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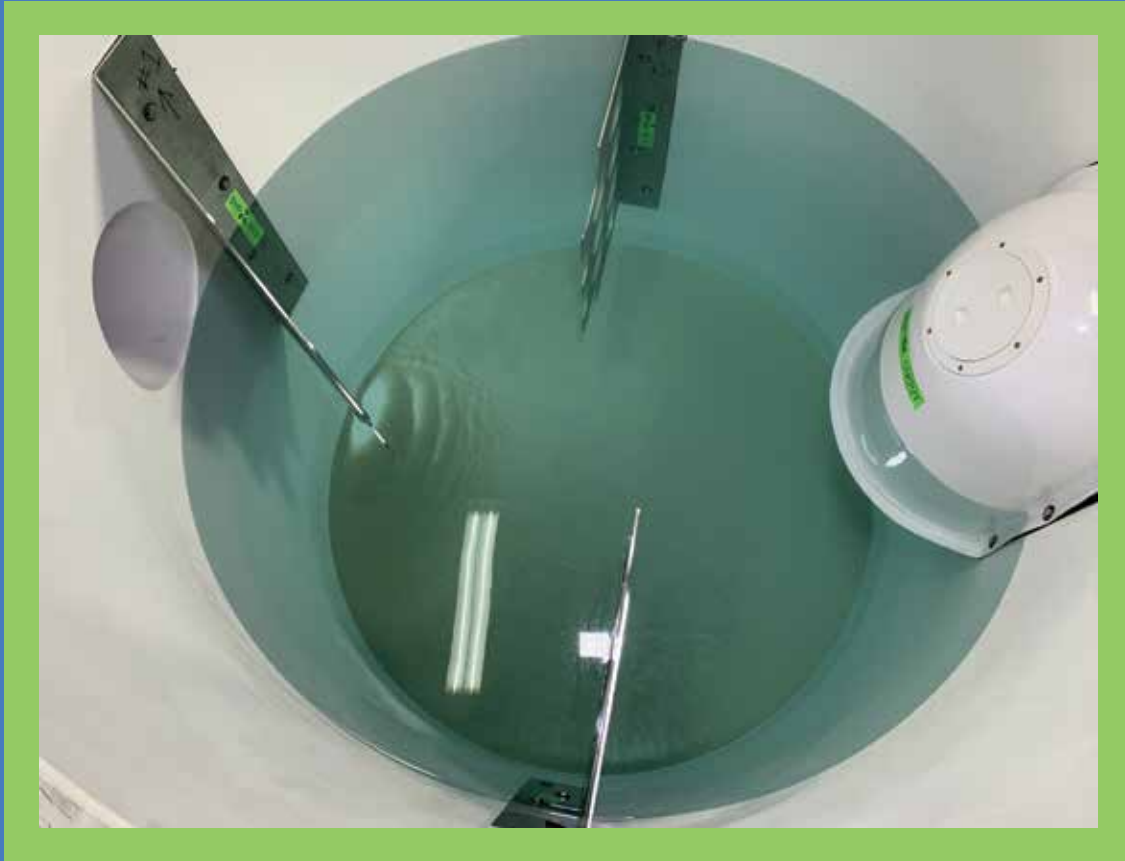
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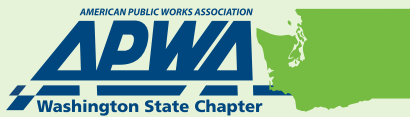
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Cover photo: 2020 Project of the Year Winner – University District Gateway Bridge.



Features:

Recap: 2021 Spring Conference – The Stage Rehearsal 13
In April, more than 125 people gathered for a virtual mini-Spring Conference: “The Stage Rehearsal” – sponsored by Platinum Sponsor Common Street Consulting.

Call for Scholarship Applications..... 13
APWA’s annual scholarship program is now open for applications, due June 25, 2021. Apply now for the Jack Pittis Memorial Scholarship or the Higher Education Scholarship!

2020 Project of the Year Awards..... 15
The 2020 Project of the Year Awards were celebrated virtually this year. The APWA-WA Chapter congratulates all the winners on their perseverance, hard work, and skill. Learn more about each of this year’s winners.

Equity, Social Justice, and Sustainability..... 27
A review of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals suggests that a greater focus on all people through the lenses of community, equity, justice, and partnerships could advance and improve our concepts of sustainability and sustainable infrastructure.

Public Works Agencies Should Prepare for New Clean Building Standards 28
In May 2019, Governor Inslee signed into law the Clean Buildings Act. Public works agencies will need to understand the provisions of the law and take steps to stay in compliance.

Departments:

President’s Message 6

Association News..... 10

Ask MRSC 30

Ostrowski’s New Outlook..... 33

Advertiser Product & Service Center 37



Donald Huling, 2021 Chapter President



Public Works-a-Palooza

As our industry moves into the future, it is inevitable that working and meeting virtually will play a dominant role in the way we serve our communities and conduct business. But if the last year has taught us anything, the virtual environment is hampered in its ability to capture the critical social energy that occurs as a result of face-to-face interactions. As our 2021 Reunion Tour rolls onward, our chapter will continue to use our newly mastered virtual tools, as well as hosting safe opportunities for face-to-face interactions with our friends and colleagues. To ensure this

can happen, our chapter's COVID-19 taskforce, in conjunction with APWA National, have developed COVID-19 event guidelines and distributed them to committee chairs. For the remainder of the Reunion Tour, all stops will be required to implement and enforce all COVID-19 safety protocols.

With our April Stage Rehearsal now a footnote in rock history, it is our moral obligation to get the band back together and party like it is 1999! Now, I'm sure all of you plan to execute that moral obligation to attend our Reunion Tour's headlining event in Yakima, Washington this fall. All attendees of this event are encouraged to adopt the mantra, so wisely coined by Def Leppard: It's better to burn out than fade away!

But after being broken up for nearly two years, many of you are thinking, I can't wait until October! Well, I have a solution for you. This August 13, the Reunion Tour will make a stop at the first-ever (and likely the last) Public Works-a-Palooza. That's right, in the fields of rural Snohomish County we will hold an outdoor BBQ and music festival so great that it will go down in APWA folklore!

To ensure that you are properly prepared for the Public Works-a-Palooza experience the following specifications have been provided. ROCK ON MY FRIENDS!

Public Works-a-Palooza Standard Specifications

1-01 General

1-01.1 Definitions

For the purposes of these specifications the Washington State Chapter of APWA shall be referred to as the OWNER, the current Washington State Chapter President shall be referred to as the PROPERTY OWNER, and all Public Works-a-Palooza (PWP) attendees shall be referred to as the PATRONS.

1-01.2 Bidding

All PATRONS interested in attending the PWP shall submit a minimum bid of **\$40 per PATRON** upon bid opening. Bid opening shall commence no later than June 1, 2021. Bidding shall be limited to the first 150 bidders (registrants). All bidders under the age of 21 shall be disqualified from attendance due to lack of adequate relevant experience. PATRONS failing to submit a bid prior to **August 1, 2021** shall be considered non-committal. Non-committal PATRONS shall be required to fill the PROPERTY OWNER'S drink for a period of no less than the first hour of PWP.

1-01.3 Approved PWP Hours

PATRONS shall make every effort to be on site promptly at **6:00 PM on the evening of August 13, 2021**. PATRONS arriving before 6:00 PM are welcome but shall be put to work setting up. All set-up effort exerted by early arrivals shall be completed at no additional cost to the OWNER. PATRON departure time is at the sole direction of the individual PATRON. However, disapproving looks will be directed at any PATRON **departing the site prior to 10:00 PM**. PATRONS departing after 9:00 AM the following morning shall be awoken with load noises and slobbering bulldogs.

2-01 Mobilization

PATRONS are encouraged to carpool to the PWP site as parking will be limited to **approximately 95 parking stalls**. PATRONS arriving as sole occupants of multi-seated vehicles will be accepted, but likely ridiculed for the remainder of the night.

2.01.1 PWP Location

PWP shall be held at the PROPERTY OWNER'S residence in **rural Snohomish County**. The address of PWP shall be provided upon submission of a successful bid for the event.

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

2-01.1(1) Vehicular Requirements

The PWP location is located near the end of a private gravel road. PATRONS should be prepared for their vehicles to get dusty during mobilization. The OWNER will not be responsible for costs associated with post-mobilization car washes.

2-01.1(2) Interaction with Locals

PATRONS should be aware that PWP will take place on the outskirts of Granite Falls, Washington. During mobilization PATRONS are likely to observe Granite Falls locals in their native environment. Although observing the locals can be entertaining, PATRONS are encouraged to avoid contact with locals at all cost. In the event that contact with locals is unavoidable, PATRONS should avoid making eye contact, avoid fast movements, and back away slowly.

2-01.2 Parking

Upon arrival to the PWP location, PATRONS will be directed to pre-approved

parking locations by certified parking attendants. Parking will be assigned on a first-come first-service basis. PATRONS parking in unapproved parking locations shall be subject to increased probability of encounters with the "locals."

