

## Utilities and Community Facilities

This process is part inventory and part “thinking about and preparing for the future”. We need to know “how many we have and how many we will need” under the various scenarios our community is considering.

If our sewage treatment plant (STP) is nearing capacity and we plan to grow our economy by attracting a food processing plant and increasing our population by 25% over the next 10 years we better be thinking about how to either expand the STP or managing it more efficiently/effectively.

Likewise, we should be thinking about all of our other services and utilities, like water (will we need more wells?), stormwater (will we need retention ponds or other facilities?), streets, emergency services, etc.

The time to think about these things is now.

Your planning should be consistent with the policies you are incorporating into your comprehensive plan. Your ordinances and other plans (zoning, capital improvement plans, etc.) will then be the implementation measures you use to follow your policies and accomplish your goals.

My final suggestion to you is that you should also think about how the rules might change over time. In the 1980s I worked for jurisdictions that had excess STP capacity one day and, after the discharge rules changed, the next day were over capacity.

This is also an opportunity to think about your community’s needs and lay the plans to add services or activities that will make people happier, healthier, or more fulfilled. Parks, paths, community centers, community gardens, open spaces, and other facilities can all add immensely to quality of life.

This might also be a place to consider your community’s interest in being a more “Green” community.

Have fun! Make your community a better place to live, work and recreate!