

Fridley Area Lift Station (L32A)

Virtual public meeting notes

November 10, 2020, 7-8:30 p.m.

Meeting statistics

Number of Participants: 32

Questions

- 1. Are you able to utilize the newer order control units that were just installed at the existing lift station?**
 - We currently do not know. Those facilities are sized for an air flow rate of 5,000 cubic feet per minute. We need to look at whether that is sufficient to handle airflow at the new lift station or odor control station. If we are not able reuse this system at either facility, we will reuse it at another MCES location.

- 2. In general, what can I do to reduce salt in my wastewater?**
 - One of the major sources of salt in wastewater could come from the salt used in your water softener. We recommend checking with your city to see if they do water softening as part of their treatment process before water reaches your homes. Many cities have this information available on their websites. That will tell you how soft the water is after treatment and then you could adjust your water softener accordingly.
 - More information is available on the Metropolitan Council's [website](#).

- 3. The conceptual plan for the Fridley site shows the setback from the road, but not the setback from the Mississippi River. What is the setback from the river?**
 - This will be figured out as part of our design stage.
 - We will be required to comply with all setback requirements as part of the process to construct a new lift station. We will need to meet the setback requirements that are required to develop the site, which include setback requirements from the Mississippi River, the bluffs, and ones related to the lift station.

- 4. What permits are required for this project?**
 - There are several permits that will be required for this project. The main permits will be the building permits required by the cities of Fridley and Brooklyn Park. We will need to meet building code regulations for both cities.
 - We will also be ensuring that we meet requirements set by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) and the wetland requirements by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR).
 - A lot of the permits will be determined later as we get further into the design of this project. As we move forward with this project, we are trying to ensure we minimize impacts to the area.

5. Residents have concerns with the huge trees that were removed near the Fridley site. These trees used to run approximately 90' feet along their property line from the Mississippi River to East River Rd at the south side of the Fridley site.

- We certainly understand that this has been a concern for local area residents. Those trees were removed when we replaced the regional sanitary sewer pipes from the Brooklyn Park lift station under the Mississippi River and connect to the rest of the regional sanitary sewer system on the east side of the river. We did a lot of replanting from the bluff area down to the water.
- The reason we did not replant trees along our southern property line is that we do not want trees planted over the top of our sewer pipes. This is to help prevent future issues with the sanitary sewer pipes – as the roots grow deeper, they can create cracks, or widen cracks in the pipes.
- Another reason is that we needed to create a pathway to get our utility vehicles from East River Road to the pipe structures along the southern portion of our property.

6. Why aren't you able to just replace old lift station or build on the current property in Brooklyn Park?

- The main reason we are not able to build on the existing site is because it lacks sufficient room to maintain wastewater flow through that location and space to build a new facility there. It is a small location (approximately one acre), and the equipment, room for staging, the building itself, and all the other work that needs to be completed there is too large to fit on that site location and maintain flow at the same time.
- The hardest part of any of our projects is that we cannot stop wastewater from flowing through our pipes. We must maintain flow through the system even while we repair, renew, or replace parts of our regional sanitary sewer system. Because of our need to maintain flow through this location, we need to build on the east side of the river.

7. Since the system is 50 years old, are the pipes also 50 years old?

- We just replaced the sewer pipes from the Brooklyn Park lift station that go under the Mississippi River, up the bluff, and to East River Road. That is all new pipe that was installed within the last five to ten years.
- We currently have a rehabilitation project taking place on the Brooklyn Park side along Mississippi Lane and Riverview Lane. We are rehabilitating pipe that is located upstream (pipes that flow into the lift station) of existing lift station L32. The existing 60-inch pipe along the Mississippi Lane is being replaced with larger 72-inch pipe to address the existing flow concerns and capacity issues in the area. The pipe on Riverview Lane is being rehabilitated with a Cured-in-Place (CIPP) lining.
- We have a future project to replace more pipes that are upstream of the existing lift station within the next five to ten years. This is part of the Facility Plan that was presented to Brooklyn Park in 2014 as part of our 20-year plan to rehabilitate the pipes in the area.

- **What is CIPP lining?**

CIPP lining is a process in which we insert a liner into an existing pipe and cure it in place to the existing pipe. This creates a “new” pipe within the existing one and extends the life of the pipe by several years. This process is done with minimal impact to the neighborhood as it utilizes maintenance holes to access the existing pipes.

8. I am concerned about changes to the heritage trees and green spaces at the Fridley site. Will the Mississippi River Trail run through the property, so the public has access to the greenspace?