3-01 COVID Protocols

COVID-19 safety protocols shall be set by the OWNER and shall be diligently followed by the PATRON until they are fully mobilized off site. COVID-19 safety protocols shall be developed based on guidance from the CDC, state and local health authorities, and applicable regulatory bodies. COVID-19 safety protocol shall be distributed as an amendment to these specifications, shortly after bid opening.

4-01 Sustenance

A selection of gourmet hamburgers, hot dogs, and an assortment of BBQ-related side dishes will be provided by Town and Country Catering service. The BBQs will

be fired up and food will be served at 6:30 PM at the location indicated on the project plans.

5-01 Beverages

5-01.1 Adult Beverages

No more than two selections of beer will be on tap, from Skookum Brewing. A selection of red and white wine will be provided for PATRONS who prefer wine over beer. A limited supply of hard apple cider will be available for those with a sophisticated palate. Beer, wine, and hard cider will be located as indicated in the project plans.

5-01.2 Over Consumption

In the unlikely event that a PATRON consumes a greater number of alcoholic beverages than their liver can adequately process (i.e., Liquidated Damages), the said PATRON will be required to demobilize from the site with an approved designated driver. No intoxicated demobilizations will be

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

allowed under any circumstances. In the event that an overindulgent PATRON does not have an approved designated driver, said PATRON shall be required to share their hangover with the PROPERTY OWNERS the next morning. PATRONS should be aware that UBER services do not service the PWP location. PATRONS should also be aware the over consumption will likely be photo documented and used for blackmail when future teaming opportunities arise.

5-01.3 Non-Alcoholic Beverages

A selection of bottled water, soda, and juice will be available for PATRONS who prefer to not make fools of themselves.

6-01 Wastewater Management

PATRONS requiring the use of wastewater management facilities shall utilize one of the two provided portable restrooms, located as indicated on the project plans. Use of the house

bathrooms shall be prohibited due to COVID restrictions. Requests for emergency house restroom use must be submitted in writing at least 4 working day prior to anticipated use to provide adequate time for engineering review. In the event that the two portable wastewater management facilities are occupied, PATRONS who cannot wait may use one of the many preapproved L.I.D wastewater management facilities (trees). PATRONS should be prepared to use L.I.D wastewater management facilities at their own risk.

7.01 Entertainment

7-01.1 Music

Rain City Time Machine shall play danceable covers from the 1970s to 2000s from 7:00 PM to 10:00 PM.

7-01.2 Dancing

PATRONS are encouraged to participate in dancing activities throughout

the night. In the event that PATRONS participate in dancing activities, the following dance moves shall be avoided:

- 1) Twerking
- 2) The white man overbite
- 3) The fishing pole and the fishy
- 4) The running man
- 5) The sprinkler
- 6) The lawnmower

In the event that any PATRON executes one of the above-referenced dance moves they will be subject to public ridicule and likely photo documentation that will be used for blackmail during future teaming opportunities. ▀

Donald J. Huling

Donald J. Huling, P.E.
Washington State
APWA Chapter President



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January 28 to May 7, 2021

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Jenna L. Anderson, Senior Engineer, Parametrix

Brent Armstrong, PW Superintendent of Storm and Sewer, City of Shelton

Nicholas Arnold, WSP

Seethu Babu, Senior Engineer, City of Redmond

Doug Benoit, M&O Supervisor, Kitsap County

Jeff Bickford, Solid Waste Manager, Thurston County

Connie Bowers, Assistant City Engineer, City of Mukilteo

Philip Camire, R&E Engineering

Joey E. Clifner, Fleet Technician, City of Moses Lake

Matthew T. Collins, PE, Associate, David Evans and Associates Inc.

Mike Collins, Deputy Director/County Engineer, Mason County

Daniel C. Cone, Deputy Chief of Police, City of Arlington

Stacy Davis, Cobb Fendley & Assoc.

Isabel Diaz, Senior Engineer, City of Issaquah

Tonya G. Dow, Water Engineer, Clark Public Utilities

Jay Downing

Jason Etzler, PW Division Manager, City of Pasco

Randy Giles, Local Programs Engineer, Washington State DOT

Spencer L. Grant, Sales Representative, SealMaster Portland

Jessica Guillotte, Apex Companies

Jami Hayes, Transportation Project Mgr., Spokane County

Ajay M. Heitzmann, Project Engineer, HNTB Corporation

Tina Hemphill, Lewis County Public Works

Janelle Hitch, Senior Engineer, City of Redmond

Amy Rose Hodgson, Navy

Michael Chad Holden, Utility Worker II, City of College Place

Jon Hutchings, Whatcom County Public Works

Kimberly Jimenez, Construction Inspector, David Evans and Associates Inc.

Per Johnson, Associate, Shannon & Wilson, Inc.

Matt Klontz, City Engineer Interim PW Director, City of Sequim

Aaron Knight, SCJ Alliance

Angeline Elizabeth Kyle, Development and Asset Management Coordinator, Lake Stevens Sewer District

Greg Laird, PE, Water Resource Group Leader, David Evans and Associates Inc.

Shawn Latimer, Senior Engineer Survey, Lewis County

Mike Lowman, Road Operations Supervisor, Thurston County

Charles S. Markham, Director, Directorate of Public Works

Ed Marson, Parks M&O Manager, Thurston County

Erik P. Martin, PE, County Manager, Lewis County

Daniel J. McCamish, PE, Civil Sr. Associate Engineer, Cannon

Catherine Mirkin, Principal, CM Design Group

Dave Nakagawara, Project Engineer, City of Sequim

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Kevin Patching, Utilities Operations Supervisor, Thurston County

Michelle Perdue, M&O Manager, Kitsap County

Scott Purkeypyle, Lead – Streets, City of Camas

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Jared Welander, Public Works Tech, City of Shelton

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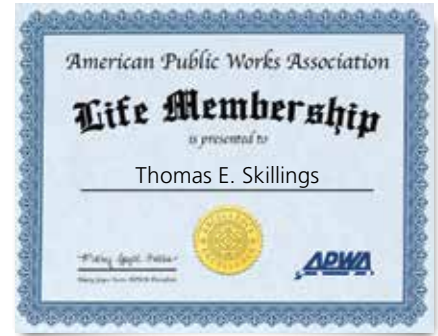
APWA Lifetime Member: Tom Skillings

Congratulations to Tom Skillings for your induction into APWA as a Lifetime Member.



In addition to Tom's engineering contributions to public works, he has prioritized time to mentor and support students and young professionals. Tom is the APWA Scholarship Committee's longest standing member. He oversaw the implementation of the Jack Pittis Memorial Scholarship and the growth of the committee. Tom is also a long-standing member and past chairman of the St. Martin's University's Engineering Advisory Board and hires student interns every year. Tom also encourages other engineers in the office to volunteer advising students through their Senior Design Projects.

Tom is a member of the National Society of Professional Engineers, the American Society of Civil Engineers, the Water Environment Federation, the American Water Works Association,



and was the 2008–2009 Chairman of the Board for the American Council of Engineering Companies.

Tom is honored to be named an APWA Lifetime member, saying, "Give a little of your time to your profession and you will get back far more in return: knowledge and friendships." ▀

Tom Skillings is a dedicated member of APWA and a valued colleague in Washington's public works industry. He founded his company, now Skillings, Inc., in 1983 and has a nearly 40-year history delivering projects for his clients.

Tom is recognized as a leader in the development of the water reclamation field. He published several reuse papers and was a participant in the National Water Research Institute workshop on reuse in Washington State. Tom co-authored the original Water Reclamation and Reuse chapter for the Washington Department of Ecology's *Criteria for Sewage Works Design "Orange Book."*

Tom managed hundreds of transportation projects throughout his career, including the redesign of 50 miles of highway in Montana and a WSDOT design build project developing 11 miles of new highway in Walla Walla County.

Tom received the APWA Washington Chapter's Roy Morse Award (2013) in recognition of his outstanding technical and professional accomplishments in public works. Tom's clients like his knowledgeable and collaborative approach. They attest to his ability to truly listen to their needs and develop solutions that achieve their vision of the project.

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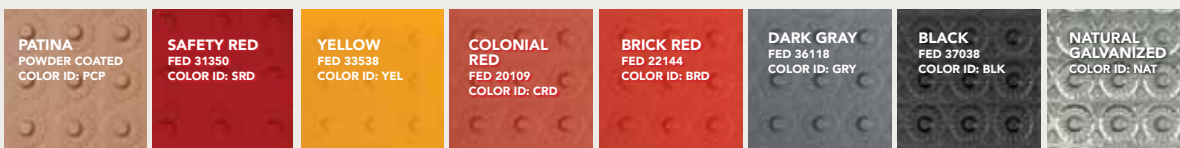


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2021 Spring Conference

The Stage Rehearsal

On April 22, more than 125 people gathered for a virtual mini-Spring Conference: “The Stage Rehearsal,” sponsored by Platinum Sponsor Common Street Consulting. With the session “Washington Legislative Updates,” panelists Mike Shaw, Principal of Shaw Government Relations; Chris Workman of Transportation Improvement Board (TIB); Jane Wall, Managing Director of WSACE; Maggie Douglas, Legislative & Policy Analyst of AWC; and Stephanie Tax, Interim Director of WSDOT – Local Programs tackled a host of transportation trends and developing policy.

