



Septic to Sewer Expansion Program

Update - April 17, 2024

www.utility.cityofpsl.com



A Quick History



- General Development Corporation (GDC) built Port St. Lucie in late 1950s
- 1/4-acre lots, \$10 down and \$10 a month
- General Development Utilities (GDU) built to service GDC homes, businesses

Treatment Plants



- 1959 Northport Water Treatment Plant
 - Served River Park subdivision, commercial plaza near US 1
- 1960 Southport Water Treatment Plant
 - Served Sandpiper Bay Golf Resort & Hotel, homes
- 1970 Northport Wastewater Treatment Plant
 - Served River Park
- 1973 Southport Wastewater Treatment Plant
 - Served Sandpiper Bay
- 1980 Westport Wastewater Treatment Plant
 - Served Windmill Point, apartments, townhomes, single-family homes

- 80,000 homes platted in early 1980s
- Other contractors started building homes
 - Could not use GDU
 - Utilized private shallow wells and septics



1990

- GDC struggled to meet demands with their limited utility
- Filed bankruptcy
- Utility assets transferred to St. Lucie County (SLC)

1992

- SLC did not expand infrastructure
- Ran out of water
- Opened dialogue between SLC and Port St. Lucie

1994

- SLC transferred to City of PSL
- Determined to expand

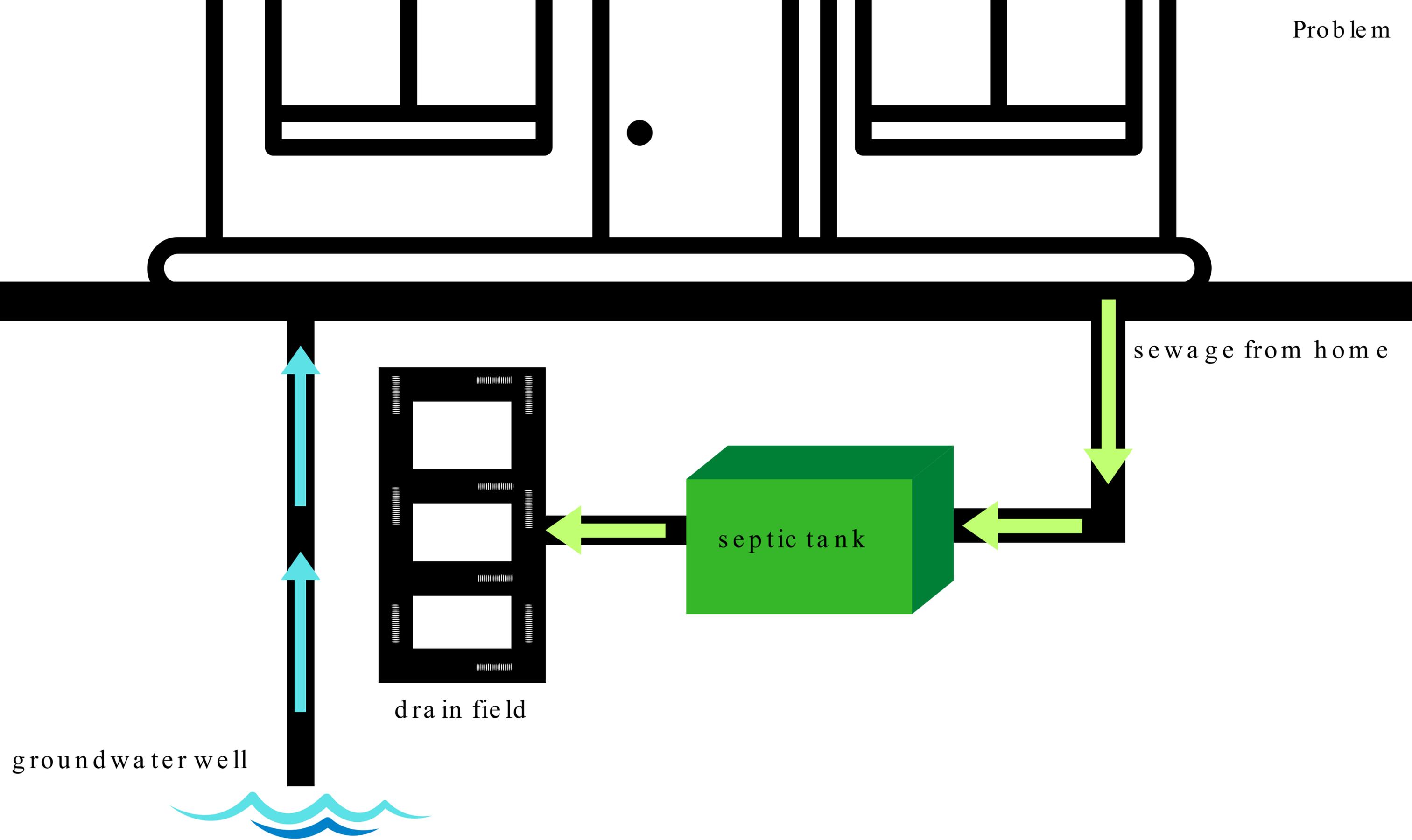
C u s t o m e r s

17,288 w a t e r

10,800 s e w e r



Problem



Concerns



Public Health

- 4 septic systems per acre
- Septic systems may contaminate private wells, pollute groundwater
- Jeopardize health of residents
- All PSL drainage flows to North Fork of the St. Lucie River



Economic Health

- Without public utilities, commercial development doomed
- Higher taxes
- Capped home sizes
- Schools cannot be built, students were bussed to Fort Pierce schools

