

Rafter J Infrastructure Improvement Project Information Newsletter

October 24, 2008

Project Information Meeting

The Rafter J Improvement and Service District will hold a project information meeting at 7:00 p.m., November 5, 2008 at the River Crossing Chapel, 3205 Big Trail Drive (formerly Jackson Hole Christian Center).

Present Project Status

The Rafter J Infrastructure Improvement Project construction has officially started and is the cause of the recent water outages.

Westwood Curtis Construction is the contractor for the project and they will be mobilizing additional crews and equipment over the next few weeks that will work throughout the winter.

Project Purpose

The Infrastructure Improvement Project includes replacing deteriorated water valves, leaking water service lines, and repairing leaking sewer mains and sewer service connections. The project involves work throughout Rafter J, except for the Southeast Forty Townhomes, who chose not to participate with the project.

Rafter J's infrastructure is 30 years old. Our water use continues to increase each year, primarily due to the deteriorating galvanized steel water service lines. Our sewer collection system has infiltration problems (groundwater seeping into the sewer system). Our sewer disposal volume increases 200-300% from spring to fall, when ground water conditions are seasonally high. The infrastructure work will involve major trenching work throughout Rafter J.

Project Funding

Construction bids were received for the Rafter J Infrastructure Improvement Project in April. The project was broken into several smaller contracts for bidding and to encourage proposals from smaller contractors. The total sum of the lowest bids was more than double the initial project cost estimates. The bids obviously reflected the rising costs of fuel and materials, limited labor and contractor availability, and the significant construction difficulties associated with the project. Adding construction phase engineering and contingency budgets to the low bids, our funding shortfall was approximately \$4 million.

The Rafter J Improvement and Service District (RJ ISD) conducted negotiations with the low bidder, Westwood Curtis Construction, throughout most of the summer to reduce the project cost. The negotiated contract utilizes reduced unit prices to establish the base contract amount. However, the work will also be tracked on a time and materials basis. In the event the time and materials project costs are lower than the unit price based contract amount, the cost savings will be shared with 20% going to the Contractor and 80% back to Rafter J.

This summer the RJ ISD also applied for grant funding assistance. While our initial grant requests were denied, after negotiating the lower construction contract prices, the budget shortfall was reduced to \$2,800,000. Teton County and the Town of Jackson have jointly awarded \$700,000 of State grant funding for the Rafter J project. In addition, the State of Wyoming also awarded a \$1,400,000 grant, leaving our project shortfall at \$700,000. Our success in obtaining this grant funding was largely due to consideration of the significant special assessments being assessed to each lot and project loan funding previously secured for the Infrastructure Improvement Project. The RJ ISD is presently exploring options, including additional special assessments to fund the remaining budget short fall.

Rafter J infrastructure work began in 2004 with the completion of water and sewer repair work prior to reconstructing Big Trails and Ten Sleep Drives. Water system improvements that included a new control building, standby generator, and transmission mains have been completed. Construction of a second water storage tank and exploratory drilling for a new supply well are nearing completion. The overall Rafter J improvement project budget is almost \$10 million, including approximately 47% grant and 34% low interest loans funding. The grant and loan funding provided by the State of Wyoming and Teton County accounts for 81% of the project budget. The overall project funding sources are summarized below:

Rafter J ISD Reserves	\$ 236,000	
Rafter J ISD Road Special Assessment	940,000	
State of Wyoming Loans	3,415,000	
<u>Rafter J ISD Budget Shortfall</u>	<u>700,000</u>	
Subtotal		\$5,291,000
Teton County Funding	\$1,617,000	
<u>State of Wyoming Grants</u>	<u>3,087,000</u>	
Subtotal		\$4,704,000
<u>Project Total Budget</u>		<u>\$9,995,000</u>

Work Plan

The Infrastructure Improvement Project is scheduled to be completed over the next two years. The major excavation and trenching work will be performed through late fall, winter, and early spring when ground water levels are low. Construction work hours are 7 a.m. to 6 p.m., excepting emergencies.

