



CITY OF NOVI CITY COUNCIL
OCTOBER 6, 2025

SUBJECT: Approve Resolution authorizing the filing of a Petition necessary to Convert Existing County Drain Facility in Novi, now known as the Walled Lake-Novı Water Resource Recovery Facility Sewage Disposal System, into a Chapter 20 Drain to be identified as Walled Lake-Novı Water Resource Recovery Facility Drain.

SUBMITTING DEPARTMENT: Department of Public Works, Engineering Division

KEY HIGHLIGHTS:

- Current arrangement between the City and the County involves a system known as the Walled Lake-Novı Water Resource Recovery Facility Sewage Disposal System owned and operated by the County under Act 342.
- County Water Resource Commissioner (WRC) recently asked the City to approve a petition to convert a portion of the existing system (mostly relating to its underground facilities to a Chapter 20 system within the City and a Chapter 21 system for the portions outside the City and City Council approved that petition at its August 11, 2025, meeting. The petition is currently going through the process at the County level to complete the conversion under the Darain Code.
- This is a related request by WRC to convert the County's water treatment plant, located roughly at West Park Drive and West Road into a Chapter 20 Drain as well.
- WRC believes that the conversion benefits both the City and WRC; City Administration does not object to the conversion.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The Walled Lake–Novı Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) provides essential wastewater treatment services for the City of Walled Lake, the City of Novı, and portions of Commerce Township, which Novı serves under an inter-community agreement.

The plant's infrastructure is aging, including its treatment processes, mechanical equipment, and electrical systems. These conditions present both challenges and

opportunities: while the facility continues to provide reliable service, proactive reinvestment is essential to extend the useful life of the WWTP for the foreseeable future. This petition seeks to establish the appropriate legal and financial structure to address these aging assets and implement the improvements necessary to ensure that the Walled Lake-Novı WWTP remains a dependable, compliant, and sustainable facility for decades to come.

At its August 11, 2025 meeting, the City Council approved Resolutions to allow the City to file Petitions with WRC to create the "Huron Rouge Sanitary Drain" under Chapter 20 of the Drain Code and the "Rouge Valley Sanitary Intercounty Drain" under Chapter 21 of the Drain Code to convert most of the underground sanitary facilities for which WRC provides service from their current status as Act 342 Drains.

This request by WRC for a Resolution and Petition relate essentially to the "rest" of the WRC facilities in the City, primarily encompassing the wastewater treatment plant (WWTP), which the County has asked to be designated a Chapter 20 drain to be called the "Walled Lake-Novı Water Resource Recovery Facility Drain." Attached are the proposed Resolutions and Petition prepared by WRC to begin the process as occurred with the August agenda item. Also included in the packet are materials explaining the likely improvement to be made to the WWTP in the coming years and an explanation why the Chapter 21 process is being proposed.

City staff are amenable to the conversions proposed by WRC.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Approve Resolution authorizing the filing of a Petition necessary to Convert Existing County Drain Facility in Novi, now known as the Walled Lake-Novı Water Resource Recovery Facility Sewage Disposal System, into a Chapter 20 Drain to be identified as Walled Lake-Novı Water Resource Recovery Facility Drain.

CITY OF NOVI

COUNTY OF OAKLAND, MICHIGAN

**RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE FILING OF A
PETITION TO LOCATE, ESTABLISH, AND CONSTRUCT A COUNTY DRAIN
PURSUANT TO CHAPTER 20 OF PUBLIC ACT 40 OF 1956, AS AMENDED**

WALLED LAKE-NOVI WATER RESOURCE RECOVERY FACILITY DRAIN

Minutes of a Meeting of the City Council of the City of Novi, County of Oakland, Michigan, held in the City Hall of said City on October 6, 2025, at 7 o'clock P.M. Prevailing Eastern Time.

PRESENT: Councilmembers_____

ABSENT: Councilmembers_____

The following preamble and Resolution were offered by Councilmember _____and supported by Councilmember _____.

