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SUMMER 2026

Spring Conference Recap | Zero to CDL: Certified in 7 Days

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APWA
Washington State Chapter

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The Seattle Waterfront Main Corridor Project – National Project of the Year Winner.
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Jim Rioux, PMP, 2026 Chapter President

A Strong Chapter Equals a Busy Board

In the fall of 2025, I met with past president Scott Sawyer for coffee. We spoke briefly about my upcoming year as president, and Scott remarked that "…some years are just caretaker years." At the time, it seemed that 2026 might be one of those years. I'm pleased to say that has not been the case.

The first quarter of 2026 has already seen our Chapter launch two significant initiatives, introduce new educational opportunities, and host a highly successful spring conference. In addition, we are well-positioned to take additional initiatives and expand existing programs before the end of the year.

Spring Conference

Let's begin with the Spring Conference and the tremendous work of our Spring Conference Committee. While there is much to celebrate, two elements stood out to me: the powerful message from our keynote speaker, Dr. Bertice Berry, and a renewed focus on committees, the engine that drives our organization.

Dr. Berry's simple definition of belonging, "You be you; I'll be me, and together we will be something better," beautifully captures the potential we can unlock by building communities grounded in inclusion.

The renewed emphasis on committees was a priority for our Board of Directors. The Conference Committee, working with Charles Smith of Reid Middleton and our marketing consultant, LILT, developed accessible materials to help members learn about committee opportunities. They also hosted a Committee Fair in the main ballroom following Thursday's lunch. The event was a success and generated new ideas for future improvements. Expect this to become a regular feature of our spring conferences.

Strategic Plan Update

Each year, the Board of Directors reviews and adjusts the Chapter's strategic plan based on current needs and priorities. This year, however, a more comprehensive update was due.

We began that effort during our annual board retreat in January. Over two days, the Board developed draft vision and value statements, along with five strategic pillars that will guide our priorities and activities moving forward.

Under the leadership of Lauren Behm, a team of ten board members has been tasked with completing the plan. They have already refined and completed mission, vision, and value statements, which the full Board has approved, allowing the group to move into its next phase. Once finalized, the plan will be shared with committee chairs and then the full membership for feedback. The team remains on track to complete this work before year's end.

NWPWI Reboot

In January, Toby Rickman, who has led our Northwest Public Works Institute for the past four years, informed the Board that the program would benefit from a comprehensive overhaul, including updates to class materials, presentations, exercises, and speaker notes.

The Board approved initial scoping of this effort at its January meeting. The NWPWI advisory committee quickly developed a scope of work and engaged a consultant to lead a strategic planning effort and provide project management support for updating and enhancing course materials. This proposal was approved at a special board meeting in March.

This represents a meaningful investment in the Institute, one that will strengthen an already valuable educational resource for our members.

Beyond the Conferences: New Educational Opportunities

In recent years, the Board has explored ways to offer educational opportunities beyond our conferences, particularly options that are more accessible to those unable to attend multi-day events.

For the past two years, we have incorporated site tours into our June board meetings, typically held in eastern Washington. In February, Chapter Vice President Caroline Barlow expanded on this idea by adding a four-hour training session to the Committee Summit agenda. As I write this message, she is planning a similar training event for our summer meeting in Everett, marking another important step toward broadening our educational offerings.

What's Next?

There is still much ahead for 2026. The Board is currently considering several new initiatives, including expanding our CDL Scholarship, partnering with the State Emergency Management Council to advance legislation recognizing public works staff as first responders, and continuing a pilot program to provide on-site CDL training for jurisdictions with employees in need of certification.

A Final Thought

The final event of each conference is our Chapter business meeting, where committee chairs and liaisons share brief updates on their work. As I closed the business meeting at the Spring Conference, I mentioned how remarkable it is to hear the breadth of work accomplished by our volunteer committees and Board.

I have often read presidential messages that describe the role as "humbling." Having now experienced it firsthand, I can say that this is absolutely true.

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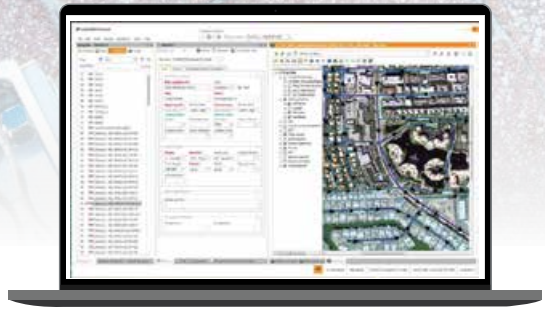

