

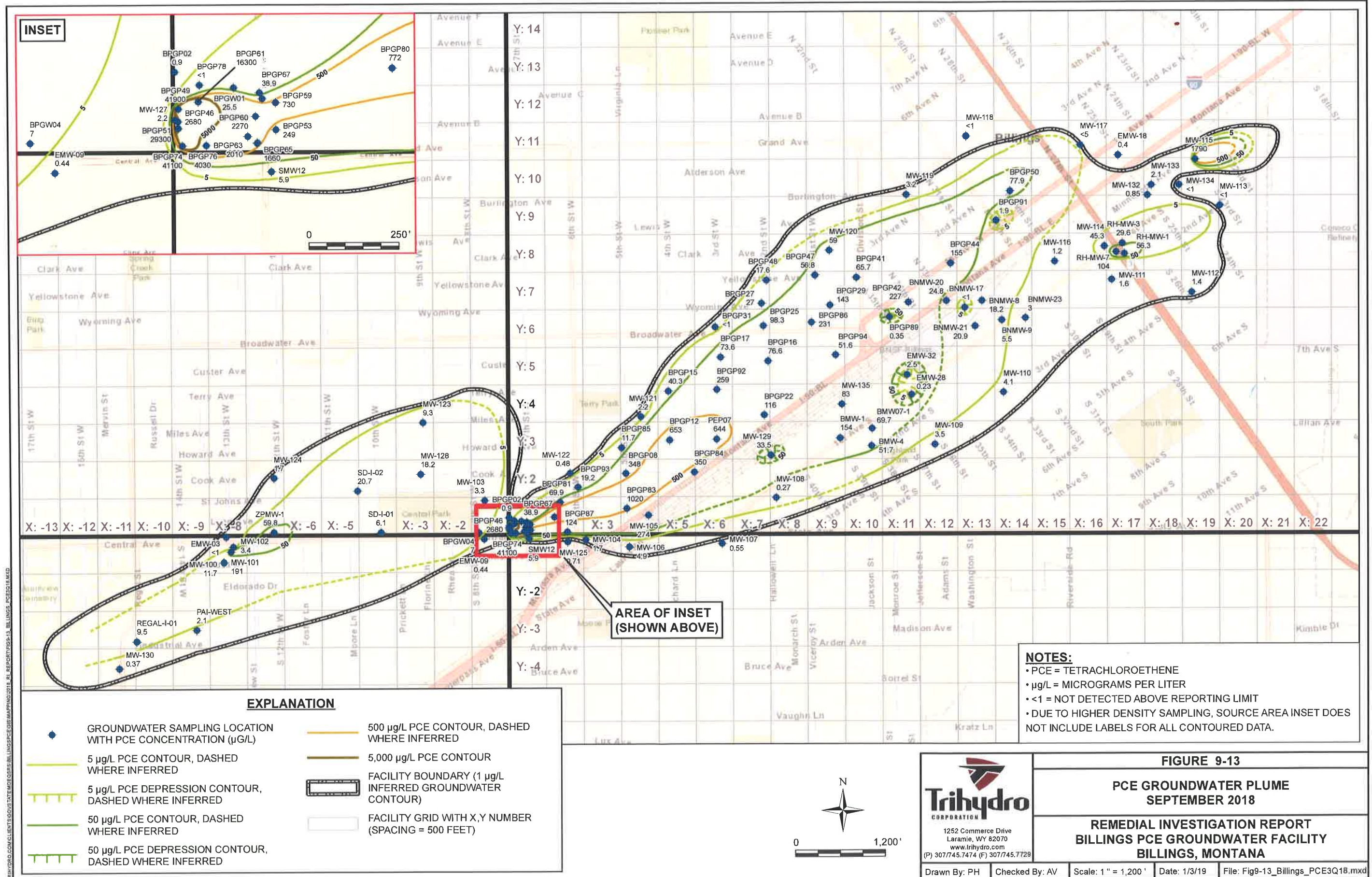
Billings City Administration Weekly Report

