

THE IOWA GREAT LAKES

SANITARY DISTRICT

1966

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## THE IOWA GREAT LAKES SANITARY DISTRICT

In 1949 the General Assembly of the State of Iowa made an appropriation available to the State Conservation Commission for the purpose of conducting a study of the sanitary sewer and waste treatment needs and facilities for the area known then as the "Iowa Great Lakes Region" in Dickinson County.

A detailed study was conducted and presented to the Iowa State Conservation Commission in August 1950 by Howard R. Green Co., Consulting Engineers, Cedar Rapids, Iowa.

In July 1949, an election was held proposing to create a Sanitary District as provided by the Code of Iowa. The residents of the area voted 985 to 125 in favor of the proposal and the results created and established the boundaries of "The Iowa Great Lakes Sanitary District."

During the years 1950-1951 there were numerous meetings and discussions involving the Board of Trustees, local residents, The Okoboji Protective Association, The Iowa Great Lakes Anti-Pollution League, Conservation Commission, the State Tax Commission, members of the State legislature and Engineers to discuss pollution of the lakes and the best methods for financing of the needed Sanitary facilities. As a result of all these meetings and discussions, the 1951 General Assembly appropriated \$350,000 for the financing of sanitary sewer facilities, with the condition

that the District levy an annual tax and assume operating cost of the original W.P.A. sewer system which had been partially completed in 1939. In addition, the District later agreed to assume operation and maintenance of the State owned waste treatment facilities and to issue bonds for expansion of those facilities when needed.

In an attempt to adopt a policy whereby residents of the area would assume their fair share of any proposed improvements, the Board of Trustees discussed the merits of special assessments for benefited areas, but because of the many problems of highly fluctuating valuations, large tracts of tax exempt property and large percentage of non-resident ownership, the financing value of special assessments was abandoned. In its place the Board adopted an ordinance establishing a system of hook-up fees and sewer rental charges to augment State appropriated funds and to provide a basis for equitable local costs.

During 1953, the Board of Trustees met with their engineer to discuss the preliminary report and direct the preparation of detailed plans and specifications. A proposed construction schedule was evaluated and in April 1954, the Sanitary District contracted for the first phase of construction. The work included sanitary sewers and pumping stations in the area around the South Shore of Big Spirit Lake, the Methodist Camp and Pikes Point area on the northwest shore of Lake West Okoboji and the abandonment of overloaded treatment facilities south of the Town of Milford which had caused pollution of the headwaters of the Little Sioux

River. The wastes were collected and pumped to the District Treatment Plant. The total cost of this first project, completed in the fall of 1954, was \$280,500.

During the construction phase of the first project, the Board directed that detailed plans and specifications be prepared for additional sanitary sewers and pumping stations in a critical area on the south and west shores of Lake West Okoboji from the Maywood area to Jones Beach. In August 1955 contracts were let for this second phase of construction, totaling \$158,200. The project was completed in the spring of 1956, and financed by the balance remaining from the original \$350,000 State appropriated funds plus a fund created by prepaid hook-up fees collected by residents of the benefited area.

Following the completion of the two sanitary sewer extension projects, growth of the area's recreational facilities expanded to the point that in 1957, the Board directed their engineers to prepare a preliminary report and evaluation of the Waste Treatment Plant which had been inherited from the Conservation Commission. At that time the facilities were approximately 20 years old, in a state of needed repairs and substantially overloaded, particularly during the summer recreational season. Subsequent to the engineering report, the Trustees voted to have detailed plans and specifications prepared for complete renovation of the treatment facilities, and in June 1958 construction was started. Total cost of the

project was \$391,300 financed wholly by issuance of general obligation bonds on the area within the Sanitary District. The work was completed in May 1959.

The tremendous increase in the use and need for recreational facilities during the late 1950's and early 1960's resulted in a rapid expansion in the Lakes' area and an increasing problem for the Sanitary District especially around heavily populated Lake West Okoboji. Financial limitations of the District prevented any undertaking of a project large enough to meet the growing needs, and in 1961 the Iowa State Legislature made available an additional appropriation of \$500,000 for extension of the Sanitary sewer trunk system. Plans and specifications were prepared and in November 1961 contracts were let to complete the main trunk lines for all of the area around Lake West Okoboji. The project was completed in 1963 at a total cost of \$610,300. Prepaid hook-up fees by residents of the benefited area again provided the financing for the project cost in excess of the State appropriated funds.

