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# City of Grand Island



**Tuesday, June 07, 2011**  
**Study Session Packet**

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**City Council:**

Larry Carney  
Linna Dee Donaldson  
Scott Dugan  
Randy Gard  
John Gericke  
Peg Gilbert  
Chuck Haase  
Mitchell Nickerson  
Bob Niemann  
Kirk Ramsey

**Mayor:**

Jay Vavricek

**City Administrator:**

Mary Lou Brown

**City Clerk:**

RaNae Edwards

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**7:00:00 PM**  
**Council Chambers - City Hall**  
**100 East First Street**

## **Call to Order**

This is an open meeting of the Grand Island City Council. The City of Grand Island abides by the Open Meetings Act in conducting business. A copy of the Open Meetings Act is displayed in the back of this room as required by state law.

The City Council may vote to go into Closed Session on any agenda item as allowed by state law.

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### **Invocation**

### **Pledge of Allegiance**

### **Roll Call**

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## **A - SUBMITTAL OF REQUESTS FOR FUTURE ITEMS**

Individuals who have appropriate items for City Council consideration should complete the Request for Future Agenda Items form located at the Information Booth. If the issue can be handled administratively without Council action, notification will be provided. If the item is scheduled for a meeting or study session, notification of the date will be given.

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## **B - RESERVE TIME TO SPEAK ON AGENDA ITEMS**

This is an opportunity for individuals wishing to provide input on any of tonight's agenda items to reserve time to speak. Please come forward, state your name and address, and the Agenda topic on which you will be speaking.

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## **MAYOR COMMUNICATION**

This is an opportunity for the Mayor to comment on current events, activities, and issues of interest to the community.



# City of Grand Island

Tuesday, June 07, 2011

Study Session

## Item C

### **Recognition of Craig Lewis, Building Department Director for 30 Years of Service with the City of Grand Island**

*The Mayor and City Council will recognize Craig Lewis, Building Department Director for 30 years of service with the City of Grand Island. Mr. Lewis was hired on June 8, 1981 as a Building Inspector. He moved to Chief Building Inspector on October 19, 1984 and Building Director on May 1, 1991. We congratulate and thank Mr. Lewis for his dedication and service to the City of Grand Island.*

Staff Contact: Mayor Vavricek

# Thirty Year Service Award

WE HEREBY EXPRESS OUR SINCERE APPRECIATION TO

CRAIG LEWIS

For your Loyalty, Diligence, and Outstanding Performance During Your Tenure With

City of  
**GRAND**



**ISLAND**

*Mary Jo Ann*  
Department Director

Mayor

5/30/11  
Date

5-17-11  
Date



# **City of Grand Island**

**Tuesday, June 07, 2011**

**Study Session**

## **Item X1**

**Discussion Concerning Residential Clean-Up Cards**

**Staff Contact: John Collins**

# **Council Agenda Memo**

**From:** Jeff Wattier, Solid Waste Superintendant  
Shannon Oster, Assistant to the City Administrator

**Meeting:** June 7, 2011

**Subject:** Review of Residential Clean-Up Card Program

**Item #'s:** 1

**Presenter(s):** Jeff Wattier, Solid Waste Superintendant  
Shannon Oster, Assistant to the City Administrator

## **Background**

From 1993 to 2002, the City of Grand Island's Solid Waste Division provided free disposal of garbage and debris to residents at the Transfer Station one week per calendar year, also known as "Free Week." There were several problems with Free Week for the Solid Waste staff, as well as residents. Residents were forced to wait in long lines at the Transfer Station to drop off their loads for disposal, which created frustration with the process. The Transfer Station was not (and currently is not) equipped or located to receive high traffic volumes. The Solid Waste Division encountered high costs from the program due to increased overtime, an increase in other operational costs, and residents abusing the program.

In 2003, the Residential Clean-Up Card (RCC) began as an alternative to Free Week. The RCC was supposed to provide a more cost-effective, customer-friendly process for assisting residents in keeping up the community appearance. The RCC allows residents two free loads up to 800 pounds each to the Transfer Station. RCCs are issued by the Public Works administrative staff at City Hall.

The purpose of the RCC program is to encourage residents to keep their property looking clean, specifically the outside of property looking orderly by offering an opportunity for disposal throughout the year. The purpose of the program is not intended to allow stockpiling of trash or other items. It is also not intended to assist residents in remodeling their property by disposing of construction materials.

## **Discussion**

Issuing of RCCs has become an extremely time consuming program for the Public Works staff to administer. When the RCC program began in 2003, the Public Works staff had two full-time support staff available for issuing RCCs; however personnel reductions have left only one full-time person available for administering the program. The program takes approximately .3FTE, which is a significant amount of time for a quartile four program (the lowest priority). The purpose for reviewing the RCC program is to address the amount of time PW staff spends on the RCC program through identifying alternatives.

In addition to the amount of time spent by Public Works issuing RCCs, the program has experienced widespread abuse. Some of the abuses include: contractors using the card for work they are charging for; landlords using the cards to clean-up rental properties; using the card as an alternative to regular garbage pick-up; and organizations or groups using cards. Consequently, rules have been tightened to prevent abuse, which has resulted in more time spent issuing cards. The RCC program alternatives presented will seek to prevent abuse to the program while not creating more of an administrative burden on staff.

The following seven alternatives will be presented for the Council:

1. City Wide Clean-Up Volunteer Event
2. Specified Free Weekend by Ward/Area of City
3. Utility Bill Insert
4. Online
5. Issue Week
6. Issued and Administrated at the Transfer Station
7. Additional Free Yard Waste and Eliminate Card Program

## **Conclusion**

This item is presented to the City Council in a Study Session to allow for any questions to be answered and to create a greater understanding of the issue at hand.