October 11, 2019

- 1) **Public Safety** – After Monday’s discussion on improving the safety of Billings our team is working towards a follow-up meeting on November 4 or 12th. Our November discussion will focus on the specifics on how we will make Billings a safer community and the options we have to pay for the increased investments.
- 2) **Billings Solvent Site** – Monday afternoon, Dave Mumford, Boris Krizek and I met with representatives of the MT Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) and the Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA) Denver office to discuss the Billings Solvent Site (BSS). MDEQ is asking the City if we want the BSS to be added to the federal governments Superfund Site listing. The impacts of this decision will be presented to the Council in November for your direction. The BSS is a chlorinated solvent (PCE) plume, caused by dry cleaning fluids that were dumped into the ground during the last century. The plume is generally located along Central Ave. and the railroad tracks (see enclosed map).
- 3) **Airport Grants** - Billings Airport received two more Airport Improvement Program (AIP) grants totaling \$2,442,526 that we will apply towards the Phase 1 Terminal Concourse Expansion project which, as you may recall, was around \$3,300,000. \$2,000,000 of this is what is considered discretionary funding out of the Airport Improvement Program (AIP) funds. Discretionary funding is based on the priority of the project and how it competes with other projects. The \$442,526 was the balance of our annual FAA AIP Entitlement grant. Subsequently, we are extremely happy to see this money be allocated to Billings. Total grant revenues secured by the Airport this year are \$6,558,431, more than double that of a regular year.
- 4) **Trailhead Business Park/Lockwood TEDD Tour** – Yesterday afternoon, Big Sky Economic Development organized a bus tour of the proposed Lockwood TEDD. Several leaders from Lockwood, BSED, the County Commissioners and several City Councilmembers attended. After the tour, the group spent time discussing how to work through the challenges the park faces in order to become a reality. See enclosed memo, Chapter 28 of the City’s utility rules and three informational documents prepared by BSED.
- 5) **Next Week’s Meetings/Task Forces/Presentations etc.**
 - a. Columbus Day, Monday, October 14th city offices will be closed.
 - b. West End Task Force, Tuesday, October 15th, 7:00 pm, Faith Evangelical Church, 3145 Sweet Water Drive Room 130/131.
 - c. Rimrock Task Force, Wednesday, October 16th, 7:00 pm, Lillis Chapel St. Johns, 2429 Mission Way.
 - d. Board & Commission Volunteer Appreciation Dinner, Thursday, October 17th, 6:00 pm, Community Center, 360 N. 23rd Street.
 - e. Southside Task Force, Thursday, October 17th, 6:30 pm, Northern Plains Resource Council, 220 S. 27th Street.

- f. Terry Park Task Force, Thursday, October 17th, 7:00 pm, Bethlehem Lutheran, 40 10th Street West.

Have a great weekend!





Council Memorandum

REPORT TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council

FROM: Chris Kukulski, City Administrator

SUBJECT: Lockwood Water and Sewer District boundary expansion to include the Lockwood Targeted Economic Development District (TEDD)

MEETING DATE: October 9, 2019

RECOMMENDATION: The City Council will attend tomorrow's Lockwood TEDD tour as you consider allowing the Lockwood Water and Sewer District to expand their service boundary. In preparation for the tour, please read this memo and chapter 28 of the City's Rules and Regulations Governing Water and Wastewater Services (attached).

BACKGROUND: During an April 2019 City Council Work Session, the Lockwood Water and Sewer District (LWSD) asked the Council to enter into discussions to expand their sewer district to include the Lockwood Targeted Economic Development District (TEDD).

The TEDD is approx. 1,200 acres located between the Interstate and Yellowstone River – north of Lockwood and east of Billings Heights. Most of the area is zoned industrial or agriculture. The current use is predominately agriculture or open space. Because of flood plain restrictions and other topographical issues, approximately half of the area is considered developable.

The goal of the Lockwood TEDD is to create the planned, ready-to-go industrial space necessary to retain Yellowstone County's growing industrial businesses and attract new private investment and industrial development that will provide many quality, long-term, high-paying jobs. The economic potential of this development is enormous. In 2015, the University of Montana's Bureau of Business and Economic Research conducted an impact analysis of Trailhead Commerce Park, a proposed industrial development in a portion of the area that has since become the Lockwood TEDD. That analysis estimated that such a development would create the following increases after fifteen years:

- Total employment 3,655
- Annual Personal Income \$255.7 million
- Annual Economic Output \$862.0 million
- Population Increase 4,352

Some of the industrial businesses already located in the TEDD include: Town & Country Supply, Pacific Steel & Recycling, American Steel, Montana Peterbilt and Apex Steel.

The contract between the City and the LWSD requires that both sides agree, in order to expand the LWSD boundary.

