and improvements; to obtain money for the purpose of financing such acquisitions (and encumbering the properties acquired) and to evidence the transaction by the issuance of bonds, notes or warrants to secure funds so obtained. Any such bonds, notes or warrants may not constitute general obligations or indebtedness of the WSC. Instead, such indebtedness must represent a charge upon specifically encumbered WSC properties and the revenue therefrom. In other words, a WSC may issue bonds for financing purposes, but such bonds are payable from operating revenues only; a WSC does not have authority to levy and collect taxes.

In order for the Wimberley WSC or another WSC to provide wastewater service to the Wimberley area, the WSC will have to obtain a sewer "Certificate of Convenience and Necessity" (CCN). The service area can be defined to include only those areas which will receive wastewater service. However, since a WSC has no taxing power and only users of the service pay for it, the CCN could cover a larger area, including potential development areas in the vicinity, so that as these areas are developed, service could be provided where feasible (and desired). The CCN process occurs before the Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission (TNRCC). The WSC would have to submit an application to obtain a sewer CCN to the TNRCC and would have to provide notice of the application to all persons within the proposed service area and to neighboring utilities. If no persons protest the application, the CCN would be granted by the TNRCC without a formal hearing after a relatively short time. If persons do protest the application, however, a hearing would be held before the TNRCC, which could delay the time for issuance of the CCN.

As noted, a WSC is not authorized by law to levy a property tax and revenues from the system must be used to finance the costs of acquiring, constructing, operating and maintaining the system. To finance the construction of the treatment plant and service lines, the WSC would in all likelihood have to obtain a loan (possibly from Farmers Home Administration or the Texas Water Development Board) or issue revenue bonds.

A WSC is authorized by law to contract with other governmental entities and could therefore provide wastewater service to Woodcreek on either a wholesale or retail basis. That is, the WSC could contract to provide wholesale service to Woodcreek, which would consist of treating and disposing of the wastewater collected in a collection system constructed by Woodcreek or others and piped to a delivery point in the WSC. Woodcreek or others would be responsible for maintaining the collection facilities and billing and collecting for the service. Or, the WSC could contract to provide retail service to individual customers in Woodcreek and be responsible for all of the foregoing functions.

Another option available pursuant to a WSC's contracting authority would be for the Wimberley community to incorporate and obtain either wholesale or retail wastewater service from a WSC (or of course, provide such service itself). The option in which a WSC would provide wastewater service to a municipality could be structured so that those residents who do not want or need wastewater service would pay taxes only for those municipal services from which they benefit.

7.1.3 Municipal Utility District and Water Control & Improvement District

The residents in the Wimberley area may also create a municipal utility district (MUD). A MUD is a governmental subdivision of the state that may include all or part of a county or counties and may include all or part of one or more cities. No land within the corporate limits of a city or within the extraterritorial jurisdiction of a city may be included within a MUD, however, unless the city grants its written consent. The land composing a MUD need not be contiguous.

A MUD only has the powers that are expressly granted by statute. Although a MUD's powers are greater than other kinds of districts, its authority is more limited than that of a municipality. In general, a MUD has the following powers: supply water for municipal, commercial and domestic uses; collect, transport, process and dispose of all domestic, industrial, or communal wastes (including wastewater); drainage control; and provide parks and recreational facilities. A MUD has eminent domain powers and is authorized to enter into contracts to accomplish any of the purposes for which it is created.

In order to create a MUD to serve the Wimberley area, a petition must be filed with the TNRCC. The petition must be signed by a majority in value of the holders of title of the land within the proposed district. If there are more than 50 persons holding title to the land in the proposed district, then the petition is sufficient if it is signed by 50 holders of title to the land. The petition must also describe the proposed boundaries of the district.

After receipt of the petition, the TNRCC will call a hearing where all interested persons may present evidence and testify for or against the proposed district. If the TNRCC finds that the project is feasible, practicable, necessary and would be a benefit to the land to be included in the district, the TNRCC must grant the petition. In making its decision, the TNRCC would consider the availability of comparable services from other utilities, the reasonableness of the projected construction costs, tax rates, sewer rates and other matters. The TNRCC may also exclude land it finds will not be

benefited by inclusion in the proposed district and the boundaries would be redefined accordingly.

Another possibility available to the Wimberley community would be to create a water control and improvement district (WCID) which is similar to but has fewer powers than a MUD. Both districts have the authority to levy and collect ad valorem taxes on all taxable property within its boundaries and there is no maximum tax rate. As a result, both operating revenues and tax proceeds could be used to finance the construction, operation and maintenance of the proposed wastewater system. The ability to obtain tax revenues is the most obvious advantage to the creation of a district. On the other hand, this same factor may cause objections to be raised by those persons who will not receive wastewater service but who are within a district's boundaries. In order to address these concerns, a district's boundaries could be defined to include only those areas that will receive service. Alternatively, a district could issue revenue notes to pay for the cost of constructing the system so that tax revenues are not used for wastewater purposes. Also, a WCID may fund the construction of a wastewater system in limited areas of the district where wastewater service is desired through the issuance of so-called "defined-area tax bonds", payable by an ad valorem tax only on the property within the defined area. A MUD does not have this authority. The feasibility of these options will depend upon the costs of the proposed system, as well as the desires of the residents of the district.

Neither a MUD nor a WCID has the authority to require persons on septic tank systems to convert to a sewer system. With respect to Woodcreek, both types of districts could provide wastewater service to the community on an out-of-district basis. Alternatively, the district's boundaries could include areas within Woodcreek, provided consent by the city was received. Service to Woodcreek by a district could be provided on a wholesale or retail basis, as is the case with a WSC.

It would be possible to create a municipality in addition to a district. The district or its operations could be structured in a manner so that only those persons who receive wastewater service would be subject to taxation for the cost of providing those services. All persons subject to the municipality's zoning and police powers, however, would be taxed for these services by the municipality, exclusive of the wastewater services.

7.1.4 Municipality

Residents in the Wimberley area may also incorporate as a municipality. We understand that certain citizens desire that a municipality be created because of its

zoning and police authority. There are three types of general law municipalities that could be created to serve the Wimberley area, depending upon the number of citizens who would reside in the municipality and the amount of land within the municipality. In general, a Type A general law municipality may be incorporated if there are 600 or more inhabitants in the area to be incorporated and the municipality meets the following territorial requirements: (1) if it has fewer than 2000 inhabitants, it must not have more than 2 square miles of surface area; (2) if there are between 2001 to 4999 inhabitants, it must have not more than 4 square miles of surface area; and (3) if there are 5001 to 9999 inhabitants, it must have not more than 9 square miles of surface area. A Type B general law municipality has the same territorial requirements, but must contain between 201 and 9999 inhabitants.

In order to incorporate as a Type A or B general law municipality, residents must file an application to incorporate with the county judge, to be signed by at least 50 qualified voters. The application must state the proposed boundaries and name of the municipality and must be accompanied by a plat of the proposed municipality. The county judge must then order an incorporation election to be held on a specified date and at a designated place in the community. If a majority of the votes cast at the election are for incorporation, the county judge will make an entry in the records of the commissioners court that the community is incorporated.

In order to incorporate a Type C general law municipality, the proposed territory must contain between 201 and 4999 inhabitants and must meet the square mileage requirements described above. Residents must file a written petition signed by at least 10 percent of the qualified voters of the community with the county judge. The petition must request the county judge to order an election to determine whether the community will incorporate as a Type C general-law municipality. If the majority of the votes cast in the election are for incorporation, then the county judge must enter an order in the minutes of the commissioners court that the community is incorporated. The incorporation is effective on the date the order is entered.

Most new municipalities begin as Type B general law municipalities. Later, as the population of these municipalities grow to 600 or more, most municipalities convert into Type A municipalities. A general law municipality operates under an aldermanic, commission, city council or city manager form of government, depending upon which type of municipality exists and the population of the municipality. General law municipalities may only exercise those powers authorized by law. In the event the Wimberley community chooses to incorporate, we recommend that the powers of municipalities, and alternative forms of government, be reviewed in more detail.

All general law municipalities are authorized to provide for a sanitary sewer system. Significantly, municipalities are specifically authorized to require property owners to connect to a sewer system. A district and WSC do not have such authority. A municipality may construct or operate a utility system inside or outside the municipal boundaries and may own land inside or outside its boundaries for purposes of owning, operating and regulating the utility system. A municipality has the power of eminent domain to acquire property inside or outside its boundaries for this purpose. A municipality may extend sewer lines outside the municipal boundaries and may provide wastewater service to any person outside its boundaries. Thus, a municipality could provide wastewater service to Woodcreek on a wholesale or retail basis, as discussed above.

Municipalities are authorized to enter into a contract with a district or water supply corporation under which the district or corporation will acquire for the benefit of and convey to the municipality a water system or sanitary sewage collection and treatment system. Such a contract need only be approved by the governing body of the municipality, rather than by the voters at an election. The contract can also provide that the municipality assumes ownership of the utility system upon completion of construction of the system or at the time that all debt incurred by the district or corporation is paid in full. A contract of this nature may appeal to the Wimberley area since a water supply corporation or district could be formed to construct and finance the acquisition of a system (by revenues or taxes paid by those persons who receive wastewater service) and upon satisfaction of all outstanding debt, the system could then be conveyed to the municipality.

A municipality has the power to levy and collect ad valorem taxes from all property within its boundaries, but such taxes cannot be used to retire general obligation bonds without the approval of the voters of the city. This taxing authority may raise objections from those persons who will not receive wastewater service from the municipality. On the other hand, these persons probably do desire the police protection, zoning and other services which a municipality may provide. The concerns of these individuals may be resolved by utilizing a separate water supply corporation or district to finance a wastewater system, as described above. Alternatively, the municipality could own the system but could assess up to nine-tenths of the cost of constructing the system to those persons benefited by the system, pursuant to §404.064 of the Texas Local Government Code. To utilize this power, the municipality would have to issue certificates in evidence of assessments levied upon the benefited property (which constitute liens). By ordinance, the municipality would determine the time and terms of payment of the assessments. The assessments may be made only after a hearing and may not exceed the enhancement of value to the property resulting from the

improvements.

A final option would be to create a public improvement district (PID) within a municipality and/or use tax increment financing in the area to be benefited by the sewer system. A PID represents a defined area of a municipality in which an improvement project is undertaken that benefits that part of the municipality. One of the improvement projects for which PIDs may be created is the acquisition, construction or improvement of wastewater facilities. A PID is normally created so that the costs of infrastructure may be financed in part by the municipality and in part by the owners of property within the PID. The owners of property within the PID are required by law to pay at least 10 percent of the total costs of the improvements, but they may pay the entire costs of the improvements, if so required by the municipality. The debt is amortized through the payment in annual installments by individual property owners of an assessment against each property based upon the benefits each property owner receives as a result of the construction of the improvements. The municipality pays its portion (if any) of the costs of the improvements by issuing bonds or setting aside revenues for such purpose.