- We typically do not permit trails to through our facility properties and will be installing a security fence around the lift station. If you visit the existing L32 lift station, you will see that we have security fence around it.
- There will still be a large area of the Fridley property that will remain unused. We will use about seven acres of the 22-acre site for the new lift station. We have been talking to the City of Fridley and Friends of the Mississippi River and exploring several options for the remaining land. Some of those options include building a small amount of single-family homes including a buffer space and public use option. We have not come to a decision on what that is going to be yet and will most likely be a while before we come to a decision. As we get closer to completing our project, we really want to work with Friends of the Mississippi River and the City of Fridley to determine the best use will be for the community.

9. Will the property remain 'wild' like it currently is? This is one of the last wild areas in the city that is not a park.

- This is something that we still need to further discuss with the City of Fridley. We have had previous conversations with them about this already. What we have heard so far is that the City of Fridley is a river city with no river access. They are aware of this and are aware of the potential this remaining site poses for a wild or public use area. This is something we want to work with the City as we move forward and determine what is the best for the community.

10. What kinds of land conservation or restoration will be undertaken on used portion of the Fridley site?

- This is part of the designs process. There are different options that we have on how to build this structure and there are several things that will limit how we build this facility. For instance, we know that the facility needs to be deep enough to tie into the existing pipes, but we cannot dig out too far either. We need to limit our construction, so it is large enough to build the facility, but small enough that we do not impact the wetlands, bluffs, the river, or any other sensitive areas in that location.
- This area is more of a wooded area, so we will probably replant some trees in the area to screen our building. We will work with a landscape architect to determine restoration as part of our design process.

- **Examples of other sites:** One of the things we have been trying to do is incorporate native landscaping into our new facilities. We try to include native plantings like prairie grasses, etc., to try and restore areas to more prairie-like locations whenever it fits the location.

11. What will happen to the current Girl Scout lodge and the asphalt driveways at the Fridley site?

- The Girl Scouts have terminated their lease with MCES as of October 1, 2020, and have moved out of this location. We are going to demolish the lodge and garage at this site to make room to build the new lift station in or near this area.
- We are currently working to secure a contractor to remove these buildings from the site.

12. What environmental review has been performed for this project?

- We have created a Discretionary Environmental Assessment Worksheet (EAW). We reviewed a number of things as part of the EAW, including wetlands and archaeological sites – really looking at the standards for the EAW and making sure what we plan to build on the site has minimal impacts to the area.

13. Has the project been evaluated by the state Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area standards?

- We have not evaluated the Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area standards yet. We would like to meet with the Friends of the Mississippi River once we get into the design phase of the project to ensure we are meeting those standards.

14. Has the DNR been consulted?

- No, we have not formally met with the DNR at this time. We will meet with them during the design phase of the project, to ensure that we meet all of their regulatory requirements.

15. A local resident to the south of the Fridley site has experienced water flooding their lower property each spring. There are several acres that drain to a slough on the northern part of their property. What will be done to handle water runoff from the Fridley site?

- This is something that MCES will need to evaluate this as part of the design process. We will look at the topography of the land and determine where water comes from and where it goes to on the site. Once we determine this, we will be able to have a better idea of what we can do to alleviate the water concerns at the site and ensure that we are managing water runoff on the site properly.
- This will be part of our Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan and the storm water improvements that will be determined during the design phase.

16. Could the new facility be designed to complement or blend into the surrounding environment, rather than looking like your example from Chaska?

- We really try to design facilities based off the local environment, and to the best of our ability, have it match the character of the location.
- The facility from Chaska is just an example of one of our newer lift stations. One of the things you do not see in that image is the Carver County Government Center which is located just to the left of the facility. This facility is in a well-developed area and the facility looks very much like the surrounding buildings in Chaska. We consulted with the City of Chaska to determine what their requirements would be for our building. They required that we use Chaska Brick and design it so it would look like the Carver County Government Center.
- We have also designed other facilities to look more like their surrounding areas. For example, the one in Woodbury looks like a home and the City of Woodbury has provided feedback that they have received questions asking if anyone will be selling that “home” any time soon.

17. Can we see a diagram of where the pipes will go?

- The existing pipes on the Fridley site come from the Mississippi River and are in the open area between the trees and the houses along the southern edge of the property. We will be connecting to those existing pipes when we construct the new lift station, which is planned to be built north of that open area.
- There will be some construction in the current open area to connect the new pipes from the lift station to the existing pipes along the southern edge of the Fridley site.

