for the homeowners? – The County has worked hard in securing three grants that have significantly bought down the project costs for the homeowners: including grants from FDEP, SWFWMD, and State Appropriation.

14. Has there been any updates to alternative monies replacing the \$4000 FDEP grant lost? There seems to be some confusion among the residents as to why there is no available funding for the connection fees. Cambridge Greens was not included in the original grant program due to the timing of construction and the fiscal year the grant was awarded. To qualify for the program, the construction of the project had to be completed and the actual connections made within the fiscal year of the funding availability. Cambridge Greens did not meet those criteria. FDEP discontinued the grants after the initial one.
15. There has been a sewer upgrade grant of \$7000 available to county residents, does this pertain to our subdivision? **No.** What is the sewer upgrade grant for and through who? **The septic tank upgrade program is for residents that are qualified for the upgrade grant to their existing system. Qualifications include areas that are not projected to be accessible to central sewer within 5 years. Sewer will be available to the Cambridge Greens community and was identified as part of the FDEP Wastewater Treatment Feasibility Analysis (WWTFA). Cambridge Greens is identified within the Phase 1 septic to sewer program and has a timeline of 1 to 5 years. The WWTFA was approved by FDEP and the Board of County Commissioners. The BOCC approved & adopted the WWTFA on 10/26/2021. Previous to adoption by the BOCC, two virtual open houses were held online for the WWTFA on 2/11/2021 & 3/25/2021.**
16. What lead the County Commissioners to determine to charge the homeowners directly for all of these projects as opposed to issuing a bond and or raising minimal taxes for sewage use? **The Water Resources Department is an enterprise fund in which revenue for operations is provided by user fees. It operates under strict State and Federal mandates. The bond will not allow CIP projects to paid through the enterprise fund that benefits a property owner with improvements. The existing rate payers would be paying to improve property that provides no benefit to them. Many would like to understand the large cost being put to them that benefits the entire county population. The benefits are not only for the homeowner and preserving our natural water resource, but for the entire County that lies within an environmentally sensitive area. It is the duty of the citizens of the county to be good stewards of the of the natural environmental elements that are shared between all and the future generations to come.**
17. I own two lots in Cambridge Greens next to each other, do I have to pay two assessments? **Yes, unless you go through the DVR process in which you combine the adjacent lots into a single parcel and give up the development rights on the additional lot.**
18. If I own two lots in Cambridge Greens will I have to pay two connection fees? **Yes, if there is a house on each lot. Connection fees are paid when a sewer connection is made. If a lot is vacant no connection fee is due until a house is built on the lot.**
19. I am applying to build a house net month in Cambridge Greens? Can I get out of installing an advance septic tank system since this central sewer project is already underway? **Yes. You will need DHRS and CCWR approval.**

DVR EXEMPTION

Note: The assessment process would start roughly in January 2025, after final costs have been provided. When the assessment window opens, folks that are eligible for a DVR would be provided with the information, which will contain the deadline to submit the application. The entire process is not finished until the agreement is recorded in public records. This process is optional, not mandatory and is not designed to remove individual lots from the assessment area. It is imperative that property owners understand the impact of the DVR. We highly recommend that they speak with a Real Estate Attorney, their heirs, etc., prior to entering into this agreement. If they have property for investment purposes – do not do this!

1. For those Homeowners that have filed a DVR exemption for additional lots they have purchased, can they be exempt from dual connections?
 - No connection will be provided to the vacant lot(s) covered by the DVR.
 - The application allows property owner(s) of multiple, adjoining residential lots that are under the same ownership to request their properties be recognized at a reduced number of Assessment

Units (AU's) *for assessment purposes only*. They will be counted as one connection unless Water Resources/Utilities determines otherwise.

- This recognition is permanent, "NON REVOCABLE" and is binding on all successive owners.
 - The DVR process *does not* combine their lots. They would need to do a Lot Reconfiguration through Land Development to make it permanent.
 - If they want to combine the lots for tax purposes through the Property Appraiser's Office to get one tax bill, they can, if they meet the Property Appraiser's requirements.
 - They still have multiple lots of records for any other purpose, including other Municipal Service Benefit Units (MSBU).
2. What is the deadline to apply for the DVR process? Deadline will not be established until the assessment process starts. The assessment process is expected to start in 2024/2025.
 3. Can owners with multiple properties apply for the DVR now? No. They will need to wait until the assessment process starts 2024/2025.
 4. Have those homeowners been notified of specifics regarding the sewer connections? No. Property owners have not been contacted to discuss any specifics of their sewer connection.

CONSTRUCTION QUESTIONS:

Note: Pre-Construction Video of the entire project area as well as photos of every driveway will be taken to identify pre-existing conditions.

1. During construction will the roads be closed? Yes. Some roadways will be temporarily closed.
2. Will the trench for the main sewer line be dug through the center of the road or down the side? The sewer main is designed substantially to be on one side of the road to avoid as much unnecessary damage to the existing road.
3. Will the roads be completely repaved or just where the digging was? Once a section of a sewer line is installed, the section will be filled and paved based on the County specifications for pavement restoration. Once a substantial area of construction is completed or possibly all, the entire roadway will be paved with a minimum of a 1" overlay.
4. Will my yard be torn up? The area near the road in front of your property that is within the County ROW will be disturbed however, the area will be returned to as good or better condition prior to the end of construction. Impacted driveways will be reconstructed.
5. Damages incurred to individual homeowner property during the installation of sewer line such as sprinkler systems, driveways and landscaping-who is responsible for repairs? The Contractor will restore any disturbed areas to previous or better condition within the County's right of way. Driveways will be restored with like kind materials. However it will be the responsibility of the property owner to re-locate prior to construction all landscaping, sprinkler systems, or any other structures that are located within the County's right-of-way.

ENGINEERING QUESTIONS:

1. Where are the new pump stations located? Pump Station CG-01 – E. Monopoly Loop in DRA #4. CG-02 – E. Monopoly Loop in DRA #10. CG-03 – E. Allegrie Drive (Clearview Estates.) CG-04 – N. Currier Point in DRA #11.
2. What is the criteria that was used to determine which properties will receive single or dual connection? The factors used included the elevation of the existing clean-out, the location of the connection to the home, driveway location and other improvements. Impact to each individual homeowner was considered and minimized to the best extent possible. Overall, about seventy percent of the lots will be serviced with single services.
3. Will an engineer meet individually with the Homeowners that will have dual connections? Driveways could be impacted and costly to repair. Individual homeowners are welcome to contact the County about their connection if they want to discuss their connection location after the design is published. It is not in the engineer's scope of work to meet individually with each homeowner.