



City of Grand Junction, Colorado 81501

250 North Fifth St., 303 243-2633

March 23, 1978

Mr. Harold Boyles
Mesa County Department of Health
515 Patterson Road
Grand Junction, CO 81501

Dear Harold:

I thought a letter would be helpful to you in making your decisions on sewer services and systems if the letter outlined the current status on the new regional sewage treatment plant, related interceptors, and outlined the current City policy concerning sewer services to both in city and outside city customers.

We have received approval from the State Water Quality Control Commission to design a mechanical treatment plant which will be located at 22 $\frac{1}{2}$ Road between River Road and I-70. The EPA has not yet given us the go-ahead to start the design work. Previously the EPA had issued a negative declaration in lieu of an environmental impact statement. The negative declaration was issued with the understanding that the existing Grand Junction sewer plant would be kept in service and a new plant built at the above site. Current plans are to abandon the existing plant and construct one larger facility at the site mentioned above. Because of this change the EPA now feels that they must issue an amended negative declaration. We don't know when it will be issued, but I would hope that it will be within the next few weeks. A period of 15 days will be allowed for comments on the negative declaration. If there are no adverse comments, then we think we will be given the go-ahead to start design work. If adverse comments are made, then we may have to go to a public hearing and/or an environmental impact statement (EIS). It is my estimate that it would take about a year to complete an EIS.

We estimate that it will take about a year to complete the design work and about a year to eighteen months to complete the construction. Depending on the starting date you can calculate the estimated date of having the new plant in operation.

The existing sewage treatment plant is approaching capacity. Based on the present growth rate and the growth rate over the last few years in the existing service area, we are predicting that the existing plant will reach capacity sometime between mid 1980 and late 1980. If the construction of the new plant is not near completion at that time we will probably be facing a moratorium on new sewer taps in our service area. There has been some discussion lately about adding

small "package" treatment units to the existing plant to avoid a total moratorium. There has been some discussion between homebuilders, City Council and the County Commissioners on how these units could be financed and built.

As you know, the existing plant serves the City of Grand Junction, several districts such as Ridges, Fruitvale, Central Grand Valley, and Orchard Mesa, as well as several associations such as Galaxy, 26½ Road, and Terra del Vista. Because of these commitments and the possible moratorium, the City Council has established a policy of not allowing any additional taps onto the system outside of the city limits or outside of any districts or associations with which the City now has agreements for treatment of sewage. The intent is to serve the area of existing commitment as long as possible and discourage anyone from investing in a new development to which the City probably could not honor any commitment to treat the sewage. Possible exceptions to this policy are existing structures outside of the above described boundaries whose existing septic systems fail and who are close enough to an existing sewer main to tap into it without extending the collection system, and structures that were under construction at the time the policy was established (Dec. 21, 1977) who also can tap into an existing main without an extension of the collection system.

If it can be determined in the future that the new plant will be in operation before the existing plant reaches capacity, then the policy may be changed to allow additional taps. If not, then the policy will remain in effect until the new plant is in operation, which I think is a minimum of three years from now.

I hope this information will be helpful to you in your administration. If I can answer any questions, please feel free to call me at 243-2633.

Yours truly,

J. E. Patterson, Jr.
Utilities Director

JEP/hm