

New Castle Neighborhood Water Improvement Program
October 21, 2020

The Town of New Castle working in conjunction with its municipal partners and engineering firm has developed an innovative public/ private concept to upgrade privately owned water lines and transition them to the public systems. This is a preliminary program description designed to solicit and identify interest in water line improvements. If there is interest, the program would be refined further. It in no way obligates the Town of New Castle to be involved with, fund or otherwise construct or improve any public or private water infrastructure.

In May of 2018, the Citizens authorized the Town to borrow up to \$5.5MM to complete water improvements projects to systems serving the Town. \$5.05MM was authorized to complete work on public lines or to construct new lines in the systems serving the Town residents, and \$450M was authorized to be used for private water line improvements which would be repaid through betterment fees.

The scope of the overall project was broken down into three primary phases; Installation of a new 12" water main from Pierce Island to the corner of Wentworth Road and Main Street, to provide money and assistance to facilitate the upgrading of private water lines ("Private to Public"), and additional public water line installations to create "loops" in identified areas to improve water flow and water quality as well as provide redundancy.

The New Castle Neighborhood Water Improvement Program focuses on the second and third phases of the project – providing money and assistance to facilitate upgrading private waterlines and installing additional public water line installations "Loops."

Private to Public
Providing money and assistance to facilitate upgrading private water lines
and transitioning them to public infrastructure

The purpose of the Private to Public phase of the program is for private water line owners to upgrade their water lines to current specifications and transition those water lines to the municipal system(s).

The program provides private water line owners the opportunity to borrow funds at a low interest rates for a long period of time to upgrade their water lines. As part of the program all water line participating will be upgraded to Town or City of Portsmouth specifications. The specifications are a function of the number of homes served, purpose of the waterline, and current infrastructure codes and requirements. In addition, any private water line upgraded as part of the program will have its ownership transferred to either the Town of New Castle or the City of Portsmouth depending on where the line is located and which system it is attaching to. A critical component of the program is that permanently recorded access agreements (easements) will be required where water lines are located on private property or private roads.

All fees, construction costs and interest associated with the Private to Public phase of the program will be charged to the owner of the water line and/or the house lots that benefit from the water line

through a betterment fee. The fee will be assessed each year and billed on the individual lot's tax bill provided by the Town. This is not a tax or a change in taxes it is a betterment fee that will be billed separately on tax bills of those who choose to participate.

The Town currently has Four Hundred and Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$450,000) available to be used to upgrade and transition private water lines. This money will be allocated to interested parties based on the projects presented and the estimated costs associated with those projects.

The Public to Private phase of the project will accept letters of interest from private water line owners and those who will benefit from October 21, 2020 through December 15, 2020. The letters of interest require the following information to be accepted and reviewed by the Town:

General requirements:

- A deed or instrument identifying current ownership of a private water line
- A commitment to provide permanent access easements and to convey the upgraded line to one of the municipal systems
- A tax map identifying all parcels receiving or eligible to receive water from the water line
- A signature from each lot owner identified on the letter acknowledging their willingness to participate in funding the upgrade through betterment fees
- All information relative to the construction, location, and connection of the current water line
- A Member/ Resident Designee - a contact person communicating for the owner and those benefiting from the upgrade
- An acknowledgement by participants that there will be a binding agreement associated with the program and that betterment fees will be attached to their property until paid off
- An acknowledgement that the participants agree to construction during the summer and fall season of 2021

The General Timeline to construction is as follows:

October 21, 2020 – December 15, 2020:	The Town will be accepting letters of interest for the program
December 15, 2020 – January 8, 2021:	The Town will evaluate the letters of interest and engage those parties in discussion to clarify project scope etc.
January 8, 2021 – January 31, 2021:	Agreements between owners, those benefiting from the improvements and the Town are developed and signed
February 1, 2021 – March 15, 2021:	Engineering and Design work
March 15, 2021 – April 15, 2021:	Bid for work
Summer/ Fall 2021:	Construction

Loops
Installation of additional water lines to improve water flow and water quality

The purpose of the Loops phase of the project is to further improve water flows and water quality on the municipal systems that serve New Castle residents.

Based on current projections, it is anticipated that the Town will have approximately \$400,000 of funding available under the approved \$5.050M warrant article to construct additional water infrastructure on systems serving the Town residents (Loops). This number is subject to change as construction continues on the Water Main Installation Phase.

