FALL 2023

WASHINGTON STATE PublicWorks

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF WASHINGTON PUBLIC WORKS PROFESSIONALS

Are We Digging in the Wrong Place? | West Seattle Streetcars: History

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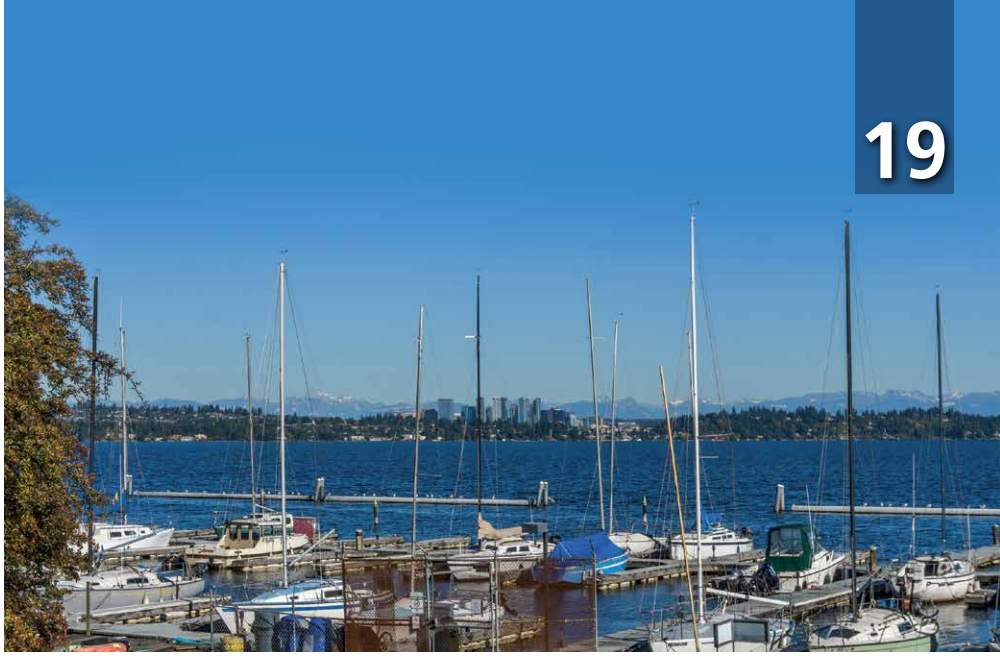

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Lauren Behm, *2023 Chapter President*

Imagining What Could Be

When was the last time you took a step back from your day-to-day work to think about the big picture of public works? Or to think idealistically about how to address the challenges we face every day? I just finished reading and reviewing this year's Jack Pittis Scholarship applications where we ask students, "What do you see as the challenges facing the public works profession over the next 5–10 years and how do we overcome these challenges?" Students usually identify global challenges like climate change, transportation mobility, diversity, water availability, or funding for infrastructure. And they offer solutions such as sustainable transportation systems, emerging technologies, reduced dependency on single-occupancy vehicles, artificial intelligence, and resiliency planning. Some people might read this and just see 'buzz words,' but I see young minds that are still free to imagine, to dream. They have not yet been sucked into the weight of the daily grind we all fall victim to in our careers.

I am reminded of a story Gitanjali Rao told us during her talk at the Spring Conference where in her STEM workshops with younger kids, she gives them a problem to solve, but doesn't limit their creative solutions with realism. She specifically mentioned a little girl who wanted to solve global warming by using hair dryers to blow the Earth further away from the sun, and as part of the workshop, Gitanjali encouraged the girl to pursue that idea without limiting her thinking. Her message to us as parents, mentors, and managers was to not squash innovation with a dose of realism. I think we can also learn from the young people in our lives to open our own minds again to idealistic possibilities.

In Design Thinking, part of the process is to ask yourself, "what if?" and to let those ideas flow before continuing with asking, "what works?" By allowing ourselves to imagine what could be, without constraint, we can find solutions that otherwise might have been overlooked. Young people seem to do this naturally and we should take time to truly listen to them. We heard this advice straight from the source when Gitanjali told us the path to engaging young people in our organizations was to give them a seat – and a voice – at the table.

"By allowing ourselves to imagine what could be, without constraint, we can find solutions that otherwise might have been overlooked."

We will continue our learning about workforce engagement and talent retention at the Fall Conference from our keynote speaker, Gregory Offner, who will be sharing lessons learned through his experience working in a piano bar that he has adapted for the business world. Wild but innovative idea, right? I am making it my goal for the rest of the year to be open to the big ideas, to channel the spirit of our scholarship applicants and emerging scientists, to not limit my thinking, and in that space, to connect more fully with the next generation of public works professionals. I hope you will join me.

Lauren Behm, MPA
APWA-WA President,
Landau Associates

Tacoma, WA Departments of Public Works & Environmental Services Achieve American Public Works Association Accreditation for the 3rd Time

The Tacoma Departments of Public Works & Environmental Services have recently received full accreditation by the American Public Works Association (APWA) for the third time. This accreditation formally verifies and recognizes that the agency is in full compliance with the recommended management practices set forth in APWA's *Public Works Management Practices Manual.*

Tacoma Departments of Public Works & Environmental Services were first awarded APWA Accreditation back in 2015. In addition to Tacoma, the accredited agencies in Washington include the counties of Kitsap, Pierce, and Thurston, and the cities of Bainbridge Island, Bellevue, Bothell, and Shoreline, and lastly, the Clark Regional Wastewater District. The City of Tacoma Public Works Department sits in the ranks of 161 current agencies in North America to be awarded APWA Accreditation designation.

The purpose of accreditation is to promote excellence in the operation and management of a public works agency, its programs, and employees. Accreditation is designed to assist the agency in continuous improvement of operations and management, and in providing a valid and objective evaluation of agency programs as a service to the public and the profession.

APWA's accreditation process includes:

