

## **Oak Ridge/Pine Forest Sewer Project Information from 2/29/2024 Public Meeting**

The following information was shared with residents of Pine Forest and Oak Ridge at the public hearing held on February 29, 2024.

The first information that was shared was that no residents will be required to take the service. Annexation into the city for service, as well as service for city residents with existing septic systems, will be voluntary.

### **Funding**

We have \$4.375 million dollars in federal, state and local funding to install sewer service in Oak Ridge/Pine Forest. This amount of funding will not be adequate to install the service down every street in both neighborhoods as that requirement would be more like \$12-15 million. The city needs to hear from each property owner to indicate if they want the service or not. The deadline for that information is March 31, 2024.

### **Engineering**

An engineering update was provided by Carl Hofstadter. He indicated that once residents respond to the city that they want or do not want the service at their address, he will design the project to serve the highest concentration of individuals that are interested. He spoke about the construction process. Questions were asked about various aspects of the project. He shared information about the hook up for the service being placed at the property line and residents will be responsible for the cost to run the line from the discharge point at the house to the city's hook up at the property line.

### **Annexation**

It was reiterated that only residents that want to tie on to the service would be required to annex into the city. The city millage rate is currently 4.869 and has only gone down since 1979. Residents that do annex into the city would be expected to follow the city's code and abide by rules established in the city. Some additional services that would be offered to those residents include yard debris pick up, trash billing (at a reduced rate), police protection, animal control among others.

It was discussed that if someone committed and submits their annexation documentation, but the line does not service their property, the annexation will not be completed and any payment for the service will be returned to the resident.

### **Fees**

Fees associated with installation are below. These are one-time discounted fees for this project. These fees will return to the regular rate once the design portion of the project is complete. Residents that wish to take advantage of the discounted rate must commit prior to the March 31, 2024 deadline.

City residents on water:	\$225
County residents with outside water:	\$650
County residents with no service:	\$1000

The resident will be responsible for the cost of running the lines on their private property from the home to the hook up at the property line.

### **State/Federal Regulations**

Residents who have wells will be required to take water service in order to get sewer service. Water from private wells cannot be put into the city's sanitary sewer. Wells may be kept for irrigation purposes, but the EPD requires a physical break in the line that goes from the house to the well in order for sewer service to be established. Additionally, septic tanks are generally required to be filled in with gravel or sand by the state health code due to the risks associated with them being abandoned on the property.

If there are any additional questions, please reach out to Keri Orvin at City Hall. Again, March 31, 2024 will be the deadline to receive information from the residents for who do and do not want the service. After that date, the design will be finalized and project will be moving forward with the information collected. County residents who want the service will need to remit their annexation application and cash payment of \$35 that will be held until design is complete. Once design is complete, only residents who will be served by the sewer will go through the annexation process and be required to make the remaining payment.

Individuals that wish to receive updates regarding the progress of the project should email Keri Orvin at [manager@baxley.org](mailto:manager@baxley.org) and ask to be put on the distribution list for updates.