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New and Returning Members

January 29, 2026 through May 5, 2026

Jayden Abrams, Associate Engineer – Stormwater, City of Sammamish, WA
Robin Adolphsen, Public Works Director/ City Engineer
Steven Ashe, Project Engineer, DOWL
Dave Baisch, , City of Bellevue, WA – Utilities Dept.
Rakesh Bhatnagar, Engineer
Robert Blegen, Public Works Director, City of Spokane Valley
Craig Bozarth, City of Kelso, WA
Allen Brazington, Construction Maintenance Inspector, City of Spokane Valley
Sheila Brooks, Administrative Assistant, Public Works, City of Sammamish, WA
Dianna Bunting, City of Bellevue, WA – Utilities Dept.
Katie Carroz, Senior Associate, Shannon & Wilson, Inc.
William Cooper, HLA Engineering and Land Surveying, Inc.
Christina Curran, Deputy Director, City of Tacoma, WA
Rob English, City of Kirkland, WA
Matt Eyer, Senior Stormwater Program Manager, City of Sammamish, WA
Tristan Fields, Consulting Arborist & Landscape Architect
Vangie Ann Garcia, Public Works Director, City of Seatac, WA
Lewis Griffith, Deputy Director, City of Tacoma, WA
Lucy Hanley, Contract Specialist III, City of Port Angeles, WA
Don Hesse, Construction Maintenance Inspector, City of Spokane Valley
Eva Ho, PE, Civil Engineer, Otak
Prasanna Humagain, Transportatino Specialist Associate, Snohomish County, WA
Dan Lautzenheiser, Project Manager, DJ&A
Chris Lopez, Civil Engineer, City of Camas, WA
Garrick Luzzo, Maintenance, City of Spokane Valley
Toney Mathison, Construction Manager, PW Engineering, City of Tacoma, WA
Aaron Miller, Senior Drainage Engineer, City of Seattle, WA – Public Utilities
Tuan Nguyen, Project Manager
Miguel Perez, Mechanic 2 – Road Dept., Skamania County, WA
Rick Powell, Geotechnical Engineer
Travis Rakestraw, Streets Stormwater Lead, City of Walla Walla, WA
Bryan Rakestraw, Streets Traffic Lead, City of Walla Walla, WA
Ryan Richardson, Solution Engineer, ESRI
Kate Roche-Sudar, Corporate Librarian, Shannon & Wilson, Inc.
Taylor Russell, Project Engineer
Neal Sartain, Construction Manager, PW Engineering, City of Tacoma, WA
Joseph Schmidt, Associate Geotechnical Engineer
Nolan Sijer, Project Engineer, GFT Infrastructure (Pennsylvania)
Michael Slack, Solid Waste & Recycling Manager, City of Yakima, WA
Sean Steichen, Senior Project Engineer, City of Maple Valley, WA
Dale Timmons, Senior Associate, Shannon & Wilson, Inc.
Briana Weisgerber, Active Transportation Programs Engineer, Washington State Department of Transportation
Rosalie Wessels, Community Engagement Coordinator & Drone Pilot, City of Kirkland, WA
Cameron Williamson, Engineer Tech II,
Lacey Jane Wolfe, Intergovernmental Policy Advisor, City of Bellevue, WA
Bradley Yaple, Engineering Technician, City of Wenatchee, WA
Marc Yarlott, Assistant Construction Program Manager, Clark Regional Wastewater District
Dominic Zaccardi, proHNS LLC

WA CHAPTER 2026 SPRING CONFERENCE BY THE NUMBERS RECAP

Board Meeting

On April 15–16, attendees gathered for the WA Chapter Spring Conference held at the Hilton Vancouver, Washington. Keynote Dr. Bertice Berry challenged attendees to tell our "public works story" as a way to improve the overall community through understanding and support for public works. Another high-profile guest included APWA National President Vic Bianes, who echoed Dr. Berry's call to be the active voice of public works in his lunch address on Thursday.

As part of the robust 41 educational sessions, Reid Middleton debuted "Build Quest," a first-of-its-kind AEC card game intended to introduce public works world to a wider audience. Part of the players' objectives was to obtain a wide variety of character cards representing different project roles, such as landscape architect or engineer, thereby building a project "dream team" to successfully complete a public works project.

The conference also offered many varied networking opportunities, including the Tuesday Night Welcome Social (hosted by Century West), the Wednesday Happy Hour hosted by the Emerging Professionals Committee (sponsored by RH2), and the Cribbage Tournament (sponsored by PRIZM). A new way of connecting was introduced after the Thursday lunch, the Committee Fair. Committees had staffed tables to allow interested committee members the opportunity to explore a sampling of our 29 active committees.

SCHOLARSHIP FUNDRAISING

This conference raised over **$5,500** for Chapter scholarships benefiting students going into public works-related fields. Contributing to this goal were golfers who raised half the total through golf registration fees, with the rest coming from the Scholarship Committee's fundraiser at the Wednesday Night Mardi Gras Social, lunch donations, exhibitor/sponsor donations, and attendees' donations at the time of registration. A huge thank you to everyone who donated.

BY THE NUMBERS

584 registrants
72 exhibitors
30 sponsors
41 breakout sessions
102 speakers
$5,500 raised for scholarships
11 Chapter Project of the Year Winners (3 national winners)
75 golfers
1 exhibitor contest winner, ESM
2 costume contest winners – Kim Klinkers (individual), Reid Middleton (group)

GOLF WINNERS

Riverside Golf & Country Club, Portland, OR

- **75 golfers**, $1037 raised for the scholarship program
- **1st Place** with score of 63: Brian Blevins, Allen Hendy, Leslie Finnigan, Seth Hemelstrand
- **2nd Place** with a score of 66*: Cheyenne Covington, Donald Nelson, Sean Oroho, Joshua Schenewerk (*won tie breaker using USGA scoring method)
- **3rd Place** with a score of 66: Dennis Hurt, Michael Gillette, Taylor Liserre, Dom Liserre
- **Longest Drive:** Joe Donegan (men), Miranda Bass (women)
- **Closest to the Pin:** Shaun Stauffer (men), Laurie Thomsen (women)

