



*Queen  
Anne's  
County*

**DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS**

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April 12, 2016

Memorandum

**INFORMATIONAL ITEM**

To: County Commissioners

From Todd R. Mohn, PE

Re: Southern Kent Island Sanitary Project Update

Queen Anne's County has completed design and preparation of construction contract documents and will be soliciting construction bids for Phase 1 of the Southern Kent Island (SKI) Sanitary Project in April 2016. This project represents 60 percent of the overall plan to extend public sewer to nine exclusive communities on SKI which have documented failing on-site septic disposal systems (OSDS) creating a large public health concern.

The collective SKI communities include 1,518 existing single family residential homes, 8 non-residential uses and a maximum of 632 vacant infill lots. The project will be implemented in a series of four phases over an estimated 10-year period. Phase 1 of the project is scheduled for completion within the next 5-years. The overall phasing plan is:

Phase 1 - Kent Island Estates & Romancoke on the Bay (KIE-R)

Phase 2 - Tower Gardens

Phase 3 - Queen Anne's Colony & Kentmoor

Phase 4 - Chesapeake Estates, Sunny Isle of Kent, Normans & Matapeake Estates

Phase 1 of the project will deliver public sewer infrastructure for the two communities with the greatest concentration of septic system failures in the new SKI sewer service area. In addition, this phase provides the transmission force main along MD Route 8 required for the remaining three phases. The components of phase 1 include:

1. An exclusive/limited access 8-mile sewer transmission force main extending from the County's Enhanced Nutrient Removal (ENR) Wastewater Treatment Plant along MD Route 8
2. Community public sewer collection lines for KIE-R
3. On-site STEP system equipment serving 775 occupied properties in KIE-R

Solicitation of construction bids is scheduled for initial advertisement during the week of April 18, 2016. Formal bids from interested firms will be received and publicly opened in June/July.



This project has been evaluated, studied and identified as a public health concern and has been a growing pollution generator since 1975. In 2004, the County Commissioners took the vital first step towards solving this longstanding problem by reserving wastewater treatment capacity at the KNSG Enhance Nutrient Removal (ENR) Plant. Since 2004, significant time, resources and contracted experts have been dedicated towards permanently solving this very challenging problem. Expenditures incurred to date for contracted services is \$1.432 million. This figure excludes extensive man-hours dedicated to the project by various Boards and Commissions, County Staff and State Officials. The major project milestones and accomplishments are briefly outlined below.

### **Major Project Milestones**

2004 - County Commissioner's adopted Resolution #04-68 reserving 500,000 gallons of ENR sewer treatment capacity for communities with failing septic systems.

2007 – The County retained nationally recognized waste disposal expert, Dr. Robert Rubin, to determine the best solution to the SKI problem. His conclusion was, “extension of public sewer is most cost effective solution and best for Nutrient reduction.”

2008 – The County retained engineering/planning firm JMT to evaluate options and ramifications of a public sewer system for SKI.

2011 – The Department of Public Works 15-member Citizen Advisory Board concluded after 4-years of study that public sewer collection and treatment was warranted for SKI provided the County imposed: 1) infill growth limitations, 2) an Economic Benefit Premium for vacant lots, and 3) obtained a significant State Grant.

2012 – The County began regular meetings with MDE & MDP to develop a plan to balance infill development with project financing and final cost to residents.

2013 – The County retained experienced expert counsel Kurt Fischer from Venable, LLC to assure legally defensible actions.

2013 – The County retained experienced expert appraiser, Fitz Turner from Tidewater Properties, to assure Economic Benefit Premium viability.

November 2013 – The County Commissioners Introduced the Lot Consolidation Ordinance #13-24 and establish SKI Service Area boundaries, reducing infill development potential from 1,600 units down to a maximum of 632 units.

November 2013 - County Staff researched public sewer collection systems nationwide in order to select an appropriate technology for this unique island peninsula service area. Estimated project costs were reduced significantly through the use of the septic tank effluent pumping (STEP) system that limits transmission of effluent to greywater.

January 2014 – MDE sponsored HB 11 at the General Assembly which facilitated the County's request to use the State Bay Restoration Fund (BRF) for an \$11.8 million grant for the public sewer extension to SKI.

March 2014 – The County Commissioners develop Resolution #14-07 establishing the SKI Wastewater Service Area and the methodology to levy a special benefit assessment for the SKI Public Sewer Project.

May 2014 – The County held a series of three Public Hearings required for project initiation: 1) the Overall Public Sewer Extension Project, 2) the Lot Merger Ordinance (#13-24), 3) the Special Benefit Resolution #14-07 to levy project costs to residents. All three were adopted by the County Commissioners.

June 2014 - The State Smart Growth Coordinating Committee (SGCC) approved the SKI Sewer Extension project making the County eligible for a conditional State BRF grant and low interest loans to fund project construction.

November 2014 - The BRF Grant Agreement was accepted by the County Commissioners for the SKI Sewer project. The \$11.8 million State BRF grant will be apportioned to each existing resident on SKI to cover their individual connection fee for wastewater treatment.

February 2015 - County Commissioners approved design contracts to proceed with detailed engineering plans to prepare construction bidding documents for Phase 1 of the project.

March 2015 - County and State Professional Staff in cooperation with the Homeowner Associations of Kent Island Estates and Romancoke hosted a series of five (5) open-house workshops at the local Community Clubhouses to provide one-on-one information to residents about the proposed public sewer extension project. Southern Kent Island Sanitary Project

April 2015 – County Staff launched an extensive door-to-door campaign to meet with residents and collect right-of-entry forms needed for the individual STEP system design plans for each home in phase 1. Homeowner participation is currently 73-percent (563 out of 775).

October 2015 - The County retained engineering/planning firm RK&K to prepare a Sea Level Rise and Coastal Vulnerability Assessment as required by grant conditions imposed by the SGCC.

November 2015 – The County established a Community office in a recently vacated home next to the United Communities Firehouse to continue with outreach efforts, assisting residents, and collection of resident design agreements and easements.

March 2016 – Construction Bidding Documents reach the 95-percent completion stage and the solicitation schedule for phase 1 is scheduled for mid-April.

March 2016 – Fiber conduit incorporated into design as a potential add-alternate to the contract.

Cc Dr. Joseph Ciotola