City of Birmingham
A Walkable Community

MEMORANDUM

Engineering Dept.

DATE: **September 3, 2015**

TO: **Joseph Valentine, City Manager**

FROM: **Paul T. O'Meara, City Engineer**

SUBJECT: **Crestview Subdivision**
Backyard Water Main Abandonment

In 2005, the City initiated its first large scale mandatory backyard water main disconnection process, focusing on 116 homes, condominiums, and commercial buildings located on Southfield Rd., Shipman Blvd., Birmingham Blvd., and Maryland Blvd. The project was combined with the installation of a new sewer improving the Acacia Drainage District, which was installed on two blocks of Birmingham Blvd. As a part of the project, new water mains and services were extended to the property line of each property, as part of the project cost. At that time, the City gave all property owners a ten year period to make plumbing changes to their buildings that would allow them to disconnect from the backyard water main system to the newer front yard system.

Many buildings were disconnected during the first year, when permit fees were waived. Many more were disconnected in the interim, often spurred by the improvement or complete replacement of the house. The City set a deadline of July 1, 2015, for this conversion process to be complete. As of last year, there were still about 25 houses and one condominium complex that had not made the switch. With written reminders, we were successful in getting all property owners to make the move to complete their internal work.

A total of six blocks of backyard mains were involved. Four of them were completely ready for shut down as of July 1. The valves to these mains were shut closed to verify that there was not any remaining buildings relying on them. To date, there has been no response or complaint, meaning that no one is still connected. The remaining two blocks each had some remaining work to do, but as of this writing, that is also now finished. Our Dept. of Public Services will be shutting the valves on these last two blocks in the coming week to verify that all disconnections have been successfully completed here as well. Once that process is done, final removal of the valves, and capping of these backyard mains will be completed by City crews, as time allows, preferably before winter weather sets in.

Not having gone through this process before, we were not certain what to expect. We are thankful that the remaining homeowners followed through and responded to our requests, and that this matter is now being brought to a close.

More recently, the City has started the disconnection process in four other areas where backyard water mains are no longer desirable. The area involved, and the disconnection deadline dates, are provided below for your information:

E. Maple Rd. (South side, Adams to Columbia)	September 1, 2022
E. Maple Gardens Subdivision (water and sewer)	January 1, 2024
E. Maple Rd. (Eton to Coolidge) (water and sewer)	November 1, 2026
Birmingham Villas Subdivision	November 1, 2026

Now that we have successfully completed the first area, we are encouraged that the remaining ones will get accomplished in a similar manner.