Although a PID is identified as a "district", it should not be confused with municipal utility districts and other special districts which are local governmental entities. A PID is not a separate governmental entity and the municipality may retain as much control over the management and creation of the PID as it desires.

In order to create a PID, a petition must be submitted to the municipality by the owners of at least 50 percent of the value of real property in the proposed district and either the majority of owners of real property in the proposed district or the owners of the majority in area of land in the district. After feasibility studies are conducted and an assessment method is determined, a public hearing is held. Based on the public hearing, the municipality must make findings as to the advisability of the proposed improvements, their estimated costs, the method of assessment and the apportionment of costs between the proposed improvement district and the municipality as a whole. After the hearing is held, the municipality may order the creation of the PID; an election is not necessary.

Tax-increment financing is a method of financing "urban renewal projects". An election must be held to determine if the majority of qualified voters approve the method of financing. Typically, a municipality would issue tax increment bonds, the proceeds of which would be used to pay for the costs of constructing the wastewater system. The tax increment bonds would be payable only from the increase in tax revenues received from the property benefited as a result of the improvement project.

Tax increment financing or the creation of a PID within a municipality in the Wimberley area would obviously be an appealing solution to address the concerns of those persons who do not desire to pay taxes for a sewer system from which they will not receive service. However, whether these financing vehicles will be feasible will depend upon the cost of the system, the number of persons who will connect to the system and whether they are willing to bear such costs.

7.1.5 Summary

It is apparent that a number of different entities may be created for purposes of providing wastewater service to the Wimberley community. The most expedient way for wastewater services to be provided would probably be through the existing water supply corporation. Unlike the other options, a separate entity would not have to be created. No incorporation elections would be required and petitions from landowners would not have to be completed. Instead, the existing water supply corporation would merely have to apply for a sewer CCN through an administrative process at the TNRCC. The certificated area of service for the corporation could be defined to include only those areas that will receive wastewater service or could include a larger area to cover potential development.

There are a number of drawbacks to this alternative. First, the water supply corporation may not be willing to provide wastewater service. In addition, such a corporation cannot compel its members to connect to a sewer system. It also has no statutory authority to levy taxes. As a result, depending upon the number of persons who connect to the system, it may not be economically feasible to pay for the construction and operation of a wastewater system through operating revenues alone.

It is known that a number of residents in the Wimberley area desire that a municipality be created for zoning and police purposes, regardless of whether a wastewater system is constructed. If a municipality is created, it could own and operate a wastewater system or could obtain wastewater service from another entity created to finance and operate the system.

A municipal form of government for the Wimberley area would require that an incorporation election first take place for purposes of creating the city. Certainly, the potential tax liability associated with a new wastewater system could be an issue in such an election. To address this concern, the municipality may be able to provide wastewater service for only portions of the incorporated area, or it could obtain wastewater service from the water supply corporation or another entity that may be

created to finance and operate the system. The system could then be conveyed to the municipality after all indebtedness has been satisfied. Alternatively, the municipality could create a PID so that only the property benefited by the system will pay for the cost of the system. The total number of persons that potentially could be served by the proposed system and the cost of the system would have to be evaluated to determine whether it is financially feasible to create a PID or to utilize tax-increment financing.

7.2 FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS OF PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

7.2.1 Financing Alternatives

The magnitude of the capital investment required for implementing any one of the structural wastewater collection, treatment and disposal options described in Chapter 6 represents a substantial financial burden for any small community, let alone a new incorporated city, district or authority as would likely be the case in the Wimberley area. With anticipated capital costs ranging from $5,000,000 to $13,000,000 for the various options, long-term financing will be essential for effective plan implementation. Such financing can be provided through local bond sales, commercial lending institutions, private enterprises, and/or certain federal and state governmental organizations. This includes such entities as banks, bond companies, privatization companies engaged in owning and operating public utilities, the Farmers Home Administration, and the Texas Water Development Board. Certainly, all available financing alternatives for the proposed wastewater management plan should be thoroughly investigated as part of the final project planning and implementation phase.

7.2.2 Plan Implementation Costs

The ultimate implementation costs for any form of wastewater management plan that includes construction of wastewater collection, treatment and disposal facilities must take into consideration financing costs and costs for operation and maintenance. For purposes of this planning study, the current financing terms offered by the Texas Water Development Board through its Development Fund have been used to estimate financing costs and the ultimate system costs to individual wastewater system customers. These terms, 5.75-percent annual interest rate over 20 years, are considered to be very reasonable in the current financial market and appropriate for purposes of this planning effort.

Costs associated with operation and maintenance of treatment facilities have been estimated based on the actual experience of the Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority

with owning and operating several small wastewater treatment plants in the region. These plants range in size, or treatment capacity, from about 0.050 million gallons per day (MGD) up to about 7.0 MGD, which encompasses the range of wastewater design flows being considered in this study, i. e., 0.315 to 0.865 MGD as listed in Table 6-4.

The total capital costs of the several structural options for wastewater collection, treatment and disposal summarized in Table 6-5 have been extended to total implementation costs by adding costs for financing and for operation and maintenance of the wastewater treatment facilities. These costs are presented in Table 7-1 in terms of annual costs and monthly costs per living unit equivalent connection. The living unit equivalents (LUEs) used to establish the connection costs for each of the options have been derived from those listed in Table 6-3 for the individual subareas and other service areas that are included within the various options.

As shown in Table 7-1, the estimated Year-1995 monthly costs per LUE connection are in the $75 to $105 range. These cost figures are based on the assumption that the entire cost of the various wastewater collection, treatment and disposal alternatives would be borne solely by the initial customers that currently could be connected to the alternate wastewater systems because of their proximity to these systems. This is not a very likely scenario in that it assumes there will be no other customers added to the systems in the future, even though the systems are designed with capacity to handle about twice the volume of existing wastewater flows. Obviously, the Year-1995 costs per LUE connections are artificially high, but they do serve to reflect an absolute upper limit on the monthly cost of the various wastewater systems to existing customers.

The Year-2015 monthly costs per LUE connection (approximately $34 to $54) provide a more reasonable indication of the actual wastewater system costs to individual customers. These monthly connection cost figures reflect spreading the total costs of the wastewater systems among all potential customers within the service areas of each of the different options. These are the costs associated with operating the wastewater systems at their design capacity with all anticipated customers within the service areas connected to the systems beginning in 1995. Creative financing of the wastewater projects involving early interest-only payments and other techniques can be helpful in achieving these levels of monthly connection costs (approximately $34 to $54) throughout the financing periods of the wastewater options.

It is important to recognize that all of the capital costs and the monthly costs per LUE connection presented in Table 7-1 include the costs associated with installing customer gravity service connections ($800 per connection) and grinder pumps

TABLE 7-1
SUMMARY OF TOTAL COSTS AND LIVING-UNIT-EQUIVALENT COSTS
FOR COLLECTION, TREATMENT AND DISPOSAL OPTIONS
FOR WIMBERLEY REGIONAL PLANNING AREA

OPTION DESIGNATION	TOTAL DESIGN FLOWS Gallons/Day	TOTAL CAPITAL COST	ANNUAL CAPITAL RECOVERY COST [1]	ANNUAL O & M COSTS [2]	TOTAL ANNUAL COST	YEAR-1995 COST PER LUE		YEAR-2015 COST PER LUE	
						LIVING UNIT EQUIVALENT [3]	MONTHLY COST PER LUE	LIVING UNIT EQUIVALENT [3]	MONTHLY COST PER LUE
NORTHWEST PLANT WITH EFFLUENT IRRIGATION									
I-A	315,000	$5,015,832	$428,470	$172,463	$600,932	511	$98.00	1,142	$43.85
I-B	470,000	$9,121,903	$779,225	$257,325	$1,036,550	820	$105.34	1,820	$47.46
I-C	710,000	$11,058,273	$944,636	$259,150	$1,203,786	1,295	$77.46	2,861	$35.06
I-D	750,000	$11,533,056	$985,194	$273,750	$1,258,944	1,469	$71.42	3,035	$34.57
SOUTHEAST PLANT WITH EFFLUENT DISCHARGE									
II-A	355,000	$7,918,643	$676,438	$194,363	$870,801	715	$101.49	1,355	$53.55
II-B	470,000	$8,985,357	$767,561	$257,325	$1,024,886	945	$90.38	1,824	$46.82
II-C	625,000	$13,243,577	$1,131,313	$228,125	$1,359,438	1,254	$90.34	2,502	$45.28
II-D	865,000	$15,331,611	$1,309,680	$315,725	$1,625,405	1,729	$78.34	3,543	$38.23
SOUTHEAST PLANT WITH EFFLUENT IRRIGATION									
III-A	355,000	$7,411,660	$633,130	$194,363	$827,492	715	$96.44	1,355	$50.89
III-B	470,000	$8,501,027	$726,187	$257,325	$983,512	945	$86.73	1,824	$44.93
III-C	625,000	$12,932,035	$1,104,700	$228,125	$1,332,825	1,254	$88.57	2,502	$44.39
III-D	865,000	$14,900,411	$1,272,845	$315,725	$1,588,570	1,729	$76.56	3,543	$37.36

NOTES:

[1] Based on financing at an annual interest rate of 5.75% over 20 years.

[2] Based on GBRA actual experience and an annual cost factor of $1.50/1,000 gallons of wastewater treated for all A & B Options; and $1.00/1,000 gallons of wastewater treated for all C & D Options.

[3] Based on Living Unit Equivalents listed in Table 6-3 for specific subareas and service areas.

($3,000 per connection), where needed, for all existing private residential and commercial customers within the service areas of each of the wastewater collection, treatment and disposal options. As an alternative, the cost of installing private service connections and gravity pumps, where needed, could, and probably should, be borne by the individual customers. In addition, a connection fee, say $1,000 per connection, could be charged to the individual customers for the priviledge of obtaining wastewater service. Assuming these cost and fee policies are adopted, then the capital costs for each of the planning options will be reduced, as will the total annual costs and the monthly costs per LUE connection. Table 7-2 presents these adjusted costs. As indicated, the effect of transferring some of the initial cost burden for implementing the wastewater collection, treatment and disposal options from the wastewater utility to the individual customers results in noticeable reductions in the monthly costs per LUE connection. These adjusted monthly costs per LUE connection range from about $30 to $41 for the Year-2015 condition, which reflects a reduction of about ten to twenty-five percent of the corresponding monthly costs presented in Table 7-1 for the case with the wastewater utility paying the entire amount of the construction and connection costs.

