

QUARTERLY REPORT TO COUNCIL

Meeting Date: Wednesday, Dec 03, 2025

Prepared by: Public Works Director - Zaher

Department: Public Works

Reporting Period: November 2025 Report

CC: City Administrator John Walsh



1. General Operations

The Public Works Department continued to deliver daily essential services across the City throughout November 2025, with a focus on water distribution, wastewater management, stormwater system maintenance, and infrastructure development.

In addition, Public Works crews performed extensive maintenance and repair work throughout the city, including meter replacement, sewer repairs, storm drain cleaning, vegetation management, and response to callouts related to weather events and infrastructure issues.

Crews completed significant maintenance work including:

- **Water Division:** Replaced 7 meters, repaired a shut-off at 104 Halsey St, and replaced a meter box at 2535 Columbia Blvd.
- **Sewer Division:** Conducted jetting, repaired sewer lines at 174 Lee St, and cleared multiple blockages citywide.
- **Stormwater:** Continued cleaning and CCTV inspection of storm drain lines as part of the SD-201 program.
- **ROW Maintenance:** Mowed city rights-of-way, cleared blackberry overgrowth, and removed hazardous trees at Old Portland Rd. & Gable Rd. and S. 9th St.

Wastewater Treatment Plant

- **Repaired Line to Aerator #6:** A line to Aerator #6 was repaired after being chewed through by nutria.
- **Secondary Totalizer Issue:** The secondary totalizer was not reading correctly. A technician has been scheduled to troubleshoot the issue.
- **Contact Tank Flow Meters:** Ken Buell came onsite to troubleshoot both the secondary totalizer and contact tank flow meters.
- **Scrap Metal Removal:** Three dump truck loads of scrap metal were removed from around the plant to improve safety and aesthetics.

- **Contact Tank Flow Meter Adjustment:** Ken Buell returned to reset the zero point on the contact tank flow meters to ensure more accurate readings.

Water Filtration Facility

- **Neutralization Flow Meter Issue:** The Neutralization flow meter continued to present challenges and is under ongoing monitoring.
- **Building Maintenance:** The facility's gutters were cleaned to prevent drainage issues.
- **Calibration:** The Finish Water pH probe was calibrated to maintain consistent water quality.
- **Entrance Gate Repair:** Metro Gate was onsite to troubleshoot the entrance gate, repairing a loose wire.
- **Chlorine Monitor Issue:** A low-flow warning on the chlorine monitor was addressed by flushing the feed lines, which resolved the alarm.
- **Neutralization Flow Meter Troubleshooting:** Brock from Taurus worked on the Neutralization flow meter. After resetting the flow numbers, they will be monitored daily to ensure accuracy.
- **Air Compressor Service:** Rogers Machinery performed routine servicing of the air compressor and drying units. During the service, the fire alarm was unintentionally triggered, prompting a response from the fire department. The situation was resolved quickly, though a follow-up on the alarm notification system is pending.

Pump Stations

- **PS#1:** A successful test run was conducted on the generator, which transferred power seamlessly after an Automatic Transfer Switch alarm.
- **PS#5:** A meeting was held with contractors and the engineering department to discuss potential capacity improvements for the station.

Key Metrics (October 2025):

- 8 active capital projects under management
- 44 meetings held by Engineering Division
- 216 door hangers delivered for delinquent accounts
- 30 delinquent water accounts disconnected/reconnected
- 63 utility locates marked

2. Staffing & Personnel

- The Public Works team continues to operate efficiently despite a hiring freeze currently in effect. The Engineering Division would like to request an authorization to hire a full-time Construction Inspector to support the upcoming Sewer Capacity Project scheduled for Spring 2026. Or look at professional services to address the inspection role which is on Freeze.
- All Public Works staff participated in CPR and safety training in October, with additional FEMA training scheduled for the Engineering Manager in early December. Internal staff development included technical sessions on erosion control, design standards, and field safety awareness.
- The Public Works team received the prestigious APWA Oregon 2025 Project of the Year Award in the Transportation category, recognizing excellence in infrastructure improvements and community impact

3. Projects & Initiatives

A. Ongoing Key Projects

- **Sewer Capacity Upgrades (S-679):** Design phase with active permitting and easement acquisition. SRF loan processing is underway. Next steps include finalizing design and securing funding approval for spring 2026 construction start.
- **Reservoir Siting Study (W-484):** Geotechnical investigation complete; environmental review and public outreach in progress. Public open house held **November 13, 2025**.
- **Street Lighting Policy (R-726):** Drafting phase in collaboration with Columbia River PUD and Operations Division. Budget impact limited to internal staff time; no major capital expenditure anticipated.
- **Pump Station #7 Upgrades (S-679A):** Design scope being revised to match CDBG grant limits. Targeting 60% design completion for funding readiness.
- **S 16th St Watermain Replacement (W-486):** In design; replacement of failing galvanized main to be completed by in-house crew.
- **N 6th/Columbia Blvd Improvements (P-540):** Performance bond executed; construction to begin upon building permit approval.
- **Old Portland Rd & S 14th St Storm Drain (SD-203):** Design in progress; construction to be completed by Public Works Operations.
- **Transportation System Management Plan (R-714):** ODOT reviewing contract execution for next phase.
- **Punch List:** 90% complete. Only two items pending are installing the Caps on intersections and planters and fix landscaping along trail.

B. Upcoming Projects

- **Railroad Avenue Watermain Replacement (W-485):** Planned start in winter 2025/26. Funded through capital improvement budget, bidding documents in preparation.
- **Engineering Design Manual Update:** Expected to improve design standards, ensure consistency across divisions, and enhance compliance with APWA accreditation requirements. Development planned for early 2026.
- **Sewer Capacity Construction Phase:** Planned for spring 2026 pending inspector hire and final permit approvals.
- **Temperature TMDL Plan:** Preliminary work underway with final plan due September 2026.

4. Upcoming Events & Important Dates

- **Reservoir Siting Study Open House:** Held November 13, 2025 – St. Helens City Hall. Purpose: Present findings and gather public input on proposed reservoir locations.
 - **Utilities Rate Town Hall:** December 2025 – Stakeholders include City Council, Public Works Department, Finance Division, and community members. Expected outcome: Educate the public on rate adjustments and upcoming infrastructure investments.
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