

TOWN COUNCIL

STAFF REPORT Department of Engineering



MEETING DATE:	October 13, 2015
PROJECT:	Resolution to Adopt the May River Watershed Sewer Master Plan as a Supporting Document to the May River Watershed Action Plan
PROJECT MANAGER:	Kim Jones, Director of Engineering

RECOMMENDATION: The May River Watershed Action Plan Advisory Committee (WAPAC) and Planning Commission recommend Town Council approve a Resolution to adopt the May River Watershed Sewer Master Plan as a supporting document to the previously approved May River Watershed Action Plan.

INTRODUCTION: The goal of minimizing the use of septic systems within the May River watershed was identified in the May River Watershed Action Plan (Action Plan). In partnership with Beaufort-Jasper Water & Sewer Authority (BJWSA), a sanitary sewer master plan was completed by consultants who examined various alternatives to provide sanitary sewer to the un-served areas within the May River Watershed.

BACKGROUND: Following a directive from Town Council, the May River Watershed Action Plan was developed with a dual approach to both restore and protect water quality in the May River and to serve as a framework for action for other watersheds within the Town's jurisdiction. It includes recommendations for both engineered, structural Best Management Practices (BMPs) such as new projects and retrofits of existing infrastructure, as well as non-structural BMPs including policies and programs.

The Action Plan was adopted via Resolution in November 2011 as a supporting document to the Town's Comprehensive Plan to act as a guiding document to improve conditions within the May River. Town Council then created the May River Watershed Action Plan Advisory Committee (WAPAC) via Resolution in May 2012 and appointed the members in June 2012. The WAPAC is tasked with providing guidance and assistance to the Town on projects and strategies arising from the Action Plan.

The Action Plan identified failing septic systems throughout the watershed as a potential pollutant source which resulted in the short- to medium-term goal of "Converting septic service to sewer service." In order to accomplish this goal, Town Council adopted a mandatory sewer connection ordinance in March 2015.

Additionally, BJWSA, Beaufort County and the Town staff met on several occasions to discuss the feasibility of a comprehensive, cooperative effort to eliminate septic systems throughout the watershed. With the aid of a consultant, BJWSA and Town staff analyzed the "un-sewered" portions of the watershed. These areas were divided into

definable service areas based on several factors including, but not limited to, geography, topography, municipal boundaries, and Beaufort County’s Community Preservation Areas. The consultant assessed these service areas to:

- evaluate three (3) design alternatives for sewer service (traditional gravity, low pressure grinder pumps and vacuum system),
- complete a high-level, non-detailed design, and
- estimate construction costs.

A near final draft of the May River Watershed Sewer Master Plan (Sewer Master Plan) was presented to Town Council in December 2013, and the final Sewer Master Plan was completed in April 2014.

ANALYSIS: One of the priorities in this year’s Strategic Plan is to formally adopt the May River Watershed Sewer Master Plan. To that end, the Sewer Master Plan has been reviewed by the following committees with the subsequent actions:

COMMITTEE	DATE	ACTION
May River Watershed Action Plan Advisory Committee	July 28, 2015	Recommendation for Approval by Town Council
Planning Commission	August 26, 2015	Recommendation for Approval by Town Council
Beaufort County Stormwater Utility Board	September 30, 2015	For Information Only

The May River Watershed Sewer Master Plan final report serves as a guiding document for the provision of sewer service to the un-served portions of the May River Watershed and has become another resource to ensure a healthy and sustainable May River. Thus, it is consistent with the goals of the Comprehensive Plan and May River Watershed Action Plan.

The information it provides assists with identifying the area(s) of greatest need and impact to create more detailed, phased design(s) and general cost estimate(s) to provide sanitary sewer as part of the Town’s Capital Improvement Program projects within Town limits. The Action Plan was designed to be dynamic and flexible, allowing for the incorporation of new data and information. As such, it is consistent to adopt the May River Watershed Sewer Master Plan as a supporting document to the May River Watershed Action Plan.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Resolution
2. May River Watershed Sewer Master Plan (Link)

RESOLUTION

APPROVING THE ADOPTION OF THE MAY RIVER WATERSHED SEWER
MASTER PLAN AS A SUPPORTING DOCUMENT TO THE MAY RIVER
WATERSHED ACTION PLAN

WHEREAS, the Town of Bluffton is a coastal community that has strong ties to its local waterbody, the May River, which provide a sense of community character and pride that is locally and regionally recognized; and

WHEREAS, portions of the May River have experienced a shellfish harvesting classification down-grade due to an increased level of fecal coliform in its headwaters; and

WHEREAS, Town Council directed Staff to develop the May River Watershed Action Plan to establish priorities and provide the initial framework to identify all appropriate water quality initiatives and projects, both structural and non-structural, for the May River watershed; and

WHEREAS, Town Council adopted the May River Watershed Action Plan on November 9, 2011 to meet Town Council's directives; and

WHEREAS, Town Council recognized that new and better information would be available throughout the duration of the project, the May River Watershed Action Plan is designed to be a "living" document that is dynamic and flexible to incorporate new information and will be updated throughout its implementation.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE TOWN COUNCIL AS FOLLOWS:

1. The Town Council hereby approves, confirms and adopts the May River Watershed Sewer Master Plan as a supporting document to the May River Watershed Action Plan.
2. The Town Council hereby grants Staff the authority to administer and implement the May River Watershed Sewer Master Plan as part of the May River Watershed Action Plan.

THIS RESOLUTION SHALL TAKE FULL FORCE AND EFFECT ON OCTOBER 13, 2015.

SIGNED, SEALED AND DELIVERED AS OF THIS 13th DAY OF OCTOBER, 2015.

Lisa Sulka, Mayor, Town of Bluffton, South Carolina

ATTEST:

Sandra Lunceford, Town Clerk, Town of Bluffton, South Carolina