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY OF NOVI, OAKLAND COUNTY, MICHIGAN, as follows:

WHEREAS, the City Council has determined that the location, establishment, and construction of the proposed Walled Lake-Novı Water Resource Recovery Facility Drain is necessary for the public health of the City; and

WHEREAS, the conversion of the Walled Lake-Novı Water Resource Recovery Facility Sewage Disposal System to a Chapter 20 drain provides substantial benefit to the City including the following:

- (a) Governance composed of three (3) elected officials from the County Board of Commissioner's Office and the Water Resource Commissioner;
- (b) Improved transparency and communication through regularly scheduled open public meetings, minutes, and approval of invoices and contracts by the Drain Board; and
- (c) The ability to conduct public hearings to solicit comments from the communities and the public for future bond financed projects; and

WHEREAS, the City desires to file a petition with the Oakland County Water Resources Commissioner pursuant to Chapter 20 of Public Act 40 of 1956, as amended ("Drain Code"), for the location, establishment, and construction of the proposed

Walled Lake-Novı Water Resource Recovery Facility Drain, to be located and established in Oakland County, Michigan.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Novi, as follows:

1. The Mayor and City Clerk are hereby authorized and directed to execute and file the petition substantially in the form attached as **Exhibit A** to this resolution with the Oakland County Water Resources Commissioner by certified mail.
2. The Mayor and City Clerk are further hereby authorized and directed to enter into an agreement under the Drain Code related to the project contemplated by the Petition and to file the same with the Oakland County Water Resources Commissioner.
3. The City Council hereby consents to the assessment of part of the entire cost of the location, establishment, and construction of the Walled Lake-Novı Water Resource Recovery Facility Drain levied against or assessed to the City.
4. The City agrees that it will pay its share of all costs incurred by the Oakland County Water Resources Commissioner or the Drainage District in the event that the Drain is not completed.
5. The City acknowledges that the County of Oakland, its Board of Commissioners, and the Oakland County Water Resources Commissioner will not contribute to the cost of the location, establishment, and construction of the Drain or its operation and maintenance except to the extent that Oakland County may be assessed for the cost of the Walled Lake-Novı Water Resource Recovery Facility Drain or may agree to contribute to the cost of the location, establishment, and construction of the Walled Lake-Novı Water Resource Recovery Facility Drain in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 20 of Public Act 40 of 1956, as amended.
6. All resolutions and parts of resolutions insofar as they conflict with the provisions of this resolution are hereby rescinded.

AYES:

NAYS:

RESOLUTION DECLARED ADOPTED.

Cortney Hanson, City Clerk

STATE OF MICHIGAN)

COUNTY OF OAKLAND)SS
)

I hereby certify that that foregoing is a true and complete copy of a resolution adopted by the City Council of the City of Novi, Oakland County, Michigan, at a regular meeting held on October 6, 2025, the original of which is on file in my office. I certify further that notice of the meeting was given and such meeting was conducted in accordance with the Open Meetings Act.

Cortney Hanson, City Clerk
City of Novi

**PETITION TO LOCATE, ESTABLISH, AND CONSTRUCT A COUNTY DRAIN
PURSUANT TO CHAPTER 20 OF PUBLIC ACT 40 OF 1956, AS AMENDED**

WALLED LAKE-NOVI WATER RESOURCE RECOVERY FACILITY DRAIN

TO THE DRAINAGE BOARD FOR THE HEREINAFTER MENTIONED OAKLAND COUNTY,
MICHIGAN DRAIN PROJECT

The undersigned public corporation hereby petitions for the location, establishment and construction of an intra-county drain project consisting of the existing Walled Lake-Novı Water Resource Recovery Facility Sewage Disposal System and all improvements needed for the efficient operation of the Walled Lake-Novı Water Resource Recovery Facility Sewage Disposal System through proactively addressing aging infrastructure and equipment, enhance treatment efficiency and performance, enhance biosolids handling, and reduce risk of permit violations. This includes, but is not limited to the following: construction of new effluent structure, new HVAŞ system, rehabilitation and lining of concrete tanks, renovation and lining of collection systems, a new dewatering process, manlift replacement, installation of new process blowers, and installation of new electrical control centers and panels.