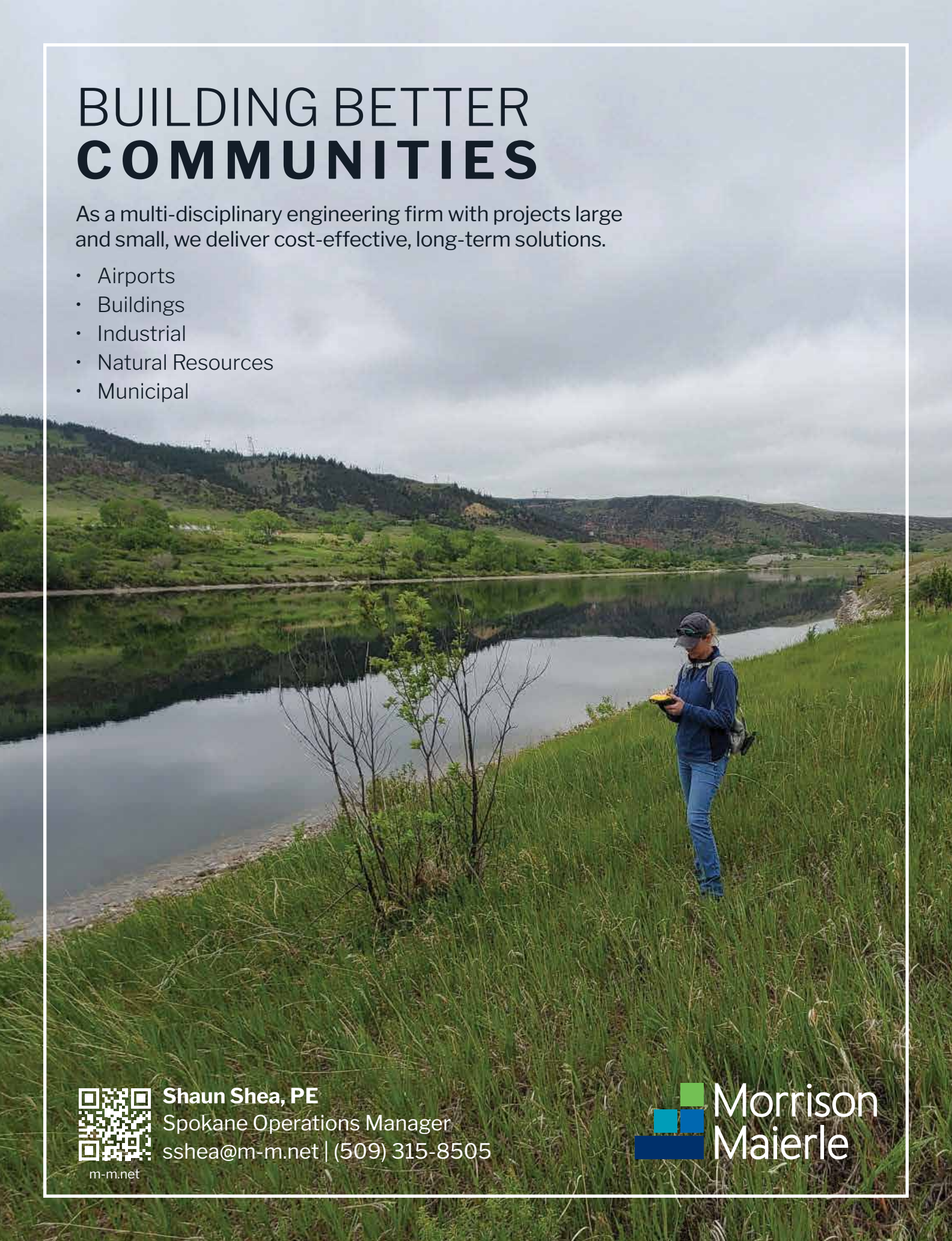
- **Self-Assessment:** Using the *Public Works Management Practices Manual* to perform an internal review of an agency's practices against the recommended practices.
- **Improvement:** After the agency has completed the self-assessment, the agency will work to bring all practices into an acceptable level of compliance with the recommended practices.
- **Evaluation:** The agency requests a site visit that consists of a review and evaluation of the agency to determine the level of compliance with all applicable practices.
- **Accreditation:** The Accreditation Council will review the site visit results and recommendation from the team, voting to award or deny accreditation.

Open to all governmental agencies with responsibilities for public works functions, initial accreditation from APWA is for a four-year period, during which time

semi-annual updates will be required to demonstrate continuing compliance. After that time, there is a re-accreditation process which builds on the original accreditation, encouraging continuous improvement and compliance with newly identified practices.

The Washington Chapter congratulates the City of Tacoma Departments of Public Works, Interim Director Josh Diekmann, and Environmental Services Director Mike Slevin on this achievement.

For more information about APWA Accreditation, please contact APWA Accreditation Manager, Nicole Shoemaker at *nshoemaker@apwa.net,* or 816-595-5294.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RISE UP!
REACH OUT!

CONNECT ★ MENTOR ★ GROW

WENATCHEE CONVENTION CENTER

OCTOBER 3 – 5

How can we do the best job maintaining and developing young talent once we've recruited them? Public Works is an amazing field that changes the physical communities that we serve, by providing resources and making them safer, cleaner, and more connected. However we can't serve our missions to their fullest if we don't recruit and educate our workforce (and ourselves). Join us this Fall for our keynote on how to mentor our new teammates as well as how to quickly learn and unlearn what we need to evolve. You have the power to connect, mentor, and grow the next generation of Public Works!

Rise up! Reach out!

Conference Highlights

» **Golf Tournament**
October 3
Three Lakes Golf Course

» **Two Days of Education**
October 4 - 5
Earn CE credits!

» **Maintenance Track**
October 4

» **Wednesday Night Social**
October 4, 7PM
Lip Sync and Costume Contests!

» **Keynote Presentation**
October 4, 12PM ★ Gregory Offner

» **ROADeo**
October 5

» **Night of Excellence Awards**
October 5, 7PM

» **Exhibit Hall**
More details: www.apwawaconf.com

Extracurricular activities are accurate as of August 1, 2023, but are subject to venue availability.

Gregory Offner

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 4TH

Tip Jar Culture

» *Globally recognized expert on performance*
» *Founder and CEO of the Global Performance Institute*
» *Award-winning international speaker*

Gregory Offner's Tip Jar Culture™ framework helps organizations around the world diminish disengagement while amplifying the performance of the people they employ. In addition to his international business and leadership experience, he holds advanced professional designations in the fields of Risk Management, Organizational Development, Lean/SixSigma, and Positive Psychology. Gregory is also an accomplished entertainer; having performed professionally on five continents and numerous countries as a solo artist, and dueling piano performer. He currently lives in Philadelphia with his wife Kim, their daughter Francelle, two dogs, and a cat that makes Garfield look like an athlete.

Learn more: www.apwawaconf.com

APWA Washington State Chapter

The Night of Excellence Awards

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 5TH

7:00PM: Dinner & Awards
followed by Urban Electra

APWA-WA is honoring the outsanding individuals and groups at the annual Night of Excellence Awards Banquet October 5th at the Wenatchee Convention Center. With entertainment provided by the electric string quartet Urban Electra, the event is sure to be memorable celebration. The Night of Excellence recognizes the outstanding contributions of chapter members to public works. Six individual awards and three group awards:

» *Outstanding Service Award*
» *Inclusion Advocate Award*
» *Chapter Pillar Award*
» *Roy Morse Award*
» *Young Leader Award*
» *The President's Award*
» *The Committee in Action Award*
» *Empowering Teams Award*
» *Our Heroes Wear Dirt Award*

Night of Excellence is a stand alone event at the conference. To attend please add Night of Excellence Awards Ceremony to your registration or purchase tickets separately.

SESSION PREVIEW

Special Session with Keynote Speaker

THE PERFORMER'S PROCESS

★ **Gregory Offner**
Founder and CEO
Global Performance Institute

The difficulty of getting someone 'ramped-up' and effective in a new position, organization, or industry is the chief complaint of leaders across every industry. Not only must we learn faster to stay competitive, the ability to quickly and effectively learn, unlearn, and relearn skills is today's most valuable competitive advantage. This session provides attendees with a deep understanding of the four-step framework, along with hands-on experience so that they leave empowered to share it with others and put it into practice within their own organizations. We've come far in the last 100 years, but the Performers Process will enable you to go so much farther in the next 100 days!

THE PRACTICAL ENGINEER: OUTSIDE YOUR COMFORT ZONE

★ **Jadene Kearney**
Business Manager, Construction Services Division
HNTB

To become the best at what you love doing, you need to reach outside your "comfort zone" to gain supporting knowledge and experience. Utilizing practical applications will keep your project in budget and improve constructability. This guidance will facilitate your opportunity to become an expert in your field.

WWW.APWAWACONF.COM ★ Oct. 3 - 5 ★ Wenatchee, WA

RISE UP!

SESSION PREVIEW

WSDOT ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION PROGRAMS DESIGN GUIDE

★ **Briana Weisgerber, P.E.**
Active Transportation Programs Engineer
WSDOT

The Safe Routes to School and Pedestrian / Bicyclist programs have helped make Washington a national leader in pedestrian and bicyclist safety and mobility. This fall, WSDOT will publish a design guide for these funding programs based on national best practices for designing safer and more comfortable walking and biking facilities.