18. What assurance can you give residents that noise and odor control will be mitigated?

- **During construction** there will be noises and odors. We will have heavy equipment on site building the facility and trucks delivering and moving materials (back up alarms).
- We will be following city codes which will limit our construction hours. Typically, cities limit construction hours from around 7 a.m. to 6/7 p.m. We need to check with the cities of Fridley and Brooklyn Park to see what their specific hours of operation are.
- We design odor control systems to ensure that they are sized to manage the odors at each site. This is a key component for us.
- **After construction** there will be occasional odors and noises for regular maintenance. Noises will be created when we run our weekly generator tests. These are usually diesel engines and the noise will be like a vehicle running. We design our project to comply with all City noise ordinances. Local area residents may experience some odors when we are maintaining the odor control system – like when we change the filters out.

19. It sounds like odor is unavoidable. Would you be willing to plant a huge pollinator and native wildflower habitat in that areas that you don't want trees planted? To benefit nature and help mitigate the smell of poo?

- Some odor is unavoidable, but we do our best to minimize it the best we can.

- We are looking at planting native plants as much as possible near our facilities. We will be looking at how to blend the facility in to the local environment and native plantings that enhance the environment and be low maintenance at the same time.

20. If it is a closed system, why does it need odor control and how does it work?

- It is a closed system, but in order to operate and maintain the system, we need to allow people in to the facility to access the pumps, wet well (where wastewater flows into the lift station), etc. Because we need to allow human access, we need to provide heating, ventilation, and air conditioning at the facility – we cannot just seal it off. Because of the HVAC equipment, the facility will draw air in and exhaust it outside. We need to capture the exhausted air and run it through an odor control system before it is released to the air outside the facility. There are many options to clean the odor-causing compounds out of the system before we discharge the air to the atmosphere.

21. What particles are released that we will not smell but that could impact people with health issues like asthma?

- MCES staff is not aware of any other particles that might be released from wastewater, besides odor, that would impact the public.
- Our main concerns with building wastewater facilities are odor-causing compounds, such as hydrogen sulfide, that are often omitted from wastewater. We try and capture and cleanup these odor-causing compounds as part of our odor control procedures.
- MCES staff are not aware of any other compounds that the Water Environment Federation or any other industry-specific or professional organizations have identified that are omitted from wastewater.

22. I know Chaska has odor issues, is that because of the facility or because of the wastewater going through it?

- Prior to the new facility being built, Tim O'Donnell has received phone calls from the public regarding odors from the lift station in Chaska. MCES used to have issues with the carbon-filtration media (carbon pellets) that neutralize the hydrogen sulfides out of the wastewater and out of the odorous air. Eventually, the carbon-filtration media is spent and no longer filters the odor-causing substances effectively. We replace the carbon median as quickly as we can, so that could be part of the issue that people experienced in Chaska.

23. Could you explain further on what activities will occur at the existing facility on the west side of the river in Brooklyn Park?

- The biggest portion will be converting the existing lift station into an odor control facility.

- We will also be adding a headhouse or headbox that connects to the pipes under the Mississippi River, which will allow flow to move under the river and into the new L32A facility. The headhouse is indicated as the *Proposed Siphon Structure w/Access Hatch* on the lower right of the Conceptual Plan slide for Brooklyn Park.
 - One of the things that occurs as wastewater flows down pipes, is that it drags air with it. That air is supplied by the vent stacks in your homes and other buildings in the area. That air is drawn into the regional sanitary sewer system and is carried along with the wastewater – carrying along with it the odor-causing compounds that we mentioned previously.
 - Once the wastewater enters the siphon structure, it fills to the top of the pipe and air can not continue to flow along with the wastewater. The air will collect at the siphon structures, so we need to collect air from the siphon structure and manage, treat, and remove the odor-causing compounds from the air before it escapes to the atmosphere. This is why we need to convert the existing lift station to an odor control facility.

24. Could you give me an address of an existing lift station so I could go and see exactly what is involved?

- We will have staff reach out by phone or email and provide you with a couple locations. If anyone else is interested in this, please contact us by phone or email (posted below).

25. Are lift stations often located in residential neighborhoods?

- Yes, we often have lift stations in residential neighborhoods. Part of the challenge of growing and developing our communities, is that we end up being located where the wastewater goes. So, as the wastewater flows through the communities, it by necessity flows through neighborhoods to a low point where we need to pump it back up to a location where it can continue to flow downhill until it reaches the wastewater treatment plant. A lot of time, this low point is in residential areas.
- We do our best to ensure that our facilities are designed to manage odors.

26. Can you reuse some of the materials from the building before or after demolition?

- This will be something that we will work with the demolition contractor to see what we can salvage from the existing facilities.
- Because these are old buildings, we also need to determine if there are any hazardous waste materials or asbestos in the building. If there is, this would affect what we are able to salvage and reuse.

27. Do other MCES lift stations have teaching components to teach the public about where the water goes and how water gets cleaned?

- Currently we do not have anything at our lift stations. Our project website has a video that we produced explaining how lift stations operate.

- Prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, we offered tours of our wastewater treatment plants for people of all ages. We would describe how we remove pollutants out of the wastewater and return clean water to the environment. We also explained the environmental requirements and how we recover heat energy at many of our facilities to help offset our electrical and other utility costs. We plan to reopen these tours again once it is safe to do so.

28. How far above the final outlet is the Fridley location?

- The existing lift station in Brooklyn Park pumps wastewater east under the river and through a couple of neighborhoods. It then goes down a very large (96-inch) gravity pipe that runs south. It is about mid-way between East River Road and University Avenue along the railroad tracks. This outlet is approximately 1500 feet away from the Fridley location.

29. A few years back this line ruptured and sewage flowed back into the Mississippi River. How do you assess the concerns of an aging system?

- That spill event was one of the drivers to replace the pipe between the Brooklyn Park site and East River Road within the last ten years.
- As part of our system maintenance, we do a condition assessment of our entire system that includes televising. We try to televise all 610 miles of our interceptor system once every ten years. Every year we send a camera down the pipe to look its condition and see if there are any leaks or breaks in the pipe. We determine on a scale of one through five, one being brand new pipe and five being pipe that is danger of collapse or failure. The pipes that we find that are rated at four or higher, we target to rehabilitate as part of our Capital Improvements Program.
- Depending on where the pipe is located, the rehabilitation process may include excavation and replacement of the pipe, but most often it is CIPP lining. This process limits impacts to the properties in the area.

30. Are there other lift stations on this pipeline?

- I think there are about six to ten lift stations upstream of L32 in Brooklyn Park that flow to it. Then it moves by gravity under the Mississippi River down through the City of Minneapolis, then through City of St Paul to the Metropolitan Wastewater Treatment Plant. There are no other lift stations between L32 and the Metropolitan Wastewater Treatment Plant.

31. How do I stay updated on this project?

- You can visit our project [website](#) for updated information, sign up for email updates on our project website, or contact us at any time by phone or email (see below).
 - **Phone:** 763-520-8650
 - **Email:** info@fridleyarealiftstation.com
 - **Website:** metro council.org/sewerconstruction/fridley

Comments:

1. **I would like to see some public use space in the area. Fridley can never have to many parks.**
 - We appreciate your comments, and this is something we will continue to work with the City and other area stakeholders to determine what is best for the community.

2. **Chaska was a treatment plant at one point, so there was not as many trees and I like the trail through the area.**
 - The Chaska plant is one of about three dozen wastewater treatment plants scattered throughout the metro area. We acquired this property in the 1960's or 1970's as there was a centralization of wastewater treatment in the metro area, housed under the old Metropolitan Sewer Board in relation to the Met Council.
 - Over last 40+ years we have considerably reduced the number of treatment plants to 9 (current). We closed most of the acquired treatment plants. Most of those plants were operated by small sanitary sewer districts or by local municipalities. Some were suffering from age, others could not keep up with the wastewater treatment standards required by the state and federal government, and the Clean Water Act of 1972 made the permanent requirements even stricter.
 - We turned many of those old wastewater treatment plants into pump (lift) stations. You had the local sanitary sewer system carrying wastewater to those old treatment plants, so something had to be down with it. So, when we went to close those plants down, we turned it into a pump station and moved the flow elsewhere along the system.
 - In this case, the facility in Chaska pumps wastewater from the across the Minnesota River to the Blue Lake Wastewater Treatment plant in Shakopee.

3. **I am very concerned when I hear there is odor and we will try to mitigate it.**
 - L27 in Hopkins was reconstructed recently. It was built in a neighborhood next to a house and an apartment building. We designed the building to blend in the neighborhood and had to ensure to design the odor control system effectively because it is located so close to residents and we do not want to impact our neighbors.
 - We are very cautious in stating that we do our best to mitigate odors, because we know that approximately every-other-year there might be some odors when the carbon filter needs to be or is being changed. We try to stay on top of our routine maintenance to help keep these times as infrequent as possible.
 - We are certainly willing to meet with any interested council members from either city at an existing lift station site so you can get a better idea of what it is that we have previously built and what we can do at this location.
 - We also encourage residents to reach out to us at any time if you have any questions or concerns about odors, even after construction (contact information above).

4. **Thank you so much and I look forward to more information on future construction.**

5. **Thanks for this virtual meeting and the transparency you give this project.**

6. **Thank you for giving such a thorough presentation. As a Metropolitan Council Council Member that lives in Brooklyn Park I had an overview of this project, but this in-depth review has been very helpful in giving me more perspective on the changes in the neighborhood, the impact to our neighbors, and how the odor is mitigated. Thank you to all the staff and council members that have attended today.**