TABLE 7-2
SUMMARY OF TOTAL COSTS AND COSTS-PER-CONNECTION
FOR COLLECTION, TREATMENT AND DISPOSAL OPTIONS
FOR WIMBERLEY REGIONAL PLANNING AREA
WITH SERVICE CONNECTION CHARGES

OPTION DESIGNATION	TOTAL CAPITAL COST	ANNUAL CAPITAL RECOVERY COST [1]	ANNUAL OPERATIONS & MAINTENANCE COST [2]	TOTAL ANNUAL COST	YEAR-1995 COST PER LUE		YEAR-2015 COST PER LUE	
					LIVING UNIT EQUIVALENT CONNECTIONS [3]	MONTHLY COST PER LUE CONNECTION	LIVING UNIT EQUIVALENT CONNECTIONS [3]	MONTHLY COST PER LUE CONNECTION
NORTHWEST PLANT WITH EFFLUENT IRRIGATION								
I-A	$3,977,435	$339,766	$114,975	$454,741	511	$74.16	1,142	$33.18
I-B	$7,336,985	$626,751	$171,550	$798,301	820	$81.13	1,820	$36.55
I-C	$9,273,354	$792,162	$259,150	$1,051,312	1,295	$67.65	2,861	$30.62
I-D	$9,748,138	$832,720	$273,750	$1,106,470	1,295	$71.20	3,035	$30.38
SOUTHEAST PLANT WITH EFFLUENT DISCHARGE								
II-A	$6,607,535	$564,439	$129,575	$694,014	541	$106.90	1,355	$42.68
II-B	$7,215,006	$616,331	$171,550	$787,881	771	$85.16	1,824	$36.00
II-C	$9,444,093	$806,747	$228,125	$1,034,872	1,080	$79.85	2,502	$34.47
II-D	$11,532,126	$985,115	$315,725	$1,300,840	1,555	$69.71	3,543	$30.60
SOUTHEAST PLANT WITH EFFLUENT IRRIGATION								
III-A	$6,115,147	$522,377	$129,575	$651,952	541	$100.42	1,355	$40.10
III-B	$6,730,676	$574,958	$171,550	$746,508	771	$80.69	1,824	$34.11
III-C	$9,132,551	$780,134	$228,125	$1,008,259	1,080	$77.80	2,502	$33.58
III-D	$11,100,926	$948,280	$315,725	$1,264,005	1,555	$67.74	3,543	$29.73

NOTES:

[1] Based on financing at an annual interest rate of 5.75% over 20 years.

[2] Based on GBRA actual experience and an annual cost factor of $1.00/1,000 gallons of wastewater treated.

[3] Based on Living Unit Equivalents listed in Table 6-3 for specific subareas and service areas.

8.0 REGIONAL WASTEWATER MANAGEMENT PLAN

8.1 TECHNOLOGICAL ASPECTS

8.1.1 Wastewater Treatment Plant Alternatives

As noted previously, the growth and development of the Wimberley area has progressed to the point where alternatives to individual onsite septic tank systems for wastewater treatment and disposal must be given serious consideration. From a technological viewpoint, one or more centralized wastewater treatment plants capable of handling the wastewater loadings from major portions of the planning area probably represent the most effective wastewater management alternative. Several options for implementing wastewater management plans comprised of collection, treatment and disposal facilities have been identified, with differences among these options being the size and location of the service areas, and hence the volumes of wastewater treated, and the means for disposing of the treated effluent.

The collection systems all have been preliminarily located and sized using a set of prescribed standards and criteria, and therefore, the individual collection systems are compatible with regard to their general features and configurations. Some result in more disruption of existing infrastructure and property than others and possibly greater environmental impacts. These disruptions and impacts are directly related to the size of the service areas of the individual options.

With regard to treatment levels, the assumed effluent quality for the different treatment plant options reflect the requirements of the Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission with regard to effluent disposal, i. e., irrigation of golf courses and pastures or discharge to the Blanco River. The proposed treatment levels and the resulting water quality are fully consistent with the uses of the surface water bodies in the region. The type of effluent disposal used does impact land requirements for the treatment plant sites and effluent disposal facilities. The irrigation options require more land at the treatment plant sites to store effluent before it is irrigated, and, of course, land is required for the irrigation operations. It has been assumed, however, that the irrigation land can be readily obtained through long-term lease arrangements with local farmers and ranchers or golf course operators.

In essence, any of the structural alternatives for collecting, treating and disposing of wastewater from the different service areas within the planning area can be implemented with few differences regarding technological factors. The primary issues to be addressed relate to the size of the desired service area and the generally proportionate disruptions in existing infrastructure and life activities and impacts on

the environment.

8.1.2 Nonstructural Wastewater Control Alternatives

In the absence of implementing structural wastewater collection, treatment and disposal measures, the region is faced with employing various forms of regulatory and nonstructural controls to assure that future onsite wastewater treatment and disposal systems are properly installed and operated and/or that future development in the area is undertaken so as to minimize the potential environmental impacts and risks. The existing Hays County rules for onsite wastewater treatment and disposal systems are intended to provide a reasonable level of protection for water supplies, water quality and public health and to avoid the threat of pollution or nuisance conditions. These rules provide a solid framework for establishing more stringent regulations for controlling septic tank installations and operations in the event that appropriate structural wastewater management measures are not implemented or in unsewered areas in general. Additional provisions that should be considered for incorporation in these rules include:

- Increased distances for off-sets of private onsite wastewater systems and facilities from watercourses.
- Required annual inspections of private onsite wastewater systems and facilities,
- Required inspections and upgrading of private onsite wastewater systems and facilities whenever properties are sold.
- Possibly with new Legislative authority, creation and adoption of watershed management ordinances that include specific regulations for land development that provide protection of surface and ground water systems.
- Requirements for more sophisticated onsite wastewater treatment and disposal processes and systems.

8.2 INSTITUTIONAL ASPECTS

The most expedient way for wastewater services to be provided within the planning area would probably be through the existing water supply corporation. Unlike other

options, a separate entity would not have to be created. No incorporation elections would be required and petitions from landowners would not have to be completed. Instead, the existing water supply corporation would merely have to apply for a sewer CCN through an administrative process at the TNRCC. The certificated area of service for the corporation could be defined to include only those areas that will receive wastewater service or could include a larger area to cover potential development.

There are a number of drawbacks to this alternative. First, the water supply corporation may not be willing to provide wastewater service. In addition, such a corporation cannot compel its members to connect to a sewer system. It also has no statutory authority to levy taxes. As a result, depending upon the number of persons who connect to the system, it may not be economically feasible to pay for the construction and operation of a wastewater system through operating revenues alone.

It is known that a number of residents in the Wimberley area desire that a municipality be created for zoning and police purposes, regardless of whether a wastewater system is constructed. If a municipality is created, it could own and operate a wastewater system or could obtain wastewater service from another entity created to finance and operate the system.

A municipal form of government for the Wimberley area would require that an incorporation election first take place for purposes of creating the city. Certainly, the potential tax liability associated with a new wastewater system could be an issue in such an election. To address this concern, the municipality may be able to provide wastewater service for only portions of the incorporated area, or it could obtain wastewater service from the water supply corporation or another entity that may be created to finance and operate the system. The system could then be conveyed to the municipality after all indebtedness has been satisfied. Alternatively, the municipality could create a PID so that only the property benefited by the system will pay for the cost of the system. The total number of persons that potentially could be served by the proposed system and the cost of the system would have to be evaluated to determine whether it is financially feasible to create a PID or to utilize tax-increment financing.

8.3 FNANCIAL ASPECTS

The Year-2015 monthly costs per living unit equivalent (LUE) connection presented in Tables 7-1 and 7-2 for the structural wastewater managment options (ranging between approximately $34 and $54 without customer service connection charges

and between about $30 and $41 with customer service connection charges) provide a meaningful indication of the actual wastewater system costs to individual customers. These monthly connection cost figures reflect spreading the total costs of the wastewater systems among all potential customers within the service areas of each of the different options. These are the costs associated with operating the wastewater systems at their design capacity with all anticipated customers within the service areas connected to the systems. Creative financing of the wastewater projects involving early interest-only payments and other techniques can be helpful in achieving these levels of monthly connection costs throughout the financing periods of the facilities.

Based on the costs per LUE connection as summarized in Tables 7-1 and 7-2, the least expensive options typically are those handling the higher wastewater volumes; however, the actual cost differences in terms of the monthly costs per LUE connection are not appreciable among the various alternatives. Probably the most effective approach would be to implement one of the smaller-scale options initially in order to obtain wastewater service for the downtown central business district and adjacent commercial areas and the Wimberley ISD schools. This system then could be expanded to other areas over time.

9.0 WATER CONSERVATION AND DROUGHT CONTINGENCY PLANS

9.1 PLANNING AREA

For purposes of these Water Conservation and Drought Contingency Plans, the planning area includes the area of southwestern Hays County that surrounds the downtown square in the community of Wimberley, including the Woodcreek corporate area and adjacent residential developments, the Living Centers of America nursing home, local recreational areas and the Wimberley ISD schools.

9.2 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The objective of the Water Conservation Plan is to reduce the quantity of water required for specific activities, where practical, through implementation of efficient water use practices. The Drought Contingency Plan provides procedures for both voluntary and mandatory actions to temporarily reduce water usage during a water shortage crisis.

Drought contingency procedures may include water conservation practices and prohibition of certain uses. Both are tools that water managers have available to effectively employ during a wide range of water demand and supply conditions within the public water supply service area.

The average daily water use in the area approaches 140 to 150 gallons per person during the summer months, but typically is less than 100 gallons per person during the winter. The statewide average daily water consumption is in the range of 150 to 190 gallons per capita. It is the goal to adopt a Water Conservation Plan for the Wimberley area that will reduce daily water use per connection by ten percent. Achieving this goal would in effect, increase the customer service capacity of the water facilities by an equivalent quantity.

The Drought Contingency Plan includes those measures that can significantly reduce water use on a temporary basis. These measures involve voluntary reductions, and water rationing. Because the onset of an emergency condition is often rapid, it is important the plans be prepared in advance. Further, the citizen and/or customer must know that certain measures not used in the water conservation plan may be necessary if a drought or other emergency condition occurs. It is the goal of the Drought Contingency Plan to reduce water used during an emergency situation or prolonged drought by five percent.

The Wimberley Water Supply Corporation (WSC), which supplies water to those

residential and commercial users in the planning area that are not in the Woodcreek Utilities service area, has adopted a Drought Contingency Plan that generally conforms to the recommended Drought Contingency Plan presented herein. The Wimberley WSC does not have a Water Conservation Plan, and it is recommended that the draft Water Conservation Plan presented in this planning report be adopted by local water purveyors in the planning area.

9.3 WATER CONSERVATION PLAN

The Water Conservation Plan addresses all aspects of water conservation, including public information and education, water conserving plumbing codes, water conservation retrofit programs, water conservation-oriented rate structures, universal metering and meter repair and replacement, water conserving landscaping, leak detection and water audits, and wastewater reuse and recycling. The following is a summary of each of these items.

