

Cape Haze Wastewater Project

Frequently Asked Questions

How will CCU decide to proceed with the project?

If a majority of property owners indicate approval as determined by a survey taken by CCU, then the project is likely to proceed. If a majority of property owners indicate disapproval, the project would not proceed any further at this time except as detailed below.

If the majority of the property owners disapprove but a smaller section of property owners in a particular area do approve, CCU will continue to discuss the possibility of serving only this smaller section with these property owners. Further, the CCU line extension policy is still available for more limited property owners to consider in order to obtain wastewater service, depending upon economic feasibility.

How will CCU conduct and tally the survey?

CCU will mail a summary information letter which will contain a ballot. Each property has a single vote. Votes submitted by out-of-state property owners will be counted and included.

How many votes are allowed for a property that is taxed as a single entity and consisting of more than one lot?

For this survey, each platted lot is considered one vote.

How will non-responders be treated in the survey tally?

A non-response is neither considered a "for" or "against" vote. The number of non-responses will be reflected as part of the tally summary as "non-responsive".

What method will be used to calculate the property owner's assessment, i.e. lineal feet along the road, as individual lots, square footage, by equivalent residential unit, etc.?

CCU's preliminary observation was to have an equal and uniform assessment for all standard-sized homes sited on standard-sized lots, which would base the assessment on Equivalent Residential Units (ERUs), with most properties being assessed for 1 ERU. As a result of several recent conversations with various homeowners in Cape Haze, CCU now recognizes that some properties may require multiple low pressure sewer (LPS) tanks to serve the home. For those particular situations, the assessment would be slightly higher to accommodate the additional construction and tank cost.

Please make note, the preliminary estimate provided by CCU for this proposed Cape Haze Wastewater Project is conditional upon the project moving forward in FY 2013, followed by incorporation into the county's budget through the MSBU process in FY 2014, followed by award of construction contracts in a timely manner. Any delays in initiation of the project would require new project costs to be determined and utilized for an assessment.

What is the assessment for a corner property consisting of half an acre with 150 lineal feet of road frontage (150 lineal feet split evenly between the two road frontages)?

As long as the corner lot is only one platted lot, the assessment remains \$13,400 (One Equivalent Residential Unit (ERU)). Some refinement of special case lots will likely occur once detailed engineering analysis of the community is completed.

As stated above, it is also probable that properties with more than one septic tank will see additional expense. CCU installs new tanks to replace existing septic tanks or converts the existing septic tanks for its proposed low pressure system (LPS). Each additional holding tank adds \$3,300 to the expense. However, it is possible that some multi-tank properties will be able to be consolidated into a single connection with only one tank. The CCU staff will discuss these particular issues with each individual property owner to determine the final solution.

Will vacant lots be assessed?

Yes, at a current estimate of \$7,400.

Will double lot owners taxed as a single property be assessed for each lot separately?

The final determination will not be made until the project moves forward. Generally, each platted lot is considered one ERU, however, each individual case will be reviewed to specifically determine the appropriate ERU designation. Various engineering factors are considered in this determination.

What payment options for the build-out assessment will be offered?

If an MSBU is formed for the entire community, then the full assessment can be paid off over 20 years (equal annual payments) and will show as an additional item on the annual property tax bill. Owners may have the option to prepay the assessment up front for a discounted amount. If only a portion of the community opts for this service, then a MSBU may or may not be formed. In the case of no MSBU, all owners must pay all wastewater service project costs prior to the project proceeding.

What method will be used to calculate the monthly usage charge?

The monthly fee consists of two components – a base facility charge and usage fee. Assuming the customer is a single family residence with a standard meter, customers will be billed a \$27.70 monthly base facility charge and \$3.86 per 1,000 gallons of water used up to a maximum of 10,000 gallons of water passing through the meter. If more than 10,000 gallons are used, there is no additional charge for wastewater. The normal wastewater bill based upon 4,000 gallons of water used is \$43.14.

What areas are included in the planned wastewater expansion?

The County does not have a planned wastewater expansion program for this area at this time. The Cape Haze subdivision located southwest of CR 775 (Placida Road) was contacted due to inquiries from some of the residents.

What areas along CR 775, 771 or in the Rotonda area will remain unconnected after this expansion?

If the Cape Haze community is connected, only a few scattered homes will remain unconnected in this southern portion of West County within the CCU service area.

What coastal areas within Charlotte County will remain unconnected after this expansion?

Portions of Harbor Heights, Harbor View, Spring Lake/Edgewater, West Port Charlotte, Gulf Cove and El Jobean within the CCU service area will remain unconnected if the Cape Haze community is connected.

How many total permitted connections to the Rotonda plant will there be after this expansion is complete?

The Rotonda WRF plant has a permitted capacity of 2.0 million gallons per day (MGD) and is currently processing and treating approximately 1.0 MGD. If the Cape Haze project moves forward, we estimate there may be an additional 30,000-35,000 gallons per day processed at the Rotonda WRF.

