

# Roger Ladd & company

21 June 1982

George White, Chairman  
Mesa County Commissioners  
Grand Junction, CO

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Action Request 1 (of many to follow)

Your Action in helping reduce housing costs for homebuyers in our Valley is urgently requested:

The City of Grand Junction acting on behalf of the Valley Wide Sanitation District collects a \$750 "plant investment fee" for each new sewer tap made in the District.

The correctness of the amount of the fee is not the subject of this particular Action Request, rather, it is the timing of the collection of the fee that imposes a burden on the homebuyer that is not cost effective.

Background.

- a. The City/County Building Department requires a "sewer clearance" before issuance of a permit to build a house.
- b. The City requires payment of the "plant investment fee" of \$750.00 and "district clearance" from the special sewer District in which the house will be located before they will issue the "sewer clearance" required by the Building Department.
- c. Most (if not all) special sewer Districts require the payment of their particular tap fee before they will issue the "district clearance" required by the City.
- d. The stated purpose of each of the required "clearances" is assurance that the house to be built has an approved sewerage treatment system available.
- e. The several special sewer Districts within our Valley were formed to provide sewer within their boundries, paid for by levying taxes on property within the District.
- f. The City/County subdivision regulations also deal with sewerage systems. Prior to the approval of a subdivision plat, the developer agrees to build and pay for a sewerage system within the subdivision. Plans and specifications for the system are reviewed and approved by the State of Colorado, Mesa County, City of Grand Junction and the Special sewer District involved.

Summary.

Builder/Developers pay for the construction of sewerage collection systems within the subdivisions built in the City/County.

Because the City maintains the system within the City, as well as most of the systems in the special Districts, both the City and the District inspect and approve the system installed. The system then becomes the property of the City or District.

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The Uniform Building Code used in both City and County requires that every house have an approved method of handling sewerage (septic system, public sewer, etc.) available prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy.

The present method of "clearances" does not provide any benefit or any protection to a homebuyer. It does, however, cost the homebuyer a very large sum of money!

Assuming that the builder of a house uses normal financing to build the house (2½% loan fee + interest at 2% over prime), takes 4 months from building permit to the Certificate of Occupancy, and works on a 10% margin of profit.....the early payment of the tap fee and plant investment fee, in most of the Districts, adds \$219 to the price a homebuyer pays for his home. If the homebuyer finances the home, as most do, he will finally pay over \$1100 for this early payment.

The homebuyer receives absolutely nothing for his additional payment.

The payment of a sewer tap fee to reimburse a special District for installation of main sewer lines, as well as the payment of a fee for the future expansion of the Valley Wide Sewer Plant may or may not be fair or equitable. These payments are now a matter of public policy. However, payment of both of these fees prior to issuance of a building permit is both unfair and inequitable.

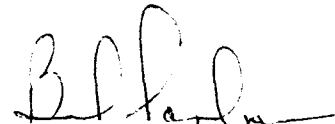
## Action Request.

1. The Building Department issues a Certificate of Occupancy for each house built in the Valley after it's final inspection by the Department. Electricity cannot be connected to the house until after the final inspection. It is illegal for a person to occupy a house without a Certificate of Occupancy.

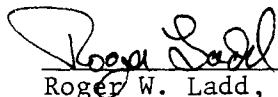
Require that a builder must provide a Receipt for the payment of both the District tap fee and the Plant Investing Fee in exchange for the Certificate of Occupancy.

2. If the City Utility department collected both the District's Tap Fee and the Plant Investment Fee (remitting the District's Fees to them on a regular basis) from the builder in exchange for the proof of payment necessary for the Building Department all parties involved would benefit from less time, travel & paper.

By working together our community can lessen the individual and collective burdens of it's citizens. "One needn't do extraordinary things to succeed, only very ordinary things, extraordinarily well."



Robert H. Gardner, General Partner



Roger W. Ladd, General Partner