Attached is Chapter 28 of the Billings Rules and Regulations Governing Water and Wastewater Service, most recently updated in 2017. Chapter 28 clearly states that it is the intention of the City of Billings to not provide water or wastewater service to customers outside the City Limits. The chapter does include a process for the Mayor and City Council to waive the requirement to annex with the following provision. The final paragraph of chapter 28 reads as follows:

In all circumstances where an enlargement of a service area has been approved or conditionally approved but annexation has been denied, prior to the provision of services by the City the applicant shall enter into a service agreement with the City and shall submit a written waiver of right to protest annexation.

Out of hundreds (maybe even thousands) of requests for access to City water and/or wastewater services, Billings has made only a handful of exceptions to these rules, most notably Lockwood, Phillip 66, Exxon and the Meadowlark Mobile Home Park. As it has been explained to me, Billings did an evaluation of the Lockwood area and determined it would be cost prohibited to bring Lockwood's infrastructure up to Billings City standards. This challenge combined with health issues that existed in Lockwood, Billings City Council decided to waive the annexation requirements and provide access to City wastewater treatment through a service agreement. Phillip 66 was receiving City water service before they requested wastewater service. Because they were already receiving water service it was determined that legally we were required to provide them wastewater service. The City Council waived Exxon based on the previous Lockwood decision. The last area that has been waived is the Meadowlark Mobile Home Park next to the City Landfill. MDEQ had permitted the Meadowlark Park to construct an above ground sewage lagoon in the 100 year flood plain a mile above the City's water plant intake. PWD had serious concerns with the vulnerability of the lagoon and its potential health impacts on the City's water treatment plant. In discussions with the Meadowlark owners, they agreed to construct and maintain the sewer line to our sewer transmission line and not construct the lagoon. These are the only areas we are aware of that the Mayor and Council have provided water or sewer service outside the City Limits. Based on my reading of our rules and regulations, any user who is not immediately annexed into the City should be required to sign a waiver of right to protest annexation.

With the exceptions listed above, the common theme is tied to prior developments not new development. In the case of the Lockwood TEDD, it has yet to be developed and can be developed with appropriate infrastructure standards to protect the environment and provide quality municipal services. Our City and County have prioritized the Lockwood Interchange Bypass, costing tax payers approx. \$200 million dollars to connect the Billings Heights to the interstate and Lockwood. This new transportation corridor and the TEDD will fuel development in our community. As stated earlier, the impact analysis of the TEDD estimated that such a development would create 3,655 jobs, with an annual income of over \$255 million. The Trailhead Business Park is a great idea and if developed properly, will be a great asset to our community.

I believe a significant problem for the City, is the exceptions we have made to help former developments, most notably the refineries and Lockwood, when their private utility systems failed. These entities should have been annexed or at a minimum, waivers of right to protest annexation should have been required. These decisions to be helpful are now being used against us. We should not repeat this mistake. Every time we make an exception, it becomes harder and harder for future policy makers to defend the necessity to annex. If the city had stopped requiring greenfield developments to annex as a condition of utility extensions back in the 1970s, the City of Billings would likely have a tax base and population closer to 65,000 residents but we would bear the cost of services for today's population of 110,000.

As we understand it, the LWSD boundary was originally developed based on Lockwood's water rights. The water district was established first and the sewer district has the same boundaries. During discussions with the TEDD advisory board the LWSD staff have acknowledged that by expanding their service area to include the TEDD boundaries, they may not have enough water rights to meet the needs of their expanded district. This is a problem that should not be ignored. Water rights are expensive and not always even available. The City has sufficient water rights to provide a solution. One of my concerns is that once the city begins providing sewer treatment services and it is determined that it is not cost effective for the LWSD to purchase more water rights, the City will be asked to provide water. In order to minimize our probability of repeating the situation the City found itself in with Phillip 66 we need to require waivers of right to protest annexation for each utility service as required by our rules.

When checking into the competing Industrial Parks identified by Big Sky Economic Development, they are all believed to be within the city limits of their perspective communities. Being within the City is an advantage, not a disadvantage. City services are critical to the success of a modern business park. We are committed to the City's vision as a diverse welcoming community where people prosper and businesses succeed. We can best accomplish this vision when developments become a partner with us rather than a competitor.

ALTERNATIVES: As determined by the Council.

FISCAL EFFECTS: The fiscal effects will continue to be analyzed prior to any formal recommendation to the City Council.