Action

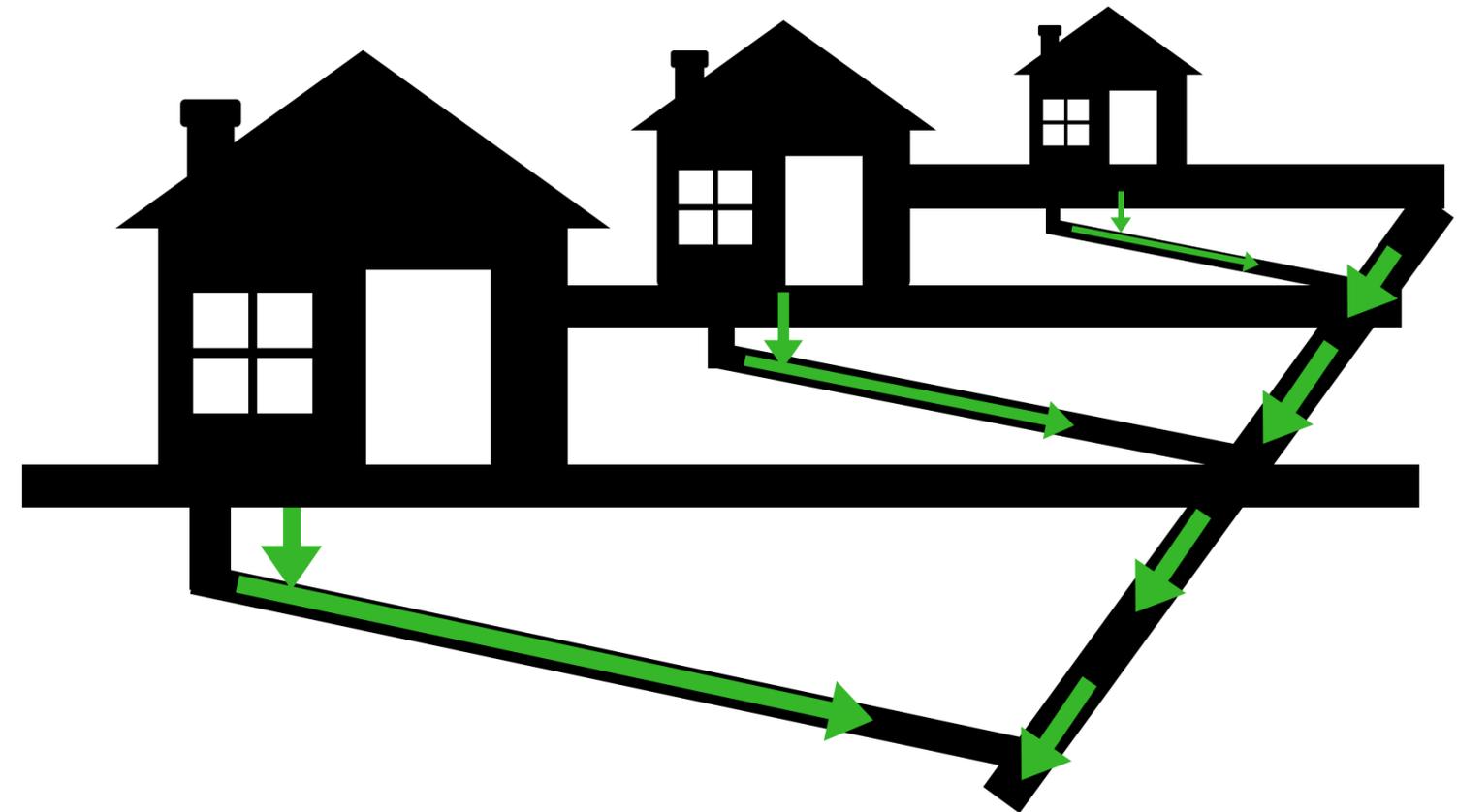
Assessments

- PSL used “utility special assessment methodology”
- Property owners assessed their share of costs for new infrastructure
- 1st 40,000 notices mailed in 1994
- Unhappy property owners
- City Council listened to concerns at all public hearings