# **Residential Clean-Up Card Program**

## **Grand Island City Council Study Session**

### **June 7, 2011**





## **How We Got Where We Are Today...**

- 🌅 Free Week (1992 – 2002)
  - 🌅 Intent was to clean and beautify community
  - 🌅 City continued this program after taking over from County
  - 🌅 G.I. residents disposed of items for free at the Transfer Station one designated week per year




*Photo of Free Week*

## How We Got Where We Are Today...

### Free Week Problems


#### Labor Intensive

-  City staff planning and organizing, Solid Waste (SW) Division overtime, volunteer labor, Hall Co. inmate labor

-  SW Division staff basically playing “catch-up” all week



#### Widespread abuse of the program

-  Residents would bring multiple loads for free disposal

-  Banned items such as tires, appliances, etc. would be disposed of due to hectic nature of program

## **How We Got Where We Are Today...**

### Free Week Problems

-  Many would “stockpile” waste until Free Week
-  Major traffic congestion and long lines to wait in




*Photo of Free Week  
congestion and long lines*




## Residential Clean-Up Card (RCC) Program

 RCC program implemented in 2003

 Allows residents to dispose of two free loads (up to 800 lbs. per load) at Transfer Station

 Started at 600 lbs. per load

 General Fund reimbursed SW Enterprise Fund tonnage value

 SW revenues come from the tonnage value

CARDS ARE NON-TRANSFERABLE

Clerk's Signature ☐

Clerk's Signature ☐

ID \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_


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### Residential Clean up Card

Valid January 1 to December 31, 2011

**\$10 Fee on Uncovered Loads**

Transfer Station  
5050 Old Potash Highway  
(308) 385-5433  
Mon.-Fri. 7-4 Sat. 7-12



**Restrictions**

- No lead acid batteries, No tires, No appliances
- No shingles, drywall, or demolition materials
- No regular household garbage
- No hazardous waste or liquids
- **One Card per Address, Must be resident of Grand Island**
- Will be required to show valid identification
- **All Vehicles Must be Tarped or Netted to Prevent Loss of Materials**

**\$10 Fee on All Uncovered Loads**

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**RESIDENTIAL CUSTOMERS ONLY**

LOST CARDS WILL NOT BE REPLACED.	GOOD FOR TWO FREE LOADS. (up to 800 lbs per load)
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## **Benefits of RCC program vs. Free Week**

- Residents can dispose of materials at any time throughout the year at their own leisure
- Reduced traffic congestion/frustration by residents
  - Much more convenient/less time-consuming to dispose of items when needed throughout the year
- SW Division staff can manage waste much easier by spreading it out through the year
  - Much less staff time spent on planning and organizing RCC program vs. Free Week

## Problems with RCC Program Begin...

- Solid Waste Division – Abuse and Lost Revenue
  - Various types of abuse to the RCC:
    - Residents obtaining and using multiple RCC received from friends, neighbors, family members, etc.
    - Use of the RCC as alternative to garbage service (i.e. stockpiling their trash to bring it to the Transfer Station twice per year in lieu of garbage service)
    - Contractors obtaining customers' cards to dispose of construction/demolition materials from for-hire projects
    - Organizations/businesses using RCC program
  - No revenue from RCC loads



## Lost Revenue: Historical RCC Figures

General Fund reimbursed the SW Enterprise Fund for RCC tonnage value from 2003-2008

Actual reimbursed amount from 2003-2008: **\$223,228**

Stopped after 2008

Year	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Cards Issued	2,465	3,120	3,618	2,934	3,173	3,148	2,856	2,733
Tons	774	1,027	1,107	983	986	1140	977	968
Tonnage Value	<b>\$28,715</b>	<b>\$38,101</b>	<b>\$41,069</b>	<b>\$36,469</b>	<b>\$36,580</b>	<b>\$42,294</b>	<b>\$36,246</b>	<b>\$35,912</b>

Lost SW Division revenues from 2009-2010: **\$72,158**

## **Major Problems with RCC Program Continue...**

- 🌐 Public Works – RCCs are issued at City Hall by Public Works (PW) administrative staff
  - 🌐 Issuing cards becomes a very time consuming program
    - 🌐 **.3FTE** for issuing the cards/keeping track of database
    - 🌐 PW went from two FTEs in 2005, to one FTE available for issuing RCCs.
- 🌐 RCC ranked a Quartile 4 program in PW General Fund and SW Enterprise Fund in both 2010 and 2011 program prioritization scoring

## Costs of RCC Program

<b>PW General Fund &amp; SW Enterprise Fund Expenses</b>	<b>2011 Budget</b>
Personnel – SW	\$34,000
Personnel – PW	\$24,500
Operating – SW	\$15,200
Operating – PW	\$2,600
<b>Total Program Expenses</b>	<b>\$76,300</b>
<b>Cost of Program (Free Disposal)</b>	<b>\$35,912</b>

the fee is a revenue to the tonnage value of the waste and is not  
over the cost of the waste.

A photograph of an outdoor basketball court. A red arrow is drawn vertically from the ground to the height of the hoop, with the text "40'" next to it. The court is surrounded by trees and a clear blue sky. The ground is grassy with some snow patches.

A large silver Peterbilt semi-truck with a long grey trailer is parked on a paved lot. The truck is facing left, and its shadow is cast on the ground. The sky is blue with white clouds. In the bottom right corner, the date "08/02/2010" is printed in yellow.

## 50 Tractor-Trailer Semi Loads

## **G.I. SW vs. Other State Landfills/Transfer Stations**

	<b>Grand Island</b>	<b>Kearney</b>	<b>Hastings</b>	<b>Lexington</b>	<b>York</b>	<b>Columbus</b>	<b>Norfolk</b>
Type of Facility	T.S. & L.F.	Landfill	Landfill	Landfill	Landfill	Transfer Station	Transfer Station
Grass & Leaves Free?	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	No
Free Disposal Program?	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No
Price/Ton For Disposal	\$37/ton & \$31/ton	\$32.50/ton	\$35.50/ton	\$36/ton	\$36/ton	\$57/ton	\$52.55/ton



## **Additional Free Programs Provided by the SW Division**

- Neighborhood Association Clean-Ups
  - Clean Community System assists with planning, organization, etc.
  - Tonnage accepted for free and SW Division pays costs for local garbage company to haul materials to the Landfill
- Surrounding community Clean-Ups
- Natural Disasters/Weather Events – free disposal for residents
  - 2005 Flood - Open extended hours and accepted 934 tons for free, in addition to the 1,107 tons of RCC tonnage received in 2005
  - 2006 Ice Storms - Open extended hours and accepted 10,000 cubic yards of tree limbs/branches for free
    - Cost \$28,900 for tree grinding services
- Grass and Leaf disposal
- CSOs can use cards to encourage problem properties to clean-up



## **Alternatives to the RCC Program**

1. City-Wide Clean-Up Volunteer Event
2. Free Weekend by Ward/Area of City
3. Utility Bill Insert
4. Online
5. Issue Week
6. Issued and Administrated at the Transfer Station
7. Additional Free Yard Waste and Eliminate Card Program

## 1. City-Wide Clean-Up Volunteer Event

- One weekend during the year at two or three locations for free drop-off
- Partner with Clean Community System for planning and hosting event
- Volunteers critical – directing traffic, unloading vehicles, checking IDs, verifying the items are accepted for disposal

<b>Estimated Costs</b>	
Personnel	\$ 32,500
Hauling Charges	\$ 34,000
Operating Expenses	\$ 17,500
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$ 84,000</b>

## 2. Free Weekend by Ward/Area of City

- Bring back “Free Week,” but divide the City into two separate weekends by ward or address
- Require a lot of public outreach so residents understand when is their assigned weekend.