BUILDING BETTER CONSTRUCTION MANAGERS

★ **Nicholas Soto, CAE**
Vice President, Professional Development
Construction Management Association of America

Workforce issues have plagued the construction industry for many years. An increased emphasis on infrastructure has organizations responding by focusing on recruiting and retaining qualified professionals for projects and programs. Find out how credentials can help your municipality gain momentum by ensuring they have qualified teams in place.

LEADERSHIP AT ALL LEVELS

★ **Erik Martin, PE**
Director of South Sound Services
Perteet Inc

Leadership tips and examples of leadership from front-line positions through to supervisor and beyond. Define the difference and benefits of being a mentor vs. being a coach. This presentation is geared towards front-line operation and maintenance personnel but is applicable to anyone interested in showing leadership in their current role.

CONNECT ★ MENTOR ★ GROW

REACH OUT!

SESSION PREVIEW

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE CONSIDERATIONS FOR SECURING FUNDING

★ **Sarah Sieloff**
Client Leader
Haley & Aldrich, Inc.

★ **Heather Good, LHG**
Associate Hydrogeologist
Haley & Aldrich, Inc.

There is more state and federal infrastructure funding available than ever before, but requirements are dynamic. Applications must not only address environmental justice (EJ) concerns, but direct 40% of project benefits to disadvantaged communities. Are you prepared? Can you effectively use available tools to craft a solid EJ argument?

CITY OF WENATCHEE ANAEROBIC DIGESTER PROJECT

★ **Jessica Shaw**
Deputy Public Works Director-Utilities
City of Wenatchee

The City of Wenatchee had planned to build a fourth anaerobic digester at the wastewater treatment plant since the 1990s.Today the digester is under construction and can be seen from the east entrance of the convention center. Come hear the story of Digester #4 from planning to construction.

WWW.APWAWACONF.COM ★ OCT. 3 - 5 ★ WENATCHEE, WA

RISE UP!

SESSION PREVIEW

WORK ORDER MANAGEMENT FOR OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE

★ **Kelsey Grover**
Stormwater Technician
City of Wenatchee

With a focus in NPDES Municipal Stormwater Permit compliance, this presentation focuses on the City of Wenatchee's use of a GIS-integrated work order system for operations and maintenance. The presentation will highlight asset management software used for illicit discharge detection and elimination, record keeping, and utility operations and maintenance.

GAINING PASSAGE: REALIZING FISH BARRIER REMOVAL

★ **Peter Wurden-Foster, PE**
Project Manager
Osborn Consulting

★ **Anna Vandermeer, EIT**
Project Engineer
Osborn Consulting

★ **Mike Zarecor, PE**
Civil Engineer
Osborn Consulting

The Salish Sea region is proactively prioritizing salmon, but where to start when it comes to removing fish barriers? Join Osborn Consulting as we take a deep dive into prioritizing fish passage structures for replacement. From analyzing barriers to implementing prioritization frameworks, we will share lessons learned.

CONNECT ★ MENTOR ★ GROW

REACH OUT!

SESSION PREVIEW

THE GREAT RETIREMENT – CRISIS AND OPPORTUNITY

★ **Dan McReynolds (facilitator)**
Senior Consultant
Parametrix

★ **Sonja Prothman**
Owner/CEO
Prothman Company

★ **Jay Drye**
Director of Local Programs
WSDOT

★ **Letticia Neal**
Transportation Improvement Section Manager
Pierce County Planning and Public Works

★ **Diane Lenius**
Public Works Director
City of Poulsbo

Seventy-five million Boomers are expected to retire by 2030. In Public Works agencies, many of these workers hold higher level positions, creating huge gaps in the workforce and threatening the ability to deliver vital services. This session provides a realistic view of the staffing challenges and opportunities facing public agencies.

AMERICAN PUBLIC WORKS ASSOCIATION
ROADEO
Washington State Chapter

With a full Maintenance track October 4, and the Equipment ROADeo October 5, this is the time to start planning to send your Maintenance Workers to the APWA WA Fall Conference in Wenatchee!

WWW.APWAWACONF.COM ★ OCT. 3 - 5 ★ WENATCHEE, WA

RISE UP!

Oldcastle Infrastructure™
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Pepin Creek Fish Passage

Back in March 2013, the U.S. District Court in Washington state ruled in favor of 21 Native American tribes and required the state to significantly increase the existing effort to remove all state-owned culverts that blocked salmon and steelhead migrations by 2030. This led to a state-wide rush to begin working on the targeted culverts; one in particular rose to the surface as timely due to its complexity: the Pepin Creek Fish Passage in Bellingham, Wash.

Challenge 1: These older and smaller existing structures were built to allow water to flow through, but not fish. It became clear that a larger culvert, thereby replicating a natural stream, would be the required and acceptable solution for hundreds of sites state-wide.

Challenge 2: Time constraints. The contractor was given three days to deliver and complete the complex three-culvert project, which included multiple products and structures, and 100% of the installation had to take place in a 76-hour period.

Challenge 3: The fish window. Complete installation must happen prior to the annual fish run in order to not upset the delicate timing of nature.

An aerial view of the installation for Pepin Creek Fish Passage in Bellingham, WA.

Granite Construction, Inc., was chosen as the contractor of record for the Pepin Creek Fish Passage, and they chose Oldcastle Infrastructure as their single-source, integrated solutions provider for the Pepin Creek Fish Passage.

"Oldcastle Infrastructure is a single-source company, meaning that the engineering team, the project leads, the plants, the capacity, and the experience – it's all under one roof," said Lance Chambers, Granite Construction.

Products selected for use were backed up by Oldcastle Infrastructure's single-source solution, so that project management, engineering design expertise, procurement, production, transportation dispatch, and overall capacity were all included under one easily accessible roof.

The main box culvert installation is complete, and outflow wing walls are being installed prior to backfill.

All went well and the project was completed on time and on budget. Water started flowing immediately and the road was returned to use in plenty of time.

While the project met all time, budget, and specification parameters of the enlarged structure, the ultimate benefit was much larger: the restoration of historic salmon and steelhead runs that had been interrupted for decades was the goal. The opportunity to recreate these natural migration patterns as part of a sustainable ecosystem is historically significant.

Projects like the Pepin Creek Fish Passage will only grow in number as the 2030 deadline approaches and Oldcastle Infrastructure is well-positioned as a single-source integrated solutions provider to partner for more of these in the future.

Explore Oldcastle Infrastructure's Fish Passage Solutions
oldcastleinfrastructure.com/fish-passage-solutions

The Ballard Locks, The Whaling Industry, and the Rise of Bellevue

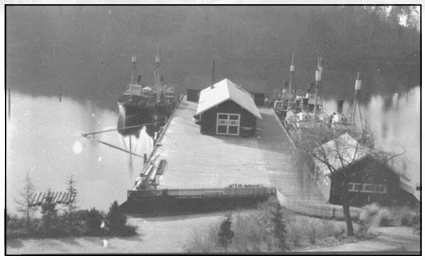
By Susann Babaei, PE, SCJ Alliance
History Committee Member

Large-scale infrastructure projects can have many interesting results. In the case of the Ballard Locks, the construction allowed one of the last commercial whaling fleets to winter in Lake Washington and contributed to the birth of the City of Bellevue, Washington.

The Hiram M. Chittenden Locks, aka the Ballard Locks, is a system of locks connecting the Puget Sound to Lake Washington. It carries more boat traffic than any other lock system in the U.S. and it profoundly shaped the areas around it (4). Discussion of building a navigable route between the Sound and the Lake began as early as 1854. The United States Navy endorsed the plan in 1867. In 1891 the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers began planning work, and the project was completed in 1917 (4).