Said drain project is necessary for the public health, and will serve property located entirely within the limits of the City of Novi; City of Walled Lake; and Charter Township of Commerce (collectively, the "Communities"). The Walled Lake-Novı Water Resource Recovery Facility Drain Drainage District will collect, transport, and handle sanitary wastewater originating in the County of Oakland only. The area to be served is depicted in the attached **Exhibit A** hereto. The route and course of the Walled Lake-Novı Water Resource Recovery Facility Drain Drainage District is depicted in the attached **Exhibit B** hereto.

This petition is filed pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 20 of Act No. 40 of the Public Acts of Michigan of 1956, as amended.

It is understood and agreed that the entire cost of the drain project, including litigation costs and the amount of any judgment, arbitration award or settlement to the extent such costs are payable by the Walled Lake-Novı Water Resource Recovery Facility Drain Drainage District, is to be assessed against all public corporations that benefit from the drain project and contribute to the conditions that make the drain project necessary, including this petitioner.

A certified copy of the resolution of the governing body of the City of Novi authorizing execution of this petition is attached hereto.

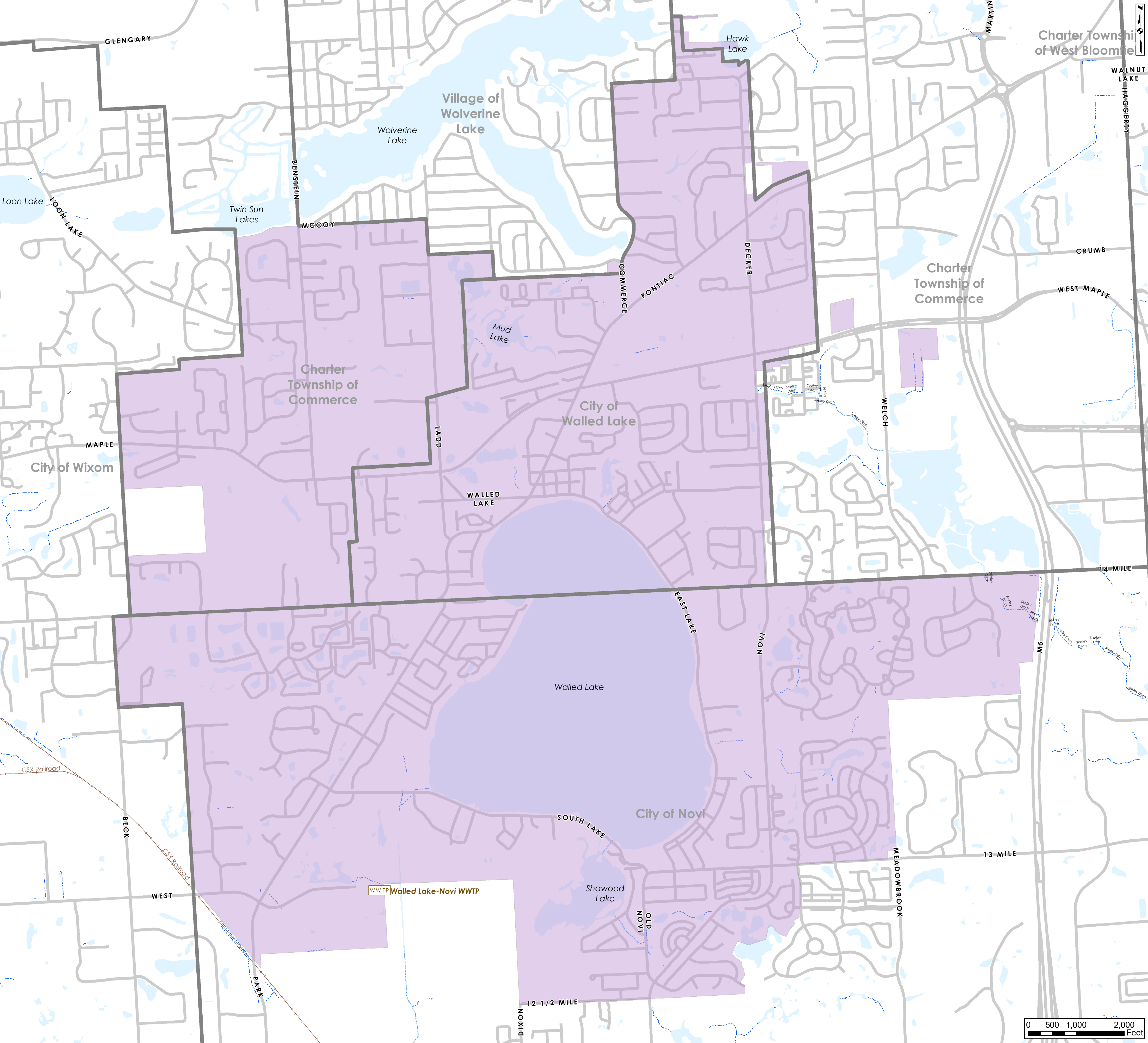
CITY OF NOVI


By: _____
Mayor

By: _____
City Clerk

**Benefits for the City of Conversion from Act 342 System
to a Chapter 20 / Chapter 21 Drain**


- Chapter 20 and 21 of the Michigan Drain Code both allow for governance by a “Drainage Board” comprised of elected officials rather than by a county designee as provided in Act 342.
- A Drain Code system provides for improved transparency and communication of business and financials through regularly scheduled open public meetings, formal minutes, and formal approval by the Drainage Board of invoices and contracts.