Solid Waste Expenses	Estimated Costs
Personnel	\$ 30,000
Hauling Charges	\$ 34,000
Operating	\$ 15,200
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$ 79,200</b>

### 3. Utility Bill Insert

- Include a RCC as a utility bill insert in January mailing.
- Require the person to bring the insert and bill to Transfer Station to drop-off their RCC load.
- Show ID with matching name and address to utility bill.
  - Businesses would not be allowed a RCC load.
- Limit to one load per year.

Solid Waste Expenses:	Estimated Cost
Personnel	\$34,000
Operational	\$15,200
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$49,200</b>

## 4. Online

- 🌐 Create an online form for residents to complete, and then pick-up RCC at City Hall when they show an ID.
- 🌐 Still need to issue RCC traditional way to accommodate citizens that do not have a computer
  - 🌐 Does not reduce staff time or other savings

<b>Solid Waste and Public Works Expenses:</b>	<b>Estimated Costs</b>
Personnel – SW	\$ 34,000
Operating – SW	\$ 15,200
Personnel – PW	\$ 24,500
Operating – PW	\$ 2,600
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$ 76,300</b>

## **5. Issue Week**

- Restructure how cards are issued by issuing cards only one week a year, at beginning of calendar year.
  - Would require several people to assist during the period for high customer traffic.
- Residents still receive a free program that can be used throughout the year.
- Potentially reduce load to one per year

<b>Estimated Costs:</b>	
Personnel (General Fund)	\$ 5,000
Operating Expenses (General Fund)	\$2,600
Personnel (SW)	\$34,000
Operating Expenses (SW)	\$15,200
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$56,800</b>



## **6. Issued and Administered at Transfer Station**

- Move issuing process out of City Hall to Transfer Station
- Limited space leaves no room for customer service area at Transfer Station
- PT Clerk would need to become FT for issuing cards

SW Expenses	
Personnel	\$75,800
Operating	\$15,200
<b>Total Costs</b>	<b>\$91,000</b>



## **7. Additional Free Yard Waste & Eliminate Card Program**

- Expand free disposal to trees, branches, bushes, etc at Yard Waste Site.
  - Currently free: grass and leaf disposal
- Still provides a free service for residents used at their leisure throughout the year, while eliminating the timely/costly step of issuing and receiving a card.
- Approximately 50% of RCCs already are used for tree/branch disposal

<b>Solid Waste Expense</b>	<b>Estimated Cost</b>
Tree Grinding Contract Service	\$13,000

Each alternative should be evaluated based on the ability to resolve the two major problems with the program: Reduce PW staff time & Prevent Abuse

<b>Alternative</b>	<b>Reduce PW Time</b>	<b>Prevent Abuse</b>
1. City-Wide Clean-Up Volunteer Event	Somewhat	No
2. Free Weekend by Ward/Area of City	Yes	No
3. Utility Bill Insert	Yes	Yes
4. Online	No	Yes
5. Issue Week	Somewhat	Yes
6. Issued and Administrated at the Transfer Station	Yes	Yes
7. Additional Free Yard Waste and Eliminate Card Program	Yes	Yes



# **City of Grand Island**

**Tuesday, June 07, 2011**

**Study Session**

## **Item X2**

**Discussion Concerning Political Signs**

**Staff Contact: Craig Lewis**

# **Council Agenda Memo**

**From:** Craig Lewis - Building Department Director

**Meeting:** June 7, 2011

**Subject:** Political Signs

**Item #'s:** 2

**Presenter(s):** Craig Lewis

## **Background**

The Grand Island City Code Section 31-33 specifically addresses political signs and provides regulations for the size, location, and limits the amount of time they may be displayed.

These regulations have in the past been questioned as to their constitutionality.

## **Discussion**

The sign regulations addressing political campaign signs have been in existence and enforced for a number of years within the jurisdictional area. Last year the duration of time specified was brought into question by the American Civil Liberties Union.

In researching the legitimacy of the sign code it would appear that nationally many communities have similar regulations which if challenged would not meet the test of being constitutional; 1). Is the ordinance content-neutral?

2). Is the ordinance narrowly tailored to serve a significant governmental interest?

3). Given the restrictions in the ordinance, are there ample, alternative channels of communication of the information?

I would suggest that we amend the City Code to combine Section 31-31 Free Standing Ground signs and Section 31-33 Political Ground Signs, into one section that regulates all "Yard Signs" as to location and size. We will need to define the term yard sign to address small sign stuck in the ground for temporary use.

## **Conclusion**

This item is presented to the City Council in a Study Session to allow for any questions to be answered and to create a greater understanding of the issue at hand.

It is the intent of City Administration to bring this issue to a future council meeting for the consideration of amending the City code.



## City Code/Political Campaign Signs

### §31-33. Political Ground Signs

- (1) Political ground signs shall include all ground signs used for advertising by or on behalf of any candidate for political office or advocating a position with respect to any political issue.
- (2) Political ground signs shall be free standing, and shall not be in excess of fifteen (15) square feet in size.
- (3) Political ground signs may be erected no earlier than four weeks before an election date, and must be removed no later than five days after the election date.
- (4) Political ground signs shall not be allowed on any public property or right-of-way.

## City Code/Political Campaign Signs

- (5) Political ground signs at street intersections shall not be placed within the triangle formed by the adjacent property lines of the two intersecting streets and the line joining points thirty (30) feet distant along property lines from their point of intersection.
- (6) It shall be unlawful to erect political ground signs at any time in violation of the Grand Island City Code.
- (7) The Chief Building Official, or his/her designee, shall be authorized to seize and remove all signs in violation of this section, and dispose of the same without notice.
- (8) The city clerk shall provide copies of this section of the Grand Island City Code to the Hall County Election Commissioner for distribution to all candidates for political office and persons using political ground signs within the corporate limits of the City of Grand Island, or other interested persons.

# International Municipal Lawyers Association (IMLA)

🌐 In constitutional law language, appropriate sign ordinances are “time, place, and manner” restrictions on speech, as opposed to restrictions on content. Even a content-neutral ordinance, such as one that simply bans all signs, can become content-based, in effect, if it is selectively enforced. In any case, the three-part test courts use in reviewing the constitutionality of sign ordinances is as follows:

- 1) Is the ordinance content-neutral?
- 2) Is the ordinance narrowly tailored to serve a significant Governmental interest?
- 3) Given the restrictions in the ordinance, are there ample, alternative channels or communication of the information?



## Typical example of Political Signs



Recognition is measured by testing identification memory before and after a particular campaign. Such testing is extensively used in political campaigns where name recognition is a critical factor in determining who is elected.