RECAP

BUILDING COMMUNITIES OF BELONGING
2026 SPRING CONFERENCE
APRIL 15-16 | VANCOUVER WA

Emerging Professionals Happy Hour

POY Hosts Paula Welly, Ellen Tiedemann & Adib Altallal

Best Individual Costume – Kim Klinkers

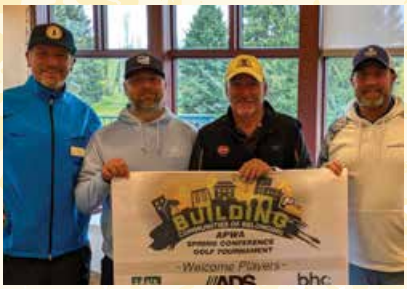
Build Quest Card Game

Keynote Speaker Dr. Bertice Berry

Best Group Costume – Reid Middleton

Nat'l. President Vic Bianes / Cribbage Tournament

1st Timers Breakfast



Golf Tournament

Wednesday Social – Mike Clark & Peter DeBoldt

Jim Rioux at the Wednesday Lunch

Caricaturist at the Wednesday Social

Scholarship Fundraising

Palm Reader at the Wednesday Social

2026 Project of the Year Awards
Showcase 10 Amazing Projects

The American Public Works Association (APWA) Washington Chapter was proud to present the Project of the Year Awards to ten amazing projects. The winning organizations accepted their awards on Thursday, April 16, 2026, at the Hilton Vancouver in Vancouver, WA. These publicly owned projects show a high degree of excellence in construction, management, and administration. These awards honor the incredible teamwork between agencies, consultants, and contractors, and spotlight the creativity and dedication it takes to build stronger, more connected communities.

These projects exemplify the very best of public works – delivering innovative, resilient, and sustainable infrastructure that strengthens communities and enhances the quality of life for residents across Washington State.
–Kristina Nelson, APWA Washington Chapter Award Committee Chair

Organizations competed to earn APWA's 2026 Public Works Project of the Year Award in the categories of Sustainability, Disaster/Emergency, Environment, Structures, and Transportation. There is a separate category for Sustainability, sponsored by the Sustainability Committee and we congratulate the Monroe Ave NE Infiltration Facility on winning on both of their submittals: in the Sustainability category and in the Environment $5–$25 million category.

Chapter Award-Winning Projects

- Disaster/Emergency <$5M: Hylebos Bridge Fender Repair
- Environment <$5M: Swan Creek Channel Restoration
- Structures <$5M: Seattle Waterfront Restroom
- Transportation <$5M: Quincy Square on Fourth Street
- Environment – Small Agency $5M – <$25M: Marina Pump Station Improvements
- Transportation – Small Agency $5M – < $25M: 50th Avenue Roundabout and Pioneer Widening Project
- Environment $5M – <$25M: Monroe Ave NE Infiltration Facility
- Transportation $5M – <$25M: SE 1st Street Improvements Project
- Structure $25M – $75M: Seattle Waterfront Pier 58
- Transportation >$75M: Seattle Waterfront Main Corridor
- Sustainability: Monroe Ave NE Infiltration Facility

Three Washington projects also took home National Project of the Year Awards.

National Award-Winning Projects

- Disaster/Emergency <$5M: Hylebos Bridge Fender Repair
- Environment $5M – <$25M: Green Cove Creek Fish Barrier Removal
- Transportation >$75M: Seattle Waterfront Main Corridor

To view more photos of the award winners, visit: *https://washington.apwa.org/poy-award-winners.*

Emergency – Less than $5 Million NATIONAL WINNER!

Hylebos Bridge Fender Repair

Agency: City of Tacoma
Contractor: Quigg Brothers, Inc.
Consultant: KPFF

Following a commercial vessel collision that severely damaged the west protective fender system of the Hylebos Bridge in Tacoma, the City of Tacoma completed emergency stabilization and permanent repairs within an accelerated three-month timeline. The $2.3 million project replaced the damaged structure with a modern, environmentally friendly fender system designed to improve durability and vessel impact protection while maintaining active shipping traffic throughout construction. Coordinated permitting, rapid stakeholder collaboration, and innovative construction sequencing restored safe navigation and bridge operations while reinforcing the reliability of this critical transportation and maritime corridor serving the Hylebos Waterway. *Photos by Clara Dubow.*

Hylebos bridge open to shipping traffic.

Finished steel fender.

Removed wood piles.

Live ship traffic adjacent to work.

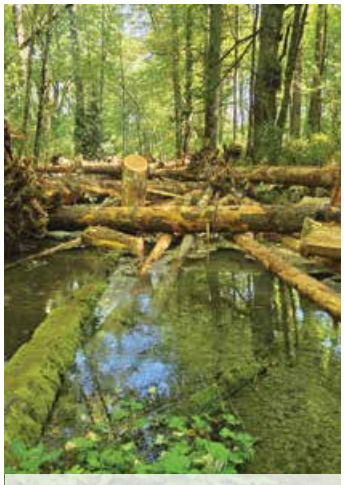
Impact displacement of original wood fender.