- Folks were worried about the financial burden, not the actual program
- Protests from septic system contractors

Grinder vs. Gravity



- More cost-effective
- 3-5 ft. deep
- Easier for contractors
- Easier for us to maintain, make repairs

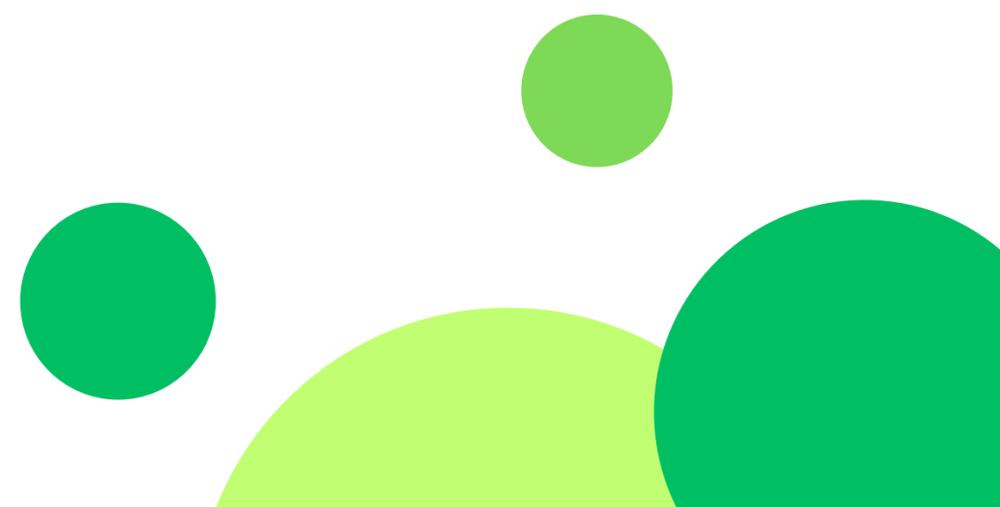


- More costly
- 15-20 ft. deep
- Tougher for contractors
- More construction, restoration