Attachments: Chapter 28 of the Billings Rules and Regulations Governing Water and Wastewater Service

Report compiled on: October 9, 2019

RULES AND REGULATIONS

GOVERNING

WATER AND WASTEWATER

SERVICE

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT
CITY OF BILLINGS, MONTANA

2224 Montana Avenue
(406) 657-8230

June 2017

CHAPTER 28 - WASTEWATER SERVICE AREA

28-1. INTENT AND PURPOSE

The intent and purpose of the rules and regulations set forth in this chapter is to:

- (1) Adopt an official wastewater service area that specifically designates that particular territory which is to be served with wastewater service from the municipal wastewater system;
- (2) Provide for an orderly, planned, and cost effective method of enlarging the wastewater service area so adopted;
- (3) Promote annexation to the corporate city limits of all properties to be served with municipal wastewater service from the municipal wastewater system.; and,
- (4) Ensure public participation and comment in the decision making process with respect to all enlargements of the wastewater service area into an unannexed area of the City of Billings hereafter to be granted by the City Council.

28-2. THE WASTEWATER SERVICE AREA

The wastewater service area for the city is that area within the boundaries of the city, any areas presently served outside the city, and any subsequently approved amendments thereto. A map depicting the wastewater service area adopted herein, and any enlargements shall be made available at all times for public inspection during regular working hours at the Public Works Department Service Center, 2251 Belknap Avenue, Billings, Montana.

28-3. PROHIBITED ACT

It is prohibited for any person to extend, or cause to be extended, beyond the wastewater service area boundary any public or private sanitary sewer and/or wastewater facilities which are, in turn, either directly or indirectly connected with the municipal wastewater system.

28-4. ANNEXATION REQUIREMENTS

- (1) Unless this section is waived by the Mayor and City Council as provided by City code section 26-207, all properties to be included within the wastewater service area shall be annexed or an attempt at annexation shall be made first and before any wastewater service area enlargement applications may be considered. Further, whenever possible the property being considered for inclusion in the wastewater service area shall be annexed to the city rather than accepting waivers of the property owner's right to protest annexation of said property to the city. Waivers may be accepted by the City Council in its sole discretion only in those particular cases where good and sufficient cause is shown and a hardship would result if

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waivers were not accepted. Any waivers must be in legal form as approved by the City Attorney; be recorded with the County Clerk and Recorder, Yellowstone County, Montana; run with the land; and shall be signed by owners of the majority of the land area and by a majority of the land owners of the area to be considered for inclusion in the water service area.

- (2) Unless this section is waived by the Mayor and City Council as provided by City code, the property owner shall first petition the City to annex the property involved prior to submission of a wastewater service area enlargement application. The City Council shall then consider such petition.
- (3) The City Administrator or designee shall notify in writing the prospective applicant of denial of annexation or right to file waivers or both, and approval or denial of enlargement of the service area. If approved the applicant shall be notified as to when the requirements set forth in this section have been satisfactorily completed and authorize said applicant to proceed with the service area enlargement application.

28-5. ENLARGEMENT APPLICATION

Applications and required documentation for wastewater service area enlargements into unannexed areas shall be submitted in writing to the Public Works Director or designee using forms provided by the city.

28-6. PREREQUISITES TO APPLICATION

Unless this section is waived by the Mayor and City Council as provided in City code, the following conditions shall be met prior to making application for enlargement of the wastewater service area:

- (1) The property at the time the application is filed shall be:
 - (a) Contiguous to the boundary of the wastewater service area as same exists;
 - (b) Entirely within the city's full service urban planning area; and,
 - (c) Entirely within the city's facilities planning area.
- (2) Applicant shall complete annexation requirements.
- (3) Provided, that should a state or federal governmental entity, as a condition of providing funds or grants, require that service be extended to other areas outside the scope of this section (Section 28-6), the City Council may, upon receipt of application for waiver and upon a proper showing, waive the requirements of this section.

28-7. **APPLICATION REVIEWS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Public Works Director or designee shall review all water service area enlargement applications into unannexed areas so filed with the director, and upon completion of said review, the Public Works Director shall submit the application to the City Council for action. A service agreement for the property shall also be submitted to the City Council for action.