9.3.1 Public Information And Education

Water conservation practices will be promoted by informing the public of methods to conserve water. Information and educational programs that are on-going and will be incorporated into this plan include distribution of educational packages developed by the State and GBRA through area schools and posting of information sources for available water conservation literature (see Addendum A). Information pertaining to water conservation techniques also can be made available to customers every month as part of the billing process (bill stuffers and fliers), as well as, to new customers who are tying into the system.

The overall public education effort will be divided into three segments: a first-year program, a long-term program, and a new customer program.

First-Year Program - the first-year program will include the distribution of educational material, including brochures and newsletters or news releases, to initially explain the program. Material will be provided at least two times during this first year. This initial effort will be followed by helpful hints on ways to save water inside and outside the home (see Addendum B).

Long-Term Program - the long-term program will include news releases to provide information on water conserving practices. Mail outs will be utilized during extremely stressful periods.

New Customer Program - all new customers will be informed of the water conservation program by a special information packet or document. The packet will describe the conservation program and explain its goals and solicit the help and participation of the new customers.

9.3.2 Water Conserving Plumbing Codes

The use of water saving fixtures will be required for all new construction and for replacement of plumbing in existing structures (remodeling). Following is a summary of the standards required for residential and commercial fixtures.

Toilets:	The maximum use will not exceed 2.2 gallons of water per flush.
Flush toilets:	The maximum use will not exceed 2.0 gallons of water per flush.
Tank-type urinal:	The maximum use will not exceed 1.6 gallons of water per flush.
Flush valve urinal:	The maximum use will not exceed 1.6 gallons of water per flush.
Shower Head:	The maximum use will not exceed 2.75 gallons of water per minute.
Faucets:	The maximum use will not exceed 2.2 gallons of water minute.
Hot Water Piping:	All hot water lines will be insulated.
Swimming Pools:	New pools must have recirculation filtration equipment.
Drinking Water Fountains:	Must be self-closing.

9.3.3 Water Conservation Retrofit Program

Retrofit of existing plumbing fixtures will be accomplished through the voluntary efforts of individual water users for their homes and businesses.

9.3.4 Water Conservation-Oriented Rate Structure

The rate charged customers for water supply and delivery can have an important influence on water use. Rate changes may be implemented to establish an increasing block rate structure to incourage reductions in water use.

9.3.5 Universal Metering and Meter Repair and Replacement

All water service connections should be metered. A schedule for testing meters is established as follows:

Production, master meters or meters greater than 1.5"	Test once per year
Meters larger than 1" up to 1.5"	Test once every three years
Meters 1" or less	Test once every ten years

9.3.6 Water Conserving Landscaping

Water conserving landscaping practices will be initiated through public information and educational programs. Builders, developers, nurseries and other businesses involved in outdoor landscaping will be encouraged to provide products that conserve water.

9.3.7 Leak Detection and Water Audits

The existing water supply system currently has a leak detection program which will be maintained. The program includes:

- Identification of high water use areas and potential leaks based on monthly water use accounting by the billing computer and readings from master meters.
- Constant monitoring of meters and storage tanks in order to identify major watermain breaks.
- Visual inspections by meter readers and system employees to provide a constant watch for abnormal conditions indicating leaks.
- An adequate maintenance staff which is available to repair any leaks.

9.3.8 Recycling and Reuse

There are no customers at this time that would be able to recycle water.

9.5.9 Means of Implementation and Enforcement

The Water Conservation Plan will be voluntary and will be implemented and enforced (though compliance is encouraged) by the following methods:

- Service tap applicants will be encouraged to utilize water conservation plumbing fixtures. Water system staff will be used to encourage the installation of water saving plumbing devices in new buildings.

- The rate structure will encourage retrofitting of old plumbing fixtures which are using large amounts of water.

- Adoption of new plumbing regulations regarding water conserving plumbing fixtures will be strongly considered.

9.3.10 Annual Reporting

Annual reports will be made to the Texas Water Development Board within 60 days of the anniversary date of the loan closing throughout the life of the loan. The report will include the water conservation activities during the previous year relative to this plan and will include:

- Progress made in the implementation of the program

- Public response

- Effectiveness of plan in reducing water use

9.4 DROUGHT CONTINGENCY PLAN

Droughts and other uncontrollable circumstances can disrupt the normal availability of water supplies. During drought periods, consumer demand is typically higher than under normal conditions. The lack of adequate system treatment and storage and distribution system failures can also present emergency water demand and management situations.

It is important to distinguish drought contingency planning from water conservation planning. While water conservation involves implementing permanent water use efficiency and/or reuse practices, drought contingency planning establishes temporary methods or techniques designed to be used only as long as the emergency exists.

The key elements of the Drought Contingency Plan are identified and described in the following sections.

9.4.1 Drought Trigger Conditions

Mild Drought - Mild drought conditions and contingency measures will be in effect when the daily water use equals or exceeds 90% of treatment or pumping capacity for three (3) consecutive days.

Moderate Drought - Moderate drought conditions and contingencies will be in effect when the daily water use equals or exceeds 95% of treatment or pumping capacity for three (3) consecutive days.

Severe Drought - Severe drought or system limitation conditions will be in effect when daily use equals or exceeds 110% of treatment or pumping capacity for three (3) consecutive days or if failure of any system component results in diminished treatment or distribution capacity.

Critical Conditions - Critical drought or system limitation conditions will be in effect when the public water supply is not dependable and/or may not be suitable for human consumption because of natural or other disasters.

9.4.2 Drought Contingency Measures

Mild Condition - Under mild drought conditions, the citizens will be notified that a trigger condition has been reached and will be asked to reduce water use and to otherwise conserve water.

Moderate Drought - Citizens will be asked to continue implementation of water conservation measures. In addition, a mandatory lawn watering schedule will be publicized. The mandatory lawn watering schedule will permit watering only between the hours of 8 pm and 10 am.

Severe Drought - Outside water use, which includes car washing, window washing and pavement washing, will not be permitted except when a bucket is used. A mandatory lawn watering schedule will be implemented. Watering will occur only between the hours of 8 pm and 10 am.

Critical Conditions - All uses of the public water supply will be banned except in cases of emergency.

9.4.3 Education and Information

The purpose and desired effects of the Drought Contingency Plan will be communicated to the public through articles in local newspapers and supplemented by pamphlets and notices. When trigger conditions appear to be approaching, the public will be notified through publication of articles in local newspapers, with information on water conserving methods.

Throughout the duration of drought contingency measure implementation, regular articles will appear to explain and educate the public on the purpose, cause and methods of conservation for that condition.

9.4.4 Initiation Procedures

Prior to formal notification of a drought condition, a statement will be issued to all media sources warning that a potential drought condition is approaching. Once a trigger condition is reached, a formal notification will be made that a particular drought condition is in effect.

9.4.5 Termination Notification

Termination of the drought contingency measures will take place when the trigger conditions which initiated the contingency measures have subsided. The news media will be notified that the emergency condition has passed.

9.4.6 Means of Implementation

The Drought Contingency Plan will be implemented through a resolution by the appropriate legal entity.

Addendum A

Water Conservation Literature

Single copies of all of Water Conservation publications and materials can be obtained at no charge. Larger quantities can be obtained through special arrangement or at the cost of printing. To make a request, write: CONSERVATION, Texas Water Development Board, Capitol Station, Austin, Texas 78711-3231. Examples of available literature include: agricultural conservation, municipal conservation, water resource planning, and audio visuals.

Addendum B

Water Saving Methods That Can Be Practiced By The Individual Water User

In-home water use accounts for an average of 65 percent of total residential use, while the remaining 35 percent is used for exterior residential purposes such as lawn watering and car washing. Average residential in-home water use data indicate that about 40 percent is used for toilet flushing, 35 percent for bathing, 11 percent for kitchen uses, and 14 percent for clothes washing. Water saving methods that can be practiced by the individual water user are listed below.

A. BATHROOM

1. Take a shower instead of filling the tub and taking a bath. Showers usually use less water than tub baths.

2. Install a low-flow shower head which restricts the quantity of flow at 60 psi to no more than 3.0 gallons per minute.

3. Take short showers and install a cutoff valve or turn the water off while soaping and back on again only to rinse.

4. Do not use hot water when cold will do. Water and energy can be saved by washing hands with soap and cold water. Hot water should only be added when hands are especially dirty.

5. Reduce the level of the water being used in a bath tub by one or two inches if a shower is not available.

6. Turn water off when brushing teeth until it is time to rinse.

7. Do not let water run when washing hands. Instead, hands should be wet and water should be turned off while soaping and scrubbing and turned on again to rinse. A cutoff valve may also be installed on the faucet.

8. Shampoo hair in the shower. Shampooing in the shower takes only a little more water than is used to shampoo hair during a bath and much less than shampooing and bathing separately.

9. Hold hot water in the basin when shaving instead of letting the faucet continue to run:

10. Test toilets for leaks. To test for a leak, a few drops of food coloring can be added to the water in the tank. The toilet should not be flushed. The customer can then watch to see if the coloring appears in the bowl within a few minutes. If it does, the fixture needs adjustment or repair.

11. Use a toilet tank displacement device. A one-gallon plastic milk bottle can be filled with stones or with water, recapped, and placed in the toilet tank. This will reduce the amount of water in the tank but still providing enough for flushing. (Bricks which some people use for this purpose are not recommended since they crumble eventually and could damage

the working mechanism, necessitating a call to the plumber).

12. Install faucet aerators to reduce water consumption.

13. Never use the toilet to dispose of cleaning tissues, cigarette butts, or other trash. This can waste a great deal of water and also places an unnecessary load the sewage treatment plant or septic tank.

14. Install a new low-volume flush toilet that uses 3.5 gallons or less per flush when building a new home or remodeling a bathroom.

B. KITCHEN

1. Use a pan of water (or place a stopper in the sink) for rinsing pots and pans and cooking implements when cooking rather than turning on the water faucet each time a rinse is needed.

2. Never run the dishwasher without a full load. In addition to saving water, expensive detergent will last longer and a significant energy saving will appear on the utility bill.

3. Use the sink disposal sparingly, and never use it for just a few scraps.

4. Keep a container of drinking water in the refrigerator. Running water from the tap until it is cool is wasteful. Better still, both water and energy can be saved by keeping cold water in a picnic jug on a kitchen counter to avoid opening the refrigerator door frequently.

5. Use a small pan of cold water when cleaning vegetables rather than letting the faucet run.

6. Use only a little water in the pot and put a lid on it for cooking most food. Not only does this method save water, but food is more nutritious since vitamins and minerals are not poured down the drain with the extra cooking water.

7. Use a pan of water for rinsing when hand washing dishes rather than a running faucet.

8. Always keep water conservation in mind, and think of other ways to save in the kitchen. Small kitchen savings from not making too much coffee or letting ice cubes melt in a sink can add up in a year's time.