Two years after the project was completed, the American Pacific Whaling Company moved from Gray's Harbor to Meydenbauer Bay in present day Bellevue. American Pacific processed up to 450 sperm, humpback, and finback whales a year. Their fleet included four ships: the *Aberdeen, Moran, Paterson,* and *Westport* (3). They were one of the last commercial whaling fleets in the country (1).

The fleet moved because freshwater is better for boats than salt water. According to Bill Lagen the grandson of William Shupp who brought the whaling fleet to Meydenbauer Bay the fleet moved because "[Meydenbauer Bay] was out in the country, and it was freshwater, and his boats would be moored in freshwater instead of salt. There's a tremendous difference between freshwater and saltwater on a steel hull." Freshwater is less corrosive and helped kill the barnacles on the ships (2). Whales were never brought to Bellevue. The company hunted in Alaska and the carcasses were processed at whaling stations near the hunting grounds. However, there was still a lot of work to be done in Bellevue.



Whaling vessel docked on Meydenbauer Bay 1925 Eastside Heritage Center

By the 1930s, American Pacific was the second largest employer on the east side of the Lake Washington. The ships wintered in the Bay and received maintenance every spring before they headed out again. The harpoons also required maintenance (2).

The market for whale oil began to dry out in the 1930s. World War II finally ended business. The government canceled the 1942 season as the Alaskan whaling grounds were considered too close to combat. The military eventually took over the fleet during the war and used Meydenbauer dock as a base. One of the boats was used as an icebreaker and the rest were used for patrol. After the war the whaling dock was converted into the Meydenbauer Bay Marina, and in 1997 the family sold the land and the marina to the City of Bellevue (2).

After the war, the loss of the whaling fleet hurt the economy of Bellevue. However, it made a comeback due to another piece of public works infrastructure, the I-90 floating bridge. The bridge opened on July 2, 1940.

Property of Museum of History & Industry, Seattle

Bellevue incorporated in 1953 and marketed itself as a bedroom community and a place to get away from the hustle and bustle of Seattle (1). Since then, Bellevue has become a bustling city with its own downtown. The Bay that once housed the whaling fleet is now a marina for pleasure boats with a small beach (1). New public works infrastructure continues to be built shaping the growth of the City.

Works cited:

1) Alicea, Simone. "Meydenbauer Bay Whaling Fleet Proves There are Old Things in Bellevue." NPR. KNKX, Seattle. 3 July 2017.
2) Banel, Felix. "Searching for the long-lost Bellevue whaling fleet." My Northwest 5 Oct. 2016.
3) "American Pacific Whaling Company" Wikipedia. 1 June 2023 *<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_Pacific_Whaling_Company>*
4) "Ballard Locks" Wikipedia. 1 June 2023 *<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ballard_Locks>*

Are We Digging IN THE WRONG PLACE?

By Brian Chandler, PE, PTOE, RSP2IB,
PMP, National Director for Transportation Safety, DKS Associates, Transportation Committee

Traffic safety professionals' reliance on reported crash history data as the primary data set to guide investments is not working, particularly for the historically disadvantaged. Incorporating new data sets from innovative transportation technologies can help improve safety and equity.

In *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, Indiana Jones and antagonist Rene Belloq were locked in battle, both searching for the elusive Ark of the Covenant. The French archeologist used partial information (one side of a head piece) to recreate the Staff of Ra, leading to the Ark's location. Without all the data (the medallion's other side), Belloq wasted resources digging in the wrong place.

Transportation safety professionals have largely failed to make critical investments where they are needed most, evidenced by the estimated 42,795 people who lost their lives on U.S. roadways in 2022. One reason is our reliance on incomplete and biased safety data sets that may lead us to erroneous conclusions. Our resulting investments can result in poor traffic safety performance, especially for Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC), low-income people, and people with disabilities, all of whom face higher risk of injury on our streets and roads.[1]

Most crash history data are collected through motor vehicle incident reports completed by law enforcement. It's not hard to understand how people living in underinvested and overburdened neighborhoods hesitate before reporting traffic crashes to police. This phenomenon has likely skewed crash history data away from low-income, BIPOC, and Tribal communities and inaccurately inflated crash history data of wealthier areas for decades. As a result, the current methods of data collection are more likely to suggest investments that further improve transportation safety in neighborhoods with adequate facilities.

The good news is that we can change this. By collecting larger and less-biased transportation data sets, and then combining this new data with more sophisticated analysis and other related demographic data, we can reduce traffic safety risks for the people living and working in underserved communities. We have an opportunity to target our transportation safety investments in the places where people are most likely to be impacted by traffic violence.

New data sets and analysis tools – including crowd-sourced data, connected vehicle outputs, and near-miss conflict analysis – are a wealth of information that we can apply to make our communities safer. To fully utilize what's available, engineers and planners need to learn where useful data are stored, how to collect and analyze these data sets, and how to apply the results to better predict crashes and invest in transportation projects that address historical inequities and save lives.

Video analytics tools identify conflict hot spots within intersections (Source: AMAG)

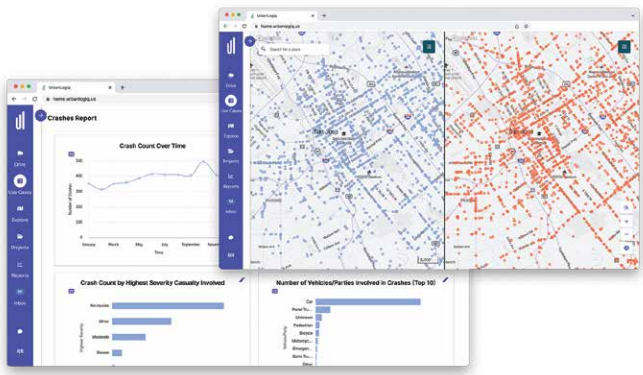
Vulnerable Road User safety risk is not equally distributed

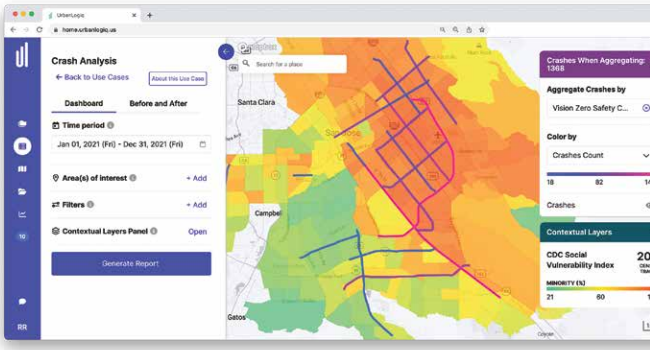
Here's how:

1. ***Leverage vehicles as data collectors.*** Every new car sold since 2017 is a ***connected vehicle,*** capable of continuously generating and uploading data about that car's performance to the cloud. Much of this data can be extracted, compiled, and analyzed in ways that would let us improve safety investment decisions. For example, information about rapid decelerations, lane changes, operating speeds, and near-miss conflicts with other road users can help us predict future crash locations.
2. ***Maximize video capabilities***. Video analytics can identify and analyze conflicts between road users at intersections, highway-rail grade crossings, school zones, and multi-use shared paths, feeding that information to traffic engineers who can make changes based on near-real-time activity. If these systems are deployed in an unbiased manner, analysis of video-collected conflicts should be more comprehensive and equitable than current methods.