The Public Works Director shall review each wastewater service area enlargement application filed with the director for the purpose of determining compliance with the following specific conditions:

- (1) Each application for enlargement of the wastewater service area so filed with the Public Works Director shall be accompanied with a legally binding and lawfully recorded special agreement wherein 100 percent (100%) of the owners-of-record of the property under consideration for inclusion in the wastewater service area shall have agreed to the following:
 - (a) To waive their right to protest any future water and sanitary sewer special improvement districts that may be created in the future by the City Council for the purpose of providing water and/or wastewater service to the property in question;
 - (b) Agree to fully comply with all rules, regulations, resolutions, ordinances, and laws governing the providing of water and wastewater service by the City, or as same may be lawfully changed from time to time;
 - (c) Make commitment to construct all the necessary water and/or wastewater system facilities and to begin development of the entire parcel of property to be included in the wastewater service area within two years from the date of the City Council's approval of the enlargement application. In the event the applicant fails to comply with this particular commitment, the property in question shall automatically be excluded from the wastewater service area; and,
 - (d) Agree to fully comply with any such other conditions and/ or requirements as the City Council may establish from time to time.
- (2) Under no circumstances shall the City Council grant approval to any applicant for enlargement of the wastewater service area which would include property in the wastewater service area that is beyond the service capabilities of the municipal wastewater system.

28-8. **PUBLIC HEARING**

At the time of completion of an annexation, the annexed territory shall automatically be included in the service area; however, before officially acting upon any application for enlargement of the service area into an unannexed area the City Council shall hold a public hearing thereon and shall give public notice of hearing upon each such

waivers were not accepted. Any waivers must be in legal form as approved by the City Attorney; be recorded with the County Clerk and Recorder, Yellowstone County, Montana; run with the land; and shall be signed by owners of the majority of the land area and by a majority of the land owners of the area to be considered for inclusion in the water service area.

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Unless this section is waived by the Mayor and City Council as provided in City code, the following conditions shall be met prior to making application for enlargement of the wastewater service area:

- (1) The property at the time the application is filed shall be:
 - (a) Contiguous to the boundary of the wastewater service area as same exists;
 - (b) Entirely within the city's full service urban planning area; and,
 - (c) Entirely within the city's facilities planning area.
- (2) Applicant shall complete annexation requirements.
- (3) Provided, that should a state or federal governmental entity, as a condition of providing funds or grants, require that service be extended to other areas outside the scope of this section (Section 28-6), the City Council may, upon receipt of application for waiver and upon a proper showing, waive the requirements of this section.

application

28-9. CITY COUNCIL ACTION

After the conclusion of a public hearing as provided in Section 26-8, by a simple majority vote of those members present and voting, the Mayor and City Council may waive the requirements of Sections 28-4 and 28-6 if in their discretion there exists unique or exceptional factual circumstances that convince them that such requirements within these two sections are unnecessary or impractical.

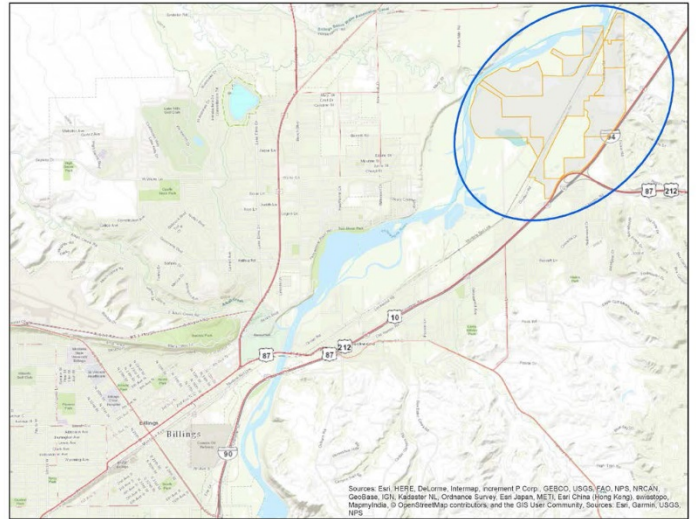
If the requirements of 28-4 and 28-6 are not waived, the City Council shall approve, conditionally approve or deny an application for enlargement of a service area that has met the requirements of Section 28-4 and 28-6 within thirty (30) days after the date of the public hearing. The approval or conditional approval shall be in force for the period of time set forth in the approval. A denial of an application shall be in force for one (1) year after date of such denial.

In all circumstances where an enlargement of a service area has been approved or conditionally approved but annexation has been denied, prior to the provision of services by the City the applicant shall enter into a service agreement with the City and shall submit a written waiver of right to protest annexation.