- The Drain Code allows for public participation through public hearing to solicit comments from community leaders and from the public for all future projects.
- A Chapter 20/21 Drain would eliminate the need for the City to seek full faith and credit resolutions from City Council for financing a project.
- Act 342 requires negotiated agreements for the acquisition, construction or financing of facilities. The Drain Code does not require such contracts.
- Under Act 342, communities can collect funds through rates, charges, or assessments. Under the Drain Code, the funds may be collected by levying of a special assessment, fee, charge, or may be funded directly from the general fund.
- Act 342 requires a notice of intent to enter a contract to acquire facilities, construct facilities, or finance projects and a referendum period of 45 days must be satisfied. Act 342 then allows electors to petition for a referendum (which may stop or at least delay a project). With a Chapter 20/21 project, there is no referendum period, and the process for acquiring, constructing, and financing is much easier.
- The Drain Code provides enforcement remedies vis a vis interaction with railroads and other public utility companies to ensure uninterrupted service.
- A Drain Code system insulates the City from EGLE enforcement actions because a Drainage District is a separate legal entity that is responsible for the system and, therefore, the City would not be subject to or responsible for any regulatory enforcement actions.
- The Drain Code provides greater enforcement remedies for obstructions of the system, including the recovery of any and all costs associated with removal of an obstruction.
- In Act 342, the maintenance and operation of the system is at the sole discretion of the County Agency. Under Chapter 20 and 21, the oversight belongs to the Drainage Board.






WRC
WATER RESOURCES COMMISSIONER
Jim Nash

EXHIBIT A
Chapter 20
Walled Lake-Novi Water Resource Recovery System Drain
Customer Service Area