3. *Incorporate demographic data*. By overlaying demographic data (available publicly by census tract and census block) like household income, race, and languages spoken at home with other data sets, safety analysts can generate a more complete and accurate picture of the safety conditions in individual neighborhoods.

4. *Combining the data in smart ways*. To turn these new data sets into useful information, safety professionals and system owners must visualize, analyze, and interpret the results. Engineers and planners can then make data-informed safety recommendations through storytelling to inform decision-makers, elected officials, and the public.





Map-based dashboards layer crash history, demographics, and other data for safety analysis (Source: UrbanLogiq)

Next generation data insights must lead to safety project investments

This new approach of combining traditional and non-traditional data, smartly applied to guide investments in effective solutions at the places where they are needed most, should be on the agenda of every local, state, and federal agency tasked with transportation safety in the coming months and years. We have an opportunity to address historic inequities and achieve the ambitious long-term goal of zero roadway fatalities and serious injuries.

[1] Disparities by Race or Ethnic Origin, National Safety Council Injury Facts, 2021.

MRSC Local Government Success

MRSC is a research nonprofit that offers local government staff free, one-on-one guidance with legal and policy consultants. Below are inquiry responses the MRSC Public Works Consultant. If you work for a city, county, or contracted special purpose district, Ask MRSC by calling 800-977-6553 or emailing mrsc@mrsc.org.

Handling Nuisances

MRSC answers questions about various types of nuisances in cities and counties.

Q: My question is about privately owned dangerous unfit buildings. Per RCW 35.80, does a city need to acquire an abatement warrant to enter a property to abate it if, after the process to deem it a nuisance and demolish it has gone through the city and to the courts and the property owner doesn't appeal or has exhausted thier appeals?

A: Ch. 35.80 RCW authorizes cities and counties to adopt ordinances to regulate and abate unfit dwellings, buildings, and structures. Under this statute, cities and counties can establish an improvement board or officer with powers to investigate potentially dangerous or unfit buildings. If a building is found to be unfit for human habitation or other use after investigation, notice and a public hearing, the board or officer may order the owner to repair, vacate, or demolish the building, subject to certain appeal rights.

Ch. 35.80A RCW allows a city to condemn blighted property, including buildings. Under this statute, cities and counties may acquire by condemnation buildings that meet any two of the following three conditions: (1) if a dwelling has not been occupied for a period of one year; (2) if the property constitutes a threat to the public health, safety, or welfare as determined by the executive authority of the city or his designee; and (3) if the dwelling has been associated with illegal drug activity in the last year**.**

RCW 35.80.030 authorizes an order directing an owner to remedy the unfit or unsafe conditions of a structure on the owner's property. There is also a provision for further action if an owner does not comply:

> If the owner or party in interest, following exhaustion of his or her rights to appeal, fails to comply with the final order to repair, alter, improve, vacate, close, remove, or demolish the dwelling, building, structure, or premises, the board or officer may direct or cause such dwelling, building, structure, or premises to be repaired, altered, improved, vacated, and closed, removed, or demolished.

So, the city would need a court order to enter private property and demolish a building that has been determined by an improvement board or code enforcement officer to be dangerous. MRSC believes an administrative warrant or abatement warrant is not sufficient to enter the property and destroy the building without the owner's consent or a court order. If a property owner refuses to remedy the problem identified in the code enforcement notice and order that the owner abate the nuisance, then your city attorney would be able to assist with further legal proceedings.

Q: Our city is considering updating our nuisance code and we are interested in seeing what other cities require property owners to do when there is graffiti on their structures. Could MRSC recommend ordinances or approaches from other cities?

A: MRSC maintains a Building and Property Nuisances webpage *(https://mrsc.org/explore-topics/legal/regulation/nuisances-regulation-and-abatement/building-nuisances)* and there are a handful of examples in the *Graffiti Control* section of the page. Our research librarian was able to find some additional approaches, which are shared below.

Yakima has a Graffiti Abatement Program as established in Sec 11.40.302.10 of the city's municipal code. Yakima property owners who receive a notice issued pursuant to Yakima Municipal Code Sec. 11.11.030 may request assistance from the city's graffiti abatement program to abate graffiti placed on their property; however, the program webpage also lists program restrictions that may lead a property owner to remove the graffiti themselves, such as the city does not guarantee matching paint.

Sequim Municipal Code Ch. 8.07 details the city's graffiti control measures, and this chapter was updated with Ordinance No. 2021-024 in 2021. Sequim requires the property owner be responsible for graffiti removal from their property within 15 days of receiving a notice from a code enforcement officer. If the city does not receive a response after notifying the owner, it will proceed with removal at the property owner's expense. This cost is enforceable as a lien again the property if the owner does not pay; however, city code provides that it may also choose to designate the graffiti removal a nuisance abatement and use city or private resources.

Toppenish Municipal Code Ch. 9.85 addresses graffiti abatement and the city's abatement program. The city gives property five days to remove graffiti after receiving an abatement notice. Property owners can request assistance from the abatement program, but the city will only paint over the graffiti and not an extended area around the graffiti, and do not guarantee matching paint. They also will not remove graffiti through sandblasting or other means.

West Richland Municipal Code Ch. 9.25 addresses graffiti nuisances. The property

owner is required to remove graffiti within three days of receiving a notice and the chapter lists what information must be included in the notice. If graffiti is not removed within three days, the property owner is subject to monetary penalties and costs, which is separate from the cost of the graffiti removal, and Sec. 9.25.090(D) details the costs to property owner if the city removes the graffiti.

Poulsbo Ordinance No. 2007-37 from 2007 requires removal of graffiti at property owner's expense within 15 days of receiving abatement notice, or if the graffiti is on removable personal property, it must be removed from public view within 14 hours. The ordinance includes a sample notice. If the property owner does not comply and the city abates graffiti, the owner must repay the city. Debt is enforceable as a lien on the property.

Snohomish Ordinance 2144 from 2008 gives the property owner 48 hours after placement of graffiti to remove it. If the property owner does not remove the graffiti, they have 48 hours after receipt of an abatement notice, unless weather or seasonal conditions require a longer deadline. If the city performs abatement, a property owner will be billed and must pay within 10 days. Costs include the value of all city staff and resources and payments the city may have made to third parties.

Q: The city is having problems with vandalism and graffiti at its public works yard. If it installs security cameras, is it required to post signs indicating the property is under video surveillance?

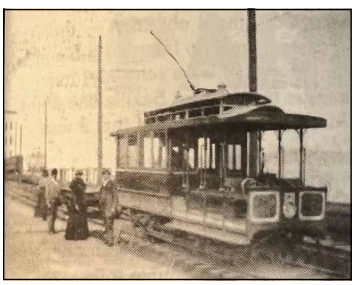
A: From a legal standpoint, signs are not required, assuming that the cameras record video only (and not audio). Signs can be a good idea if the purpose of the cameras is to deter crime, but different agencies handle the signage issue differently. Some post prominent signs to discourage crime, and others, especially if an investigation is at issue, do not want to call attention to the cameras. Most entities using security cameras do not record audio. Audio presents complications because there are circumstances under which it is illegal to audio record a person without their consent.

Another thing to remember is that security camera video recordings are public records for which there are retention requirements. If the city does decide to install a security camera, then any recordings that are created will be public records that will need to be retained for the appropriate retention period. For more information on retention, see DAN GS50-06B-18 Rev. 1 of the Local Government Common Records Retention Schedule (page 89).