Lockwood TEDD Overview

The Lockwood Targeted Economic Development District (TEDD) is approximately 1200 acres located between the Interstate and the Yellowstone River – north of Lockwood and east of Billings Heights. Most of the area is zoned Heavy Industrial with the remaining parcels zoned Controlled Industrial or Agricultural Open Space. The current use of this land is mostly Agricultural or Open Space. Because of flood plain restrictions and other topographical issues, less than half of the area is considered developable. Some of the industrial businesses already located in the TEDD include:

- Town & Country Supply – fertilizer facility
- Pacific Steel & Recycling – scrap metal and recycling facility
- American Steel – steel manufacturing
- Montana Peterbilt – truck sales and service
- Apex Steel – steel fabrication



This location was recommended over two other alternatives – one in Billings and one in Laurel – studied in the [Industrial Park Feasibility Analysis](#) completed by KLJ Engineering in 2014. That recommendation was based on this area's good access to rail and road infrastructure, the lack of conflicting land uses, and property owner support.

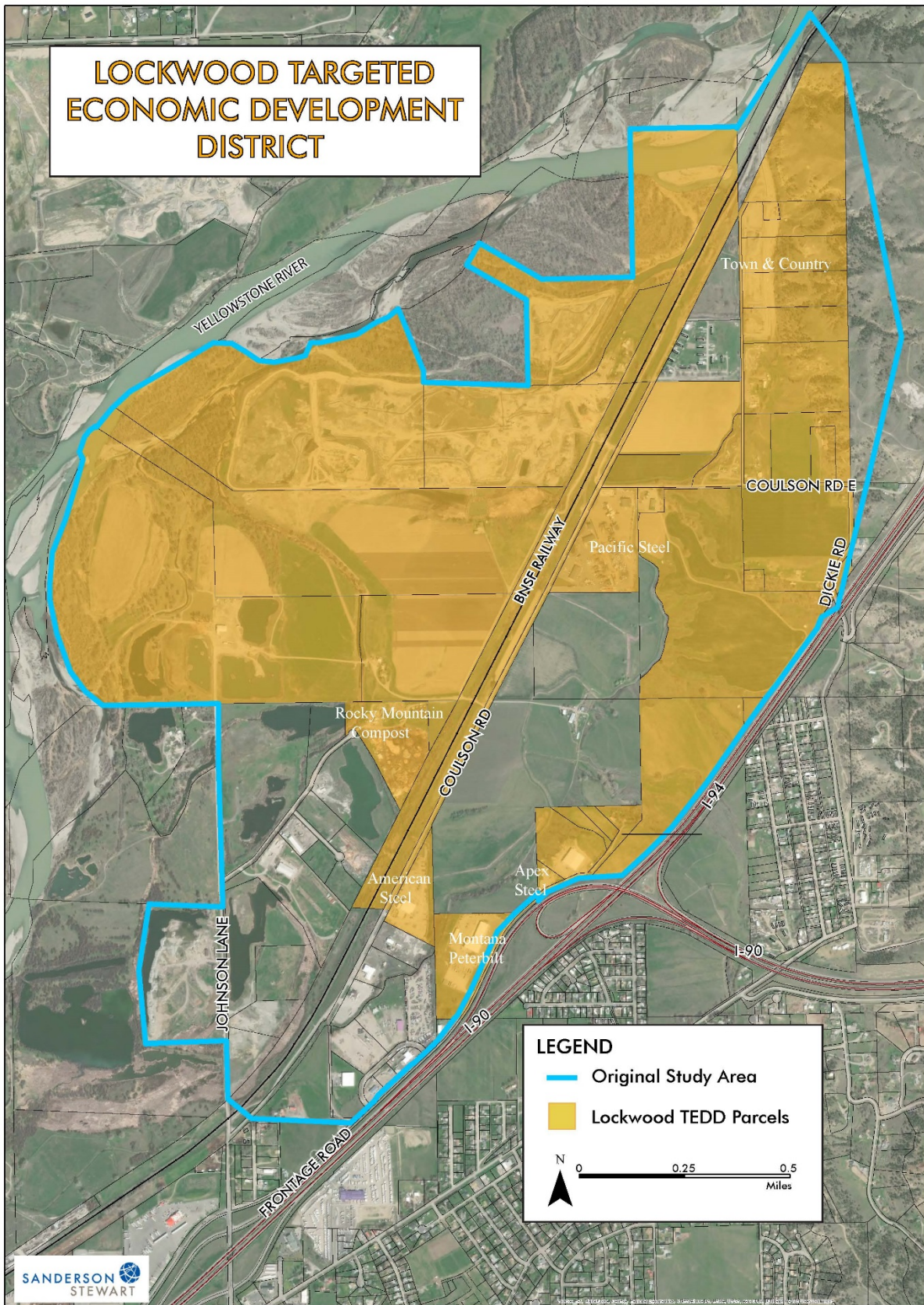
As a Targeted Economic Development District, the County can use Tax Increment Financing (TIF). While TIF is used in Urban Renewal Districts to address blight, TEDDs use TIF to help fund the development of public infrastructure to promote secondary, value-adding industry and manufacturing.

