



**KALAMAZOO COUNTY
HEALTH AND COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT**

Promoting Health For All

James Rutherford, MPA
Director/Health Officer

Environmental Health

June 22, 2017

Marc Elliott P.E.
Director of Public Works
Charter Township of Oshtemo
7275 W. Main Street
Kalamazoo, MI 49009

Re: Proposed Sewer Project

Dear Mr. Elliott:

This letter is in response to your request for support of providing municipal sewer to Beech Ave, Westport, Skyridge, Country Club Village, North 7th Street, Main Street, KL Avenue, 11th Street, Whitegate Farms, Fairlane, Meridian Ave, and Frie Ave. Our department is in support of municipal sewer serving properties in these areas. We are in support of this for several reasons. Due to the generally small size of parcels in aging plats, it is becoming increasingly difficult to locate replacement water wells and sewage treatment systems. Also, many of the older systems within the proposed sewer extension project areas do not meet current design standards. Specifically, 59.1% of homes in the neighborhoods above, have sewage treatment systems that do not comply with current sewage treatment system design standards. Additionally, due to lot size and existing system locations, it may be necessary to remove old failed systems to install a sewage treatment system that meets today's design standards. This leads to an increased cost to the homeowner for a replacement system that has a limited lifespan.

In order to install on-site sewage treatment systems, several items are required to ensure compliance with the Kalamazoo County Sanitary Code. These items include maintaining four feet above signs of a high water table for the sewage treatment system (STS), maintaining 50 feet from an STS to a water well (including maintaining these distances from neighboring parcels), and maintaining 50 feet from an STS to surface water.

Also, the Kalamazoo County Sanitary Code requires a suitable area for new and replacement sewage treatment systems for new construction. Current code also requires that new and replacement sewage treatment systems consist of a septic tank

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or tanks and a drainfield rather than drywells. Currently a variance is required for drywells to be installed for a replacement sewage treatment system. Drywells are not allowed to service new construction for a parcel. Although not indicative of every lot in your proposed sewer extension areas, some of these lots may be too small to meet code requirements for new construction.

Municipal sewer would provide protection of the groundwater in these areas and improve water quality. Protecting groundwater and increasing water quality can help protect the health of the citizens living in these communities

We are pleased to lend our support of this project and appreciate the opportunity to comment on this issue. If you have any further questions please contact me at (269) 373-5356.

Sincerely:

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Vern Johnson".

Vern Johnson, REHS, Environmental Health Director
HEALTH & COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT WEBSITE: www.kalcounty.com
EMAIL: vljohn@kalcounty.com
PHONE: 269-373-5356 FAX: 269-373-5333

Cc: Lucas Pols, R.E.H.S.