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## 6. RECOMMENDATIONS

This study has shown that wastewater treatment and capacity needs remain in Waitsfield Village and Irasville, and that property owners are still demanding an appropriate solution. A program of managing existing wastewater infrastructure while providing long-term, low-interest funding for system upgrades and replacements has the potential to leverage existing grant funding to fix problems and facilitate targeted, carefully considered growth in the village areas. This report contains information that can now be considered by Planning Commission members, the Selectboard, town staff, and residents and business owners for implementation. While the consultant can recommend a path forward, the real decision lies with the community.

Following are some items to consider for the next steps in a potential decentralized wastewater management project:

### **Committee/Town Work**

- Review and decide on how to move forward, including local administration/governance options
- Develop and implement public involvement plan to start building understanding of and support for a management and low-interest loan program
- Continue to work with consultants on technical work (described below).

### **Technical Work**

- Continue discussions with Vermont DEC and US EPA staff regarding use of STAG and Clean Water SRF funding towards implementing a decentralized wastewater management district and locally revolving low-interest, long-term loan program for targeted wastewater system repairs and replacements.
- Conduct two further technical analyses, using and expanding upon data collected in the process of completing this study, to characterize the financial aspects of decentralized wastewater management:
  - Assess the longevity of existing onsite wastewater systems in the villages.
  - Conduct a financial analysis to estimate the value of existing wastewater infrastructure in the villages and potential future scenarios of replacing systems using a revolving loan program.
- If a decision is made to implement a management program, begin to develop the practical “nuts and bolts” of the program—including the enabling local ordinance and governance structure for the management district; a priority system for the loan program; and a detailed, financially viable, and actionable plan for implementation.