

West Linn Centennial • 1913-2013



WEST LINN UPDATE

July 2013



Message From Mayor John Kovash

The following editorial appeared in the June 6, 2013 edition of the West Linn Tidings. Mayor Kovash provided this perspective after learning more about infrastructure resiliency.

The I-5 bridge collapse and Oklahoma tornado are stark reminders of the state of our nation's infrastructure. In Oregon, researchers anticipate a massive magnitude 9 earthquake from the Cascadia subduction zone that would devastate much of our infrastructure.

In April, the City Council received a report regarding the resiliency of water and wastewater systems from the Oregon Seismic Safety Policy Advisory Commission. The report was prepared for the legislature and discussed the likelihood of a catastrophic event, the ability of our water and wastewater systems to function during and immediately after such an event, and how long it would take to recover. What we learned was both enlightening, and depressing.

We learned that if a magnitude 9 earthquake were to occur today, it would result in a "dramatic change in life as we know it" for our water and wastewater systems. In the past we have been advised to prepare to sustain ourselves for 72 hours.

The new advice is to prepare for something closer to 72 days and likely impacts will include: most water systems will drain their contents; major structural damage to our supply facilities, water

treatment plants and pump stations; alteration of traditional firefighting methods; distribution of emergency water would be required; and there would be significant public health risks.

West Linn's water supply is particularly vulnerable as our reservoir is 100 years old, sits on a side hill, and is in poor condition. The 24-inch pipe that brings fresh water to our city was not built to withstand an earthquake and is suspended under the I-205 Bridge.

Fortunately, a significant change in our water system is underway as the Lake Oswego-Tigard (LOT) Water Treatment Plant will be upgraded and construction will begin in the next few months. This plant and its ancillary water pipes are being constructed to survive a catastrophic earthquake. The plant and much of the pipeline will be constructed in West Linn and paid for by Tigard and Lake Oswego. There will be a connection from the plant to the West Linn water system so West Linn citizens will be able to count on water from the LOT partnership even if our system fails during a catastrophic event. And this new, seismically-hardened system will come at no cost to West Linn rate payers. In fact, LOT will be providing West Linn with a \$5 million dollar payment which will go a long way toward replacing our 100 year old reservoir.

The West Linn water system, like the rest of our infrastructure, (including sewers, roads, buildings, and parks) are owned by the citizens. These facilities inevitably become degraded and need maintenance. If facilities are not maintained they become less functional, of less value, and become even more costly to rebuild.

Your City Council will continue to explore options and seek approval for the resources needed to protect community health and property and we will continue to look for ways to partner with other cities and public agencies.

Proposed Water Resource Area Code Changes

West Linn's wetlands, streams and the vegetated areas beside them are protected as Water Resource Areas (WRA) by Chapter 32 of the Community Development Code (CDC). After three years and 24 meetings, Planning Staff and the Water Resource Advisory Committee propose changes to the CDC that should make protection of WRAs less complicated. A draft version of the code amendments is available at WestLinnOregon.gov. Please learn more about the proposed changes and how they could specifically affect or benefit our community. The Planning Commission will hold public hearings followed by the City Council. Notice of the hearings will be mailed to all property owners adjacent to streams and wetlands. To share any comments or for more information, please e-mail or phone Peter Spir, Associate Planner, at pspir@westlinnoregon.gov or at 503-723-2539.



THEN: 1913 view of Willamette Falls.

Photo restored by Old Oregon Photos from Clackamas Co. Historical Society originals.



NOW: 2013 view of Willamette Falls.

Photo courtesy of Kendra Frankle, Rosemont Ridge Middle School.



Know Your Neighborhood Association

Do you know which Neighborhood Association (NA) you belong to? There are 11 NAs in West Linn. NAs are part of the city. NAs are a voice to and from the City to the residents in an NA. NA boundaries can include multiple Homeowner's Associations. The City of West Linn encourages, recognizes, and supports NAs, which are organized under provisions of Chapter 2.100 of the West Linn Municipal Code.

NAs receive official recognition and funding from the City of West Linn. Find your NA on the map and then stay in touch using a City RSS feed for the NA, or by joining the NA email list. You can contact your NA president using the below email addresses. Agendas and minutes for NA meetings are posted at <http://westLinnOregon.gov/Neighborhoods>.

BHT - BHTNA@WestLinnOregon.gov

Bolton - BoltonNA@WestLinnOregon.gov

Parker Crest - ParkerCrestNA@WestLinnOregon.gov

Maryhurst - MaryhurstNA@WestLinnOregon.gov

Robinwood - RobinwoodNA@WestLinnOregon.gov

Rosemont Summit - RosemontSummitNA@WestLinnOregon.gov

Savanna Oaks - SavannaOaksNA@WestLinnOregon.gov

Skyline Ridge - SkylineRidgeNA@WestLinnOregon.gov

Sunset - SunsetNA@WestLinnOregon.gov

Hidden Springs - HiddenSpringsNA@WestLinnOregon.gov

Willamette - WillametteNA@WestLinnOregon.gov

Questions? Not sure which NA you live in? Email webmaster@westlinoregon.gov.