C. LAUNDRY

1. Wash only a full load when using an automatic washing machine (32 to 59 gallons are required per load).

2. Use the lowest water level setting on the washing machine for light loads whenever possible.

3. Use cold water as often as possible to save energy and to conserve the hot water for uses which cold water cannot serve. (This is also better for clothing made of today's synthetic fabrics.)

D. APPLIANCES AND PLUMBING

1. Check water requirements of various models and brands when considering purchasing any new appliance that uses water. Some use less water than others.

2. Check all water line connections and faucets for leaks. If the cost of water is $1.00 per 1,000 gallons, one could be paying a large bill for water that simply goes down the drain because of leakage. A slow drip can waste as much as 170 gallons of water EACH DAY, or 5,000 gallons per month, and can add as much as $10.00 per month to the water bill.

3. Learn to replace faucet washers so that drips can be corrected promptly. It is easy to do, costs very little, and can represent a substantial amount save in plumbing and water bills.

4. Check for water leakage that the customer may be entirely unaware of, such as a leak between the water meter and the house. To check, all indoor and outdoor faucets should be turned off, and the water meter should be checked. If it continues to run or turn, a leak probably exists and needs to be located.

5. Insulate all hot water pipes to avoid the delays (and wasted water) experience while waiting for the water to "run hot".

6. Be sure the hot water heater thermostat is not set high. Extremely hot setting waste water and energy because the water often has to be cooled with cold water before it can be used.

7. Use a moisture meter to determine when house plants need water. More plants die from over-watering than from being too dry.

E. OUT-OF-DOOR USES

1. Water lawns early in the morning during the hotter summer months. Much of the water used on the lawn can simply evaporate between the sprinkler and the grass.

2. Use a sprinkler that produces large drops of water, rather than a fine mist, to avoid evaporation.

3. Turn soaker hoses so the holes are on the bottom to avoid evaporation.

4. Water slowly for better absorption, and never water on windy days.

5. Forget about watering the street or walks or driveways. They will never grow a thing.

6. Condition the soil with compost before planting grass or flower beds so that water will soak in rather than run off.

7. Fertilize lawns at least twice a year for root stimulation. Grass with a good root system makes better use of less water.

8. Learn to know when grass needs watering. If it has turned a dull grey-green or if footprints remain visible. It is time to water.

9. Not water too frequently. Too much water can overload the soil so that air cannot get to the roots and can encourage plant diseases.

10. Not over-water. Soil can absorb only so much moisture and the rest simply runs off. A timer will help, and either a kitchen timer or an alarm clock will do. An inch and one-half of water applied once a week will keep most Texas grasses alive and healthy.

11. Operate automatic sprinkler systems only when the demand on the town's water supply is lowest. Set the system to operate between four and six a.m.

12. Not scalp lawns when mowing during hot weather. Taller grass holds moisture better. Rather, grass should be cut fairly often, so that only 1/2 to 3/4 inch is trimmed off. A better looking lawn will result.

13. Use a watering can or hand water with the hose in small areas of the lawn that need more frequent watering (those near walks or driveways or in especially hot, sunny spots.)

14. Learn what types of grass, shrubbery, and plants do best in the area and in which parts of the lawn, and then plant accordingly. If one has a heavily shaded yard, no amount of water will make roses bloom. In especially dry sections of the state, attractive arrangements of plants that are adapted to arid or semi-arid climates should be chosen.

15. Consider decorating areas of the lawn with rocks, gravel, wood chips, or other materials now available that require no water at all.

16. Not "sweep" walks and driveways with the hose. Use a broom or rake ihstead.

17. Use a bucket of soapy water and use the hose only for rinsing when washing the car.

APPENDIX

COPIES OF MEDIA COVERAGE

Wimberley View - July 20

County addresses on-site wastewater

By Harrell King
Staff Writer

Hays County Commissioners Monday addressed a problem they had been waiting approximately two years for the State of Texas to resolve. The issue involved regulations dealing with the proper installation, maintenance and discharge of on-site wastewater systems.

The issue was brought to the attention of the court by Director Allan Walthers, of the Environmental Health Department who told commissioners it was time to stop waiting for the Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission (TNRCC) to finish revising its regulations. That process could take another year or longer, he explained.

Meanwhile, the director and commissioners agreed the county's regulatory system needed an overhaul.

Walthers said he was seeing the introduction of a number of new types of wastewater systems, designed by professionals. The nature of these designs could affect the way in which the county has traditionally looked at small lot sizes for home sites.

Revising the regulations would also provide an opportunity to address sites over the recharge zone. The county also could encourage certain types of fine treatment through the development of new rules.

Precinct 2 Commissioner Jeff Barton agreed. "There are things we can do to enhance our position in negotiating with agencies such as the EPA."

With the recent increase in environmental action through the Endangered Species Act and the Outstanding National Resource Waters proposal, Hays County Judge Eddy Etheredge said the issues "brought home some shortcomings that we have."

He added, "We're going to have to take a little different view of how the Health Department treats septic systems."

The judge also acknowledged that the county could not make much headway with federal agencies if they told them Hays County could take care of its own problems "and then we turn around and ignore the problem."

In negotiating over federal regulation of local areas, Etheredge said county officials would only be taken seriously if they provide alternatives to ONRW's. This could be done by "keeping our rules current and strict."

Perhaps seeking to enlist the aid of local school districts in holding off such federal intervention, Etheredge said if the imposition of the proposed non-degradation standards were to lower property values, "it will also affect school districts."

Moving specifically back to the subject of wastewater, commissioners discussed some additional options if new design and technology were recognized.

By setting specific standards, the county could encourage some actions, deemed as desirable, and discourage others.

Among those which could be encouraged, if the proper standards were in place, were cluster developments with contained or planned open spaces for more efficient land use.

Barton suggested that such plans might be "more effective if we let the market dictate that." He did acknowledge the possibility of creating incentives for more efficient systems and land use by "knocking down bureaucratic barriers."

Discussion included the possibility of developing a regional wastewater system, though it was agreed that no funding was available from CAPCO.

The ONRW once again creeped back into the discussion, as Etheredge told commissioners if the designation were implemented "we would be prohibited from collective systems which would have any kind of discharge."

Walthers said most agencies, at every level of government favor subsurface discharge.

Commissioners asked Walthers to begin working on a draft revision of wastewater regulations in preparation for a detailed workshop on the subject.

They also asked him to prepare an instructional program for the court, to bring them up to speed on the different types of systems available, both innovative and conventional.

Day's use approaches 1 million gallons

Water use at record high as wells go dry

By DB Bearden
Staff Writer

Water usage at the Wimberley Water Supply reached an all time high with 982,000 gallons recorded on Sunday. The reading was for the previous days use so last Saturday Wimberley residents were doing everything they could to keep cool or to keep their yards green. Water utility manager Lanny Montague issued a warning last week that the community must voluntarily limit outside watering to once every five days.

Montague said, "Daily usage should be limited to drinking, cooking and bathrooms. If this doesn't work, we'll have to put a total ban on all outside watering.

An audit of Wimberley Water Supply daily usage since May indicates that water use has doubled or tripled. On Sunday May 1 a total of 378,000 gallons were recorded from the previous days usage. One week later usage leaped to 448,000 gallons. By the last Sunday in May usage recorded had increased to 568,000 gallons.

During the month of June usage crept up to breach the 600,000 gallon mark and then on July 5, 871,000 holiday gallons were recorded.

The box above shows the most recent week's water usage that is averaging almost 870,000 gallons a day.

There have been reports of many water wells in Wimberley going dry. Montague said they have added 63 feet of pipe to one well to keep the pump below the water line.

On Monday the Barton Springs/Edwards Aquifer Conservation District issued a Drought Alarm due to dropping water levels and a forecast for continued hot, dry weather. Board president Patrick Cox said, "Water levels in key monitor wells have dropped below the established trigger points and have remained there for at least 14 days."

Persons holding pumping permits from the district are required to begin conservation measures with a goal of a 20 percent reduction in monthly water use. The district has been under a Drought Alert since August 1993.

According to the conservation district water levels in some locations in western Hays County are approaching lows last seen in the drought of the 1950s.

Wimberley Water Supply Well Pumpage

Date of reading	gallons
Thursday July 21	782,000
Friday July 22	815,000
Saturday July 23	872,000
Sunday July 24	982,000
Monday July 25	955,000
Tuesday July 26	818,000

County okays GBRA attempt at regional wastewater study

By Harrell King
Staff Writer

Addressing the Hays County Commissioners Court Monday, Precinct 3 Commissioner Craig Payne said, "As most of us are aware, Wimberley, the City of Woodcreek and the school district in Wimberley... all of us have some sort of sewer problems."

He said Wimberley has had these problems for years. In addition, the City of Woodcreek is overloaded and the school district is having problems dealing with growth in the area, Payne related.

In an effort to encourage the finding of a solution to these problems, Payne suggested that the court compose a letter of support, acknowledging the need for regional wastewater study.

The letter would accompany a grant request by the Guadalupe/Blanco River Authority (GBRA) to the Texas Water Development Board. "This is actually going to be just a letter of support and sponsorship for this application by GBRA," Payne emphasized.

Additional letters of support would be forthcoming from the City of Woodcreek and the Wimberley Independent School District, the commissioner added.

With Payne's motion receiving a second from County Judge Eddy Etheredge, approval was unanimous.

Payne said he would be drafting the letter immediately and would release additional information once it was complete.

Wastewater treatment object of future study

By DB Bearden
Holly Media Group

"We're one of the players making a proposal," said David Welch, Director of Planning and Development for the Guadalupe Blanco River Authority.

After months of discussion by the Wimberley Study Group about water quality problems facing the community, the GBRA is looking at alternatives and making cost estimates for developing a regional waste water treatment plant for the Wimberley Valley.

"Wimberley is a challenge due to the soil conditions and because it is a growing area with new people moving in, you need some form of wastewater treatment. We're trying to see what kind of facility is feasible there," said Welch.

Welch said that while GBRA does operate wastewater treatment plants elsewhere, a facility in Wimberley could be operated by a Municipal Utility District or a Water Conservation and Improvement District as well.

"We have had some experience. We operate four rural plants at Canyon Lake, Lake Dunlap, Northcliff and Springs Hill. In addition we have operated a large plant in Victoria since 1972 and will be building a new one at Lockhart," he said.

Development in Wimberley has been restricted by county health officials who are reluctant to permit new septic systems. In addition the Wimberley school district and Woodcreek Utilities have systems that have been declared beyond their permitted capacity.

Welch said that the GBRA was involved in discussions with the City of San Marcos, which is seeking a new permit for its wastewater treatment plant. The San Marcos River Foundation is asking the city to reduce

See GBRA, page 9

the amount of pollutants released into the river beyond what they have requested. San Marcos is currently permitted at 20-20 — Biological Oxygen Demand and Total Suspended Solids.