The panelists responded to how UDBE requirements continue to be challenge for local agencies, consultants, and Local Programs staff, and offered guidance on how to be successful with FHWA funding as well as changes on the horizon. Comments were also offered on the growing trend of local governments being pushed to the front lines of homelessness issues. A number of funding topics were also discussed including the status of TIB’s existing programs, the long-term viability of the Public Works Assistance Account, the Governor’s environmental agenda in regard to the budget, the likelihood of a new transportation funding package, as well as the outlook that while the federal government seems poised to fund public works – there may be “match requirements” that will be unsupported at the state level, leaving cities and counties to find other solutions. The session closed with discussion on how the year’s emphasis on equity and social justice impacted the 2021 session.

Following the session, 75 people met on Remo (a networking platform for virtual table hopping) to discuss the session and catch up with colleagues. The Stage Rehearsal closed out with the Rock n’ Roll Trivia Gameshow from TopCon Solutions.

CALL FOR SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS

Due June 25, 2021

APWA’s annual scholarship program is now open for applications, due June 25, 2021. Please share with interns, educators, and students. Applications can be downloaded at <http://bit.ly/APWAScholarship>, and questions can be sent to Scholarship Committee Chair, Justin Matthews, justin.matthews@kpff.com.

Jack Pittis Memorial Scholarship Application | 4-Year Degree, \$7,500

The Washington State Chapter of the American Public Works Association is offering a \$7,500 scholarship to honor Jack Pittis. Jack was an active member of APWA, a past Chapter President, and a friend who is greatly missed. Jack’s legacy was one of leadership, commitment to his community, and dedication to his role as a public servant. Successful applicants must exhibit a similar devotion to career and community.

Higher Education Scholarship | 2-Year Degree, \$2,500

The Washington State Chapter of the American Public Works Association is offering a \$2,500 scholarship to students in two-year colleges or technical schools. These scholarships are directed to students majoring in a subject that will benefit the field of public works.

The application process is open to students currently enrolled in two-year programs.

Applicants must be enrolled in a college or school in the state of Washington.

Students enrolled in an out-of-state school will not be eligible.

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The **PROJECT** **OF THE YEAR** *Awards*

The Project of the Year Awards were hosted this year in a virtual environment. The Remo platform allowed more than 50 guests to hop from table to table, chat, and network – much like a real conference. Chapter President Donald Huling hosted the awards, showcasing the projects with short videos that included acceptance speeches from the winners. With nine winners, one of whom was also a national winner, it was hard to condense the details about these projects, but it was worthwhile to be able to properly honor winners and be able to talk to winning teams during the networking period. It was also exciting to see the level of projects that were successfully completed during 2020 – a year with so many unusual challenges that the word “unprecedented” may have to be retired in 2021. The 2020 Project of the Year Awards may have been celebrated virtually, but the projects themselves were spectacular successes in the real world and the APWA-WA Chapter congratulates all the winners on their perseverance, hard work, and skill.

Emergency/Disaster | < \$5M

356th EMERGENCY SLIDE REPAIR

Agency: King County | **Primary Contractor:** Road Construction NW, Matt Wagester | **Primary Consultant:** Perteet, Peter DeBoldt

Overview: In early February 2020, a series of major storms caused a slide along a section of 356th Drive SE, a road that serves as the sole access in a section of unincorporated King County near Fall City, WA. For seven months prior to the start of emergency road repairs and implementation of a private alternate route, the damaged road, which had been reduced to a single lane with weight restrictions, was the only way in or out of this rural community of 92 residences (220 residents).

To complete construction before the next winter storm season began, the project team – comprised of County staff, Road Construction NW, and Perteet – worked together to evaluate solutions to permanently stabilize the slope. The County moved forward with a hybrid solution consisting of a 10-foot-deep/3-foot-wide interceptor trench – to lower groundwater levels and improve stability of the slope – and a soldier pile and tieback system that would be drilled deep enough to embed into the stiffer clay layer below.

The project team worked hard to meet and exceed timelines as well as environmental goals. Coordination throughout construction resulted in the completed project having fewer trees removed and less wetland impacted than initially anticipated. Coordination between stakeholders, team members, and the local community, as well as sourcing local materials and closing the road during the day, shaved weeks off the timeline. The road closure was only possible when access to a private primitive road was secured.

The timeframe from when site investigations began until the project was substantially complete was a short nine months –



remarkable given the need to evaluate the cause of the slide, extensive communications with the community, develop construction documents, attain sensitive area permits, acquire of right-of-way, and the complex construction itself, all while maintaining public safety during the COVID-19 pandemic.

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SR 520 Trail, Lake Washington to I-405
King County, WA



Yodelin Creek Culvert Replacement
Chelan County, WA



Bothell Way NE
Bothell, WA

Environment | \$5M–25M

WATER RECLAMATION FACILITY PHASE II

Agency: City of Snoqualmie | **Primary Contractor:** Prospect Construction | **Primary Consultant:** RH2, Dan Mahlum



Photos by Max Freimund and Dan Mahlum.

Overview: In 2015, a fire within the City of Snoqualmie’s Water Reclamation Facility caused the WRF to be rebuilt and became not only the largest endeavor the City of Snoqualmie had taken on in decades, but an opportunity make the WRF more sustainable and self-sufficient, as well as positively and responsibly contribute to mitigating climate change causes and effects. The benefits from the rebuilt WRF are considerable – from substantial cost savings, increased safety, improved reliability, and more environmentally friendly processes, to earning the Washington State Department of Ecology’s Wastewater Treatment Plant Outstanding Performance Award two years in a row – and will continue into the future.

Phase I was completed in 2017 and, while that portion was under construction, RH2 proceeded with Phase II. The project faced many unusual challenges, including the weather. In 2019, a record

three-foot snowfall threatened the timeline and budget but the project team rose to the occasion. The Prospect Construction team even helped the City clear roads within the project vicinity.

Phase II consisted of a new solids handling system that included a building to house new thickening, dewatering, and biosolids hauling truck loadout systems, new aerobic digesters and aeration system, new operations building, new odor control systems for the solids handling building and headworks facility, replacement of the grit classifier, retrofits to an existing clarifier, and installation of a new vector decant station. By adding the ability to refine biosolids that can be applied to crops and farmland, the City now requires fewer and shorter hauling trips, and eliminated the need (and cost) of wastefully disposing of the WAS at a landfill. The new WRF is projected to save the City at least \$4.2M in operating costs over the next 10 years.



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Structures | < \$5M

JUANITA BATH HOUSE REPLACEMENT

Agency: City of Kirkland | **Primary Contractor:** Synergy Incorporated | **Primary Consultant:** Patano Studio Architecture, Erik Barr



Overview: Popular Juanita Beach has welcomed visitors since 1916 when it was a privately operated resort. In 2012, Kirkland's voters invested in the vision for Juanita Beach Park when they approved a parks levy that would fund the renovation of Juanita Beach, as well as other parks throughout the city. However, in 2016 a previously unidentified wetland and stream buffer was discovered, constricting the amount of space available for development. A compromise was eventually reached. The City was allowed to place a small section of the bathhouse inside the stream buffer, and in exchange the City had to enhance the environmental health of nearby Juanita Bay Park. Then in 2020, the project broke ground one month before the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions hit.

The City worked with Synergy Inc. to continue the project in accordance with the Governor's restrictions, despite the many unique challenges of the pandemic, including material supply delays and contractor labor shortages due to illness and

childcare responsibilities. The project team implemented many additional site safety procedures, including: hiring a full-time safety inspector, socially distancing site workers by adjusting the work schedule, increasing sanitation of jobsite, providing hand sanitizer, washing stations, and masks, relying on phone and electronic communication whenever possible, requiring that all face-to-face interaction occur outside with safe distances between the parties, and closing the jobsite trailer to all workers, except two project leads.

Through careful management of the project and strong outreach to a very interested public, the Juanita Beach Bathhouse project saw the preservation and enhancement of wetlands and historic trees, the installation of a bathhouse, pavilions, and an all-ages/all-abilities play facility, all while maintaining open footpaths for outdoor recreation during COVID-19 restrictions. The Juanita Beach Bathhouse project has been resoundingly popular with the public and was completed under budget.

Transportation | \$25M–75M

NE SPRING BOULEVARD

Agency: City of Bellevue | **Primary Contractor:** Johansen, KLB, Interwest | **Primary Consultant:** HDR, Paul Ferrier



Photos by King County DNR/Parks, and HDR.

