

17 April 2025

Stevenson City Council  
7121 East Loop Road  
Stevenson, WA 98648  
(509) 427-5970

Dear Stevenson City Council:

We are Lisa and David Birney, Stevenson residents since 2017, and we are urging you to not adopt the “Proposed Sewer Ordinance” as presented.

At the first hearing on Thursday, April 10<sup>th</sup>, Council Member Oldfield told residents that we needed to “share the burden” of the sewer costs. He kept calling it “fairness” because the sewer system was developed for the whole city, and currently, only people connected are paying. According to Council Member Oldfield, the city has a \$17 million sewer debt (possibly \$12 million), and the “Proposed Sewer Ordinance” will help pay that debt. The “Proposed Sewer Ordinance” is in no way “fair” to all the residents who have paid for their septic systems and continue to maintain their systems. The “Proposed Sewer Ordinance” states:

E. ... More specifically, equitable distribution of costs is accomplished by expanding the pool of ratepayers to include those to whom the public sewer system is available but who do not connect thereto. Equitable distribution of costs for POTW expansion is accomplished by placing greater expectations on ratepayers and the public at large to pay than on developers.

The “Proposed Sewer Ordinance” (pp. 1-15) has many flaws that are not “equitable” to the residents of Stevenson:

1. “13.08.070 Connection with public sewer required. A. Compliance Required.” The table in part A under “Existing Development” does not allow an owner with OSS to alter or repair their current OSS. The table also states: “Installation or expansion of an OSS will not be approved unless the lot owner agrees to pay a proportionate share of the cost to make sewer available to the lot.”
2. Residents who opt out of connecting to city sewer will incur a monthly “penalty” of \$140+. Council Member Oldfield said the city cannot legally charge residents for a service they are not using; therefore, the city is calling it a “penalty.”
3. Twelve property owners will be immediately affected if the ordinance is adopted.

4. When the city's "General Sewer Plan" and "Conceptual" plan become realities, your residents will have to connect or pay a monthly "penalty," even if they have a working OSS.

The "Proposed Sewer Ordinance" needs more work. Existing developments with OSS should continue with their OSS, without penalty, or have a choice to connect, and new developments should connect to city sewer.

Please do not adopt the "Proposed Sewer Ordinance" as presented. Thank you for your time!

Sincerely,  
Lisa & David Birney