While the treatment level is determined by the stream and it is difficult to compare treatment permits, Welch cited the following permits for GBRA operated plants: Dunlap — 10-15; Springshill — 2.5-3; Northcrest — 20-2.5; and Canyon Park — 10-15.

Plans underway for a possible Wimberley plant involve meetings at the Water Development Board to develop a study grant. Welch said the grant proposal would be completed and submitted in the next two weeks. He said a population study with an ability to pay analysis plus a system cost and design would be included. He said there is a lot of support for the study from the people in Wimberley.

Mayor of Woodcreek Jeannine Pool said she had attended meetings at the Water Development Board but that the City of Woodcreek has not discussed participation in a regional wastewater treatment plant. The council has discussed possible purchase of Woodcreek Utilities from the resort.

The GBRA is looking at all of Hays County. "There are a lot of small communities that need water," said Welch.

The GBRA recently participated in the discussions that might lead to the purchase of Blue Hole by the Texas Nature Conservancy. The river authority operates parks in locations where there is compatibility for recreation and dedication. In Seguin they operate Nolte Island in conjunction with a power plant and at Cleto Creek there is a cooling pond with 3,100 surface acres and a dam that is also used for recreation.

Welch said the river authority would probably not be interested in acquiring park land that is not in conjunction with a utility service.

Wimberley View – Saturday, October 22, 1994

Texas Water Board awards grant for wastewater plan

By Harrell King
View Staff

An effort initiated one and a half years ago, involving an examination of surface and well water problems in the Wimberley area, Thursday culminated with a grant award to the Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority (GBRA) in the amount of $43,785. The grant, awarded by the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB), was approved "to develop a comprehensive regional wastewater planning and management program to protect Wimberley's resources by preventing continued deterioration of land and water quality," according to a press release.

At a total cost of $87,570, the balance of project funding will be shared by GBRA, Hays County and the Wimberley Study Group. Much of the financing by the various entities, in addition to cash funds, will involve 'in-kind services,' which are tasks performed by the personnel, consulting agencies and/or equipment of the individuals organizations.

Matching funds will be provided by GBRA, at the level of $15,000, and Hays County, with a contribution of $1,985.

According to the grant application, filed by GBRA the responsibility "for the overall administrative and fiscal management of the project, including coordination of the various technical activities undertaken by the different study participants."

"I'm just super delighted," said Jene Williams, chairperson of the Wimberley Study Group. "We've been moving in this direction every since that first meeting," held in August, 1993. David Welsh, with TWDB said the "fairly comprehensive study" will be coordinated on a local level with Williams.

The group met in August with Carolyn Briton, head of the regional planning division of the TWDB to coordinate the funding request. Present at the meeting were WISD Superintendent of Schools Vernon Newsom, Eddie Gumbert, City of Woodcreek Mayor Jeanine Pool and Tony McGee.

When contacted Thursday, Hays County Commissioner Craig Payne said, "I'm very happy about it." However, he noted that the performance of the study was "the tip of the iceberg." By way of the study, the community would need to "look at and digest the overall environmental financial impacts."

Completion of the study was estimated at approximately one year.

Wimberley View - October 26, 1994

Wastewater study spurred by Wimberley area growth

By Harrell King
View Staff

With nearly every community in the central Texas area wrestling with what many are calling uncontrollable growth, it should come as no surprise that the Wimberley community is no immune.

Organizing an effort one and a half years ago, concerned citizens in the Wimberley area sought out a method with which they could examine problems connected with surface and well water.

With the awarding of a grant last week by the Texas Water Development Board, those who helped to initiate the drive for assistance reveled in the fruition of their goals.

The result of an application by the Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority, the grant will provide $43,875 for the primary funding of the study.

Matching funds were prov ided by GBRA and Hays County, totaling $1,685. In kind services will be provided by each participating group, with the GBRA providing the majority, Hays County about half of that amount and the Wimberley Citizens Group matching the county.

Local participation will be primarily in the form of coordination and information compiling.

According to the grant application, filed by GBRA the responsibility "for the overall administrative and fiscal management of the project, including coordination of the various technical activities undertaken by the different study participants."

"I'm just super delighted," said Jene Williams, chairperson of the Wimberley Study Group. "We've been moving in this direction every since that first meeting," held in August, 1993. David Welsh, with TWDB said the "fairly comprehensive study" will be coordinated on a local level with Williams.

The group met in August with Carolyn Briton, head of the regional planning division of the TWDB to coordinate the funding request. Present at the meeting were WISD Superintendent of Schools Vernon Newsom, Eddie Gumbert, City of Woodcreek Mayor Jeanine Pool and Tony McGee.

When contacted Thursday, Hays County Commissioner Craig Payne said, "I'm very happy about it." However, he noted that the performance of the study was "the tip of the iceberg." By way of the study, the community would need to "look at and digest the overall environmental financial impacts."

Completion of the study was estimated at approximately one year.

According to the application submitted by the GBRA, the need for the funding assistance is based on the fact that "no single governmental entity exists with the authority or resources for planning, implementing, funding or operating an overall wastewater management program that can effectively address present and future water pollution problems throughout the area."

The planning is needed, according to the proposal, because "The wimberley Region has grown so rapidly over the past two decades."

The environmentally sensitive nature of its rural terrain has "undergone significant physical change and experienced a variety of adverse impacts."

As a result of the population growth, due to a "spillover from the high-tech development along the I-35 Corridor," the absence of organizational management and planning and the "reluctance of local residents to submit themselves to local governmental planning and regulatory restrictions," serious problems with water and land resources in the area have occurred.

The planning will focus on overall wastewater facility and water pollution control needs.

11-30-94 Austin-American

County quits negotiations to purchase the Blue Hole

Officials say $2 million price for swim area too high

By Zeke MacCormack
American-Statesman Staff

WIMBERLEY

Sticker shock prompted Hays County to drop negotiations for the purchase of the Blue Hole, a favorite swimming hole considered for use as a county park.

The 125-acre parcel along Cypress Creek is now being considered for use as a mobile home park, said Kirby Perry, general partner for Blue Hole Management Ltd.

He said the asking price is $2 million for the property off RM 3237 near Wimberley but that it might be leased to mobile home park operators if no sale agreement can be reached.

In negotiations with the county, Perry said, the partners dropped the price to $1.5 million, but the negotiator for the county topped out at $1.1 million.

Commissioners voted last summer to have Jim Fries of the Texas Nature Conservancy negotiate for them.

If terms had been reached, plans called for the Nature Conservancy to buy the property and hold it until funding was available for purchase by the county.

Hays County Judge Eddy Etheredge last week called Blue Hole negotiations "a dead issue."

"They weren't willing to come down (enough), and there was way too much money in between," Etheredge said.

Commissioner Craig Payne, who represents the Wimberley area, agreed with decision not to raise the county's offer, but said, "I wish we could have come to terms because it's an ideal piece of property for a park.

"If it falls into hands of a private developer it could be gone," he said.

The county's proposal to buy the Blue Hole drew mixed reactions from patrons of the swimming hole that has been operated as a private club since Perry's group bought it in 1973.

Perry said that he doubts a mobile home park will be received any more favorably by surrounding property owners but that the partners are intent on generating revenue from the property.

The mobile homes would be on a bluff overlooking the swimming hole area, which would remain open for swimming and camping, Perry said.

He said the property could handle 100 mobile homes, which would be connected to the wastewater treatment plant that currently serves the Deer Creek Nursing Home.

1994 staff file photo

The Blue Hole has been a favorite swimming area for peo- officials have pulled out of negotiations to buy the site, say-

DAILY RECORD, San Marcos, TX., Tuesday, December 6, 1994

Consultant discusses development options with Hays County officials

By SCOTT MAIER
Staff Reporter

The president of Olson Policy Consulting of California met with the Hays County Commissioners Court Monday to discuss a development plan for the county.

Last month, commissioners hired the environmental planning specialist firm to help create a development plan for the county.

At a cost of $9,000, it will work with local officials and the local community to develop a plan protecting the environment and satisfying federal agencies without infringing on private property rights.

An approach in meeting these objectives is the "Habitat Transaction Method" (HTM), designed by Olson Policy Consulting and its president Todd Olson.

As proposed, conservation credits would be given to landowners who voluntarily conserve land in certain ways. Credits also would be required of landowners developing land.

These created credits then are freely bought and sold, enabling a landowner to conserve habitat and sell the resulting credits to fellow landowners who desire to develop their land.

Further, by paying a certain number of credits, land developers could receive a permit stating requirements of the federal Endangered Species Act and other conservation laws have been satisfied. Other benefits, like density increases, could be given for paying the required credits.

Presently, Olson said San Diego and Riverside counties are undergoing a similar introductory process, while an HTM plan is well along in the development process in Kern County. All three counties are located in California.

It's important to emphasize this is not a cookie-cutter approach, he said. The program must be designed to meet the specific needs of Hays County, as the resources are different. Water is key to the whole program here, while Kern County has a more land-oriented plan. The philosophy to be applied, though, would be the same.

Following these community meetings, Olson will piece together a proposal suitable for the county. Work would culminate in a 25-30 page discussion paper that would be distributed to the community for public comment probably in late January.

There is no specific plan right now, said Commissioner Jeff Barton. If and when the proposal is completed and the Court decides to move forward, then I'm sure we'll have numerous public hearings on it.

Beginning Monday night, Olson participated

(See County, page 2)

in small group discussions with landowners, environmentalists, property rights organizations and other stakeholders.

"I think the meetings have been very productive, and I've learned a lot about what people in Hays County want in a plan like this," he said. "...(I)t's clear there's strong local concern over water and quality of life issues, and a plan that focuses on those things rather than relief from federal regulation has received a lot of support."

Some county residents and property rights' groups are concerned about the process being expedited too quickly and involving the use of an out-of-state agency.

Moreover, a new plan to help protect endangered species in Central Texas is expected momentarily from Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt. The centerpiece of the proposal apparently will be a revolving fund for land acquisition.

The U.S. Interior Department plan could be unveiled this month, with its approval coming in the spring.

"The Endangered Species Act is law, and it must be dealt with," said County Judge Eddy Etheredge. "They're going to have to make some decisions regarding endangered species, and those decisions will affect Hays County.

"With that, the intent is to come up with an alternative for locally-generated program to take the place of federal mandates. We've got a lot of work to do, and a fairly short amount of time to get it done."

Further, environmentalists are under some of the sharpest attacks in years from conservatives in Congress, property-rights advocates and commercial interests that see environmental regulation as the enemy of economic growth.

For instance, a growing number of legislators want to toughen risk assessment requirements and protect property owners from intrusive environmental regulations.

"The local community has an interest in endangered species protection if for no other reason than to prevent the federal government from taking over land development from the county," Olson said. "That's been a real problem in California."