Utility (i.e. water, sewer, electricity, natural gas, phone and cable TV) outages will occur throughout the construction process, but planned outages will occur normally between 8 a.m. and 6 p.m. Existing utility lines could be damaged during construction and some lines will need to be shut down for the safety of the construction operations. Expect frequent temporary power, phone, cable TV, and natural gas outages throughout the construction process.

Construction crews will coordinate with the utility providers to minimize the duration of the outages. Utility services will normally be restored at the end of each work day. Street access will be obstructed at times. Warning signs will be placed at streets where construction crews will be active.

The project will begin with the replacement of water main valves. Initially, large areas of Rafter J will require water shut-off's until critical control valves are replaced. Once the critical valves are installed, the water shut off areas will be smaller as the work is directed to individual neighborhoods.

The start of water service replacement and sewer main repairs is scheduled for the beginning of November 2008. The water service line replacement will primarily involve the portion of the line from the water main to the curb stop valve at the property line. This work will normally utilize trenchless installation methods to minimize trenching through the streets. However, excavation will be required on both sides of the street to complete the pipe connections.

Trenches will normally be backfilled each day. Trenches through the streets will be temporarily filled with gravel, until asphalt pavement patching can be performed when warm temperatures return in the spring. Once the trenching and street patches are completed, the single family streets will receive an asphalt pavement overlay. The street overlay work will be scheduled for the summers of 2009 and 2010.

Construction Staging Areas / Gravel Extraction

Temporary construction staging areas will be utilized for material stockpiles and equipment storage at various locations to serve individual neighborhoods within Rafter J. A large construction staging and gravel extraction area will be utilized throughout the project. This area is located south of Big Trails Drive and west of Flat Creek. The flood control berm will be utilized for temporary road access to the site. Gravel will be excavated and stockpiled from this area and utilized for backfilling trenches during cold weather periods. The excavation for the gravel extraction will create a temporary pond that will eventually be filled back in with soil that was not suitable for trench backfill, due to frozen conditions.

The project was originally bid utilizing this onsite gravel source to reduce the project cost. If we do not utilize this onsite gravel source, importing the gravel from an offsite source would add approximately \$428,000 of additional cost to the project. To pay for imported offsite gravel each household in Rafter J would need to pay over \$950 in additional fees or assessments.

Rafter J residents and neighbors will receive a notice from the Teton County Planning office regarding the gravel extraction permit application. We request your support for the temporary gravel extraction permit to control construction costs and to minimize the need to increase homeowner's special assessments to complete this project.

Ground Water Issues

Groundwater levels are high in Rafter J and trenches will require de-watering for construction. The excavation work is primarily scheduled for winter when ground water levels are seasonally low to reduce pumping needs. To minimize sediment discharges to live stream (including Flat Creek), the water pumped from trenches will be discharged to grass areas to settle out sediment and allow the water to seep back into the soil. Expect temporary water discharges to individual lots, lawns, and common areas.

Reclamation Work

Each lot owner is responsible for landscape repairs and replacement, including sprinkler systems, which are damaged by the construction operations. The Contractor has agreed to flag or mark known damaged sprinkler system components for repair.

Each lot owner is responsible for repairing private driveways, walkways, and improvements that are damaged by the construction operations.

To control the project cost, reclamation work under the construction contract is limited to installing topsoil and reseeding disturbed grass areas. The lot owner is responsible for watering and maintenance of the reclaimed areas.

Lot Owner Responsibilities

Each lot owner is responsible for informing tenants about the Rafter J Infrastructure Improvement Project. Please provide a copy of this letter to your tenants.

The Rafter J Infrastructure Improvement Project will involve frequent shutting off of the water mains. Home occupants should avoid using hot water when the water mains are turned off. Draining the water from your hot water tank can cause damage. For protection, you may want to shut off your hot water heater during water outages. The RJ ISD is not responsible for water heater damage.

All galvanized steel water service lines will be replaced. Each lot owner is responsible for their private water service line that runs from the curb stop (water valve) near their lot boundary and extending into the house. Existing copper and polyethylene water service lines will be pressure tested as part of this project. The lot owner is responsible for repairs or replacement of the water service line if their pressure test fails.