In the 16 years following the presentation of the preliminary report on the need for sanitary sewerage facilities with the Iowa Conservation Commission, the Iowa Great Lakes Sanitary District has grown from its original 3-man Board of Trustees to a present-day Board of five members, two of which are appointed by the Iowa Natural Resources Council. Policies of the Board are administered by a Superintendent who

heads a full time staff to operate and maintain the growing system of sanitary sewers, pumping stations and waste treatment facilities. In addition to the waste treatment plant staff, a regular schedule of inspection and maintenance is carried out for approximately 22 miles of concrete and clay pipe gravity lines, 14 miles of cast iron pressure lines and 31 pumping stations with a variance of mechanical, electrical and programming equipment.

In the years following completion of the last major project, the area has continued to grow and develop as a tourist and vacation attraction. Former lake shore agricultural and grazing land is being developed for expanding recreational and residential needs. Areas which heretofore presented little or no pollution problem are rapidly reaching the point when the Sanitary District is faced with the task of finding means of financing additional facilities or exploring steps of curbing development.

Since the mid 1940's when pollution of these lakes reached the point of a near statewide disgrace, nearly one and one-half million dollars has been spent to keep pace with the problem of safeguarding the public health and protecting the natural beauty of these waters and shorelines.

Growth and development of the areas beyond the present limits of sanitary facilities presents the Trustees with three major problems which remain to be evaluated and solved in the near future. In

general, these problem areas can be briefly described as follows:

1. The area along the shoreline of Lake East Okoboji which includes recently developed residential, Church sponsored and public camping facilities.

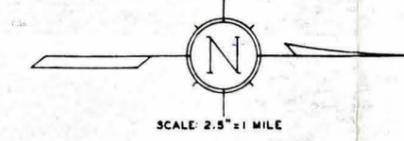
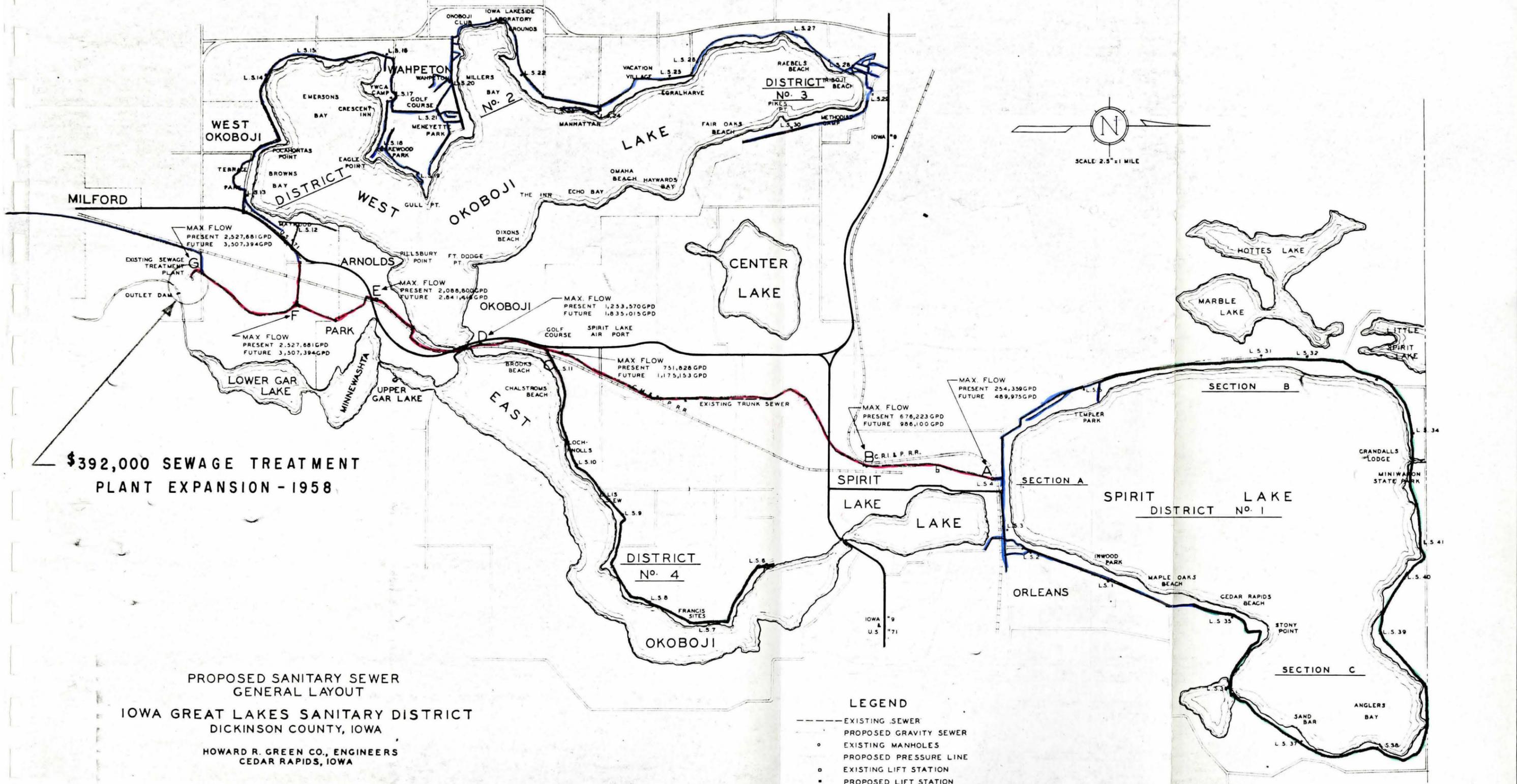
2. The majority of the west, north and northeast shoreline of Big Spirit Lake. Recent highway improvements have made this area more popular to tourists and vacationers. Major portions of the shoreline devoted to a State owned public camping facility and a State park seriously hinders local financing ability.