As part of the project planning phase leading up to the warrant article, seven loops were identified as options to construct. These loops were identified as areas where the systems had dead end lines or potential lower flow areas. They were not looked at for feasibility to build, construction specifications, or ownership/ easement access to areas and existing lines. They were not and have not been designed or engineered for construction.

After extensive discussions with the State, City of Portsmouth and Underwood Engineering the Town has determined that any new water lines “Loops” installed through this program must connect Town or City owned water lines and the Town or City must be given a proper easement to the land in order to maintain them. This is important as some of the loops identified connect privately owned water lines and as such are not eligible to be looped. However, those private water lines are eligible to upgrade to current specifications either through the Private to Public phase of this program or through other means and be transition to one of the municipal systems. If that occurs, those loops would then be eligible for consideration as part of the program.

Below is a list of the Loops Identified in the 2016 report and study. Since that study, two of the loops have been determined to present significant challenges outweighing the potential benefit and have been noted as not to pursue by the Engineering firm. A third has been identified as a project for the City of Portsmouth to complete. The remaining four loops identified are C, D, E and G (1-2).

Loops identified in 2016 Report:

Lo op	Water System	Road 1			Road 2			Length	# Lots servic ed	Easeme nts Needed ?	Purs ue
		Name	Rd Own ed	Water Own ed	Name	Rd Own ed	Water Own ed				
A	New Castle	Cape	Town	Town	Riverview	Town	Town	280		Yes	No
B	New Castle	Atkinson	Town	Town	Salamander	Town	Town	270		Yes	No
C	New Castle	Lilac	Town	Town	Quarterdeck	Town	Town	370		Yes	
D	Portsmouth	Shaw	Town	City? 6"	Beach Hill	Private	Private 2" and/or 4" (1990's)	900	~20	Yes	
E	Portsmouth	Lavenger/Spring Hill	Private	Private 6" and/or 8"	Abigail	Private	Private 8"	750	~30	Yes	
F	Portsmouth	Wild Rose	Town	City	X-Country	City (eas)	City	700		Yes	City
G-1	New Castle	Mainmast	Town	Town	Mainmast	Town	Town	100		No	
G-2	New Castle	Locke	Town	Town	Locke	Town	Town	80		No	

Goals of Program:

1. Improve water quality
2. Improve reliability and redundancy
3. Improve substandard water distribution systems where possible
4. Transfer ownership and access rights, where appropriate by eliminating private water lines.
5. Implement looping if desired and only if above is complete

Loops A, B, C, and G (Illustration):

- Town system and may be pursued, if possible/desired by the Town since each connecting water line is Town owned. Costs would be from Town funds.
- Where easements are needed, they shall be provided with rights to the Town
- Loops will be owned and maintained by Town.

Loops C and G (1-2) connect two existing Town owned waterlines. All funding would come from Town project funds.

Loops D and E are private lines and private roads on the Portsmouth system.

- Existing private lines will require improvement to current standard
- Once private lines meet standard and appropriate access easements were provided (right to the City), Portsmouth would take over ownership and maintenance (if approved by City Counsel)
- Illustration of Cost Allocation of Project (These are example costs only. Final costs need to be determined):
 - Improvements to existing lines and access easements would be borne by the neighborhood benefiting.
 - Example cost (E) = 2,000 ft x \$200/ft = \$400,000 / 30 (Homes) = \$13,000 @ 20 years = \$667/yr. per property. Interest charges would be additional if financed.
 - Example cost (D) = 1,200 ft x \$150/ft = \$180,000 / 20 (Homes) = \$9,000 @ 20 years = \$450/yr. per property. Interest charges would be additional if financed.
 - Looping will be completed by Town with Town funds. Looping cannot be done without first completing improvements to existing lines (City standard) and transferring ownership.
 - Example cost (E) = \$300,000 (by Town)
 - Example Cost (D) = \$400,000 (by Town)
- Note: Acceptance of lines by the City shall require that the water mains meet City standards and that appropriate access easements are provided if on a private line.
- City Council ultimately approves acceptance of the lines, but City notes it is done routinely through the City's system.

Please contact the Select Board with any questions related to the water project and the Neighborhood Water Improvement Program. We are diligently working to improve the infrastructure and systems our Town relies on for safety and convenience.