Environment – Less than $5 Million

Swan Creek Channel Restoration

Agency: Pierce County Planning and Public Works – Surface Water Management
Contractor: Active Construction Inc.
Consultant: Natural Systems Design + CGS

The Swan Creek Channel Restoration Project restored approximately 2.5 miles of stream habitat through a collaborative effort between Pierce County, the Puyallup Tribe of Indians, local park districts, and an experienced project team. Designed to stabilize the channel bed and banks while restoring natural sediment transport, the project introduced large wood structures to improve stream complexity, reduce erosion, and create habitat for salmon and macroinvertebrates. A 20-acre riparian planting effort further strengthened long-term ecological health. Completed in summer 2025, the project demonstrates innovative, cost-effective restoration practices that support water quality, habitat recovery, and resilient natural systems.
Photos by Natural Systems Design + CGS, and Pierce County.



Swan Creek Channel Restoration.

Log jam construction.

Columbia Vertol C107 helicopter.

Helicopter log delivery.

Salmon utilizing wood structures.

Engineered logjams - Site 1 downstream reach.

Structures – Less than $5 Million

Seattle Waterfront Restroom

Agency: City of Seattle, Office of the Waterfront & Civic Projects
Contractor: Bayley Construction
Consultant: Hoshide Wanzer Architects + Interiors

The Seattle Waterfront Restroom is a high-capacity, accessible public amenity that supports the city's transformative Waterfront Seattle redevelopment. Strategically located along the central promenade, the facility welcomes thousands of daily visitors with six all-gender stalls, touchless fixtures, integrated changing facilities, and concierge-supported operations that prioritize cleanliness and comfort. Designed with sustainability, universal accessibility, and visitor experience in mind, the restroom is carefully integrated into the surrounding waterfront landscape and pedestrian network. By addressing a critical community need for centralized restroom access, the project enhances inclusivity and strengthens Seattle's revitalized waterfront as a welcoming destination for all.
Photos by Heywood Chan YE-H Photography.

Waterfront Restroom stall tile array.

Waterfront Restroom and boardwalk at night.

Waterfront Restroom and landscaping at entrance.

Waterfront Restroom illuminated.

Transportation – Less than $5 Million

Quincy Square on Fourth Street

Agency: City of Bremerton
Contractor: Active Construction Inc.
Consultant: Consor North America, Inc.

Inspired by music legend Quincy Jones, Quincy Square transformed a long-overlooked block in downtown Bremerton into a vibrant pedestrian-oriented gathering space designed for concerts, markets, festivals, and community events. Developed through extensive public engagement, the project features an outdoor performance stage, decorative concrete piano keys, interpretive signage, flexible seating, and enhanced landscaping that reflects the city's creative identity. Sustainable infrastructure elements, including BioPods for stormwater treatment and 17 new shade trees, support long-term corridor resiliency and beautification. As part of Bremerton's broader downtown revitalization effort, Quincy Square strengthens walkability, economic activity, and community connections in the city center.
Photos by Consor.

A crew prepares the stage for a live performance.


Aerial view of active paving operations at the entrance to Quincy Square.


A mural bursting with color in honor of Quincy Jones, set against the calm backdrop of the Puget Sound.


Entrance to Quincy Square, marked by signature piano key concrete.

Environment, Small Agency – $5M – $25M

Marina Pump Station Improvements

Agency: City of Port Orchard
Contractor: Stellar J
Consultant: RH2 Engineering

The Port Orchard Marina Pump Station Improvement Project demonstrates excellence in resilient and environmentally responsible infrastructure delivery. Completed on time and within budget, the project addressed complex tidal conditions, historic fill soils, and uninterrupted sewer service requirements through careful planning and adaptive construction solutions. Climate-resilient features, elevated operational systems, energy-efficient equipment, and upgraded SCADA controls improve long-term reliability while protecting nearby Sinclair Inlet and surrounding marine ecosystems. Strong coordination among stakeholders, proactive public communication, and a commitment to minimizing disruptions allowed the project team to successfully deliver a modernized wastewater facility that strengthens community resilience and environmental stewardship.

The fully completed pump station showcases its elevated superstructure designed for climate resilience.

View of the Marina Pump Station construction site during active development.

Underground valve vault containing the essential piping and valves for flow control.

Close-up view of rebar cages and tied reinforcement ahead of concrete placement.

Transportation, Small Agency – $5M – $25M

50th Avenue Roundabout and Pioneer Widening Project

Agency: City of Ridgefield
Contractor: Active Construction, Inc.
Consultant: Harper Houf Peterson Righellis Inc. (HHPR)
Construction Manager: Consor North America, Inc.

The 50th Avenue Roundabout and Pioneer Widening Project transformed Ridgefield's primary east-west corridor into a modern, multimodal gateway capable of supporting rapid residential and commercial growth. The project widened Pioneer Street to four lanes, added a new roundabout, improved utility infrastructure, and enhanced pedestrian and bicycle connectivity throughout the corridor. Careful traffic management maintained access for businesses, schools, emergency responders, and residents during construction, even as major commercial developments opened nearby. Extensive public outreach, including frequent traffic updates and community engagement, helped build trust and transparency. Today, the corridor supports economic development, improved mobility, and Ridgefield's long-term vision for sustainable growth.
Photos by Consor and ACI.


Completed 50th Avenue roundabout with final pavement and striping.