"The important thing as a Court is to stay focused on our intentions," Etheredge said. "Those intentions are to put in place a mechanism providing for the protection of endangered species and conservation of our natural resources, while at the same time allowing continued growth to go on in the county without dealing with daily federal bureaucracy."

As a related discussion item, Chuck McKinney made a presentation to the Court concerning the Sustainable Development Workshop conducted Nov. 18-19.

McKinney, workshop coordinator and facilitator, said the two-day event was a great success, and participants would like additional meetings to be scheduled.

"This is one step in a process that could be tremendous for the county," he said. "Everyone's eager to continue what we've started."

One of its goals was to bring together a diversified group of stakeholders. That was reached through the presence of city officials, representatives of chambers of commerce and environmental groups, and others who spoke about a variety of topics affecting the county.

Other goals involved maintaining the county's beauty, improving its quality of life, and projecting its appearance in the year 2025.

In addition, the participants suggested areas of improvement to better facilitate county changes and growth. More accountability by the county is needed, along with the establishment of plans for specific projects and issues. Also, enhanced communication and cooperation was suggested.

1-4-95 Wimberly View

GBRA receives grants from TWDB

GBRA has received approval from the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) for three grant applications to study water supply and wastewater treatment needs in the Guadalupe River Basin.

TWDB will contribute $20,230 toward a $40,460 grant to fund a cooperative study by GBRA, and Caldwell, Comal, Guadalupe, and Hays Counties. The study will evaluate the benefits of developing and operating a regional wastewater sludge disposal facility. Municipalities currently operating wastewater treatment plants in these areas spend more than $550,000 annually to dispose of sludge byproducts generated by the treatment process. By combining their resources, they can more effectively process and dispose of domestic sludge, utilize new composting techniques, and comply with future disposal and environmental regulations using the most cost-effective procedures.

Another TWDB grant in the amount of $43,785 will fund an $87,570 regional wastewater study of the Village of Wimberley and surrounding areas by GBRA and Hays County. The County is experiencing rapid residential growth, resulting in a large number of new septic tank installations. This study will examine the potential for a regional facility to serve present and future wastewater treatment needs, as well as protect the water resources of Cypress Creek, the Blanco River, and the Edwards Aquifer which underlies much of Hays County.

A $22,000 grant from TWDB will fund a $46,000 feasibility study to plan, construct and operate a regional water treatment facility to benefit rural communities and water systems in the Hays County and San Marcos area. Participating in the study with GBRA are the cities of San Marcos and Kyle, and nine rural water supply corporations. Most of these systems rely totally on groundwater, either from the Edwards Aquifer or from a small aquifer along the San Marcos River. By combining their resources, they can more effectively investigate alternative water sources, additional treatment methods, and address future water supply needs.

The TWDB administers financial assistance funds dedicated to funding water-related or municipal solid waste management projects. Political subdivisions of the state, or nonprofit water supply corporations, may apply for planning grants like those mentioned in this article, to help communities pay the cost of developing regional facility planning feasibility studies for alternative water supply, wastewater treatment, and flood control projects.

Community meeting scheduled

Officials discuss wastewater study

By Harrell King
View Staff

In an effort to keep the local area informed and involved, a community meeting is scheduled for 7 p.m. Thursday at the Chapel in the Hills to allow representatives of the groups participating in the Wimberley Regional Wastewater Planning Study to discuss their interest in the project and how the study will be conducted.

Representing the Texas Water Development Board, David Welch will discuss his organization's interest in clean water and the general management philosophy toward a regional approach. The importance of protecting area rivers and creeks for the future of Wimberley will be explained by David Welch, of the Guadalupe/Blanco River Authority. Bob Brandes, project director of the study will outline the study and explain how the community can participate.

Wimberley View – Saturday, March 4, 1995

Regional wastewater study gathers momentum

By Harrell King
View Staff

Local citizens and representatives of organizations participating in the Regional Wastewater Planning Study for the Wimberley area met Thursday at Chapel in the Hills as a preliminary to initiating the first stage of the project.

Funded by a grant from the Texas Water Development Board, represented at the meeting by Gordon Thorn, the purpose of the study is to develop solutions to problems, both immediate and those associated with future growth, involving regional water and land resources caused by ineffective control of wastewater.

Approximately 35 citizens attended the meeting to discuss not only the goals of the study, but also the role community members will play in the gathering of information on which the final options or proposals will be based.

Representing other organizations involved as participants in the study were Craig Payne, Hays County Commissioner for Precinct 3, David Welsh, of the Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority (GBRA), Mayor Jeanine Pool, of the City of Woodcreek, and Bob Brandes, of R.J. Brandes & Company (an engineering consultant firm hired by GBRA).

In addition to redefining the purpose of the planning study and displaying a map of the study perimeters, officials fielded questions and explained the schedules of events which would lead to a final proposal by the group.

A schedule of 'Stage 1 Activity Assignments' was introduced, which designated the responsibility of the tasks involved in the study to each of the groups.

While overall management and coordination of the project was listed as the responsibility of the GBRA, Brandes' company shouldered the responsibility of organizing the tasks of the study and making assignments to the participants.

Commissioner Payne suggested that those citizens who were interested in participating in the project should check the list of tasks and activities assigned to the community and contact Al Sanders for inclusion in that portion of the process.

While completion of the planning study is not expected until November, Brandes told the audience another meeting was scheduled for early September to assess the information on hand at that time and to begin the formulation of preliminary alternative solutions.

Welsh noted that the quantity of information gathered by late August, including population figures, projections on growth, sources of water supply and septic system totals, would provide a base for the development of a rough draft report. From this report, the group could further refine options and alternatives until a final proposal was developed.

Brandes said several options existed to fund and control whatever plan developed as a result of the study. "I don't think it's going to be an easy problem to solve," he observed. He said the engineering alone presented a stiff challenge.

One member of the audience asked if future growth would be taken into consideration in the project. Brandes noted, "The plan as it evolves has to focus on existing development and existing property... as new development occurs there are opportunities for a developer, for instance, to foot the bill on his portion of the system."

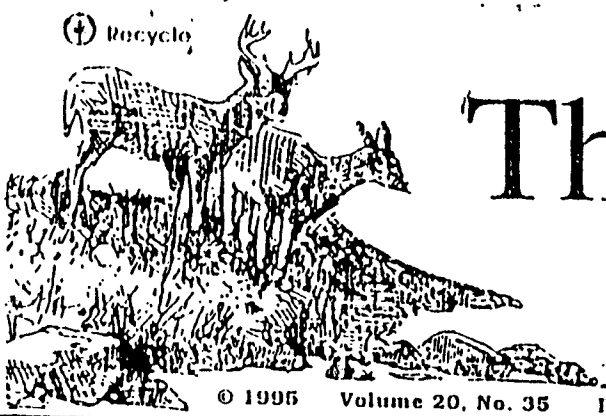
While he did acknowledge growth as an issue, the consultant said he could not imagine the entire study area being serviced by whatever plan resulted from the study. This, he related, was primarily due to the amount of financing available and "what we can afford to do."

Other concerns included whether connection to a area system would be voluntary or if recently purchased independent systems would be required to connect.

Welsh informed the audience that many of those questions would be ironed out in the final stages of the study. Brandes said he did not think the system would work well if a large number of residents resisted connection.

In consideration of the final proposal, Welsh said structural and non-structural solutions would be explored. Examples of non-structural solutions included regulations, such as expansion of lot size requirements, phosphate bans or pay toilets and 'honeywagons' in high-traffic public areas.

In County Subscriptions: Wednesday or Saturday
Wednesday and Saturday



The Wimberley View

50¢

"A Nice Place To Visit ... A Great Place To Live"

© 1995 Volume 20, No. 35 P.O. Box 49, Wimberley, Texas 78676 • E-Mail Address: 75114.1252@Compuserve.Com Saturday, September 2, 1995

Wastewater System Options

The Guadalupe Blanco River Authority, the Texas Water Development Board, Brandes Engineering consultants, Hays County and the Wimberley volunteer citizen's group will present the wastewater system options for the community that have been developed during the Wimberley Wastewater Planning Study which began early this year. The presentation will be made at a meeting the public is urged to attend at 7:00 p.m. September 7, 1995 at Bowen Intermediate School Cafeteria. Those attending will be invited to ask questions, make comments and present alternative approaches. These views will be studied before a final recommendation is presented to the public later in September.

GBRA presents initial wastewater study results

By Harrell King
View Staff

Approximately 30 citizens of the Wimberley community were on hand at Bowen Intermediate School Thursday to hear initial results of a wastewater study, sponsored by the Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority (GBRA).

Representing the GBRA, David Welsh explained the steps taken in the study, how the information was categorized and what kind of options the community would be presented with when the final reports were compiled.

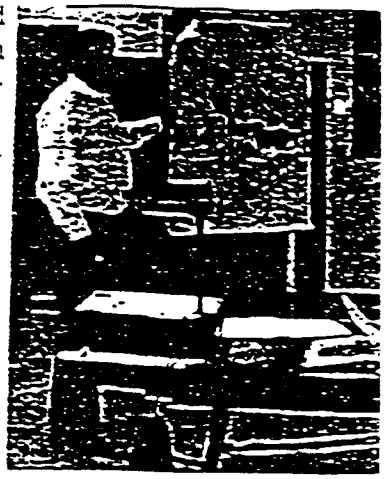
In addition to gathering information about the number of wastewater systems currently in the defined area, Welsh said population played a key role in the study. Current population as well as accurate projections of growth for the next 20 to 25 year were vital keys to planning effective alternatives.

Those alternatives fell into two general categories, the GBRA official said, one involving structural options and the other institutional.

Robert Brandes, an engineering consultant specializing in water resources, explained that structural alternatives also fell into two categories, one involving different types of facilities and the other dealing with rules and regulations.

To determine what type of facilities would be appropriate for the area, Brandes said, "We need to know how much wastewater we're actually dealing with."

Breaking the area down into subsections, the group researched population, estimated at 4,600, and the number and types of structures, including residential and commercial.



Engineer Robert Brandes explained various options available to the Wimberley community for the disposal of wastewater.

Taking into account soil types and terrain, Brandes said the options presented involved both irrigation and discharge for the disposal of treated wastewater. Leased tracts of land would be required for drainage fields if the irrigation method were chosen. The Blanco River, downstream from the densely populated areas, would be used for the discharge method.

Of the two disposal methods, Brandes said the discharge method "has a higher level of treatment."

Examples of the options presented included II-A, servicing the WISD schools, the downtown area and future development of the Blue Hole tract.

The treatment plant for this option would be located near Flite Acres. This method would utilize the discharge method of disposal and handle a capacity of 200,000 gallons per day. Including collection, treatment and administration, total capital cost were estimated at $4.4 million.