3. A study and repair program must be initiated for the 30 year old original W.P.A. trunk sewer line and pumping stations. The present volume of waste is in excess of the original design capacity in many areas.

The following schedule outlines in brief form the various projects completed to date and their total cost including funds appropriated by the State of Iowa.

The attached plat indicates the general layout of The Iowa Great Lakes Sanitary Sewer System and the proposed sanitary facilities necessary to provide a clean and healthy future for Iowa's natural "Great Lakes."

Date	Description of Project	State Appropriation	Total Project Cost
1950	Preliminary Report	\$ 25,000	\$ 25,000
1954	Sanitary Sewers	350,000	280,500
1955	Sanitary Sewers	None	158,200
1957	Preliminary Report	None	2,100
1958	Waste Treatment Plant	None	391,300
1961 - 63	Sanitary Sewers	500,000	610,300
	Total to Date	\$875,000	\$1,467,400



**\$392,000 SEWAGE TREATMENT  
PLANT EXPANSION - 1958**

PROPOSED SANITARY SEWER  
GENERAL LAYOUT  
IOWA GREAT LAKES SANITARY DISTRICT  
DICKINSON COUNTY, IOWA  
HOWARD R. GREEN CO., ENGINEERS  
CEDAR RAPIDS, IOWA

- LEGEND**
- EXISTING SEWER
  - PROPOSED GRAVITY SEWER
  - EXISTING MANHOLES
  - PROPOSED PRESSURE LINE
  - EXISTING LIFT STATION
  - PROPOSED LIFT STATION

- ORIGINAL W.P.A. TRUNK SEWER
- SANITARY SEWERS BY SANITARY DISTRICT
- PROPOSED FUTURE SANITARY SEWERS

PROPOSED SANITARY SEWERS GENERAL LAYOUT	
IOWA GREAT LAKES REGION DICKINSON COUNTY, IOWA IOWA STATE CONSERVATION COMMISSION	
HOWARD R. GREEN CO., ENGINEERS CEDAR RAPIDS, IOWA	
DRAWN _____	A
CHECKED _____	
JOB NO. _____	