Roadway paving during construction.


Crews setting precast sections for Culvert #2.


Full roadway closure to expedite construction.


Progress photo of the 50th Avenue Roundabout construction.


Completed landscaping on Pioneer Street.

Environment and Sustainability – $5M – $25M

Monroe Ave NE Infiltration Facility

Agency: City of Renton
Contractor: KLB Construction, Inc.
Consultant: Otak, Inc.

The City of Renton's Monroe Ave NE Infiltration Facility is the largest stormwater infiltration system of its kind in Washington State, providing flood reduction and enhanced water quality treatment for more than 260 acres in the Renton Highlands. Designed to fully infiltrate the 100-year storm event, the project protects businesses, transportation routes, emergency access, and the Cedar River aquifer while reducing pollutant discharge into local waterways. Innovative treatment systems, including a multi-stage "treatment train" approach, maximize long-term performance and environmental benefits. Completed ahead of schedule and under budget, the project represents a major investment in resilient, sustainable stormwater infrastructure. This high-performance project won in two categories – Environment $5–25M and Sustainability.
Photos by Travis Gallatin – Fueled Photography.

Aerial view of project site during installation of infiltration chambers, May 2024.

Transport of infiltration rock into pit via conveyor belt, February 2024.

Post-construction grass field over infiltration facility, January 2025.

Placement of infiltration gravel surrounding StormTech chambers, May 2024.

Transportation – $5M – $25M

SE 1st Street Improvements Project

Agency: City of Vancouver
Contractor: Colf Construction
Consultant: MacKay Sposito

The SE 1st Street Improvements Project transformed nearly a mile of rural roadway in Vancouver into a modern urban corridor designed to safely accommodate growing traffic demands and multimodal travel. The $14.8 million project widened the roadway, added separated bicycle facilities, ADA-compliant crossings, upgraded utilities, and incorporated low-impact stormwater infrastructure that infiltrates runoff on-site. Significant engineering challenges included lowering the roadway through a former gravel mine while relocating major utility systems. Guided by the City's Complete Streets policy, the project improves safety, connectivity, and access to future development while creating a sustainable gateway corridor that supports Southwest Washington's continued growth.

New separated pedestrian and bicycle facilities provide safe, ADA-compliant travel options and improve access.

The sundial functions as both public art and infrastructure, reflecting collaboration between public and private partners.

The finished roundabout improves traffic flow and safety.

The roundabout also reduces conflict points and enhances corridor identity.

Completed SE 1st Street corridor with widened travel lanes, separated bike facilities, and new street lighting for improved visibility.

Signalized intersection improvements enhance pedestrian safety, improve vehicle operations, and support access to adjacent developments.

Aerial view of the completed SE 184th Avenue roundabout and reconstructed SE 1st Street corridor.

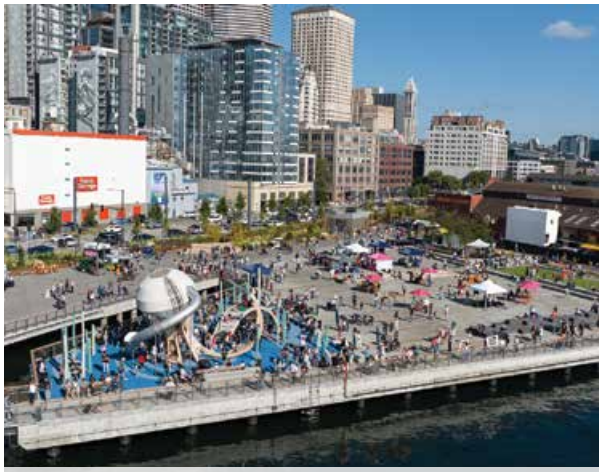
Aerial view of the project showing corridor integration with adjacent development.

Structures – $25M – $75M

Seattle Waterfront Pier 58

Agency: City of Seattle, Office of the Waterfront & Civic Projects
Contractor: Pacific Pile & Marine
Consultant: Jacobs

Pier 58 is a newly rebuilt public waterfront park that blends inclusive recreation, ecological restoration, and community-focused design into a vibrant gathering place along Seattle's central waterfront. Covering more than 47,000 square feet, the park features a marine-themed playground anchored by a 25-foot-tall jellyfish climbing structure, accessible play features, restored public art, flexible seating, and spaces for community events. Ecological improvements, including an opening in the pier deck that increases light penetration to aquatic habitat, support salmon migration and marine health. Designed through extensive public input, Pier 58 creates a welcoming destination that celebrates Seattle's waterfront identity while supporting long-term resilience and accessibility.
Photos by Time Rice, Earthscape, and City of Seattle.

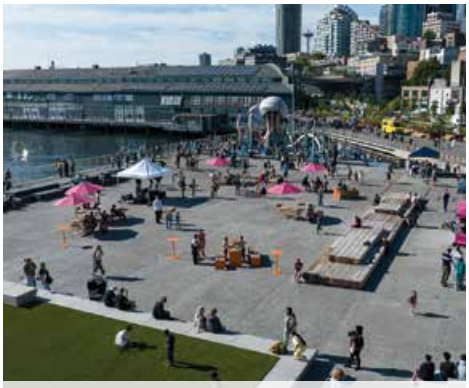


Aerial of Pier 58 grand opening looking south.

