Customers, who wish to connect to the public water and wastewater systems in Mecklenburg County, must submit construction plans to Charlotte Water for review and approval. Charlotte Water staff review plans for water service availability and wastewater system capacity, in addition to other design standards. Plans cannot be approved if the receiving wastewater plant does not have sufficient available capacity to treat the wastewater according to each plant’s permitted allowance.

Charlotte Water owns and operates five wastewater treatment plants which treat wastewater collected through more than 4,400 miles of (mostly) gravity-fed pipes. However, it is cost prohibitive and nearly impossible to collect wastewater hydraulically through gravity-fed pipes in certain Mecklenburg County basins. Charlotte Water has a contract with Water and Sewer Authority of Cabarrus County (WSACC) to receive and treat up to 6 million gallons per day (MGD) of wastewater and to serve some of these hydraulically limited basins.

**WSACC-BASINS STATUS**

As of October 2021, Charlotte Water has nearly reached the maximum limit of permitted sewer flow to the WSACC system and, therefore, has no additional treatment capacity in the WSACC system. The WSACC system also has limited treatment capacity and is in the early stages of an expansion project.

**SHORT TERM ACTIONS**

Charlotte Water has requested and received approval of a reduced flow factor from the N.C. Department of Environmental Quality (NCDEQ – the State agency regulating wastewater permits). Charlotte Water developed an allocation process using the reduced flow factor for the capacity-limited basin served by WSACC. The allocation process rationed the remaining available capacity so that some capacity was allocated to as many projects in the existing plan review-queue as possible (prior to Charlotte Water pausing new requests). Allocated capacity will be provided on a first-come, first-served basis which allows some phased development to occur for most applicants. Charlotte Water has notified the impacted customers directly. Single family development projects under an official review received a maximum of 18,500 GPD (approximately 81 homes at a 3.5-bedroom average); one multi-family development received 24,000 GPD; and commercial or industrial requests under an official review received their capacity according to 15A NCAC 02T.

**MID TERM ACTIONS**

Charlotte Water has immediately started the process to design and construct a pump station to help provide some additional capacity to these basins and other service areas. The station will pump wastewater to an existing Charlotte Water wastewater treatment plant and would provide more capacity in approximately 2 years from the
start of this project and detailed design begins. A design-build team was selected, and the first contract primarily for design services was approved by City Council mid-February and preliminary design is currently underway.

**LONG TERM ACTIONS**

Charlotte Water has requested additional capacity from WSACC. The WSACC wastewater treatment plant expansion is expected to be online in 2024.

**WHAT DEVELOPERS AND BUILDERS NEED TO KNOW**

Development requests with WSACC approvals that have not expired can continue. Previously approved capacity shall be reviewed twice annually for progression of construction. Developments with approvals are asked to review their phasing plan and building schedules. Charlotte Water will not reassign or reallocate capacity approvals between projects or parcels.

Due to the limited treatment capacity with WSACC, Charlotte Water will not accept applications for plan review or Capacity Assurance Program review in the capacity-limited basins. This pause on acceptance of new capacity requests is temporary and until more capacity becomes available.

At this time, Charlotte Water does not have an allocation queue beyond those projects under an official review at the time of the pause. Customers can sign up a charlottewater.org to be notified of service updates.

Customers who wish to connect initially to the public system in the capacity-limited basins have options for wastewater treatment. These options may include “package plants” and septic systems that can allow construction to proceed until Charlotte Water is able to offer capacity. Alternative approaches are regulated and permitted by entities external to Charlotte Water (e.g., NCDEQ and Mecklenburg County Environmental Health). Proposed projects close to basin boundaries may also be able to pump to a different basin.

Currently, wastewater treatment capacity is available in other areas of Mecklenburg County, and applications for capacity in areas outside of the capacity-limited basin served by WSACC are unaffected.

**CAPACITY-LIMITED BASINS**

The capacity-limited basins are within Charlotte, Davidson, Cornelius, and Huntersville and their ETJ: Rocky River North, Clarke Creek, small portion of Back Creek (Fuda Creek), Reedy Creek and McKee Creek. The following map shows the locations of basins.