Overview: Long used for light industry, the 900-acre BelRed subarea of Bellevue, Washington, is transforming into a state-of-the-art, mixed-use and transit-oriented neighborhood. The gateway into BelRed, and backbone for redevelopment, is NE Spring Boulevard. This new five-lane roadway includes five new intersections, two bridges crossing the Eastrail regional corridor and East Link light rail, a multipurpose pathway, cycle tracks, parking and drop-off zones, bioretention stormwater treatment, and a one-of-a-kind urban corridor.

This new half-mile roadway was designed from the ground up with multimodal transportation in mind, and provides a blueprint for future master planning and city redevelopment of the BelRed subarea. To further the conversion of the area to a vibrant and sustainable corridor, a total of 158 trees were planted within the roadway section, utilizing amenity zones and raised medians to maximize tree canopy. High-contrast pavement and design features were used to improve safety, delineate distinct spaces, and also

reduce long-term maintenance needs. The project also incorporated infrastructure for future electric vehicle charging stations, 5G small cell technology, and other forward-compatible utilities.

Prior to the project, the area was mostly paved over for warehouses and trucking, and substantial remediation had to be done to create the new, vibrant \$2.3 billion neighborhood made up of walkable streets, open spaces, and independent shops. It's currently the second-largest construction project in the region, just behind the East Link light rail extension. Centrally located, transit-oriented, and buzzing with activity, at full build-out the development area will support approximately 2,000 residents and 13,000 office workers. The team overcame constructing through a global pandemic, high area seismicity, and remediation requirements to complete this innovative project within budget and on time to meet milestone schedules and coordinate with adjacent public and private projects. The result is a one-of-a-kind project that will benefit the community for decades.



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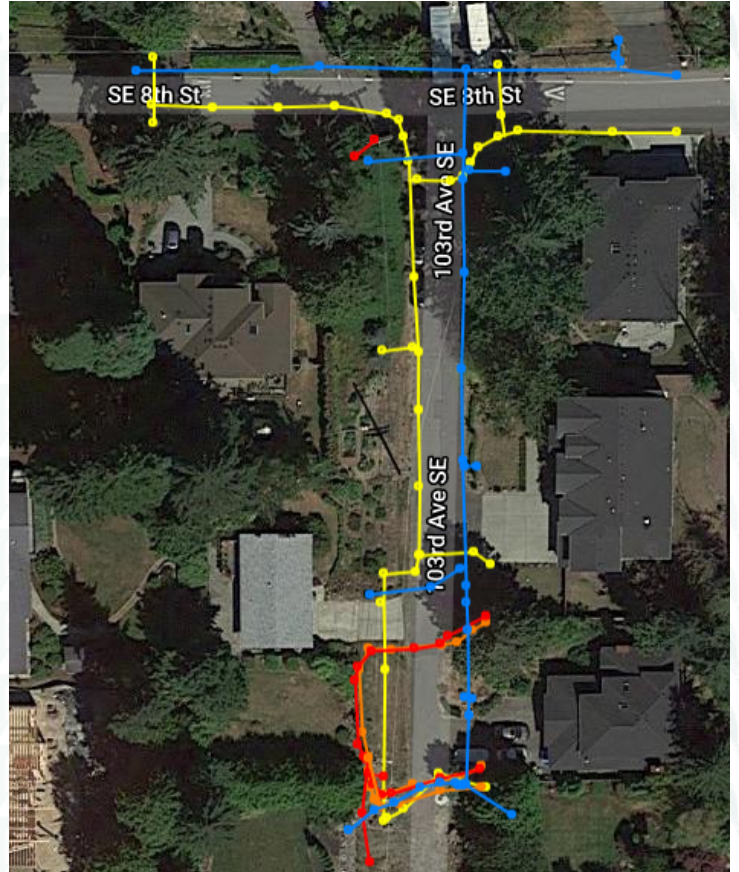
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Transportation | < \$5M

MACHIAS INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENTS

Agency: Snohomish County | Primary Contractor: Strider Construction | Primary Consultant: Snohomish County



Photos by George White.

Overview: South Machias Road is an arterial that carries traffic from Snohomish to Lake Stevens and onward to SR 92, and the Machias Cutoff branches off westerly from S Machias Road. Both roads are two-lane rural minor arterials that intersected at a skewed 'T' configuration. Before this project, the busy rural intersection (with daily traffic counts of about 10,000 vehicles) functioned as a three-legged, all-way stop. The location of the Centennial Regional Trail crossing was separated from, but adjacent to, the intersection, creating a complex situation that increased the risk for rear-end collisions. There was also a nearby corrugated metal pipe culvert, with wetland areas on each side and beaver activity that frequently blocked the culvert and flooded the roadway.

To alleviate all these problems, the County selected a design that improved roadway geometry to permit more efficient vehicle movement, integrated the Centennial Trail crossing, provided new

signals, and used the smallest footprint to minimize environmental impacts. The project also installed a new culvert, planted over a thousand new native trees and shrubs, and added additional amenities such as bike rests and equestrian-height push buttons for crosswalks.

The County faced many problems including the federal government shutdown in 2018 that delayed permitting, coordination with five utility companies due to a high density of utilities in the area, and working with Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) and the Tulalip Tribes on the design of the fish passage culvert. By using Snohomish County's climate change tool to predict the impact of climate change on the area, the culvert was expanded to a 17-foot wide culvert with low-flow fish passage channel in the culvert. This \$2.1 million project fixed many problems by providing a controlled crossing for trail users, speeding traffic, and alleviating and improving environmental issues.

Structures | \$5M–25M

UNIVERSITY DISTRICT GATEWAY BRIDGE

Agency: City of Spokane | **Primary Contractor:** Garco Construction | **Primary Consultant:** KPFF, David McMillan



Photos by Garco Construction and KPFF Consulting Engineers.

Overview: The University District Gateway Bridge is a 460 foot-long cable-stay bridge in the City of Spokane that was built to connect the Riverpoint campus to the East Sprague neighborhood. The project faced many challenges on all portions of the work – design, procurement, construction, and management. But the project team was able to navigate the many challenges and create a unique structure that will serve the City of Spokane for years to come by connecting communities and spurring economic development.

Complex and innovative engineering solutions were needed to meet the design challenges. The tall clearance required by the railroad meant taking users more than 30 feet off the ground, then returning the path back to grade at slopes that met ADA requirements, and minimized the landing footprints. By using the cable-stay design, angling the path of the bridge, and casting the unique parabolic arches in-place, the project team created a bridge unlike any other.

Other challenges included steel tariffs which spurred international tensions and delayed the procurement of required material, oversight from a BNSF inspector, minimal work windows to allow for trains, an abrupt change in BNSF girder erection policy during a critical phase of construction, and site topography that meant a large amount of elevated work, at heights up to 120 feet, and construction over active rail lines and roadways. Despite all these challenges, Garco Construction had zero reportable incidents while completing over 48,000 man-hours of construction.

The University District Gateway Bridge is an exceptional structure within the region and the engineering world. The project is seen as a lynchpin in the expansion plan for the area – which is expected to generate approximately \$1.6 billion and support 9,276 jobs over the next 20 years – and finished under budget due to careful phasing, staging, and innovative workflow solutions.