Pier 58 Fitzgerald Fountain at night.

Children playing on the Pier 58 lighted playstructure.

Pier 58 looking west at dusk.



Aerial of Pier 58 grand opening looking west.

Children enjoying the Pier 58 play structure during the grand opening.

Aerial of Pier 58 showing open water area adjacent to seawall looking south.

Transportation – Greater than $75M NATIONAL WINNER!

Seattle Waterfront Main Corridor

Agency: City of Seattle, Office of the Waterfront & Civic Projects
Contractor: Gary Merlino Construction
Consultant: Jacobs

The Seattle Waterfront Main Corridor Project transformed Seattle's central waterfront into a multimodal public destination that reconnects neighborhoods, improves mobility, and creates vibrant spaces for community life. Following removal of the Alaskan Way Viaduct, the project rebuilt Alaskan Way, Elliott Way, and connecting streets while adding a linear waterfront promenade, protected bike lanes, native landscaping, public art, and upgraded transit infrastructure. The revitalized corridor improves access to major destinations including Pike Place Market, Pioneer Square, Colman Dock, and the Seattle Aquarium. By combining transportation improvements, environmental enhancements, and year-round programming, the project has reestablished the waterfront as an active and inclusive civic space.
Photos by Caitlin Atkinson, City of Seattle, and Field Operations.


Waterfront Seattle Bike Path under Oscar Tuazon post and beam art installation.

Waterfront Promenade at Pier 56.


Waterfront Promenade, boardwalk, and benches.


Waterfront boardwalk and plantings near Pier 58.


Shaun Peterson art looking south.

Environment – $5M – $25M

Green Cove Creek Fish Barrier Removal

Agency: Thurston County
Contractor: Quigg Brothers, Inc.
Consultant: HDR

NATIONAL WINNER!

The Green Cove Creek Fish Barrier Removal Project replaced a failing culvert beneath Country Club Road with a new 150-foot bridge that restored natural stream processes and reopened critical salmon habitat in Thurston County. Completed ahead of schedule and under budget, the project removed decades-old roadway fill that had blocked fish passage and threatened nearby utilities and transportation infrastructure. The new bridge improves flood resilience, stream connectivity, pedestrian and bicycle safety, and long-term roadway reliability while allowing sediment and woody debris to move naturally through the channel. Strong regional collaboration helped deliver a project that successfully balances environmental restoration, transportation improvements, and community safety.

ZERO TO CDL: CERTIFIED IN 7 DAYS

By Nicholas Tucker, KBA, inc., ntucker@kbacm.com – Co-Chair, APWA Washington Mentorship Committee

THE PROBLEM

Local agencies across the state often need personnel with Commercial Driver's Licenses (CDLs) to serve in a wide variety of job functions, including operating heavy vehicles such as dump trucks, flatbed trucks, sewer pump trucks, and bucket trucks. These agencies have a choice: restrict the hiring pool to candidates who already have a CDL, or incur the cost of training those without a CDL but who otherwise have the skills and experience to perform well in the role.

These roles are often in areas like maintenance and operations, sanitation, and logistics, and are critical to the everyday functioning of public infrastructure. To meet hiring needs, many agencies choose to take on the training expenses.

However, for agencies in more remote areas, this decision may also mean sending personnel far away to get trained. Robert McAndrews, Public Works Director for the City of College Place, said: "Due to our location, the nearest training that was really feasible was in Pasco, 45 minutes to an hour away. So, to send people to the training, it's a five- or six-week ordeal, paying staff overtime, travel time, and for them to use vehicles."

This is on top of the expense for the training itself and the weeks of salaries paid to personnel who haven't yet begun working in their job functions – an expensive proposition for a small agency. Not to mention the burden on employees, who had to get to work at 5:00 am and didn't get home until 6:00 pm, and couldn't miss more than two days of the two-month course for any reason.

THE ON-DEMAND MOBILE SOLUTION

The alternative to this is mobile training services that send certified CDL trainers to agencies to lead classroom and hands-on instruction before administering the CDL test. There are many different companies offering these services, and the City of College Place hired the Kansas-based firm DLTS – Diversified Logistics Training Solutions, who trained two City employees in seven days.

According to McAndrews, the direct costs were roughly similar to what it cost to send employees to training in Pasco, but the indirect cost savings were much greater.

"It cost a few extra dollars, but if you really break down the cost to send staff away and the impacts of having them gone for that long, it was a night and day no-brainer – going from [five or six weeks] to seven days," said McAndrews.

Camron Clark, the City of College Place's Public Works Foreman, served as the main liaison between the City and DLTS. He was responsible for registering with the State of Washington as a CDL training location, which largely involved setting up a Secure Access Washington (SAW) portal and identifying the training location. Hands-on training requires a space large enough for trainees to maneuver the large vehicles safely, something that required the City to get creative.

"College Place, being a small city, we don't have a massive city-owned parking lot or something like that to use. We found a location out by our wastewater treatment plant that had an open area, but it was bumpy, so we had to grade it out to make a practice area. But it ended up working out great; there wasn't any traffic, there weren't any people walking around," Clark said.

Another advantage to training this way is that personnel can be trained with the vehicles they will actually use in their job functions, a dump truck with a 35-foot flatbed trailer in the case of College Place, rather than the semi-trucks commonly used in CDL schools designed largely for the trucking industry. According to Clark, this made the trainees more confident in their skills and ready to begin working in the field immediately, as they were already familiar with their equipment.