Multi-Phased Expansion Program

- Extend potable water mains, low-pressure sewer mains throughout the City

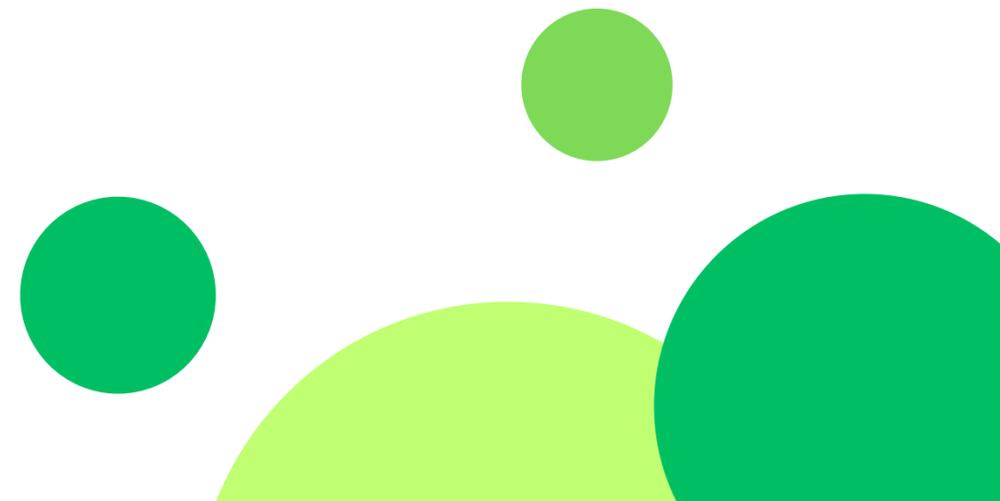
Assessment Payment Options

- Pay off assessment in full for a discount
 - Pay with interest over 20 years through property tax
 - *Homestead property owners with up to 3 lots that touched were exempt until they developed them if they executed a restrictive covenant against the deed for those properties
- 



Connection Fees

- Not mandatory for functioning septic systems, wells per State Statute
- If septic system fails and infrastructure is in place, homeowner must connect
- 10-year financing program with no interest
- Residents may still use their private wells for irrigation
- All new construction must connect



 Conversion Fee

10 - Year Interest - Free Financing Program

\$2,277.00 Treatment plant capacity

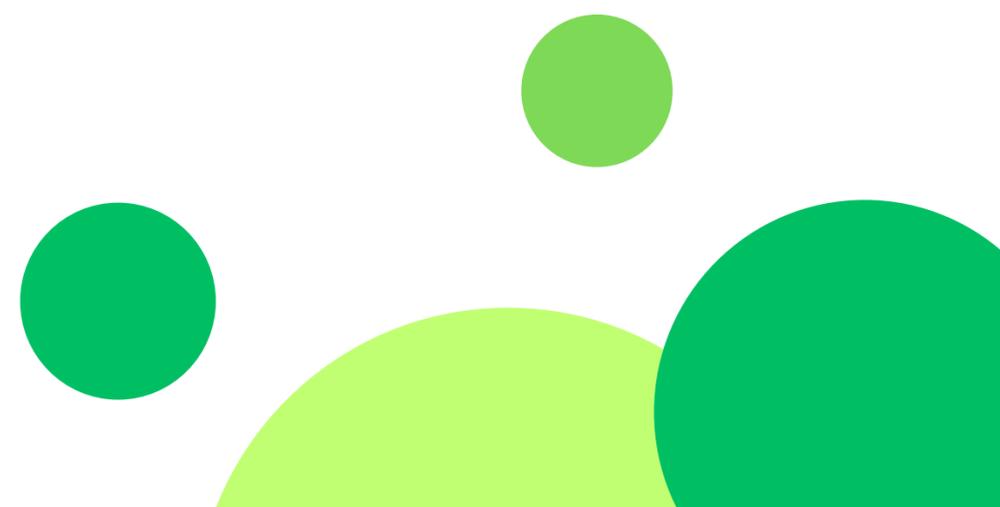
3,263.00 Grinder system

577.00 Septic abandonment

+ 90.00 Account deposit

\$6,207.00 (\$50.98 per month)