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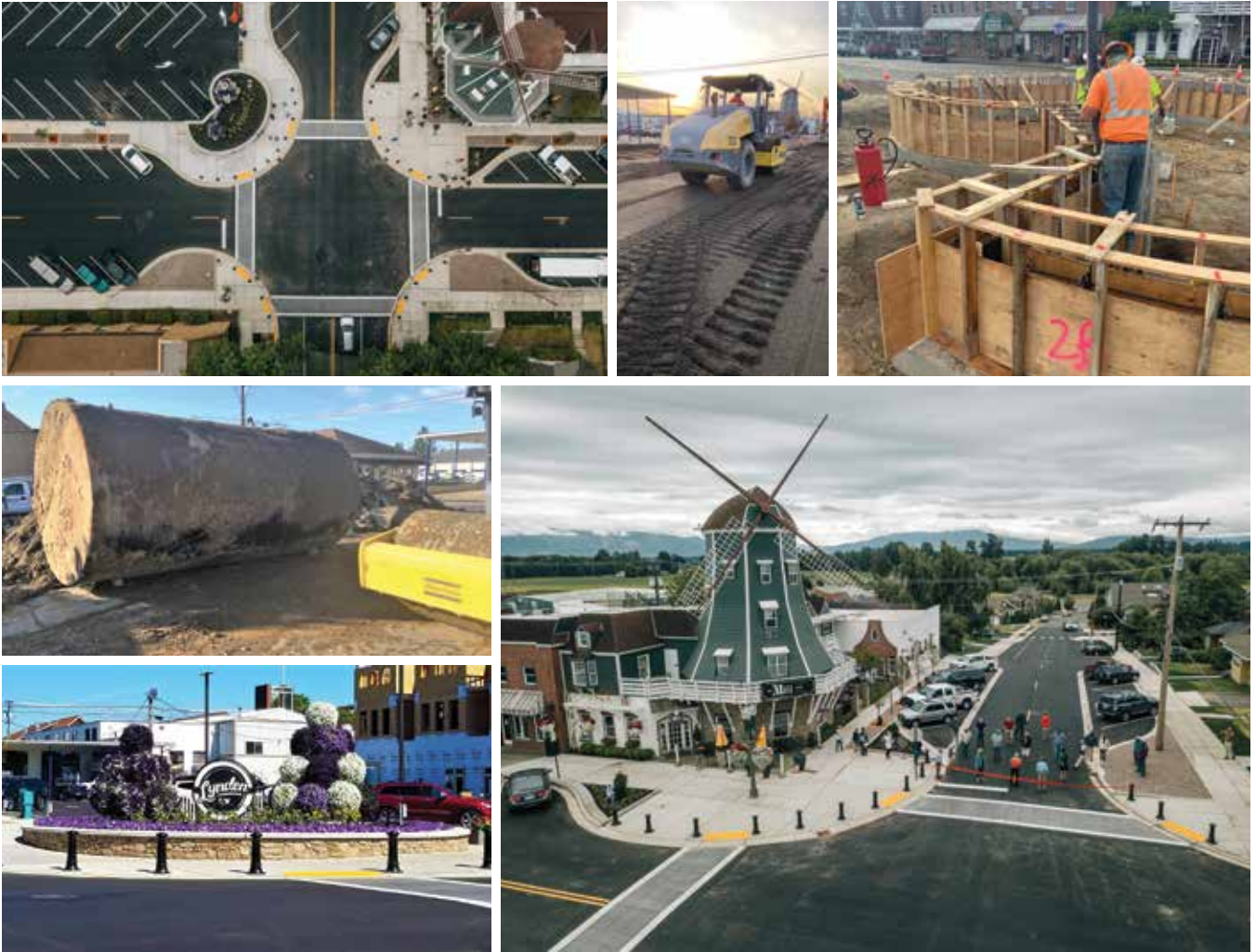
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Transportation (Small Agency) | < \$5M 7th STREET RECLAMATION

Agency: City of Lynden | Primary Contractor: DeKoster Excavating | Primary Consultant: Reichhardt & Ebe Engineering, Inc.



Overview: The City of Lynden’s downtown Historic Business District (HBD) is a shopping and event destination for much of Whatcom County. During events, Front Street – which is a major arterial – is temporarily closed to traffic and becomes a pedestrian event center. This results in substantial vehicle and pedestrian traffic passing through the HBD from the west with 7th Street being the entrance. After years of struggling with the upkeep with the severely aging 7th Street, the City received a Transportation Improvement Board (TIB) grant in 2018 and was finally in position to fix and improve the much-worn 7th Street.

To maintain unimpeded traffic flowing into the HBD along Front Street and minimize the disruptive nature of construction to local businesses and public events, the project was originally sequenced in four phases, with construction beginning in October of 2019. The original sequencing was ultimately modified in the spring of 2020 as the COVID-19 virus erupted into a global pandemic and stay-at-home

orders were mandated for Washington State. This unforeseen event required immediate resequencing and schedule modification. Because the project included replacing water and sanitary sewer facilities, the City deemed the project essential and the contractor chose to proceed with COVID-19 safety protocols in place and successfully completed the project without injury or illness.

The project promotes pedestrian and multimodal transportation by providing a central location for lighted parking. From the enhanced parking lot, pedestrians can safely and freely reach downtown shops and public services or the surrounding residential neighborhoods and churches via wide sidewalks with low flush curb bulbs, and ADA compliant ramps. Other accomplishments include: rehabilitating aging infrastructure, adding a water main, coordinating construction activities with concurrent adjacent private development, safe removal and disposal of buried petroleum tanks, and adapting to COVID-19 protocols.

Transportation | \$5M–25M

ISAACS AVE RECONSTRUCTION – PHASE I & II

Agency: City of Walla Walla | **Primary Contractor:** DKS Associates, Premier Excavation, City of Walla Walla, Culbert Construction | **Primary Consultant:** Anderson Perry & Associates, Inc.



Photos by Andy Perry and the City of Walla Walla.

Overview: Isaacs Avenue is an arterial connecting the City of Walla Walla’s Eastgate area to the city’s central business district. Adjacent to Whitman College and Green Park Elementary School, the roadway serves as a primary route of travel for many, including pedestrians and bicyclists. The street possessed significant safety issues for all modes of transportation and had one fatal and two severe injury crashes related to vulnerable pedestrian users. Prior to reconstruction, the roadway was in disrepair with failing pavement and a collision rate nearly triple the statewide average for a street of this classification.

The \$15.5 million project completely reconstructed approximately 1.5 miles of roadway, adding bicycle lanes, ADA-compliant sidewalks, enhanced pedestrian crossings, a center turn lane to improve sight distance, and upgraded utilities. The project constructed five bioretention facilities as well as 21 infiltration galleries, eliminating discharges to Mill Creek during the design storm event.

The City utilized several pavement and concrete products to extend the lifespan of the new surfaces and accelerate the construction. Full depth reclamation using cement-treated base was employed to allow traffic to travel on existing granular base materials, eliminating weeks of excavation. The City also used fiber-reinforced asphalt cement (FRAC) to reduce cracking due to weather. A densifier that hardens concrete at a molecular level was applied to all flatwork to extend the life of the finished concrete sidewalks.

The project maintained safe continuous access to the adjacent Whitman College and Green Park Elementary School and nearly 0.75 mile of businesses. Halfway through the two-year project that completed on time, the team implemented a COVID-19 safety plan. Capacity Manual estimates a 29% collision reduction as a result of the new road diet. The center turn lane and related traffic signal improvements are estimated to result in a travel time reduction of 12 to 14%.

An advertisement for insta-pipe trenchless pipe repair. The background is blue with a yellow sun logo. The text reads: "When You Think Pipe Lining Think insta-pipe TRENCHLESS PIPE REPAIR (360) 943-5840 insta-pipe.com PRIMUS Line & UV CIPP Lining". The image shows a large pipe being installed in a trench.

Transportation (Small Agency) | \$5M–25M

TREMONT STREET WIDENING PROJECT

Agency: City of Port Orchard | **Primary Contractor:** Active Construction, Richard Guis | **Primary Consultant:** WSP USA Inc., Blake Nelson



Overview: As a primary route connecting Port Orchard to State Route 16, Tremont Street is the gateway into the city. With the completion of the Tremont Street Widening Project in 2019, the redesigned and rebuilt roadway now lives up to that role both functionally and aesthetically, providing a long-needed update that eases traffic congestion and improves safety for pedestrians and bicyclists, while also increasing the corridor’s visual appeal.

The \$23 million project was initiated by City of Port Orchard in 2005 in response to growing concerns about its ability to meet anticipated future capacity needs. The project weathered daunting obstacles over the next 14 years, including funding, stricter state and federal agency policies, high-profile public scrutiny and political opposition, and an ever-evolving project design related to intersection types and utility relocations. Ultimately it would garner an unprecedented \$8 million grant from the TIB – the largest amount ever awarded by the agency to a city jurisdiction – among other grants, just in the nick of time to meet their obligation to begin construction.

One of major challenges for the Tremont Street Widening was relocating all existing overhead dry utilities, including electrical and telecommunication lines, underground within a joint utility trench. The project also installed a new sewer and water mains/lines, and stormwater systems while coordinating with six utility providers. None of the underground utilities seemed to be located where the design team thought they were, requiring extensive potholing. The project also protected an adjacent wetland, two fish-bearing streams while becoming the first implemented Washington State traffic signal preemption roundabout, due to being on a first responder route. Despite an operator strike, asphalt shortage, and the 2018 Port Orchard tornado (the strongest tornado to hit Washington state since 1986), the project was completed in two years. ▀

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Equity, Social Justice, and Sustainability

By Jesse Williams, Jacobs

Many of us, particularly those involved with green building design and construction, have focused for years on 'sustainability.' We read books and studied late into the night to achieve green building credentials such as the LEED Accredited Professional (AP) or Envision Sustainability Professional (SP).

We've applied sustainable design practices to our projects, developed green infrastructure details and standards, and tried to live out these ideas in personal practice. We've even encouraged family and friends to plant a garden, save roof runoff, compost food waste, or travel by bicycle.

With a new or renewed focus on community, equity, and race and social justice, what happened to sustainability? Have we moved from one mission to another, destined to repeat the same process in the next decade, or will this new design paradigm be incorporated into our standard practice? This author argues that incorporating community-focused values including equity and race and social justice into our practice of sustainability is not only consistent with our original goals, but necessary for truly sustainable outcomes.