West Seattle Streetcars: A History of Connections

By Susann Babaei, PE, SCJ Alliance
History Committee Member

The history of West Seattle and the history of its streetcar system are intrinsically tied. West Seattle developed into the community it is today because of the streetcars. From its origin in 1890 to its end in 1940, this mode of transportation shaped the lives of the people living in the community. The story of streetcars in West Seattle shows that public works engineering not only shapes the lives of its communities but is shaped by them as well.



Lafayette School
The Dinky, between 1907 and 1925.

Streetcars in West Seattle began in 1890. The West Seattle Land and Improvement Company developed the City of West Seattle, centered on the modern-day Admiral District. They ran the ferry between modern day Seacrest Park and downtown Seattle and built a cable car that ran from the current 47th and Admiral to the ferry. The cable car debuted on September 1, 1890, but was shut down in 1897 due to financial difficulties (West Side Story, 94–95).

When the private company shut down, the community needed another mode of public transportation. The city of West Seattle was incorporated in 1902 to meet this need and other amenities. The city was unable to find another private company to take over the streetcar. In 1904, residents voted to borrow $18,000 to build their own streetcar railway system, the first in the country to be run by a municipality. The streetcar ran along the original route from Seacrest Park to modern day California & College. In 1905 it was extended to the schoolhouse, modern day West Seattle High School (West Side Story, 97).

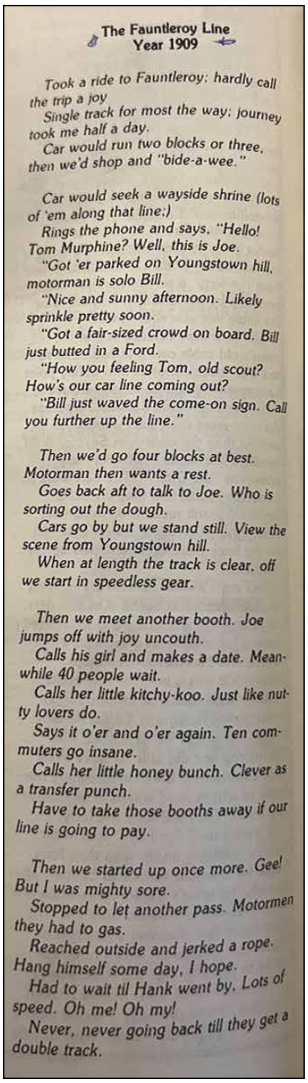
The purpose of the original streetcar was to transport commuters to and from the ferry, a service originally provided by horse drawn wagons. The cars were retrofitted cable cars from the original system built in 1890. They were converted with electric motors. The cars were much smaller than the trolleys in Seattle and earned the nickname "The Dinky" due to their size. (West Side Story, 97).

Warren Wing
The Junction, looking north on California Avenue, March 18, 1926. Paving of the intersection with brick had just been completed when this photgraph was taken.

In 1906 West Seattle sold the service to the Seattle Electric Company for $30,000. They introduced the first service across the Duwamish connecting downtown to Fauntleroy. In 1907 West Seattle voted 325 to 8 to become annexed by Seattle. Improved connections to downtown came the same year when the California Avenue line was extended to connect with the Fauntleroy line, forming a junction at Ninth (modern day Alaska) and California which came to be known as *the* Junction, a name the neighborhood still holds today (West Side Story, 97). The Junction is still a thriving hub of economic and cultural activity in modern West Seattle.

Service on the streetcar was slow. The lines ran once an hour and took an average time of 45 minutes to reach downtown. Many of the lines only had one track. According to a paper at the time "Patrons of the Seattle Electric Company are very loud in their criticism. The cars are simply crowded all the time, and many persons who come over here with the intention of looking for homesites return in disgust on account of the transportation system" (West Side Story, 98). A poem written in 1909 by Seattle P-I columnist Carlton Finchett described the frustration.

West Seattle Streetcars:



The Fauntleroy Line
Year 1909

Took a ride to Fauntleroy: hardly call the trip a joy
Single track for most the way: journey took me half a day.
Car would run two blocks or three, then we'd shop and "bide-a-wee."

Car would seek a wayside shrine (lots of 'em along that line;)
Rings the phone and says, "Hello! Tom Murphine? Well, this is Joe.
"Got 'er parked on Youngstown hill, motorman is solo Bill.
"Nice and sunny afternoon. Likely sprinkle pretty soon.
"Got a fair-sized crowd on board. Bill just butted in a Ford.
"How you feeling Tom, old scout? How's our car line coming out?
"Bill just waved the come-on sign. Call you further up the line."

Then we'd go four blocks at best. Motorman then wants a rest.
Goes back aft to talk to Joe. Who is sorting out the dough.
Cars go by but we stand still. View the scene from Youngstown hill.
When at length the track is clear, off we start in speedless gear.

Then we meet another booth. Joe jumps off with joy uncouth.
Calls his girl and makes a date. Meanwhile 40 people wait.
Calls her little kitchy-koo. Just like nutty lovers do.
Says it o'er and o'er again. Ten commuters go insane.
Calls her little honey bunch. Clever as a transfer punch.
Have to take those booths away if our line is going to pay.

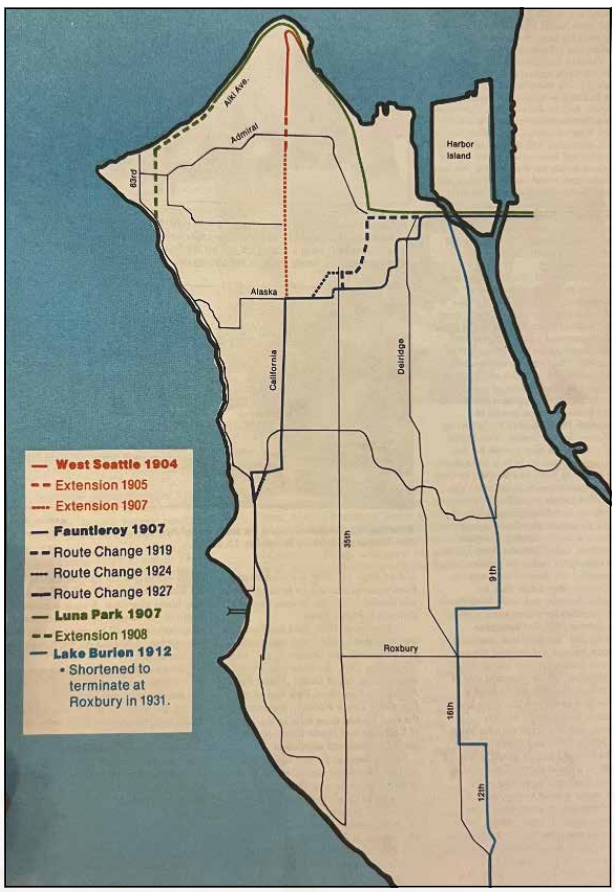
Then we started up once more. Gee! But I was mighty sore.
Stopped to let another pass. Motormen they had to gas.
Reached outside and jerked a rope. Hang himself some day, I hope.
Had to wait til Hank went by. Lots of speed. Oh me! Oh my!
Never, never going back till they get a double track.

Promising better service, the Seattle Municipal Railway took over service in 1919, once again serving West Seattle with municipally run streetcars (West Side Story, 106). The new providers improved service by constructing an elevated streetcar viaduct from the Spokane Street bridge to First Avenue and Washington Street downtown, following the same route as the recently torn down Alaska Way Viaduct. They also expanded service along Avalon Way and abandoned a former circuitous route. The streetcar system was so much improved that the ferry service was terminated on March 14, 1921 (West Side Story, 106). However, this meant that West Seattle commuters could only rely on the Spokane Street bridge which was in its fourth year of its projected 10-year service life. On April 24, 1922, the City Council authorized construction of a permanent bridge at Spokane Street. Before this all the crossings had occurred on temporary trestles. This permanent structure was named Bridge No. 1 and was a double leaf, trunnion bascule. The permanent structure would carry cars and the streetcars would continue on the wooden trestle (West Side Story, 106).

