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**Subject: Sewer Connection Policy – Local Comparison and Context**

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Council Members,

Ahead of our next discussion, I wanted to share some local context on how neighboring communities structure sewer connection policies. This is intended to provide background information as Council considers how you want to move forward. We've heard concerns from some property owners that the current or proposed approach may feel unfair. That feedback is important to acknowledge. At the same time, it may be helpful to understand how neighboring cities of similar size are addressing this issue.

I've attached three city ordinances for reference, along with a table below that outlines the requirements at a high level.

### **What other cities are doing**

Across neighboring communities, there is a consistent baseline approach:

- When public sewer is available to a property, connection is required
- Distance thresholds are typically around 100 feet
- Septic systems are not treated as a long-term alternative once sewer is available
- Cities rely on clear triggers such as proximity, system failure, or property changes

For example:

- City of Bingen requires connection within 30 days once notified
- City of White Salmon requires connection within 180 days when sewer is available within 100 feet
- City of North Bonneville requires connection when sewer becomes available or at the time of property sale for certain systems, with enforcement mechanisms that include liens and utility shutoffs

### **How Stevenson compares**

As discussed in prior meetings, Stevenson's current direction includes exploring:

- Longer timelines than neighboring cities
- Additional flexibility, including administrative extensions or hardship considerations
- Alternatives to a penalty-first structure

Based on what we're seeing regionally, one question for Council to consider is not whether connection is ever required, as that is a common element across jurisdictions, but how that requirement is structured.

This includes:

- What triggers should apply (distance, health, sale, etc.)
- What timeline is appropriate
- What level of flexibility should be built in
- How enforcement, if any, should be approached

**Next steps**

This is ultimately a policy decision for Council. My goal is to make sure you have the information and context needed to decide how far you want to go and what approach best reflects your priorities. I look forward to your direction at the next meeting.

Best,  
Jenny

City	When Connection is Required	Distance Trigger	Timeline to Connect	Enforcement	Flexibility / Exceptions
Bingen	Mandatory upon City notice	100 ft (500 ft for public/commercial)	30 Days	City can complete work, lien property, add penalties/interest	Very limited
White Salmon	Mandatory when sewer is available	100 Ft	180 Days	Violation subject to enforcement and penalties	Moderate (longer timeline)
North Bonneville	Mandatory when sewer available or septic fails; also triggered at <b>property sale (for some systems)</b>	Not explicitly distance-based	90 days after notice	City can enforce, place lien, and even shut off water	Some exemptions for older compliant systems