If we compare our current concept of sustainability to the 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), we find examples of synergy and agreement, as well as opportunities for improvement. Our current sustainability strategies and green building rating systems successfully consider such environmental goals as Climate Action (goal #13), Life Below Water (goal #14), and Life On Land (goal #15). We've conserved water, reduced energy consumption, and reduced the waste generated by construction projects, among other successes. But we may lag behind social and people-related goals such as SDG #11, 'Sustainable Cities and Communities,' which aims to "Make cities and human

settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable." Other goals include Gender Equality (#5) and Reduced Inequalities (#10), which considers vulnerable groups such as older persons, persons with disabilities, children, women, and migrants and refugees. We may have progressed well with the environmental aspects of sustainability, but failed to incorporate the equally critical needs of people.

Policies and infrastructure that consider performance and environmental benefit but neglect or underappreciate human wants and needs are not sustainable: environmentally sound solutions that are not affordable, maintainable, and enjoyed or appreciated by all people may be less likely to be maintained by the community. Infrastructure that prioritizes certain modes of travel or neglects the safety and comfort of some users, even if efficient and cost effective, is destined to be modified or removed and is therefore not 'sustainable.' Infrastructure that creates negative health impacts to certain communities or groups, or maintains past injustices, is not sustainable. Consider the vast number of sidewalks and curb ramps that were not designed for adequate (safe, comfortable, etc.) access by people with disabilities, and now must be replaced at great financial and environmental cost; this was truly unsustainable infrastructure because it failed to adequately address human needs and placed additional burden on a certain population. And it seems worth noting that accessible sidewalks and curb ramps benefit many other users including the elderly and parents of smaller children, providing more inclusive infrastructure; inclusive design may have positive benefits beyond our original intent.

Consider the current issues of racial equity and social justice: policies and

infrastructure that value certain populations over others, create unequal or disparate impacts on different communities, maintain unequal access to wealth and capital, or provide health to only some communities, create injustice and inequality and are inherently unsustainable. If we as policy makers, planners, designers, builders, and operators intend to produce and maintain sustainable infrastructure, we must ensure that infrastructure provides services (and avoids unequal impacts) to all humans regardless of ethnicity, community of origin, gender, community of birth, etc. Similarly, we must ensure that the business of infrastructure provides economic opportunity for and benefits all communities. And we have work to do as a society to consider how to benefit low-income and previously underserved communities without creating displacement.

A review of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals suggests that a greater focus on all people through the lenses of community, equity, justice, and partnerships could advance and improve our concepts of sustainability and sustainable infrastructure. As opposed to something different or inconsistent, our current learning and efforts toward advancement of underserved communities and populations addresses a gap in our previous understanding of sustainability and can lead us to greater fulfillment of our original goals. Reviewing the lessons learned from years of sustainable design and living can also remind us how to ensure that new evolutions of sustainable infrastructure yield long-standing, high-performing, and beloved community assets.

References

- <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>
- www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/news/communications-material ■

PUBLIC WORKS AGENCIES SHOULD PREPARE FOR NEW CLEAN BUILDING STANDARDS



By Jim Rioux, PMP, Project Manager,
City of Olympia Public Works

and

Joel Davis, MA, MBA,
Managing Principal,
Sazan Environmental Services



On May 27, 2019, Governor Inslee signed into law the Clean Buildings Act (CBA). The CBA was part of a suite of clean energy bills that were passed during the 2019 Legislative Session to address the state's energy grid, transportation infrastructure, hydrofluorocarbon emissions, and emissions from buildings.

While the language of the CBA focuses on "covered commercial buildings," the definition does not exclude buildings that are publicly owned. Public works agencies will need to understand the provisions of the law and take steps to stay in compliance. The CBA defines covered commercial buildings as follows:

"Covered commercial building" means a building where the sum of nonresidential, hotel, motel, and dormitory floor areas exceeds fifty thousand gross square feet, excluding the parking garage area.

State Energy Performance Standard

The Clean Buildings program is managed by the Washington State Department of Commerce (Commerce) and supported by utility providers. Performance standards are based upon ASHRAE Standard 100. The new standards include requirements related to:

- Energy management plans,
- Operation and maintenance,
- Calculation of a building's Energy Use Intensity, and
- Performance of energy audits.

Energy Use Intensity and Energy Use Intensity Targets are defined in the new regulations as follows.

- *Energy Use Intensity (EUI):* A measurement that represents any given building's energy use relative to its size. "Energy use intensity" is reported as a value of a thousand British thermal

units per square foot, per year. A building's EUI is calculated by dividing the total net energy consumed in one year by the gross floor area of the building, excluding any parking garage area or non-conditioned spaces.

- *Energy Use Intensity Target (EUI_t):* The net energy use intensity of a covered commercial building that has been established for the purposes of complying with the standard. The Department of Commerce developed EUI_t targets based upon average EUI data for building use types in two climate zones in Washington: Climate Zone 4C and Climate Zone 5B.

The EUI and EUI_t establish the performance metrics to determine compliance. A building's energy performance is calculated in terms of its EUI, and that measurement is compared to an EUI_t benchmark for buildings of similar use type.

Building Personnel Roles and Responsibilities

A critical element of the new standard is how they define energy management responsibilities for building owners and their staff. Specifically, new requirements establish energy management roles and responsibilities and qualification requirements for building managers, building operators, energy managers, qualified auditors, and qualified persons.

Meeting Compliance Requirements

Compliance with the new regulations is the building owner’s responsibility. A building’s size determines the date on which it should be compliant with the new standard, as the following table shows:

Size of Building	Compliance Date
Over 220,000 sf	June 1, 2026
90,001–220,000 sf	June 1, 2027
50,000–90,000 sf	June 1, 2028

By July 1, 2021, all building owners of covered commercial buildings can expect to receive notification of the initial compliance schedule and outline of the regulation’s early adopter program.

The Early Adopter Incentive Program applies to non-residential, hotel, motel, and dormitory buildings greater than 50,000 sf. An eligible building owner who demonstrates early compliance for a facility may receive a one-time base incentive payment of \$.85 per gross square foot of floor area.

The Commerce Clean Building web portal provides detailed guidance for owners to comply with the new regulations as well as details about eligibility for the Early Adopter Incentive Program.

While the program can appear daunting at first glance, building owners may already be doing much of what will be required.

In summary, the steps to achieving compliance are:

1. Get familiar with the new regulations.
2. Establish a written Energy Management Plan.
3. Coordinate with utility providers for energy use data.
4. Start documenting your building’s energy use.
5. Define the staff responsibilities consistent with the new regulations.
6. Begin calculating your building EUI and measuring it against the appropriate EUIt.
7. Document compliance via the Department of Commerce Clean Buildings web portal.

Another Opportunity to Contribute

It might be easy to view these new requirements as another load placed on the already heavily burdened backs of public works staff. It is, however, important to keep in mind that the drivers for this new law include the very well-documented fact that buildings are a significant contributor to greenhouse gasses. Compliance with these new requirements is intended to address that unfortunate reality. ▀

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Questions About Bids, Lien Periods, and More



Q: Under RCW 39.04.270 there is a reference to “qualified sources” and “qualified bidders.” Does this refer to RCW 39.02.350 – such that any party putting in a bid under the exception would have to meet the standard public works criteria? The exception is in the public works chapter and no definition addresses it. We have a company in Oregon who wants to put in a bid but believes they cannot because of the criteria under RCW 39.02.350.

A: MRSC has advised that out-of-state contractors need to comply with RCW 39.04.350’s qualification requirements. I find nothing under the alternative procurement process of RCW 39.04.270 that would provide an exception to this noted requirement.

Q: Our agency owns a barn building that was damaged in a windstorm and is in danger of collapse or other type of failure. Can our agency declare an emergency to replace the existing building with a pole structure building?

A: There could be a basis for declaring an emergency for the purpose of demolishing the existing structure. It is advisable to thoroughly document the condition of the structure with photographs before having it demolished to support the decision.

With respect to the new building, I don’t see a basis for declaring an emergency for its construction. While the condition of the current building may constitute an emergency, once it is demolished, the emergency is over. Based on the estimated cost of the proposed new pole building, the agency could use its small work roster to contract for its construction.

Q: The city formally accepts all public works projects to establish the lien period. This is done through our city council at a regularly scheduled meeting. What is the RCW requirement to have formal acceptance done by the governing body? Can we simply have a process of formally accepting a project with a department director

signing an acceptance letter to then accept work and establish the lien period?

A: As you know, closing out a contract affects your obligations related to retainage as well as the lien period for bonds. MRSC has previously recommended that,

The contract documents should clarify that for the purposes of the retainage statute (RCW 60.28.011), “completion of all contract work” is the same as “date of final acceptance” in the performance and payment bond statute (RCW 39.08.010). This means that the trigger date for retainage release will be the same as the trigger date for filing claims.

But neither Chapter 60.28 nor 39.08 RCW specify whether the governing body is required to take that action or if it can be delegated to staff. In RCW 39.08.030, which discusses an action against a contractor on its bond, the statute says that a person cannot sue to collect on a contractor’s bond unless they do so:

...within thirty days from and after the completion of the contract with an acceptance of the work by the affirmative action of the board, council, commission, trustees, officer, or body acting for the state, county or municipality, or other public body, city, town or district... [Emphasis added]

MRSC has previously noted that the emphasized language indicates that, at least for purposes of that statute, council could delegate acceptance.