The goal of the Lockwood TEDD is to create the planned, ready-to-go industrial space necessary to retain Yellowstone County's growing industrial businesses and attract new private investment and industrial development that will provide many quality, long-term, high-paying jobs. The economic potential of this development is enormous. In 2015, the University of Montana's Bureau of Business and Economic Research conducted an impact analysis of Trailhead Commerce Park, a proposed industrial development in a portion of the area that has since become the Lockwood TEDD. That analysis estimated that such a development would create the following increases after fifteen years:

- Total employment 3,655
- Annual Personal Income \$255.7 Million
- Annual Economic Output \$862 Million
- Population Increase 4,352

The potential benefits of the Lockwood TEDD are significant and will reach well beyond the community of Lockwood to Billings, Yellowstone County, and the entire region.

LOCKWOOD TARGETED ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT



Dear Mayor and City Council: 9-26-19

As preparation for our future meetings, tours, and discussions regarding the Lockwood Targeted Economic Development District (TEDD), we promised to provide you with some information to help facilitate the conversation. Below is our **second installment** examining our regional competition for industrial businesses.

Please let me know if you have any questions, or if you need additional information.

Regional Industrial Park Competition

A critical motivation for the development of the Lockwood TEDD Industrial area has been the lack of appropriate space for manufacturing, processing, and other industrial enterprises within Yellowstone County. This is due, in part, to a very low vacancy rate for industrial properties. KLJ Engineering's Industrial Park Feasibility Analysis (2014) noted 301 acres of vacant industrial land in the County, less than ten percent of all industrial land. This situation is exacerbated by other limitations on many of these vacant parcels that make them unappealing to industrial businesses. These constraints include:

- Parcels tend to be scattered between existing structures.
- Most available parcels cannot accommodate future expansion or planned assemblage.
- Many parcels are bound by conflicting land uses.
- Some lack adequate access for large trucks or have limited access to highways and interstates.
- Insufficient utilities and communication infrastructure.
- Limited or no access to rail siding facilities.

As a result, Yellowstone County has been losing potential industrial business to our peer communities in the region that have already developed suitable space not hindered by these limitations. Examples can be found in Butte, Sioux Falls, Great Falls, and Bismarck.

Butte – Montana Connections Development Park

- 800 developable acres at the intersection of I-90 and I-15.
- Offers water, sewer, power, streets, and rail.
- Manufacturing, warehousing, distribution, and offices
- Publicly owned by Port of Montana port authority.

Sioux Falls – Foundation Park

- 820-acre site located at the intersection of I-29 and I-90 and close to the airport.
- Phase 1 – 430 sub-dividable acres for larger manufacturers. Phase 2 – 390 acres for a single mega-project.
- Offers all utilities to site, including rail on many parcels.
- Developed through a unique partnership between Sioux Falls Development Foundation, the Governor's Office of Economic Development, the City of Sioux Falls, and Forward Sioux Falls.

Great Falls – AgriTech Park

- 1,100-acre phased heavy industrial park. 197-acre Phase 1 is a BNSF Certified Site.
- Offers water, sewer, power, telecom, streets, and rail.
- Heavy industrial tenants including Pacific Steel, Helena Chemical, and Montana Specialty Mills.
- Owned and operated by Great Falls Development Authority.

Bismarck – Northern Plains Commerce Centre

- 243-acre development located on the southeast side of Bismarck, near the airport.
- Offers water, sewer, storm water, streets, power, and rail.
- Features industry, manufacturing, and warehousing including construction equipment, scrap metal, and agricultural services.
- Owned and developed by the City of Bismarck.

Each of these developments offers the amenities most sought by industrial businesses:

- Desirable location with convenient access to the Interstate system and airports.
- Rail service.
- All utilities available in sufficient amounts.
- Acreage to allow for expansion.
- No conflicting land uses in adjacent area.