The wooden trestle carrying the streetcars was condemned as an obstruction to river traffic by the War Department in 1927. The War Department granted an 18-month extension, but in January 1928, the Seattle Engineering Department inspectors discovered that the piling was honey-combed by piling worms and on Friday the 13th the Mayor ordered the bridge closed as it was determined that the bridge could collapse at any moment. Acting quickly, the council approved plans for a second bascule bridge identical to and immediately south of the first. An interim "shoo-fly" was constructed to carry the streetcars over Bridge No. 1 while No. 2 was under construction (West Side Story, 111). When the second bridge opened in 1930, they were both used by cars with streetcars using the far-left lane of each bridge (West Side Story, 112).

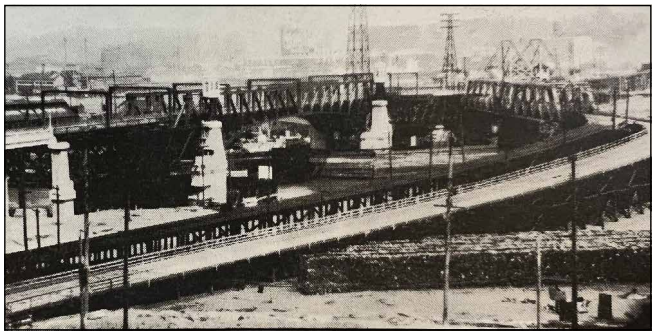
The 1930s signaled the beginning of the end for the streetcar system. An increase in cars and buses ended service to Burien in 1931, and a landslide in 1933 took out a section of track opposite Michigan Street. Additional paved roads and bridges were built in West Seattle using Public Works Administration and state gas tax funds, including a new bridge over the Schmitz Park Ravine on Admiral Way built in 1937 that was hailed as the longest single-span rigid frame bridge in the nation (West Side Story, 112–113). On January 8, 1937, West Seattle was the scene of the worst streetcar accident in Seattle's history. The Avalon Way line car lost its brakes and sped out of control. It jumped the tracks and flipped onto its side. Three passengers were killed and 59 were injured (West Side Story, 112).

The streetcars continued to lose money and in May 1940 the city began replacing the system with buses. The last car to operate in West Seattle was the Alki car which made its final run on November 16, ending a 50-year era. Today, West Seattle residents continue to rely on buses for their public transportation needs as well as the King County Water Taxi, which transports residents in the same way as the original ferry line. Planning to bring passenger rail back to West Seattle is now in motion in the form of light rail from Sound Transit expected 2037–2039. This would bring passenger rail back to the community after an almost one-hundred-year absence.



S.D. Peterson
Electric streetcar lines of the West Side. The network began with the city of West Seattle's municipally owned system in December 1904 and ended with the last run of the Alki Point line on Nov. 16, 1940.

A History of Connections



Paul Dorpat
Recently completed Spokane Street Bascule Bridge No. 1 (left) and wooden swing bridge, looking east, 1924.

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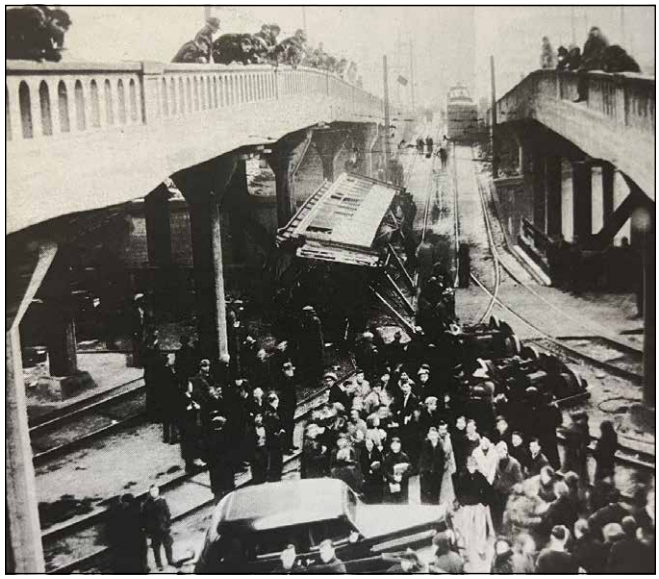

Museum of History and Industry

The New Ostrowski's Outlook 38

Learning from Mistakes with Elected Officials

Could cell phones have saved Custer? The telephone was invented in 1876, the same year as Custer's Last Stand. Could Custer have benefited from improved communications? He probably could since that was one of his problems, but a bigger problem was his hubris. Even though the cell phone wouldn't become available for another 100 years, Custer really could have done better if he just had a better evaluation of his abilities.

Wilbur Wright was correct when he observed, "The man who wishes to keep at the problem long enough to really learn anything positively must not take dangerous risks. Carelessness and over confidence are usually more dangerous than deliberately accepted risks."

The difficulty lies in knowing the difference between an acceptable risk and a dangerous one. I have a couple of examples from my career that may illustrate this point.

Custer didn't get a chance to learn from his mistakes. However I've made a number of them over the years with elected officials that I want to share with you so that, maybe, we can all learn something. Those public works officials who spend the earlier part of their career working for professional engineers tend to be professional. They make well-reasoned recommendations and let the chips fall where they may. What I've discovered over my many years working in government is that there's more to it than just making recommendations.

It's all about relationships.

When I was an assistant public works director, I was negotiating a contract with a sewer district for sewage treatment. I worked closely with one of my three county commissioners on the project and though he had a pretty good idea of what I was up to, he didn't really know the details. When we drove together to the county commission meeting at which my proposal would be reviewed, he pointed out that my approach, went a little too far and wouldn't work. He told me that I'd probably have to ask for more time to revise the agreement and essentially start over.

Later, at the meeting with all three county commissioners, I had to explain that I would not be presenting my proposal because it needed some more work before it could be discussed. This took another commissioner by surprise because they were not aware of the discussions I had been having with the first commissioner. I was relatively young at this time and should have remembered that if all three commissioners (or even two of three) met and discussed public business, it constituted a county commission meeting by law, a meeting that should be open to the public. I should have known that my commissioner wouldn't have discussed my proposal with any of the other commissioners ahead of this particular meeting.

Unfortunately, one of the commissioners had a reputation for holding up the show and I had put them in a very awkward position. This commissioner had some questions about what my team was doing and why we had to delay action that I really couldn't answer. As a result, it looked more like it was the commissioner's problem than mine.

The next day, as I was walking up the stairs in the county courthouse, I met the same commissioner. They proceeded to read me the riot act for putting an elected official in such an awkward position during a public meeting. All I could do was agree and apologize but the commissioner was still really angry and wouldn't let up on me. What I haven't mentioned is that I was on my way to interview for the position of head of the public works department, which would have resulted in me reporting

directly to the county commission. I've always thought that I put that negative interaction with the commissioner out of my mind and went on with the interview without thinking about what had just happened. Regardless, I didn't make the cut after that interview.

I was in my mid-30s at the time but I thought that I learned something useful from that experience that would help me throughout my career. However, that doesn't mean that I still didn't have too much confidence at times.

Years later, when I was just about to retire, I was the interim executive director at C-TRAN, the regional bus company in Clark County. C-TRAN was holding interviews for the executive director position and I had put together a group of employees to interview and evaluate the applicants. The group would then provide feedback to the C-TRAN Board of Directors.