## PROPOSED EXAMPLE

### Chapter 31 Signs

#### 31-1 Definitions

**Free Standing and Yard Signs.** Any sign that shall have as its supports, wood, or steel columns, pipe, angle iron framing, or any other combination of material attached to or standing on the ground and temporary in nature.

#### 31-31 Free Standing and Yard Signs.

It shall be unlawful for any person to place or permit to be placed upon premises any free standing or yard sign in excess of 15 square feet, provided however this section shall not prohibit the placement of mobile signs as defined by section 31-32.

(1). Signs shall be free standing or temporary attached to the ground and shall not be in excess of fifteen square feet in size.

(2). Signs shall not be allowed on public property or the right-of-way.



## EXAMPLE CONT.

(3). Signs at street intersections shall not be placed within the triangle formed by the adjacent property lines of the two intersecting streets and the line joining points thirty (30) feet distant along property lines from their point of intersection.

(4). It shall be unlawful to erect signs at any time in violation of the City Code.

(5). The Chief Building Official, or his/her designee, shall be authorized to seize and remove all sign in violation of this section, and dispose of the same without notice.

(6). The City clerk shall provide copies of this section to the Hall County Election Commissioner for distribution to all candidates for political office.



## Conclusion

I would suggest that the city amend the City code by combining sections 31-31 Free Standing ground sign and section 31-33 Political ground signs, into one section that regulates all “Yard Signs” as to size and location.



# City of Grand Island

Tuesday, June 07, 2011

Study Session

## Item X3

**Discussion Concerning City Dewatering Wells**

Staff Contact: John Collins

# **Council Agenda Memo**

**From:** John Collins, Public Works Director

**Meeting:** June 7, 2011

**Subject:** Discussion on City Dewatering Wells

**Item #'s:** 3

**Presenter(s):** John Collins, Public Works Director

## **Background**

On December 21, 1998 the City entered into an agreement with the Central Platte Natural Resources District (CPNRD), which provided for the installation of test and monitoring wells. These wells were placed in the following areas, Cambridge Road, Sun Valley Avenue, Nevada Avenue, Villa Mar Dee Avenue, and Phoenix Avenue, and allowed for studying the success of lowering groundwater levels.

Olsson Associates was the consulting engineering firm selected to conduct the study. The study recommended the installation of a series of vertical wells and a pipeline to carry the water to the Platte River. When the study was completed in September 2000 the opinion of probable cost for the construction of the capital improvements was \$13,063,000, with an annual cost to amortize these improvements at \$1,233,100. The annual operation and maintenance costs were estimated to be at \$341,000.

## **Discussion**

It has been found that the City Council authorized the agreement between the City & CPNRD during the term of the planning period, which was not to exceed thirty-six (36) months from the date of execution.

The City has been powering and providing for maintenance and repairs of these wells 7+ years past the authorization given by Council.

At this time Staff needs direction on how Council wishes to proceed with these wells. The discussion needs to happen regarding whether City will continue to provide for the power, maintenance, and repairs or turn them over to the residents in the affected areas.

## **Conclusion**

This item is presented to the City Council in a Study Session to allow for any questions to be answered and to create a greater understanding of the issue at hand.

It is the intent of City Administration to bring this issue to a future council meeting for the action Council wishes to take on this matter.

# Dewatering Wells



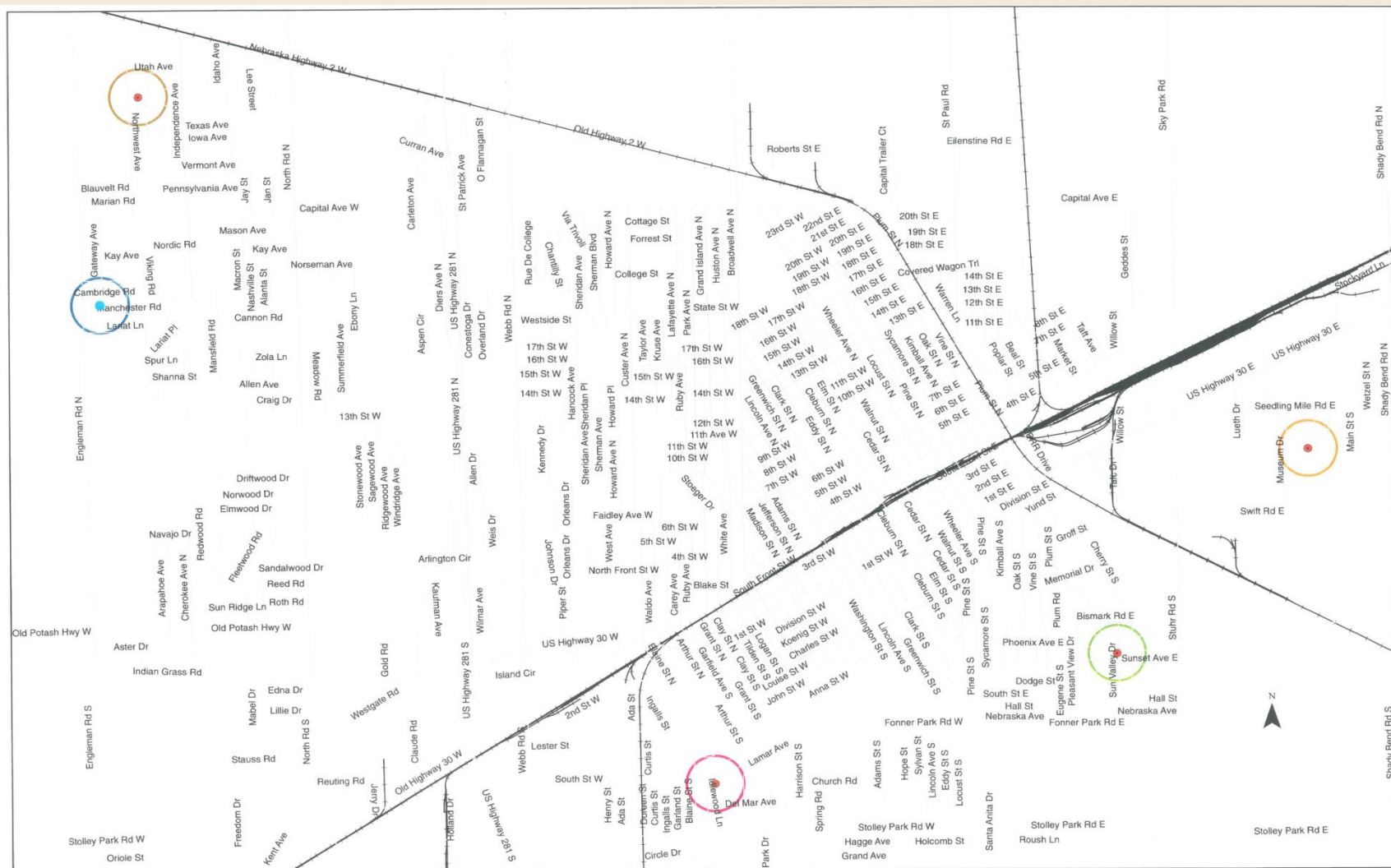
## Interlocal Agreement with the CPNRD

- Executed December 21, 1998 and amended October 25, 1999
- Demonstration project to test the feasibility of dewatering the City
- Cost split 50/50
- 36 month limit with the option to amend to extend
- Amendment dealt with responsibilities during planning period.