Each lot owner is responsible for the cost to replace or repair their private sewer service line from their home to the sewer main that are identified as leaking or damaged. Several problem sewer service lines have already been identified through TV inspection. Additional TV inspection work will be performed on the remaining sewer services during the project.

Notifications of water and sewer service lines that have known problems will be mailed in the near future. Homeowners may coordinate with, and pay at their own expense, Westwood Curtis Construction to complete the private water and sewer service line replacement and repairs or they may utilize a separate contractor of their choice. The Rafter J ISD Regulations require repairs to be made within 72 hours of

notice to the lot owner. Homeowners must notify Rafter J prior to beginning work on private lines and to coordinate with the RJ ISD regarding inspection and testing of service lines.

Water and sewer service lines may be located under private drives and walkways. Each lot owner is responsible for repairs to their own driveways and walkways.

Each lot owner is responsible for any repairs to damaged irrigation lines located within the road and utility easements.

Expect and be prepared for utility outages throughout the day. Emergency situations are likely to occur that could delay restoring water, sewer, and utility services by 6 p.m. each workday. Since the work will be performed throughout the winter, home heat sources may not operate for extended periods each work day. Minimize heat loss from your home and consider providing a backup heat source for extended utility disruption and emergencies. The home occupant should store additional water. Minimize refrigerator and freezer openings during power outages to maintain the cold temperatures and avoid thawing. Computer files should be saved and computers should be backed up frequently.

What can you do to expedite the construction process?

Reference the Rafter J website (<http://rafterj.org>) for current construction updates and work areas.

Allow and accommodate access to your house for pressure testing water service lines.

Minimize sewer discharges while repairs are being made to sewer mains.

Understand that there will be times when construction crews will need to work past 6 p.m. Water and sewer line trenches will usually be backfilled at the end of each work day to prevent freezing.

Avoid parking in active work areas.

Avoid plowing snow into active work areas.

Let the contractor know of particular concerns, locations of items likely to be damaged during construction, and locations of water and sewer service lines.

Relocate or remove trees, bushes, and landscaping items from the excavation areas. Construction operations may remove or cut back trees, bushes, and landscaping items that are located in the active work areas.

Let the contractor know if you have a sprinkler irrigation system. Mark irrigation system lines and sprinkler heads with stakes that will protrude above the snow.

Please yield to the trucks and construction equipment when walking or driving in Rafter J. Please allow trucks and equipment to use the temporary construction access road (flood control berm) to the construction staging and gravel extraction area. We have already had conflicts with pedestrians and joggers obstructing the construction operations on this road.

Be patient and cooperative with the construction operations. This necessary project impacts every Rafter J resident. Everyone will need to bear with the inconvenience of the construction operations and utility outages.

Please be courteous to the construction personnel. This is a difficult project and the crews will be working outside in harsh conditions throughout the winter. Minimize unnecessary contact and discussions with the construction workers. Construction crew interruptions and delays will delay the project, delay restoration of utility services, increase the project cost, and ultimately increase the cost of the project borne by every Rafter J homeowner.

Questions / Concerns / Complaints

Again, please reference the Rafter J Website for current construction information. You may contact the Rafter J Office by phone or e-mail (rafterj@onewest.net) with questions, concerns, and complaints.

Cooperation and Patience

This massive project will impact everyone, but it must be completed to provide reliable and safe water and sewer systems and to protect our property values. Everyone's cooperation and patience will be necessary to expedite the project schedule and to minimize the project cost. All Rafter J property owners will have to pay for any costs that exceed the current project funding. We all need to work together to complete this project efficiently and minimize the potential for construction cost overruns.

While the next two years will present some challenges and inconveniences, Rafter J will continue to be a great place to live. Let's work together to improve our community!

We appreciate your cooperation.

Thank you,

RAFTER J IMPROVEMENT AND SERVICE DISTRICT

James P. Huspek, President
Don Martin, Secretary
Vernon Martin, Treasurer