I wanted one of our panelists to represent the local transit union, so there was a union representative on the panel. I figured we were covered with that, but the union president had assumed that he would be the representative. Except, I was not getting along with the union president at that time and didn't trust or want him on the panel, so I told him he wasn't on it.

On the morning of the interviews, the union president showed up anyway, and so I told him to go home. He immediately called some elected officials and complained. He also threatened to disband the panel by telling other participants not to participate. The chair of the C-TRAN Board now was in the awkward position of choosing between me and the transit union. Fortunately she worked out a deal where the union president sat in on the public interviews and provided feedback directly to the board afterwards, but he did not participate on the panel I had pulled together. Other panel members thanked me for resolving the problem, but I had to tell them that the board chair had arranged the solution.

I really didn't want to let the union president get away with being a jerk, so I felt I had to do what I did. Plus I was on my way to retirement and felt I could have all the hubris I wanted. It made me and the department managers feel good, but that's about as far as it went. So, after all these years, I may have learned a lesson about dealing with elected officials, but I wasn't always applying it.

I have another example of when I've broken one of my rules for dealing with elected officials. When I was the Vancouver public works director, food trucks were beginning to appear in the city, and we were having to issue permits for siting these.

I had one applicant who had been on private property but couldn't stay there any longer. This person applied to operate in a spot that was very close to an existing food stand and a grocery store that served lunch. I gave the applicant a temporary permit, with the hopes that it would give the owner enough time to find a better location, but the grocery store owner didn't like this. He called me almost every day and asked when I was going to get the food truck to move because it unfair competition. He reasoned that food trucks didn't require as much investment as he had put into his grocery store.

When I worked at Vancouver, I admired a poster that the city attorney had on his wall which said, "Too smart is dumb." In the case involving the food truck, I forgot about that poster, and came up with an idea that I thought couldn't fail: I would pull the food truck permit while also telling the owner to appeal this decision to the city council. I figured that the council would overturn my decision, put the food truck back in business, and everything would be just fine. This is where I made my mistake.

What I hadn't anticipated was that the grocery store owner would collect a group of people who also saw food trucks as unfair competitors. The group showed up at a city council meeting to argue their case. Though this was years before everybody and their brother had a food cart – there were just a few on the streets of Vancouver at that time, the food truck owner also managed to rally advocates to appear at meetings. When I finally had to give my report on the topic at a city council meeting, it was the only time in my entire career that I didn't recommend a course of action.

I figured since I was the one who was making the report and the one whose decision it had been that they were now considering to overturn or support, I shouldn't make a recommendation.

(You should always make a recommendation.)

Instead, the lack of a recommendation left the council hanging and the meeting went on for more time than the subject deserved. Eventually it was referred back to staff to do further work, which is always the best way out when things aren't going well. To solve the issue I met with representatives from the opposing groups and collectively we worked on some approaches for evaluating and approving street use permits for food trucks, but we didn't put it in writing at that time. I have since retired and hope someone in the city eventually put recommended policies in writing.

Here is my final example. Even earlier in my career – in the early days of environmental impact statements – I told an applicant that I wouldn't put him through the expense of preparing an impact statement because I was going to recommend denial anyway. The problem with that approach is that his project was approved, and he came back later to expand the site. At the site hearing for the expansion, one of the planning commissioners asked me why the project had been approved in the first place. I told the commissioner that the staff had recommended denial and the subject was dropped there without any real embarrassment for anyone.

A common feature of the last three examples is that I invented a new process to deal with a situation based only on my confidence that I could make the process work. I had done this routinely to solve problems, but it only works if overconfidence isn't a factor.

None of these mistakes was fatal for me, but I can't guarantee doing something similar would have a different result for you. It's best to just learn from my mistakes and make your own non-fatal mistakes. We still don't know if Custer would have done better had cell phones been available to him 100+ years ago, but we do know that his problem was less about communication and more about too much self-confidence. Custer thought he didn't need better communications; he could solve his problems on his own. He was wrong.

Remember that you can have your views printed with future articles by sending me an email at *ostrowj@pacifier.com* and I'll put you on the mailing list for advance copies of future New Outlooks. In case you thought you were on the list but haven't been getting advance copies, perhaps I don't have your current email address. Now would be a good time to let me know you still want to read and perhaps contribute to future articles.

Reader Responses

Jason Van Gilder, PE
Thank you, John! Great stories. And great insights that "too smart is dumb," "always make a recommendation to council," and "it's all about relationships." Having recently lived through mistakes very similar to the ones you described, I'm sure you, me, Wilbur Wright, and General Custer are all susceptible to the same human shortcomings, independent of whether we have cell phones. Thanks for trying to help us avoid them.

Brian J. Ziegler
Thank you for baring your soul for the rest of us to examine. In each of your examples, it appears to me that your heart was in the right place!

APWA Public Works Report Shows Benefit of Investing in American Communities

Source: *APWA.org*

Washington D.C. – A new research study by the nation's largest public works group finds American communities are benefiting with local, state, and federal investment in water, surface transportation and emergency management. Yet the American Public Works Association's examination says a greater economic benefit would be realized if funding more closely matched need.

"This important report shows just how essential the public works profession is in every community throughout the U.S.," said APWA CEO Scott D. Grayson, CAE. "For surface transportation, water, and emergency management, we now know the level of financial benefit of every dollar invested, and we know what the benefit could be if budgets at all levels of government came closer to actual need.

"Asset management technology is giving communities better insight about the health of their infrastructure, which is allowing them to schedule and fund maintenance projects and extend the life of roads, sewer systems and bridges. However, AM is also providing a clearer picture of what needs to be replaced now."

Every $1 invested in transportation returns $5 in economic benefits, and every $1 billion supports and creates about 50,000 jobs, the report found.

Every $1 billion of capital investment in public transportation more than doubles business sales ($2.6 billion) and sparks a 20% increase in GDP ($1.2 billion), while a $1 billion investment in operations yields a threefold increase in business sales and a near double increase in GDP.

However, there is an $81 billion funding gap in total water sector capital expenditures. As a result, 2.1 trillion gallons of drinking water worth $7.6 billion is lost due to aging infrastructure. Lower production volumes will also result in 636,000 lost jobs annually by 2039.

"Public works teams keep the water flowing but in some communities duct tape and bailing wire no longer work, as this research shows," APWA President Keith Pugh, PE, PWLF, said.

Should the U.S. increase its investment in water infrastructure by $109 billion a year until 2043, approximately 800,000 new jobs

would be created and the increased reliability in water services would help consumers avoid $7.7 billion in medical costs, $2.6 trillion in losses caused by service disruptions, and $1.4 trillion in lost income.

Grayson and Pugh acknowledge the significant strides being made to rebuild transportation and water infrastructure through the *Infrastructure Investment & Jobs Act*, IIJA.

"IIJA is the official acknowledgment our infrastructure needs more and better help," Pugh said. "APWA, as we always have, are working with local, state, and federal partners to ensure the historic act's success."

APWA's report, in conjunction with *National Journal*, found that 85% more is spent on disaster recovery than for resilience against future hazards. In financial terms, that is $46 billion/year on cleanup and repair and only $7 billion to make sure community infrastructure withstands the next blow from mother nature.

The Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG) program is the only source of federal funding provided directly to state and local governments for the functions which help build robust emergency management systems.

Grayson said it is an APWA policy priority to include more public works professionals at the federal table during the design and employment of emergency management programs.

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*Alden Labs, Holden, MA, Feb. 2020, 50-1000 micron PSD at 226.5 gpm.

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