

Latecomer Agreements - Frequent Questions

What is a Latecomer Agreement?

Latecomer Agreements are a common financing tool for private developers or municipalities to spread the cost of utility extensions among future beneficiaries (a.k.a., latecomers).

Which costs can be reimbursed?

Developers and municipalities may be reimbursed for costs associated with the design, construction and construction management of a sewer or water extension project.

What is the City's Latecomer goal?

On behalf of its ratepayers, the City seeks to recover the **full cost** of utility extensions it finances for future beneficiaries.

How is the utility extension cost allocated?

Parcels that require the extension to develop or redevelop are assessed as a proportion of the improvement cost based on prescriptions contained in RCW. Common prescriptions are parcel area and lineal frontage.

When does a Latecomer payment come due?

Payment is due when the **property owner is required to connect or requests to connect** to the new or improved facility.

With regard to Latecomer payments, RCW 35.91.040 is clear that no person, firm, or corporation may be authorized to tap into a water or sewer facility or extension thereof without first paying to the municipality all costs and charges made or assessed for such tap.

Are property owners notified when Latecomer Assessments are proposed?

A Preliminary Assessment estimate based on verified construction cost is sent via certified mail to each individual property owner within the assessment area.

Can property owners dispute a proposed Latecomer Assessment?

Within twenty days of the Preliminary Assessment mailing, a property owner in the assessment area may request a Public Hearing before the City Council to dispute the proposed assessment. At the conclusion of the Public Hearing the Council may approve the Preliminary Assessment, reject it, modify it, or send it back for further review by the Public Works Director.

How is a final decision made and how are property owners notified?

The City Council votes into place an Ordinance establishing the final reimbursement area and individual parcel assessments. These are recorded with the County for each affected parcel. Following the City Council's final determination, property owners are notified by certified mail.