Plus: \$45.50 Account Recording Fee



Connect to Protect

www.cityofpsl.com/septicsewer

- Reasons to convert
- Steps to connect
- Warning signs of septic system failure
- Connection costs
- Expansion Program history

Installations



Hot Spots

Microbial Tracking Study

- Partnered with Harbor Branch
- Tested for fecal coliform, sucralose, acetaminophen
- Phase I (2018)
- Phase II (2020)
- Studies identified 5 hot spots



HARBOR BRANCH

FLORIDA ATLANTIC UNIVERSITY®



Grant Funding

- Grants focused on cleaning up hot spots
- Funding from Indian River Lagoon Council (IRLC) since 2019
- \$100,000 from City of PSL annually since 2020

Sagamore

Phase I (2020)

- TOTAL: 17 completed applications / out of 62 properties
- 26% participation

Phase II

- Sent 1st & 2nd letters to 40



Grant Funding

Elkhart

Phase I (2020 & 2021)

- TOTAL: 36 completed applications/ out of 104 properties
- 34% participation

Phase II (2021)

- TOTAL: 38 completed applications/ out of 120 properties
- 30% participation

Phase III (2021)

- TOTAL: 29 completed applications/ out of 114 properties
- 25% participation



Grant Funding

Monterrey

Phase IA (2021-2023)

- Extended to 3 customers

Phase I (2022-2023)

- 33 completed applications / out of 154 properties
- 21.4% participation.
- 33 grants x \$3,013.00 each = \$99,429 of \$100,000 allocation was expended

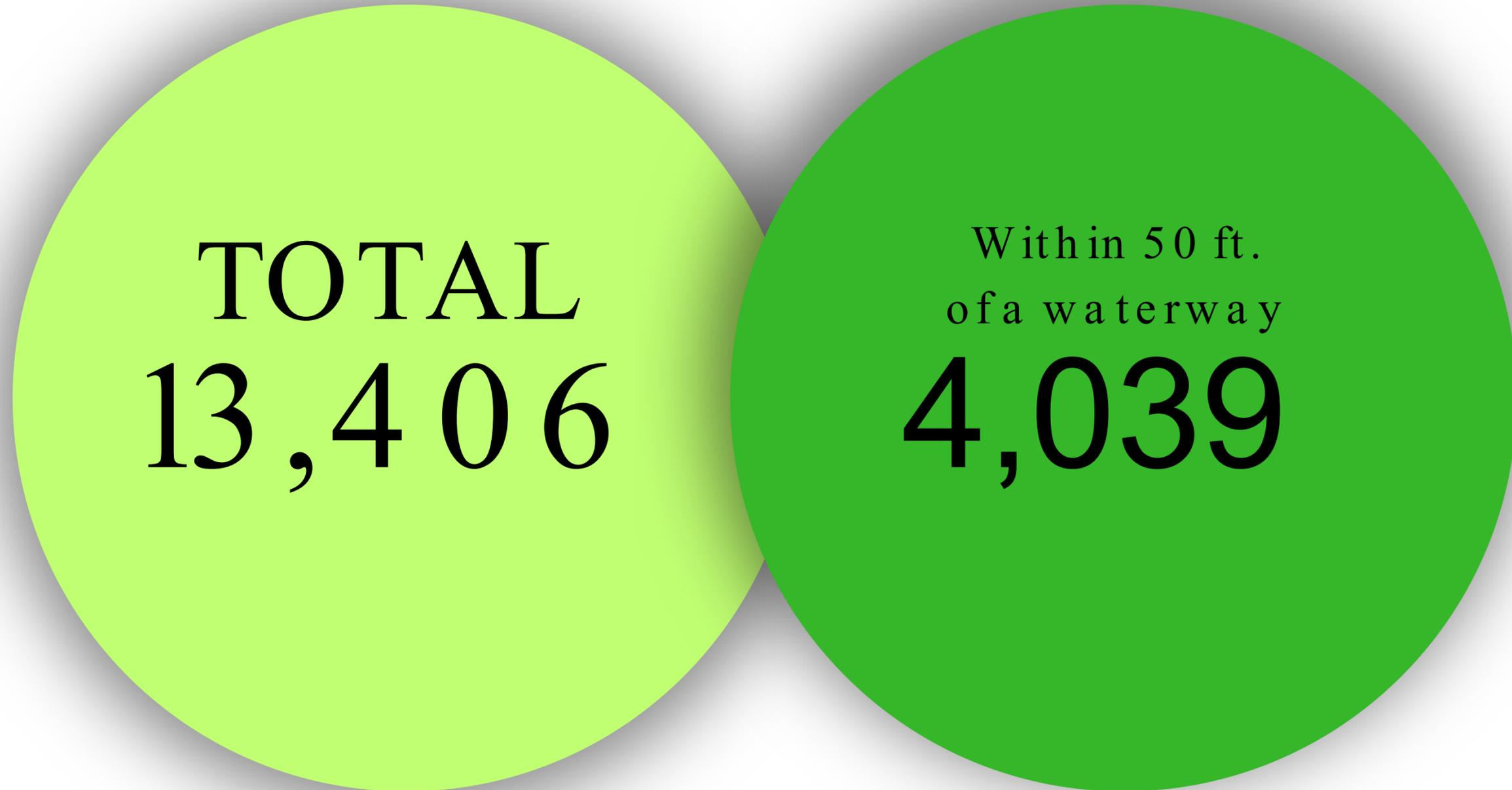
Phase II (2023-2024)