 Wastewater Treatment Plant

 Walled Lake-Novi WWTP Service Area

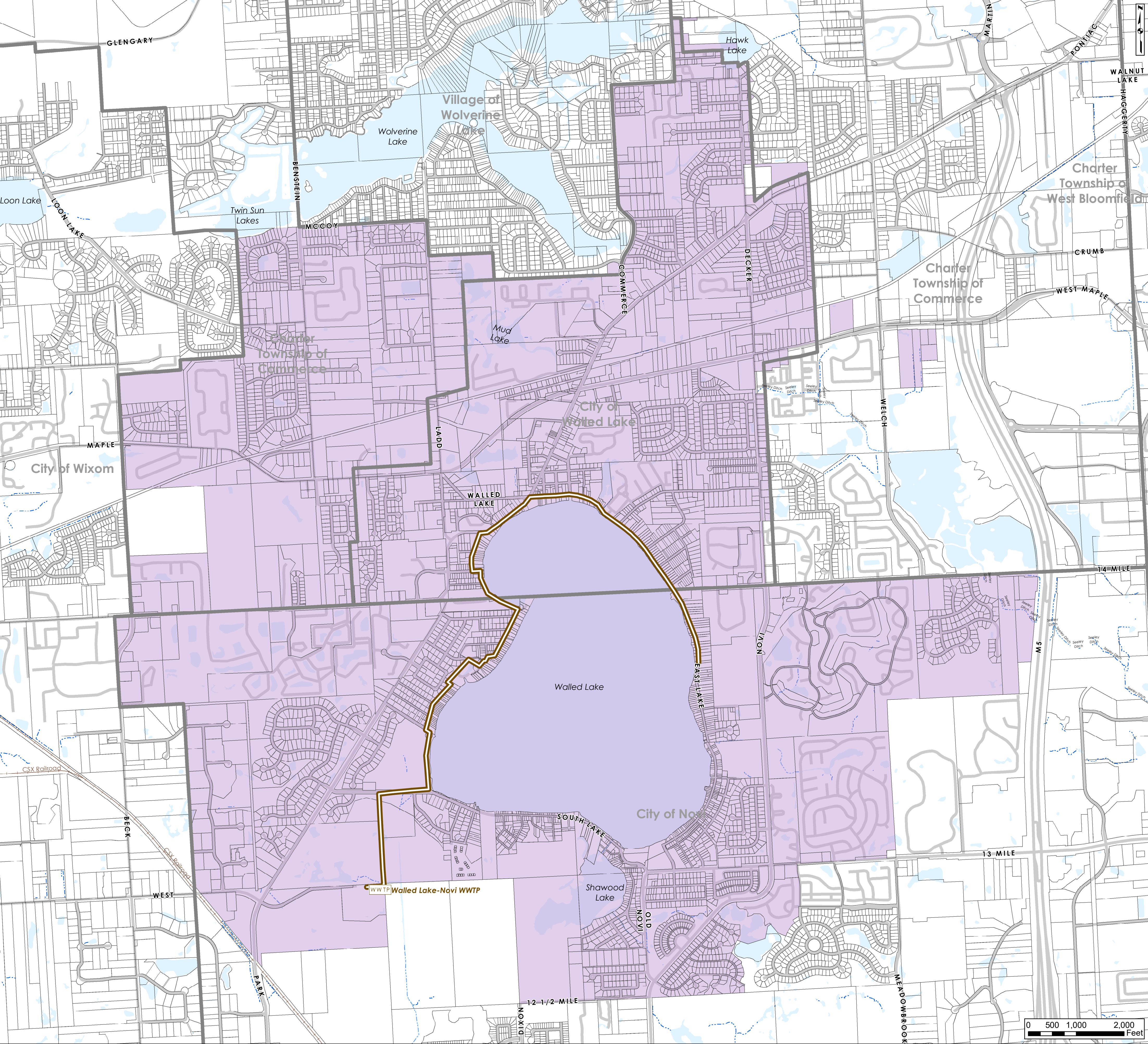





EXHIBIT B
Chapter 20
Walled Lake-Novi Water Resource Recovery System Drain
Route and Course

-  WWTW Wastewater Treatment Plant
-  Sanitary Gravity Main
-  Walled Lake-Novi WWTW

Walled Lake-Novi WWTP *Projects*

Mary Koeger, P.E.
Oakland County WRC



Walled Lake-Novi WWTP

Introduction

The Walled Lake Arm and Walled Lake-Novi WWTP were originally constructed in 1966 with the original intention of being a temporary facility.

Overtime, it has become realized to be more permanent with many upgrades over the years.

However, these upgrades were not to sustain the existing infrastructure that was originally built.