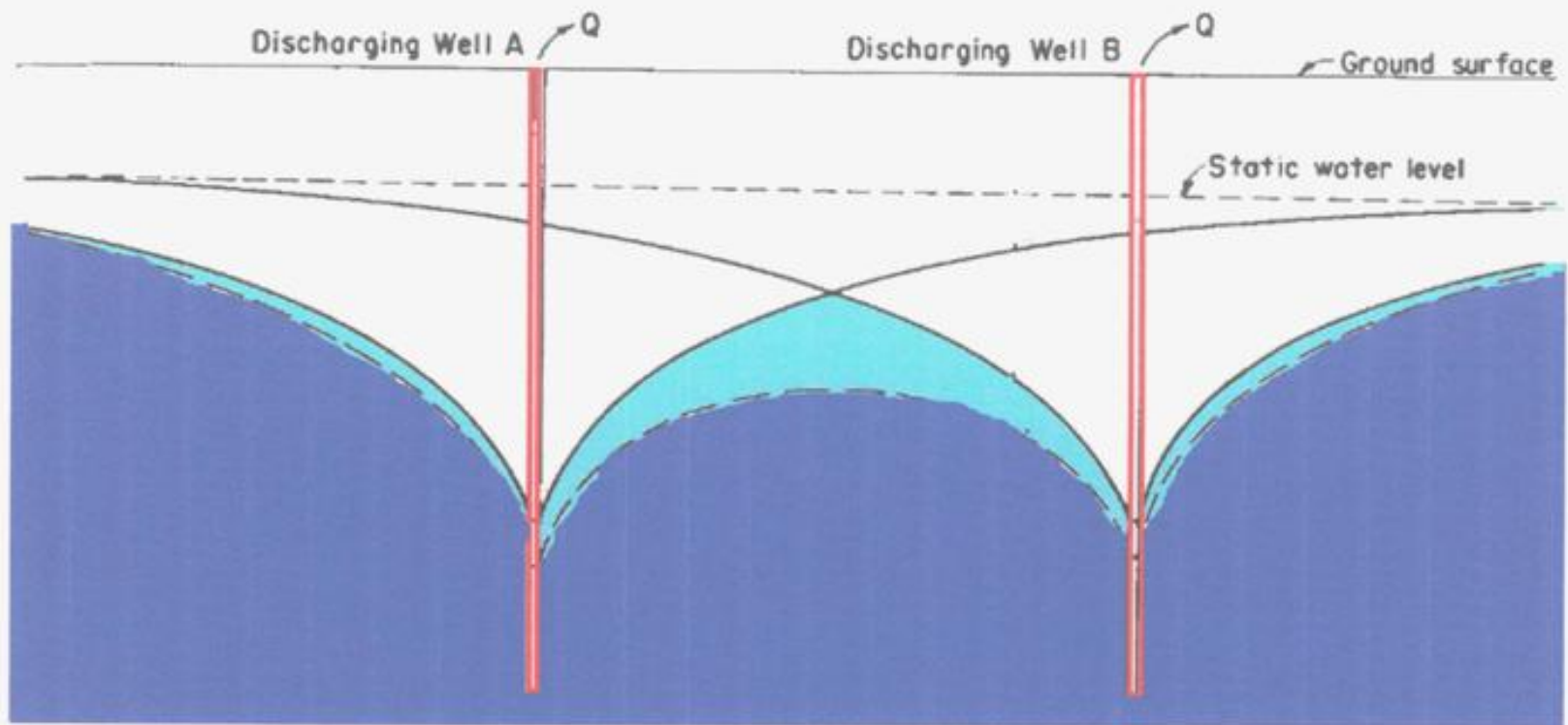


## Final Report

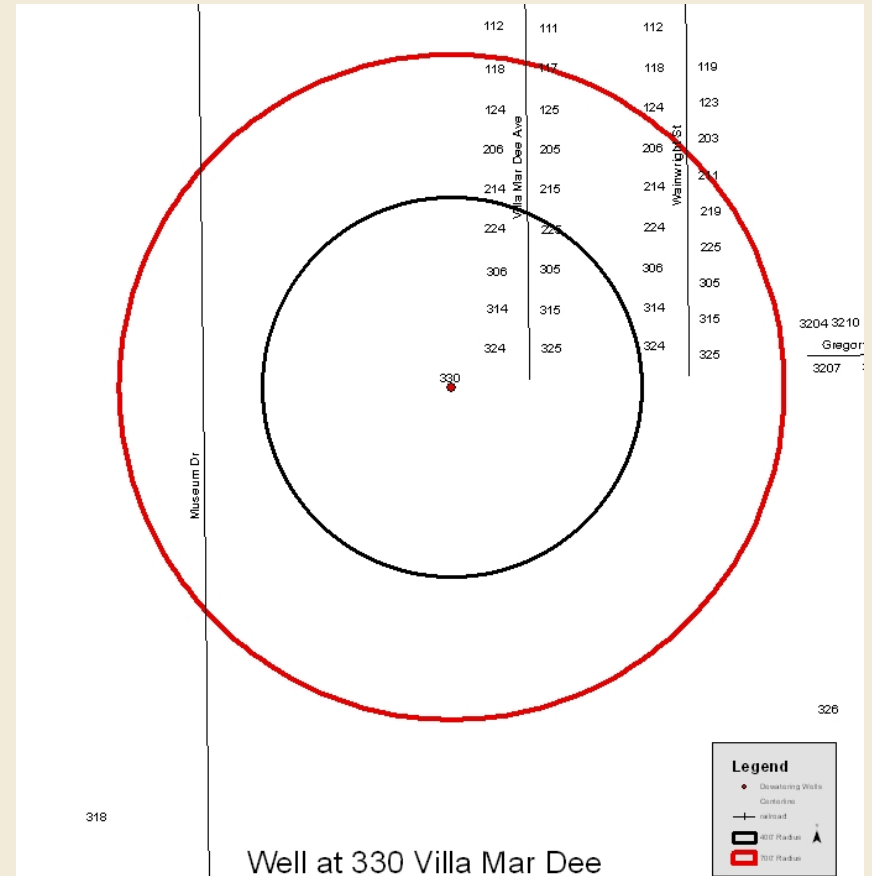
- Approved September 26, 2000
- Recommended \$13million dewatering project (preliminary estimate)
- Outlined alternatives for the design.