- Sent 1st & 2nd letters to 67
- 14 applications received

*Another round of letters will be sent this fiscal year

Remaining Septic Systems

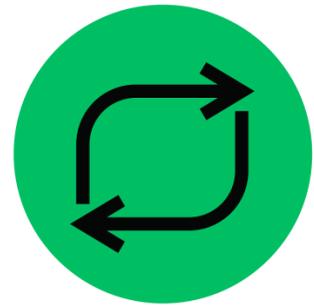
within City limits



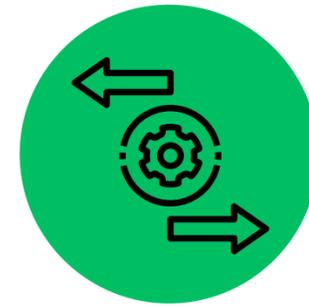
As of February 29, 2024

Conversions since 1999

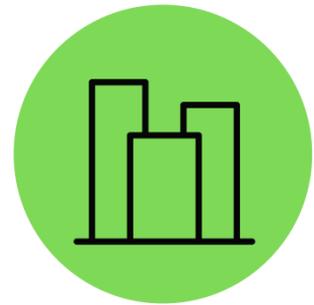
As of February 29, 2024



10,499 conversions



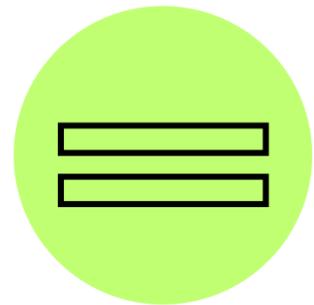
20 billion gallons of sewage diverted



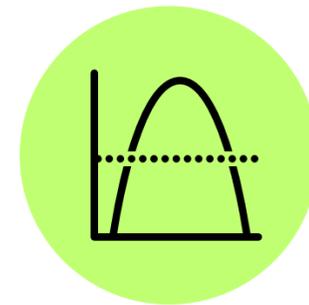
32,176 new construction



80 conversions pending



42,675 combined



412 average number of conversions per year
(550 projected for FY24/25)



Thank you!

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