Both McAndrews and Clark said they would unquestionably use DLTS or a similar service for their CDL training needs in the future, and that the newly CDL-certified employees echoed their satisfaction with the training.

"They were great to work with and helped me figure out some of the ins and outs of setting up a CDL school. Easier than I expected, less paperwork, less red tape than I imagined," Clark said.

"When I heard about this, I was pretty skeptical and said, 'I don't know if this will work in Washington State.' I was pleased to work through it with them and realize that yes, this can work, and we were successful at it," said McAndrews. "So, I think it's important for others to realize that it's an option, and that there are more efficient ways to get the certifications your people need."

DESIGNING FOR EXTREME RAINFALL:

UPDATING INFRASTRUCTURE FOR WASHINGTON'S NEW NORMAL

By John Phillips, Director of Integrated Watershed Management, Parametrix

Across Washington, public works departments are confronting a clear shift in rainfall patterns. Storms are becoming more intense, more concentrated, and less predictable. Infrastructure systems – designed using historical rainfall records – are increasingly misaligned with current and future conditions. For cities and counties, this is translating into more frequent flooding, stressed stormwater systems, and rising costs to maintain service levels.

Experience from King County, supported by regional consulting practice and grounded in research from the University of Washington Climate Impacts Group (UW CIG), provides a roadmap for how public works agencies can respond to this new normal.

Understanding Washington's Changing Rainfall

The University of Washington Climate Impacts Group has led foundational research on future precipitation in the Puget Sound region. Their work shows that while total annual rainfall may increase only modestly, the intensity of rainfall events – especially short-duration storms – is projected to increase significantly. This shift is driven by a warming atmosphere that can hold more moisture, increasing the likelihood of intense precipitation events.

For public works professionals, the implication is clear: system performance is increasingly driven by peak intensity rather than total rainfall volume.

How Future Rainfall Was Projected

UW CIG used a multi-step modeling approach to develop future rainfall projections. First, global circulation models (GCMs) were used to simulate atmospheric conditions under different greenhouse gas emissions scenarios. These models represent a range of possible futures depending on how global emissions change over time.

Second, these global projections were downscaled using a regional climate model – the Weather Research and Forecasting (WRF) model – to better reflect local conditions in the Pacific Northwest. This step captures the influence of regional topography, coastal dynamics, and atmospheric rivers, which are critical drivers of precipitation in Washington.

Finally, the downscaled climate data were translated into usable engineering inputs by adjusting historical rain gauge data. This approach preserves local variability while scaling rainfall intensity to reflect future conditions. The result is a set of time series that can be used directly in hydrologic and hydraulic models for infrastructure planning.

Key findings from UW research indicate that while annual precipitation may increase by less than 10%, peak rainfall intensities for short-duration storms may increase substantially. These changes are most pronounced during winter months and in high-intensity events that drive flooding and infrastructure performance.

Impacts on Stormwater and Flooding

These changes in rainfall patterns have direct implications for stormwater and flood management systems.

First, stormwater facilities designed using historical rainfall data are increasingly undersized. Analyses in King County indicate that stormwater facilities may need to increase in size by 10% to more than 100% to accommodate future rainfall conditions.

Second, more intense storms lead to increased flooding and system stress. Public works departments are observing more frequent roadway flooding, culvert overtopping, and erosion in both natural and constructed channels. These impacts not only affect infrastructure but also disrupt transportation systems and public safety.

Third, higher intensity rainfall produces higher peak flows. Even modest increases in rainfall intensity can result in disproportionate increases in runoff due to the nonlinear nature of watershed response. This affects pipe sizing, conveyance capacity, and the overall reliability of drainage systems.

INFRASTRUCTURE SYSTEMS – DESIGNED USING HISTORICAL RAINFALL RECORDS – ARE INCREASINGLY MISALIGNED WITH CURRENT AND FUTURE CONDITIONS.

What This Means for Public Works

Public works departments must now plan for a future where infrastructure is exposed to conditions outside the historical record.

Design standards must evolve. Traditional design storms based on historical data are no longer sufficient. Agencies are beginning to incorporate climate-adjusted rainfall into their models and evaluate infrastructure performance under multiple future scenarios.

Systems must be both larger and more flexible. While upsizing infrastructure is one approach, many agencies are also considering adaptive designs that allow for future expansion or modification as conditions change.

Green and gray infrastructure must be integrated. Distributed stormwater solutions such as bioretention and infiltration can reduce peak flows and provide additional system resilience. However, their performance under changing rainfall patterns must be carefully evaluated.

Costs will increase. Larger facilities and expanded systems require greater capital investment. Analyses suggest that stormwater infrastructure costs may increase proportionally with facility size, potentially doubling in some cases depending on site conditions.

The Role of Public Works Leadership

Public works departments are uniquely positioned to lead climate adaptation efforts. Key actions include updating design manuals to incorporate climate-informed rainfall projections, prioritizing investments in critical infrastructure, enhancing maintenance practices, and coordinating across departments to address system-wide impacts.

Equally important is adopting scenario-based planning approaches. Given the uncertainty in climate projections, planning for a range of possible futures allows agencies to make informed, resilient decisions.