Another shared feature of these developments is they are each operated by one public or public-private entity. In a typical example, an economic development authority or port authority owns, markets, and manages the operations of the industrial park, either selling or leasing parcels to individual businesses. The Lockwood TEDD development uses a different model – an informal partnership with the local private landowners. Though this model was the most fitting choice in this situation, it does come with some unique challenges that must be considered. Those challenges are the subject of next week's installment.

Billings has a long industrial heritage that we hope to continue and enhance through the development of the Lockwood TEDD Industrial Area. As a regional hub ideally located at the crossroads between Minneapolis and Seattle – Denver and Calgary, we have an incredible opportunity to build an industrial facility to rival anything in the western United States.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Thom MacLean

Dear Mayor and City Council:

As preparation for our future meetings, tours, and discussions regarding the Lockwood Targeted Economic Development District (TEDD), we promised to provide you with some information to help facilitate the conversation. Below is our **third installment** examining the unique opportunities and challenges of our development model.

Please let me know if you have any questions, or if you need additional information.

The Lockwood TEDD Model Brings Opportunities and Unique Challenges

Last week, we provided you with information on established industrial parks in four regional cities – Butte, Sioux Falls, Great Falls, and Bismarck. We noted that one feature common to each of these examples is ownership by a single public or economic development entity. This is a popular form of operation. Industrial parks in Missoula, Williston, Livingston, Hardin, Gillette, and Belgrade also use this model.

The Lockwood TEDD has a different design. It is a cooperative effort among Yellowstone County, local business and property owners, service districts, the community of Lockwood, the City of Billings, and Big Sky Economic Development to achieve the common goal of fostering industrial growth by strategically developing needed infrastructure and effectively marketing to convince businesses to locate and expand in Lockwood.

A significant unique feature of the development model we are using is the central nature of the local property owner. There are seventeen different owners associated with TEDD properties, ranging from a few acres to hundreds of acres. These property owners will be the driving force in the development of this industrial area. Direct involvement by numerous property owners has some advantages. These owners have valuable expertise, resources, and connections that can assist in the realization of our common goals. They are inherently invested in our endeavor and are motivated to contribute to the success of the TEDD.

At the April 1, 2019, City Council work session, the annexation of the Lockwood TEDD area was discussed as a requirement for the City's agreement to allow Lockwood Water and Sewer District to expand its sewer district boundary under the Wastewater Service Agreement to include that area. Any proposed annexation would not be immediate or total. The City has suggested that any property owners in the expanded sewer district area would be required to sign a "Waiver of Right to Protest Annexation" (Waiver) only if and when they hooked into the sewer system. The City would agree not to use those waivers until the TEDD sunsets – which could be as late as 2056. At the time, KLJ Engineering was in the process of developing a Short-term Strategic Infrastructure plan for the TEDD. Part of that analysis involved interviewing the TEDD property owners. We asked KLJ to query the owners on their thoughts about annexation by the City. Property owners and businesses expressed very little support about possible future annexation, and many expressed strong concerns.

Landowner support is crucial to the successful development of planned industrial space in this model. This fact has become even more apparent as we have worked with City Administration to develop a recommendation for the City Council regarding the expansion of the Lockwood Water and Sewer District's sewer boundary under its Wastewater Service Agreement with the City of Billings. Based on the feedback we have heard from the property owners involved, if that recommendation includes a requirement that property owners provide a "Waiver of the Right to Protest Annexation" (Waiver) in order to receive sewer service, it will pose obstacles that may curtail or prevent the envisioned development of the area as an industrial park capable of providing abundant high-wage jobs.

Big Sky Economic Development is charged with assisting in the creation of planned, ready-to-go industrial space to maintain and enhance Billings' tradition as an industrial and commercial hub for Montana and the region. We believe this is a common goal for all parties interested in a strong regional economy. We and our partners within this community have devoted tremendous time and resources to get us to this point. We have a superb location offering many of the elements necessary to develop an outstanding industrial park: access to rail and road; land properly zoned for industrial use; willing landowners; and community support.

Our request of you, as our City leaders, is to help us solve this challenge:

Given the unique features of our property owner-driven model, how do we provide the services needed for industrial development in a way that meets the needs of the property owners, the County, the City, Lockwood Water and Sewer, and the Lockwood community?

Thank you for your time, attention, and expertise. We look forward to exploring this issue with you as we strive toward our common goal of a ready-to-go industrial space that helps support our economic growth.

Thom MacLean

Project Manager, Community Development

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