Walled Lake-Novı WWTP

Background Plant Overview

Capacity

- Design 3.5 MGD
- Peak 7.0 MGD

Treatment

- Solids and Fecal Coliform
- Phosphorus
- Ammonia-Nitrogen
- Nutrient Recovery and Reuse

8 Employees

- 2 Chemists
- 4 Operators
- 2 Supervisors



Walled Lake-Novi WWTP

Background Flow Data Summary

Community	RY 2024	
	Average Flow Rate (cfs)	3-yr Average Percentages
Novi	2.38	68.1%
Walled Lake	1.12	31.9%
Total	3.5	100.0%



Walled Lake-Novı WWTP

Background Facility Timeline

- 1970: Raw Sewage Pump Station (RSPS Building), EQ Tank, Clarifiers and Sludge drying beds
- 1986: Tertiary Filters, Clarifier Upgrade
- 1990: Admin Building, Aerated Clarifiers
- 1993: Sludge Storage Tanks Addition
- 2000: Sludge Storage Tanks
- 2003: UV Disinfection System
- 2014: Retention Basin

Current Trends in Wastewater

Inflow and Infiltration (I&I)

Managing I&I water entering the sanitary system is a priority to sustain reasonable treatment costs, prevent overflows, and extend plant capacity without new construction.

Per/Poly-fluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS)

PFAS consists of human-made chemicals used in products like nonstick cookware, shoes, and firefighting foams. It is known as a “forever chemical” because it does not easily break down.

Class B Biosolids Demand

Many facilities are upgrading to Class A biosolids production, which is a higher quality product, reducing demand for Class B along side fear associated with PFAS in biosolids.

Aging Infrastructure

Much of the nation’s wastewater infrastructure is well beyond its lifespan. Reinvestment in pipes, tanks, electrical, and treatment processes is critical for compliance, reliability, and safety.

Public Engagement and Transparency

Sanitary systems are no longer “out of sight – out of mind”. Communicating the value of water, treatment, and sustainability efforts is vital.

Access, Plan, Collaborate



Assessing Past Projects

1966:
Walled Lake
Arm

1970:
RSPS, EQ,
Clarifiers &
Drying Beds

1986:
Tertiary
Filters,
Clarifier
Upgrade

1990:
Admin
Building,
Aerated
Clarifiers

1993:
Sludge
Storage
Tanks
Addition

2000:
Sludge
Storage
Tanks

2003:
Disinfection
System

2014:
Retention
Basin

We have updated ancillary equipment to treatment since 2014.

Major rehabilitation to ensure sustainable treatment has yet to be performed.

Maintenance Assessment



Unplanned Events

Older systems will have unforeseen issues occur



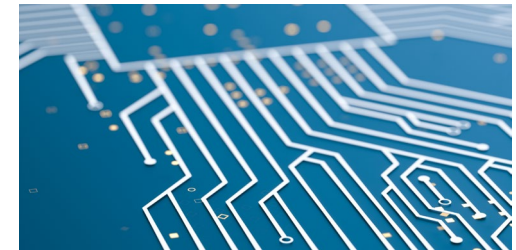
Aging Piping

Piping was installed between 1970-1990, aging past useful life



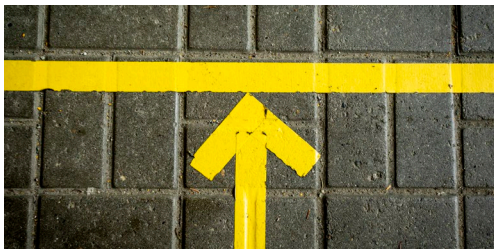
Pump and Valve Replacements

Many pumps around the facility are over 20 years old



Calibrations and Evaluations

Ancillary equipment, buildings, and electrical require evaluations and calibrations



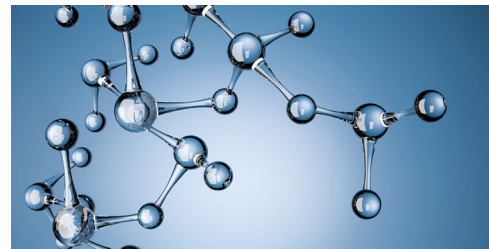
Concrete Repairs

Minor concrete repairs around the facility for tanks, process rooms and buildings



Minor Facility Improvements

This includes gutters, roofs, exterior masonry repairs, etc.