### Concept

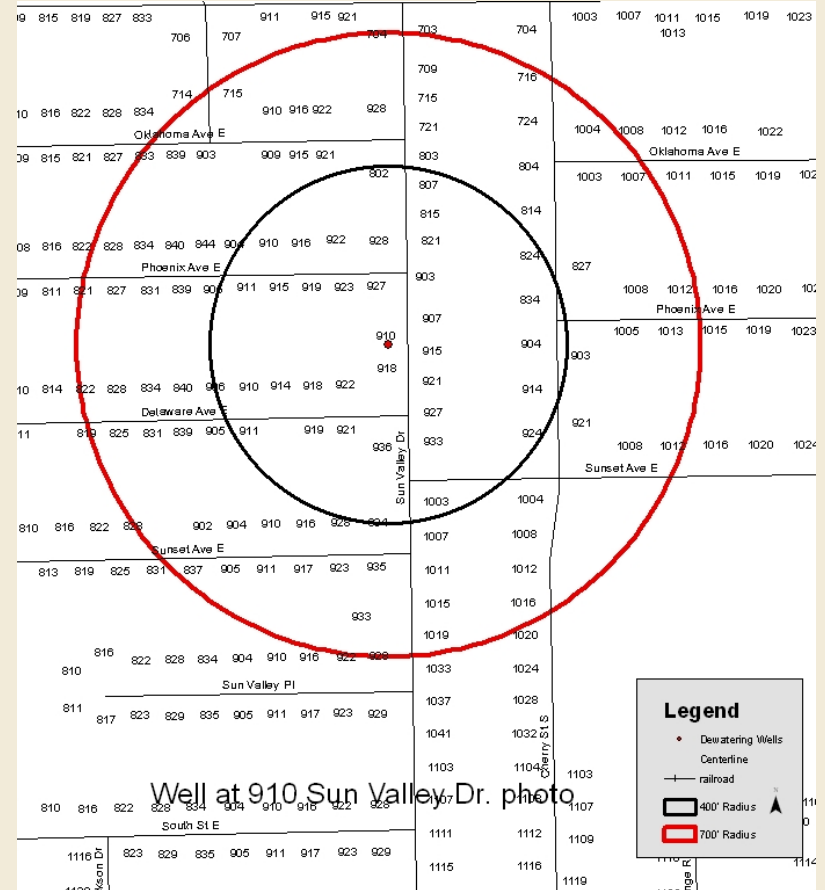
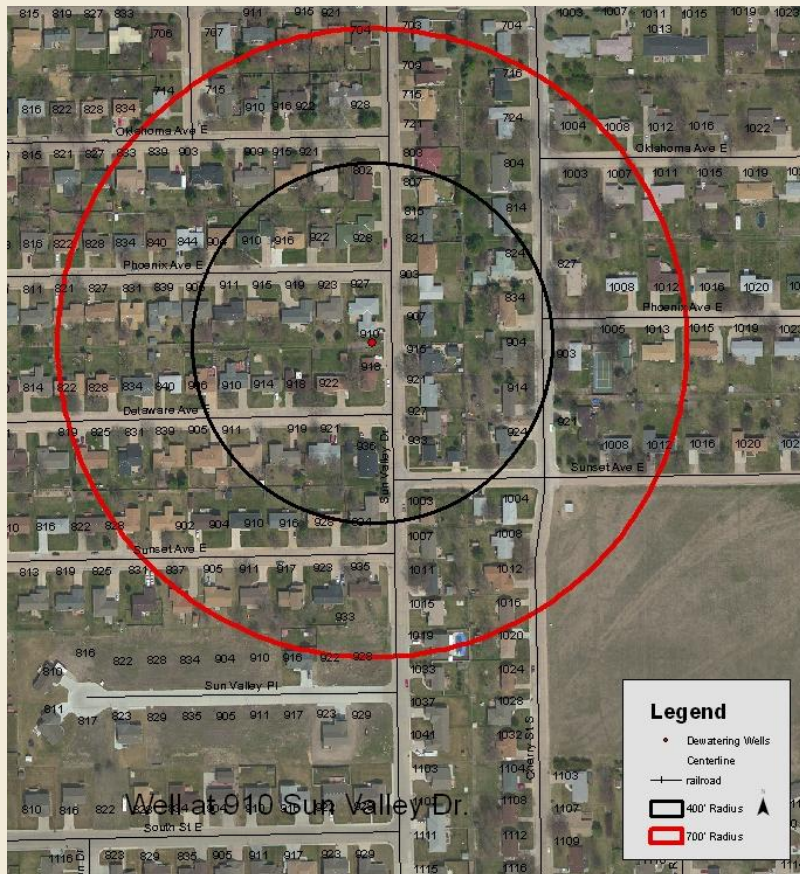