Will any land be purchased by the County or taken by eminent domain in connection with the project?

No.

Will there be any impact on or need for coordination with the planned Placida Road improvements?

No

How will the main lines be installed?

CCU anticipates use of an LPS system for which directional boring would be the primary method for the main line installation. Open holes are only needed at the termini points of the directional drilling and at the actual connection points to the individual wastewater services.

Where will the main lines be placed?

Normally, the wastewater mains are located on the opposite side of the road from the potable water mains.

How will wastewater move in the mains to the pump station?

The LPS tanks serving each property include a small pump which forces the wastewater through the mains to the pump station.

Will the main lines have horizontal bends to get around obstacles?

The directional drilling method allows the main to move both vertically and horizontally within the ground as the installation is made. This construction method reduces the number of bends needed significantly. The location of bends is limited to major change in direction requirements.

Will there be manholes along the main lines? If so, how far apart will they be?

Manholes are not required.

How and where will wastewater be moved from the Cape Haze island?

The low pressure sewer main will be attached to the Cape Haze bridge either through a directional drill under the waterway or attached to the bridge in some manner. Final design will determine the best method.

Will the property owner be denied access to his/her property at any time during the build-out?

Vehicle access will be limited to one lane for one or more brief periods when the actual directional drilling is occurring on your street.

If the property owner does not have access to their property, will the county compensate the property owner for alternate living accommodations?

Access will be provided every day to each home.

Will there be vehicle access restrictions?

Vehicle access will be limited to one lane for one or more brief periods when the actual directional drilling is occurring on your street.

How much notice will be provided for denied or restricted access?

The contractor will provide 24 hour notice to the property owners before the restricted access.

How long might be the period of denied or restricted access? Will there be more than one period of denied or restricted access?

See answers above.

How many pumping stations will be required to maintain positive flow?

Every LPS pump provides positive flow to the pump station. The pump stations force the wastewater to the Rotonda WRF for treatment.

Where will the pumping stations be located?

The Cape Haze subdivision will be connected to one of the existing pumping stations on the northeast side of Placida Road.

How will odors produced by these units be controlled?

Odor control units are used to address these problems at the existing pumping stations.

What septic conversion method is the county planning for existing septic systems?

Existing tanks in good condition could be used as the LPS tank with the addition of a submersible pump. Other existing tanks would need to be abandoned as per regulations.

Is the property owner responsible for build-out to the street?

No. CCU is proposing a turn-key program for the entire project which includes the connection work on each property.

Will the county offer services to complete this build-out and make the connection at the street?

Yes.

How will these services be priced and paid for?

They will be incorporated into the assessment. Each ERU would be priced the same, but the vastly different on-site septic configurations may require site specific pricing adjustments. Payment may be made over time or in a lump sum if an MSBU is created. Otherwise, payment must be made prior to the project proceeding.

What tree/landscaping will be removed?

None is anticipated at this time.

Will efforts be made to protect the tree canopy?

Directional boring does not disturb landscape, hardscape or tree canopies. There should be no destruction and very limited damage, if any.

Will the county replace the damaged landscape to private and public property?

All property will be returned to original or better condition.

What is the property owner's recourse if there is damage that the county fails to repair in a satisfactory manner and who determines "satisfactory repair"?

The contractor under the control of the County is responsible for all repairs. CCU staff will be discussing each property owner's situation with them as the project proceeds. It is the intention to have all concerns addressed before the contract is finalized.

Can a property owner opt-out?

If the MSBU project is approved, all property owners are connected to the LPS wastewater system as part of the project. If the project or portion of the project moves forward as strictly individual line extensions to specific individual properties, then other developed property owners need not connect to the system immediately. See cover letter for mandatory connection information.

If so, will opted-out property owners face any expenses related to the project?

See answer above.

If an opt-out is not offered, will property owners be compensated for recently installed or upgraded on-site septic systems?

CCU has indicated a willingness to offer a rebate credit for recently installed or upgraded systems as part of the MSBU process. The final details of this rebate program are being finalized in the next few months and will be made available on the CCU web-site once it is completed.

If an opt-out is offered, can a property owner opt-in at a later date?

No.

If an opt-in is offered, what would the cost be?

See answer above.

Will reclaimed water for irrigation be made available as part of this project?

CCU has not considered reclaimed water as part of the project. However, CCU is willing to discuss the possibility as a part of the proposed Cape Haze wastewater project.

If the El Jobean project is estimated to cost an average of \$11,000 and those lots are approximately 10,000 square feet, a price of \$13,400 for each Cape Haze property seems too low.

The plat for this area has the majority of the lots being approximately 125 feet in width at the right of way line. A few of the lots are actually less than 125 feet in width while some of the lots are more than the 125 feet in width. The lots with the longer frontages are generally located on the inside of the roadway curves. The cost estimates are based upon the footages of pipe needed to serve the properties. The estimated assessment is then based upon the benefitting properties. In the case of El Jobean, one of the main cost elements is the location of this development along State Highway 776. Additional costs are incurred due to this state highway.