WAC 296-127-020(1) says that “‘acceptance date of the public works project’ referred to in RCW 39.12.065 is the date that the contract awarding agency formally accepts the completed public works project pursuant to state law.” But as you can see it does not say how the agency accepts the completed work.

Some cities have delegated granting final acceptance. We know of one city’s resolution that authorizes the mayor to grant final acceptance for certain contracts and appears to be tied to the mayor’s signature authority to enter into those contracts.

Q: When a city requests and acquires statement of qualifications for engineers, how many years must that city keep them on file?

A: If the RFQ is successful, the city should keep these records for six years after completion of purchase or fulfillment of contract, then destroy. If it is an unsuccessful RFQ, the record should be retained for four years after the end of the fiscal year, then destroyed. This retention guidance is contained at p. 110 in the records retention schedule applicable to local governments called Common Records (CORE) v.4.1 (Aug. 2020), available through the Records Management – Local Government page on the Washington State Secretary of State’s website.

Q: A large commercial space owned by our agency had a failing HVAC system. The work to replace the HVAC was split into two phases. The first phase replaced several units that were not functioning and venting. Because of the onset of winter weather and carbon monoxide emissions that posed a health hazard to employees, we passed an emergency resolution for Phase I and that phase was completed under the emergency exemption to competitive bidding. We are now looking to complete Phase II, which will cost more than \$500,000. The emergency conditions no longer exist. Under RCW 39.04.290(1)(a), our agency can utilize competitive bidding or an RFP process where bidders are required to provide final specifications and a bid price for the design, fabrication, and installation of building

engineering systems. We would like to select bidders based on qualifications, not necessarily price. We also want Phase I and Phase II to work cohesively. Is there a way that we could select based on qualifications or must we adhere to the lowest price?

A: Since the statute provides that a contract can be awarded using a competitive bidding process or request for proposals process, you would set the criteria. It is necessary to outline the specific criteria, what the contractor needs to provide to meet the criteria, and the evaluation process in your solicitation.

Also, I believe it is a good practice to reference in the document that the process of RCW 39.04.290 is being used for the solicitation for reference and transparency.

Your agency may not want to request only qualifications as award criteria in following this bidding alternative. The desire is to be sure the two phases are cohesive, but you should be cautious about writing criteria that may be interpreted as favoring the prior contractor. Alternately, including in the solicitation as much information about Phase I as would be deemed helpful is suggested, such as identifying who did the work and what brands of equipment were used, as well as stating the necessity for cohesiveness with the prior work. Contractors can then decide if they want to step into Phase II knowing what has been done and understanding your intentions, and your agency is not giving the appearance of trying to limit competition. At the same time, you would want to request pricing, giving it an appropriate measure of importance in the evaluation criteria, as the work is still public works, and you want to obtain the appropriate work at the best price possible. ■



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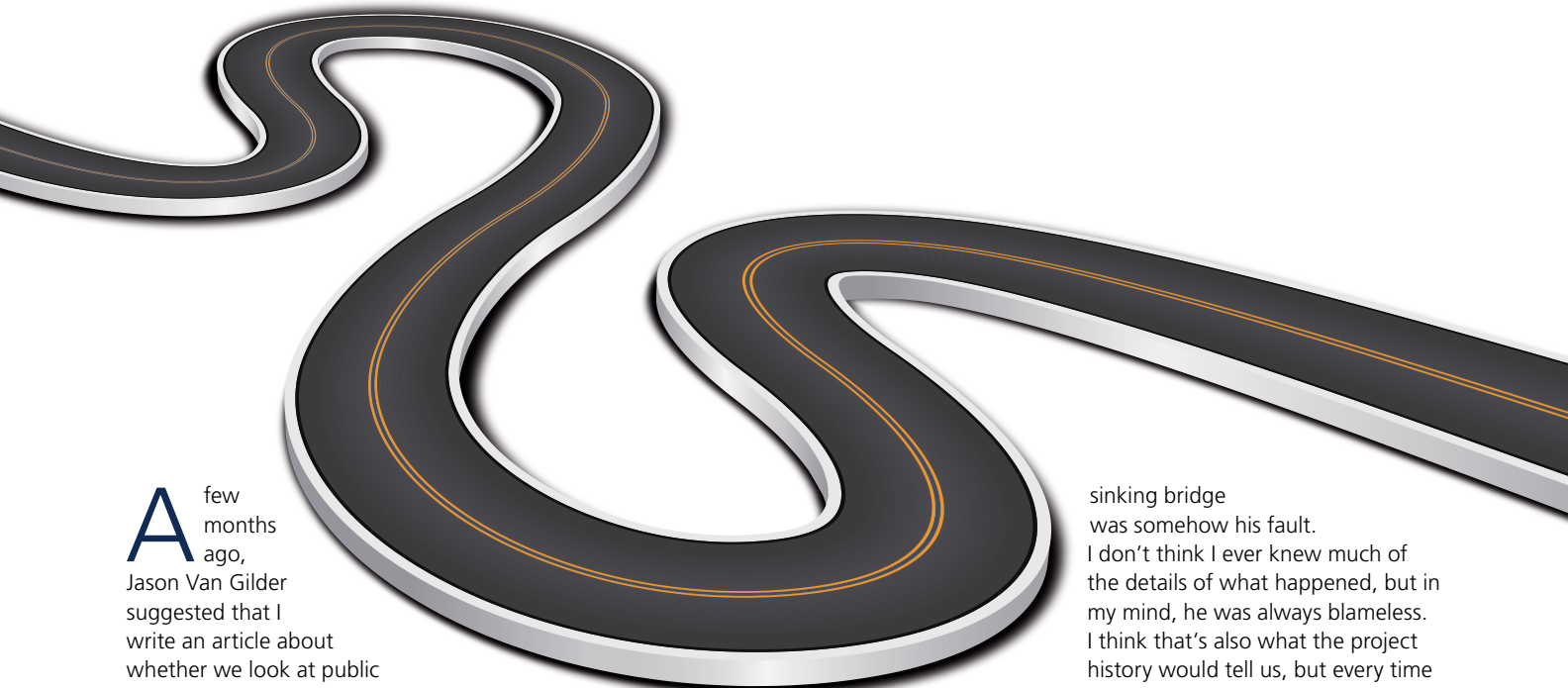
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The New **O**strowski's outlook 29



A few months ago, Jason Van Gilder suggested that I write an article about whether we look at public works projects differently when we associate specific people with them. Does that change as those people pass away or does it change when the projects themselves get replaced?

He was inspired by my telling of my small part in the design of Interstate 90 (I-90) around North Bend, and how he thinks of me whenever he passes through that corridor. I have a related experience with Interstate 405 (I-405). The guy I worked for on I-90 wasn't my favorite boss, but he was an excellent designer. He could visualize how a road would look and turn that into the profiles and cross sections needed to produce the project. He won an award for his design of part of I-405, which is why I think of him when I drive on any part of it, since I don't remember the specific part he designed.

I'm not even sure if the part he designed has since been expanded, but I always

assumed that if they did expand it, they probably messed up his beautiful design. I liked him even though I didn't think much of his supervisory skills. Therefore, the answer to one of Jason's questions can be found in conventional wisdom.

Conventional wisdom says that people who are liked make more sales, for example. So if you like someone, you're more likely to take their side in any debate. In this case, I had a favorable view of a project because I liked the designer and thought he was good at his designing job.

Jason asked if our opinions change if the person involved with the project passes away. I knew the guy who was the project engineer on the I-90 floating bridge project when part of it sank. I only knew him a little, but I thought he was a great guy. He's dead now, but even before he died, I never thought that the

sinking bridge was somehow his fault. I don't think I ever knew much of the details of what happened, but in my mind, he was always blameless. I think that's also what the project history would tell us, but every time I drive on that bridge, I think of him.

I think I should look into the history to find out more about it, but by the time I get to the other end of the bridge, I've already decided that I like my memories better than the information any detailed investigation would provide.

My memories of some people are associated with something that's not even there anymore. I always thought that the Seattle Kingdome was an example of the violation of a basic principle of public finance; primarily that you shouldn't be making payments on something that doesn't exist anymore. The repair to fix the ceiling tiles in the Kingdome brought the debt up to twice the original cost of constructing the whole building, and payments needed to be made even after the Kingdome had been torn down. I changed my mind about what a dumb decision the county made when I ran into a friend who was an executive with King

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County Metro. He told me why paying down the debt was the right thing to do, and while this didn't change my mind, because this information came from him I was willing to listen. For me, his memory is permanently linked to the Kingdome.