## Villa Mar Dee

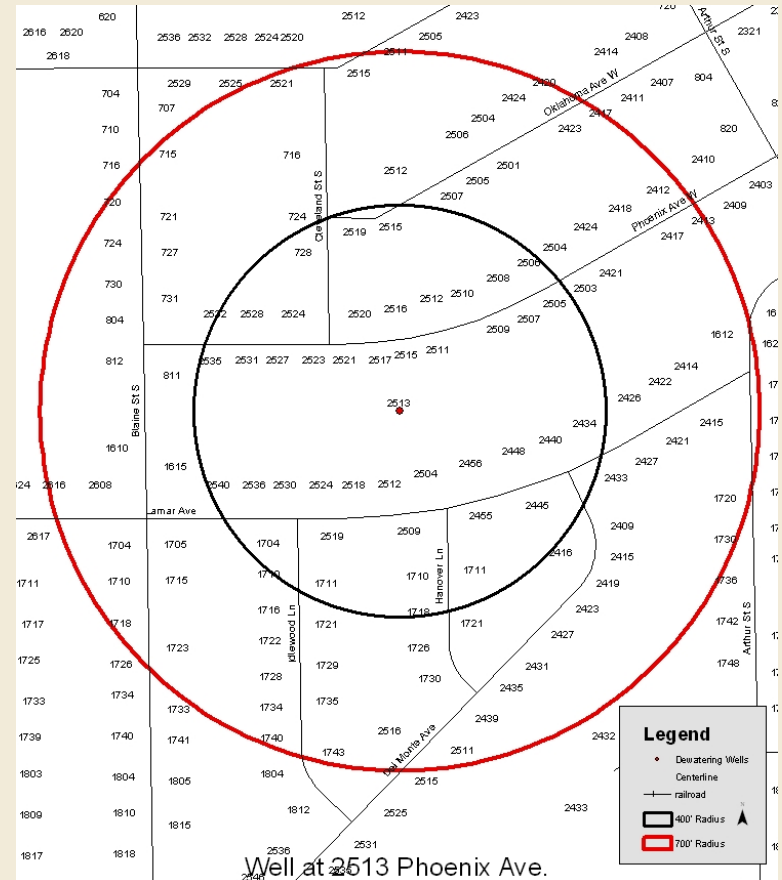
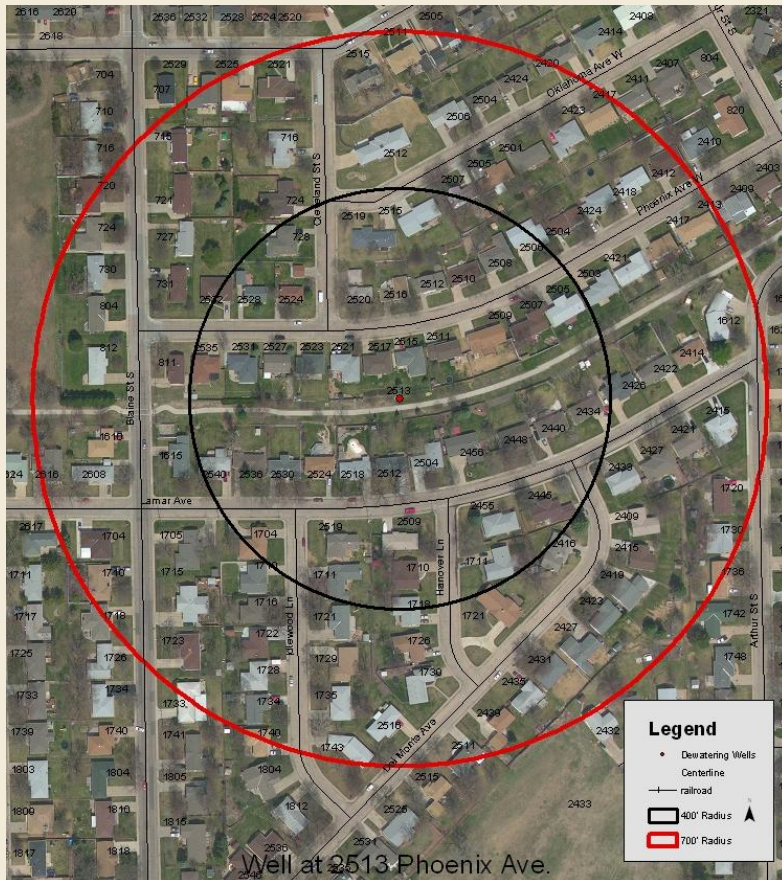




## Sun Valley Drive

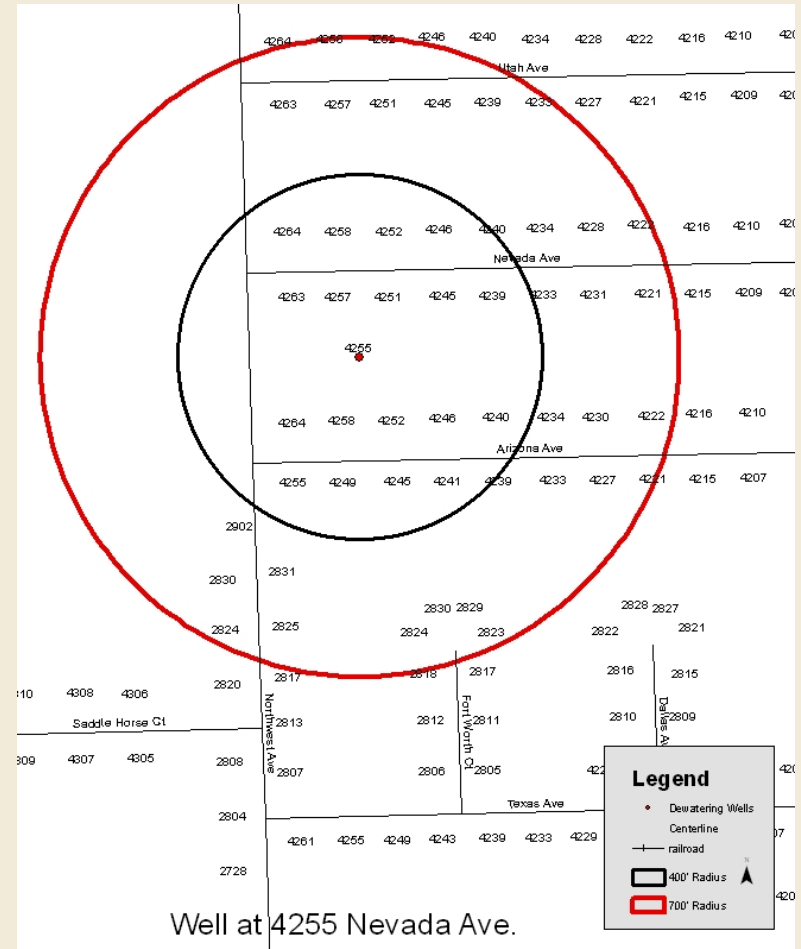
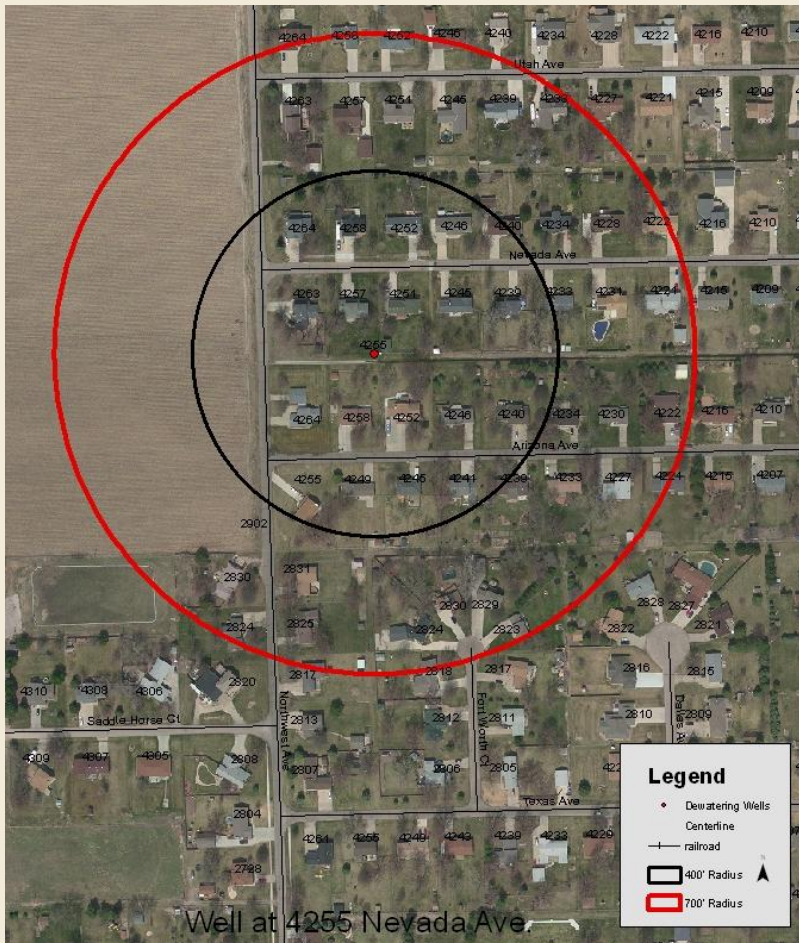