Diffuser Replacement

Diffusers are over 20 years old and supply biological treatment through oxygen delivery



Samplers, Meters, and Hoists

Samplers, Meters and Hoists from the 1990s and 2000s require repair or replacement



Maintenance Assessment

Diffuser Replacement

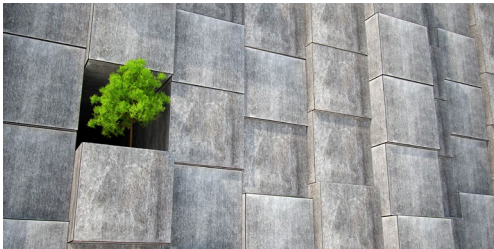
SCADA Upgrade – Security and Treatment Issue

Retaining Wall Replacement

Tertiary Filters Media Replacement



Major Improvements Assessment



Biosolids Storage
Tanks updated in 1993
Time lapse of 32 years



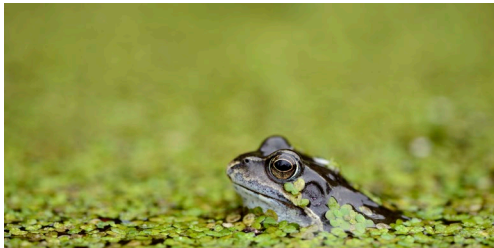
Biosolids Dewatering Equipment
Dewatering Drum installed in 1970
Time lapse of 55 years



Process Blowers
Blowers updated in 1990s
Time lapse of 35 years



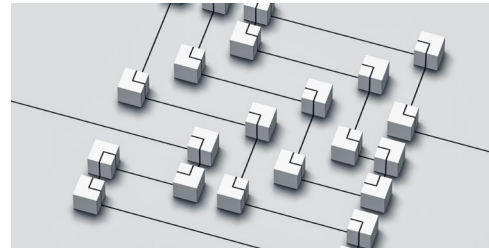
Walled Lake Arm Collection
Installed in 1966, last inspected in 2016
Time lapse for repair 59 years



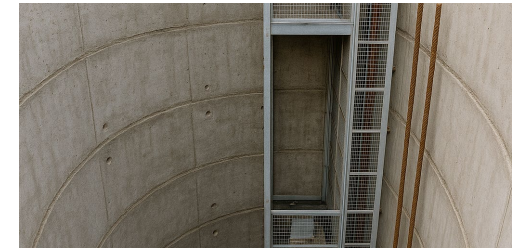
Effluent Structure
Structure installed in 1970
Time lapse of 55 years



Administration Building HVAC
HVAC installed in 1990
Time lapse of 35 years with minor upgrades to keep functional



Electrical Panels and MCC-1
MCC-1 and PP installed in 1970
Time lapse of 55 years