Another option, I-D, involved the same area plus the addition of the Woodcreek Utility District, locating the treatment

gation method would be used, with capacity of 620,000 gallons per day. Total cost was estimated at more than $11 million. (see map, page 8)

Estimating a 30-year financing package, Brandes provided some estimates of monthly payments for service for each connection. For the 10 options presented, estimated payments ranged from a low of $47.32 per month to a high of $91.05.

ment. "It costs you more to pick it and move it, than to treat it," he explained. "You have a lot of hills," he observed.

Informing the audience that you need something in place so you can achieve financing, Welsh supported attorney Bert Hooper's explaination that one of four types of organizations have to exist to administer the system.

Either an existing or ne
supply corporation, MUD, W
municipality must admini
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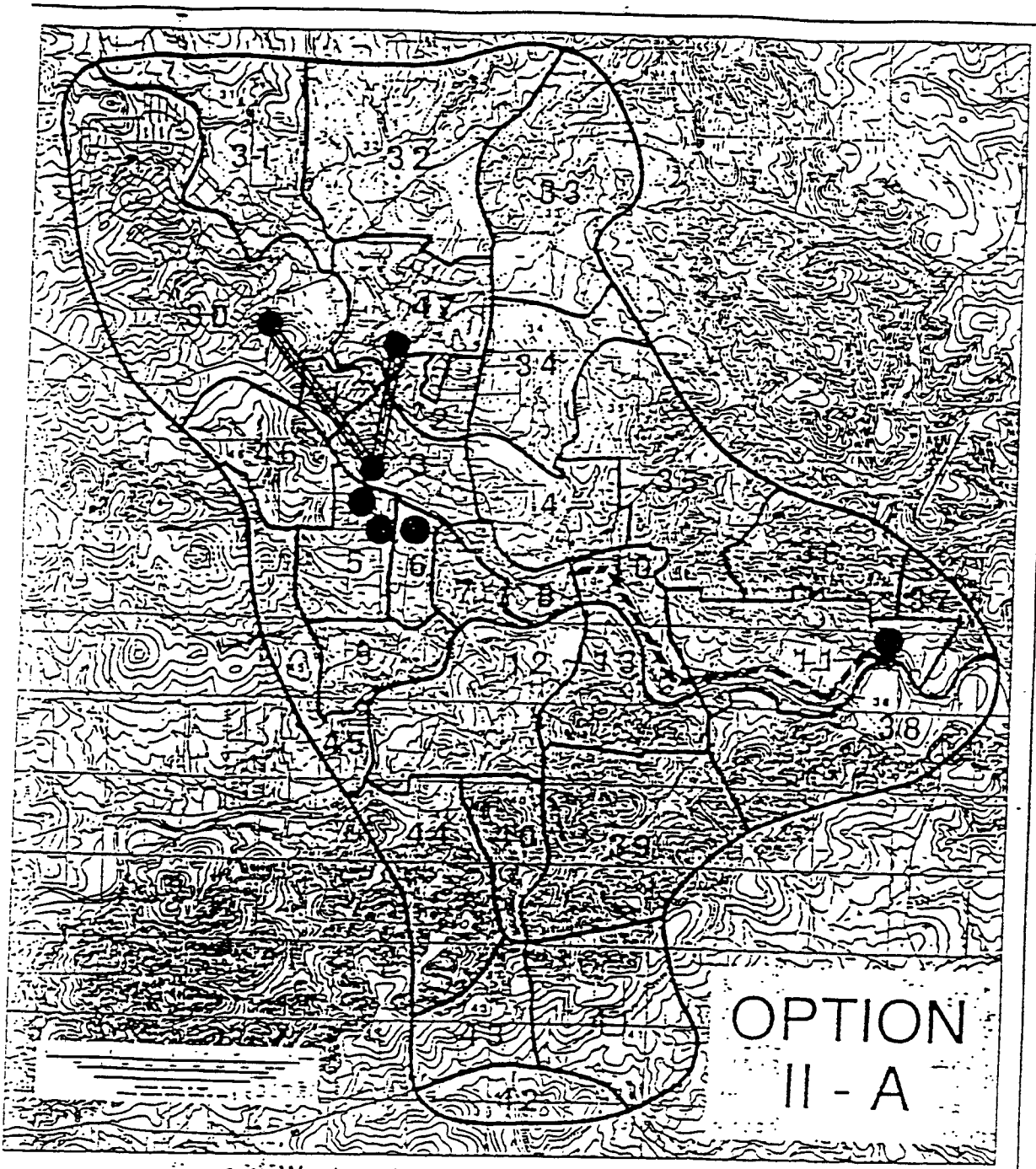
Water Development Board r



Wastewater-structural alternatives

As part of a wastewater study of the Wimberley area, sponsored by the Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority, several maps were presented Thursday to illustrate structural alternatives for the disposal of wastewater. This illustration is a combination of two of those maps, provided by Engineer Robert Brandes. The two circles in sections 30 & 47, with lines connecting to section 3, illustrate Option 1-D. Both routes illustrate potential locations for treatment plants, one northwest of Wimberley and the other near Flite Acres, and the collection lines which would supply them.

9-1-95 Austin-American

Community at a Crossroad

Rebecca McEntee AA

Dorothy Wimberley Kerbow says the main forces behind the drive to incorporate the community her great-grandfather founded are businesses that don't want to pay for their own sewage system. 'We don think it's fair for them to expect us to pay for it,' she says.

Wimberley cityhood question resurfaces

BY ENEDELIA J. OBREGÓN
American-Statesman Staff

In the 121 years since Dorothy Wimberley Kerbow's great-grandfather founded the community of Wimberley, no one has paid a dime in city taxes.

Kerbow hopes it will stay that way.

For the third time in 12 years, a campaign is under way to incorporate the town, long known as a summer destination and artists' colony. Proponents have hired a consultant with no ties to the Hays County community southwest of Austin to hear residents' fears and concerns at a series of town meetings that begins next month.

Campbell

Kerbow, perhaps the highest-profile opponent of incorporation efforts in 1984 and 1987, is skeptical.

"This time I'm going to listen and attend (the meetings) to see if they have any — and you can quote me — new tricks," she said.

Although proponents through the years have touted the benefits of incorporation, such as control of land use, residents were suspicious of the messengers, usually business owners and the Wimberley Chamber of Commerce. Opponents have countered that incorporation would benefit only a few business owners, saddling the rest of the community with another layer of

government and more taxes.

This time, however, an advisory committee on incorporation, headed by Wimberley resident and business owner Dave Campbell and Wimberley Chamber of Commerce President Leslie Howe, has hired a firm, Reed Planning Investments of Belton, to help determine whether Wimberley residents are ready to vote on the issue again.

Jim Reed, a community planner, will solicit public comments on the issue in meetings at the Wimberley High School gymnasium at 7 p.m. on Oct. 17, Nov. 20 and Dec. 11. Residents also will be asked whether they think the issue should be put to a vote.

"I don't bring any Wimberley baggage with me," he said. "They get an unbiased product."

To avoid any perception of bias, the meetings will be moderated by the Civitas Project of Southwest Texas State University. The project, funded by a grant from the Texas Commission for the Humanities, allows students to study why many U.S. residents are disenchanted with civic life.

"I keep my mouth shut and let citizens give me their fears, questions, hopes and concerns about the topic of incorporation," said Reed, who also is leading Salado — located about 60 miles north of Austin along Interstate 35 — through a similar process.

As part of the study, Reed will publish a newsletter in the local newspaper or mail it to registered voters in the community. The newsletter will include an unofficial ballot for residents to state their preference on incorporation.

Later, he will present a final report, ballot results and his recommendation on whether to incorporate.

"The ... ballot is not scientific, but it gives me a feel for what citizens want," Reed said. "Sometimes civic leaders want the community to go in a certain direction, but that isn't the direction citizens want."

Wimberley is growing

Hays County Precinct 3 Commissioner Craig Payne said although Wimberley residents have voted against incorporation in the past, the time has come for this scenic hamlet by the Blanco River to incorporate. Payne used $3,200 from his precinct's special project budget to finance Reed's study.

"Times change and demographics change," Payne said. "The county is growing."

And so is Wimberley. When voters in Wimberley went to the polls in 1984, the community had a little more than 2,000 people. It now has about 8,000 residents. Construction is booming and traffic has increased.

More people means more septic tanks. Hays County commissioners, worried about pollution to Cypress Creek and the Blanco River, asked the Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority to study bringing a wastewater system to Wimberley.

Payne said while people complain about county government, they don't want another layer to duplicate services. But county government is limited in its powers to adopt ordinances on land management and planning, he said.

Campbell said that if Reed recommends against voting on incorporation at this time, then the committee will drop the issue. But Campbell said he feels it is time for Wimberley to consider incorporation.

"The other option is to let someone else determine what our environment will be five to 10 years down the road," Campbell said.

Campbell pointed to San Marcos' five-year master plan, which includes annexing the Freeman Ranch, owned by Southwest Texas State University. The ranch lies between Wimberley and San Marcos.

"That will put them two miles from our closest point (in the city) if we incorporate," Campbell said. "That means their (extraterritorial jurisdiction) extends toward us."

"Incorporation will allow us to have ordinances for controlled use of land, improvement of streets and highways and police protection," Campbell said. "If people say we shouldn't incorporate, what do you think it will be like in five years compared to now?"

If Wimberley had been incorporated, Campbell said, the city would have been notified when the Pedernales Electric Cooperative decided to locate a 138,000-volt power line through the community.

Many prefer status quo

But residents like Kerbow may be hard to persuade.

Kerbow said she has opposed incorporation in the past for three reasons:

First, she said, the issue is raised by people who moved to Wimberley because they like the way it is, but then they decide they want to change it.

Second, those who work hardest to incorporate don't live within the boundaries they are drawing up for incorporation, she said.

Third, Kerbow said, the main reason business people and the chamber want to incorporate is so they can get a wastewater system for downtown businesses.

"The (river authority) has offered to build a sewer system for the business area, but they've turned it down," Kerbow said. "That's because the ones that needed the service would have had to pay for it. We don't think it's fair for them to expect us to pay for it."

Kerbow said the septic tanks in place "are working just fine," and residents don't need another taxing entity. The Hays County sheriff's department patrols the area. Residents already have a county government that "spends money and raises taxes beyond reason," she said.

ATTACHMENT 1

WIMBERLEY REGIONAL

PLANNING AREA

SUBAREA DELINEATIONS

ATTACHMENT 2

MAP OF SENSITIVE NATURAL FEATURES AND CULTURAL AND HISTORICAL RESOURCES

HISTORICAL SITES

1. Low Water Bridge
2. J. R. Dobie, Jr. House
3. J. Dobie House
4. Winters - Wimberley House
5. Camp Young Judea
6. J. C. Lone House
7. John Henry Sounders Store
8. John Henry Sounders House
9. William Park Johnson, Jr. Home

Indian Grounds

Cemeteries

Environmentally - Sensitive Areas