## Phoenix Avenue

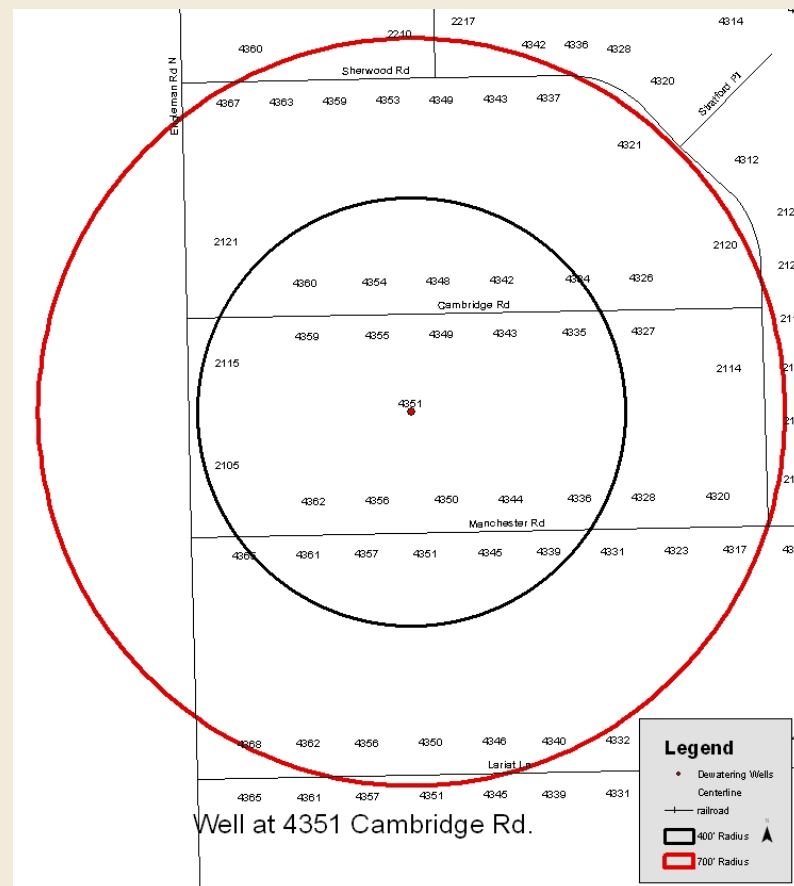
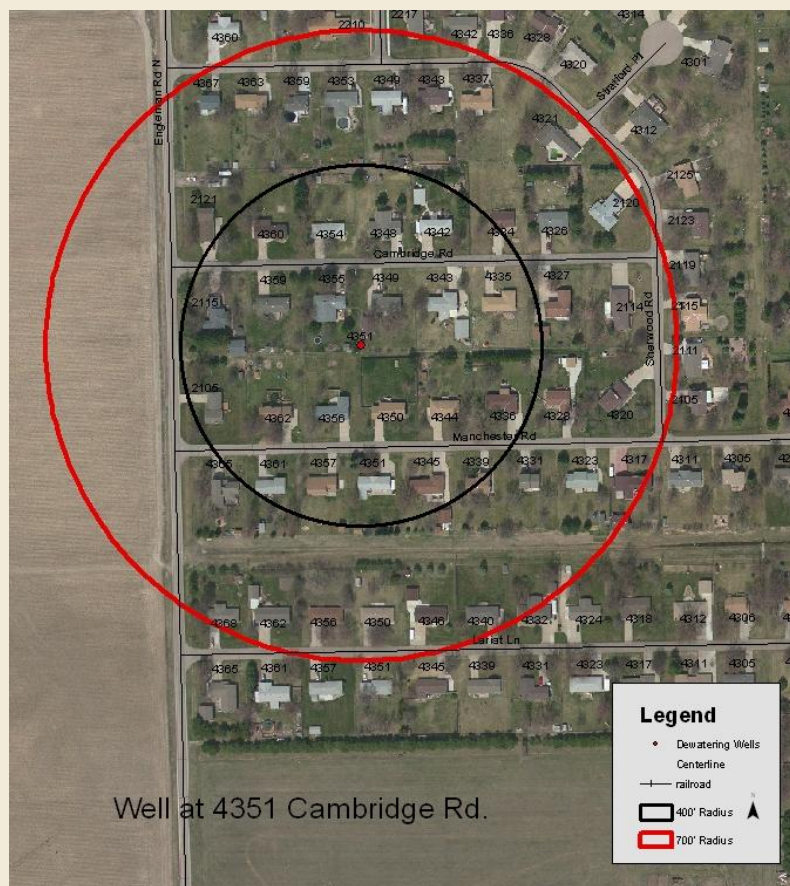




## Nevada Avenue



## Cambridge Road



## Influence

	400' radius	700' radius
Villa Mar Dee	29	9
Sun Valley Drive	118	44
Phoenix Avenue	128	46
Nevada Avenue	54	22
Cambridge Road	24	50
	353	171

### Annual Cost

- 🌊 Power \$15,000
- 🌊 Testing \$7,200
- 🌊 Repair: \$5,000
- 🌊 Maintenance has not been tracked

Note that the pumps are nearing the end of their 15 year design life



## Issues

- The City has powered these 5 wells without authorization from the Council
- The pumps are near the end of their design life and will need to be replaced
- Only a few properties benefit (most dewatering wells are private)

### Options

- 🌐 Continue to operate these 5 wells
- 🌐 Add additional wells
- 🌐 Reconsider the NRD's proposal