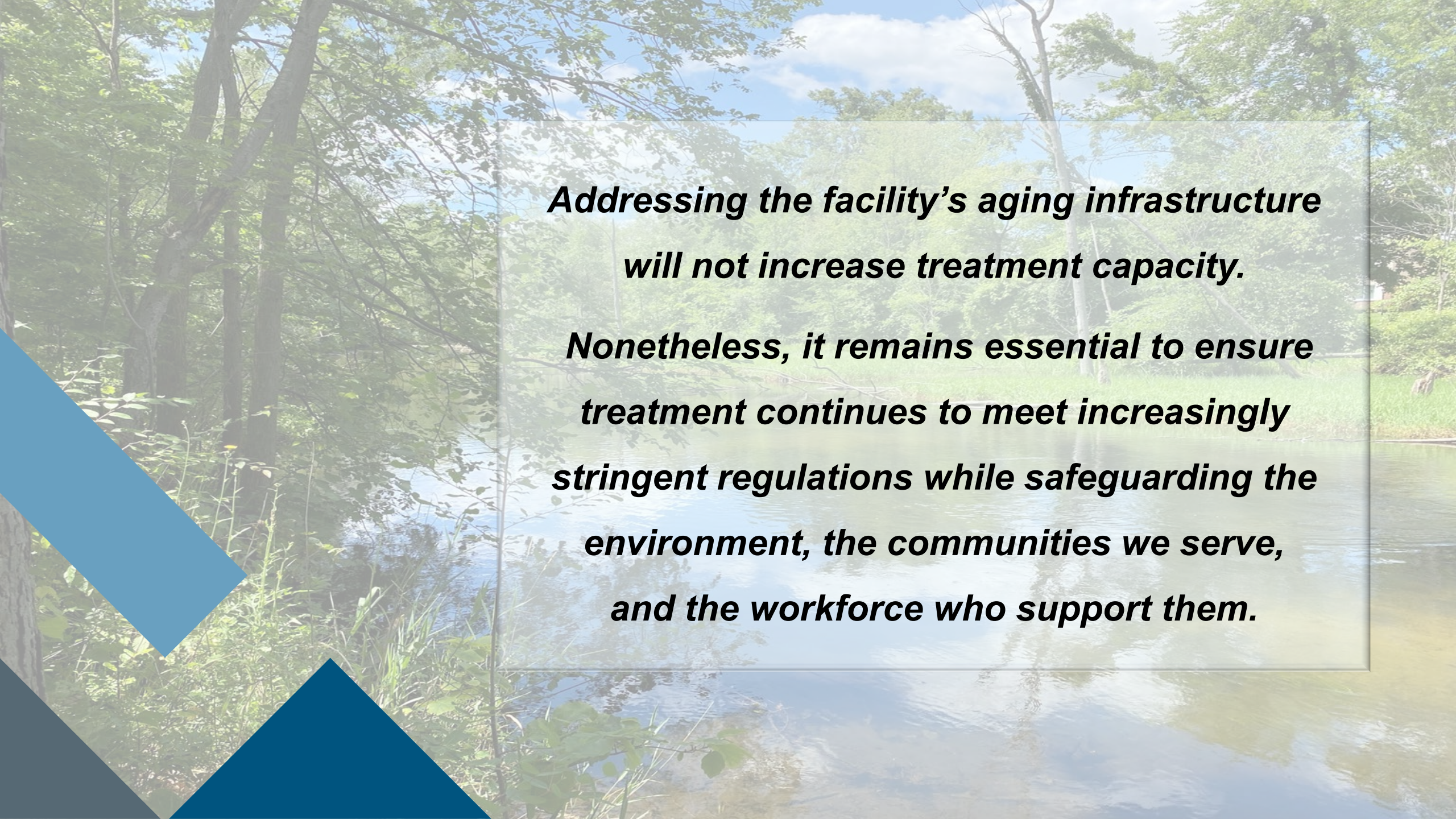


Pump Station Elevator (Manlift)
Manlift installed in 1970
Time lapse of 55 years

Capital Improvement Projects

Project Description	Estimated Implementation Year(s)	Net Useful Life/ Extended Life	Estimated Cost
New Dewatering System	2026 - 2027	20 years	\$600,000
Concrete Tanks Restoration	2026 - 2029	50 years	\$895,000
Process Blowers Replacement	2026 - 2029	20 years	\$585,000
Collection System and Manhole Restoration and Lining	2026 - 2029	40 years	\$1,400,000
Electrical Control Center Replacement	2027-2029	30 years	\$1,550,000
Effluent Structure Replacement	2028 - 2029	40 years	\$150,000
Administration HVAC Replacement	2029	15 years	\$200,000
Replacement of Manlift	2030	40 years	\$620,000

Total Estimated Cost: \$6,000,000



***Addressing the facility's aging infrastructure
will not increase treatment capacity.***

***Nonetheless, it remains essential to ensure
treatment continues to meet increasingly
stringent regulations while safeguarding the
environment, the communities we serve,
and the workforce who support them.***



WATER RESOURCES COMMISSIONER

Jim Nash

Walled Lake-Novu WWTP *Projects and Rates*

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