Even though it was torn down, the Kingdome didn't go away totally. For years after, there was still a sign on Interstate 5 (I-5) telling drivers how to get to it – or the spot where it used to be. I sent an email to the state about this sign, but the response I got from the public servant who answered it was essentially a sob story about how hard it was to do his job, which was why they hadn't gotten rid of the sign yet. I always thought they needed a

couple of kids with spray cans to cover up the misinformation, but that's not the way things are done. Where are the vandals when you need them?

There was also the ghost of the Kingdome lurking in a rest stop south of town in the form of a wooden sign with instructions on how to get to various attractions in the Seattle area. There were even phone numbers on the sign, with the old letter exchanges like MA2-3000. There was also a picture of the Kingdome as one of the things to see in Seattle. The sign was so old, however, that the picture used wasn't of the Kingdome itself but of a model of the Kingdome before it was built.

When I let the state know about my most recent find they said they'd take care of it. A few months later I stopped at that same rest stop to see if they'd updated the sign but it wasn't there anymore. Suddenly I was sorry I brought it up in the first place since I thought the sign was a historic curiosity and should have been displayed in some sort of museum. Maybe it is, but all I know is that it's gone from the rest stop.

My last two Kingdom stories aren't about any specific person that I dealt with, because one of the guys is really nice and I don't want him to be accused of bureaucratic thinking. I do, however, think of him when I pass the rest stop where the sign used to be.

There's another stretch of I-5 that makes me think of someone every time I drive it because of county park next to the road. That park is there thanks to the efforts of a woman who later became a county commissioner. She could be hard to deal with, so I wasn't surprised when she explained to me how an activist thinks, and she knew this because she was one. She reminded me that activists all have tunnel vision and are focused on their goal, which means your big picture arguments will fall on deaf ears. I knew she was right because I've even seen that tunnel vision in some project designers who push so hard to get their way that they alienate even their

supporters. I had just such a person work for me and I had to tell him he couldn't talk to the media. I told him why, which he didn't understand, and I said that was exactly why he couldn't talk to the media. That didn't work for him, so he quit. I didn't want him to quit. I just wanted him to stop pushing on the pull door.

By that time in my career, I had learned from a city manager that if someone threatens to quit, don't try to stop them because you'll pay for it later. The city manager was right, but I didn't get this advice soon enough. Instead, he gave it to me after I told him about an employee who threatened to quit and that I had talked the employee out of it. I thought the city manager would praise me, but he told me I shouldn't have done that. He was right. The guy worked there even after I left and was a consistent thorn in the side of management.

The tunnel-vision commissioner taught me more than just the psyche of an activist. She also gave me a vivid lesson in how to deal with elected officials. She was serving as one of three county commissioners when I was working with one her counterparts on an agreement with a sewer district. I mistakenly thought this commissioner was keeping the others informed about the agreement. I wasn't just mistaken, I was stupid. For him to inform the other two would have required an illegal meeting or a clever workaround, and I shouldn't have expected him to do that. Instead I should have been briefing the other commissioners individually.

When the staff and commissioners met with the sewer district, I found out that my tunnel-vision commissioner wanted more information about the agreement. She was unhappy because she didn't like having the reputation for holding things up when all she was doing was asking for the information that the staff should have provided her anyway. Unhappy was an understatement: When I walked past her the next day, she stopped me



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and gave me the worst chewing out I've ever gotten in my life. Even when I kept repeating that I had been wrong, she kept on reading me the riot act.

Right after that chance meeting I went to interview for the public works director position. There were several candidates, and I was the first interview, but I didn't make the cut. I've always thought that I put the encounter with the unhappy commissioner out of my mind for the interview, but I'm probably not an objective witness. Did I torpedo my chances subconsciously because I knew I'd be reporting directly to her and the other two commissioners? We'll never know for sure. I don't usually recommend chewing someone out as the best way to change behavior, but in this case, I learned my lesson so well that 40+ years later I'm still better for the experience.

I said she was hard to work for but that commissioner also asked good questions, which irritated some of the bureaucrats facing her because they didn't like having their judgment questioned. I had one of those encounters with her when we were reviewing a design for a drainage pond

that would require replacing a mile of drainpipe to solve a problem. She asked me why we didn't just use a pump. I told her that it would have to be a huge pump and it would cost too much. But her question made me rethink my approach, and instead, we came up with a solution needing only a small pump that didn't have to be used all the time. The details of the design are kind of elegant but not worth repeating here. The point is that she made me rethink my approach by asking good questions.

She wasn't the only elected official to straighten out my thinking. We had a councilmember in Vancouver named Rose Besserman who had been on the council forever. She once asked me and the Finance Director to explain why we were funding some sewer improvements the way we were because it didn't seem right to her. Again, we (the staff) were too close to the problem and eventually both realized how insightful she was. A reporter covering the work session wrote a straightforward article about how we were going to revise our proposal. I told the reporter that the article missed what really happened: The headline should have read, "Savvy

Councilmember exposes flaw in staff proposal and saves the citizens money."

I don't know if Jason expected me to take that much of a detour down memory lane when he suggested the original subject. In my experience, I think the answer to his question is that we do think more warmly of projects if we know someone involved in the project and like them.

But I also found that those projects made me think about other things that I learned along the way, things that had nothing directly to do with the project but started the chain-letter-thinking process. I've been lucky. Most of the experiences I remember made me learn something valuable. You should also be so lucky.

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Reader Responses

Brian Ziegler, P.E.

Great article John... even if you are guilty of "squirrel" distractions.

Like you, I've been fortunate to work with some amazing people – elected, appointed, or just plain "citizenized" into my life – over my 44-year career. So I'm not surprised when people reflect on their careers and highlight the people they worked with or the people they served as being among their fondest memories. I think the projects we worked on are just mental reminders of those lasting and loving relationships with coworkers, bosses, and teammates, even the "crazy" ones who just occupy our headspace and bring an occasional smile or two.

Thanks for piquing our aging recall muscles!



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Jason Van Gilder, P.E.

Thank you for your reflections on this question. It was exactly what I was hoping to hear. We should all be so fortunate to learn from others' experiences, and I appreciate you sharing your life lessons with us.

Bob Moorhead, P.E. – Retired

I tend to agree that having some sort of connection with a project often brings pleasant thoughts or memories to mind. For me, coming across a road or street project that was partially funded by one of my former state agency employers often brings a smile or a comment to be shared with those traveling with me. Of course, if I spot something that could have been done differently a decade or more ago, I usually keep quiet!

I also think about the dedicated public works professionals who are seldom, if ever, memorialized in the naming of projects. Growing up in New York City, there were many projects named after historical figures (George Washington, Alexander Hamilton, Verrazano-Narrows, and Henry Hudson Bridges; John F. Kennedy and LaGuardia Airports), but only a few pieces of infrastructure honoring the public works engineer (Holland Tunnel and Goethals Bridge, for example).

Perhaps it's for the best that we do not name projects after the engineers. At my first job out of college on the Clearwater National Forest in northern Idaho, the official forest map had a site noted as "Engineers Crime." It seems that an early road designer was so intent on keeping the road grade low that his design took the long way around a point rather than a much shorter route through a saddle in the ridge. In a later generation, the comment was if the map makers were going to identify "engineer crimes" then we'd have to add number to them. ▀



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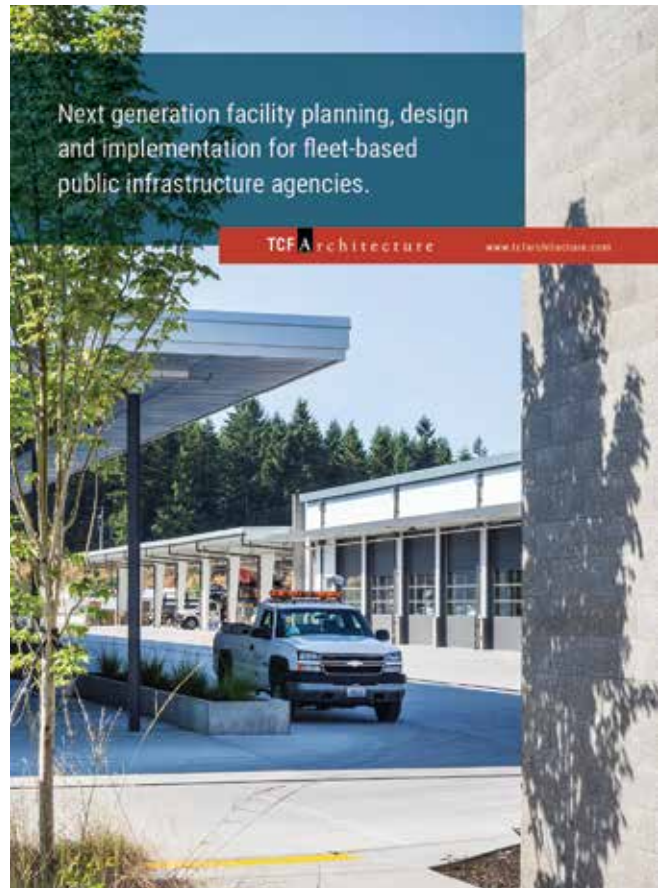
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