Moving Forward

The University of Washington's research makes one point clear: future rainfall will not resemble the past. More intense storms are already testing infrastructure systems, and these pressures will continue to grow.

Designing for extreme rainfall is no longer optional. By integrating climate science into planning, design, and operations, public works departments can build infrastructure systems that are resilient, adaptable, and capable of serving communities well into the future.

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About the Author

John Phillips is Director of Integrated Watershed Management at Parametrix, where he leads multidisciplinary teams addressing climate resilience, water resources, and watershed planning across the western United States. His work focuses on integrating science, engineering, and policy to develop practical solutions for complex environmental challenges.

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.

Questions Related to HR and Personnel

The following are some questions MRSC has received on topics related to human resources and personnel.

Q: How is holiday pay handled when a local government switches from a typical eight hour/day five-day workweek (8/5) to a 10 hour/day four-day (4/10) workweek? Does an employee receive 10 hours of pay for those holidays? And what if the holiday falls on an employee's day off?

A: It is a matter of local policy whether and how to provide holiday leave and pay to employees. As noted on the Washington State Department of Labor & Industries' (L&I) webpage, Holiday, Vacation & Bereavement Leave (*www.lni.wa.gov/workers-rights/leave/holiday-vacation-bereavement-leave):*

Washington State does not require employers to provide leave or pay for holidays, vacations, or bereavement. These benefits can be found in your employer policies or collective bargaining agreement. They are generally an agreement between an employer and employee. L&I does not enforce these agreements.

Assuming your agency's current holiday pay policies do not reflect the new work schedule, MRSC recommends that the agency amend its policies to reflect the 4/10 schedule as soon as practical.

There are few different policy approaches for holidays and 4/10 schedules, with the most common being to provide paid leave for eight hours on a holiday, with the 10-hour shift employee needing to use paid time off (PTO) or otherwise make-up for the two hours they would typically work. Here is a brief summary of some different approaches:

- **The "Top-Off" Requirement:** In this approach, the holiday benefit is fixed at eight hours. If an employee's scheduled shift is 10 hours, they must "top off" the remaining two hours using other leave types.
- **The "Full Shift" Model:** In this approach, employers provide holiday pay that matches the actual hours the employee would have worked (i.e., 10 hours).
- **The "In Lieu Of" or "Flex" Option:** This type of policy addresses what happens when a holiday falls on the 4/10 employee's day off. Some policies allow an employee to choose a different day off during the same workweek. Or, if the holiday falls on a Monday and that is the employee's day off, the following Tuesday is considered the "in lieu of" holiday.

You can likely find many examples of these types of approaches by searching for examples on MRSC's Personnel Policy Manuals webpage at *https://mrsc.org/explore-topics/personnel/policies/personnel-policies.* Search terms could include "alternative work schedule" or "alternative work period."

Of course, if this relates to union employees, check the collective bargaining agreement for relevant provisions, and this would also be a mandatory subject of bargaining.

Q: Our public works department would like to update its job descriptions to say that employees only need to have a valid driver's license rather than a Washington State driver's license. Is there any reason not to do this?

A: From a legal perspective, MRSC does not see any issues changing the requirement from a state driver's license to a valid driver's license in general. Your agency should, nevertheless, reach out to your risk pool or insurer to discuss this proposed change.

Also, for each position in the department, consider whether driving is an essential job function or if it is related to a legitimate business purpose. Under RCW 49.58.120, it is unlawful for an employer to require a valid driver's license as a condition of employment or to include in a job posting that an applicant must have one, unless it is an *essential job function or related to a legitimate business purpose.*

MRSC also recommends that you discuss this matter with your agency attorney, who will be in the best position to advise the department further.

Q: Our agency has an employee that is interested in joining the National Guard and will need to take six months off for training. What are our obligations to this employee during this leave period (e.g., pay, health insurance, continued employment)?

A: Here are your agency's obligations:

- The employee is entitled to 21 days of military leave, which is paid leave (RCW 38.40.060). The employee can then elect

to use accrued vacation or other available time off during the remainder of the military leave. Your local policy may provide more guidance on this topic.

- Assuming this is a full-time employee, the employee is entitled to return to their job at the agency after the six-month training concludes. See Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA, *www.dol.gov/agencies/vets/programs/userra/aboutuserra*).
- Your local policies may differ, but the law does not require that the agency provide or pay for continued health care coverage during the term of military service. However, the federal law (USERRA) provides for COBRA-like benefit continuation for persons who are absent from work to serve. If a person's health plan coverage would terminate because of an absence due to uniformed service, the person may elect to continue the health plan coverage at their own expense. Individuals performing military duty of more than 30 days may elect to continue employer sponsored health care for up to 24 months; however, the employee may be required to pay up to 102% of the full premium.

For more information and additional statutory citations, see MRSC's Military Leave and Reemployment Rights webpage at *https://mrsc.org/explore-topics/personnel/leave/military-leave*.

Q: For those employees using agency vehicles or their own vehicles for agency purposes, how often should the employee driving record be reviewed?

A: MRSC is aware of no legal authority establishing a set schedule for reviews of employee driving record by local government employers. Instead, these matters are usually determined by the agency's employment policies, and these policies can vary widely based on risk.

Some employers request and review employee driving records every three years, in tandem with RCW 46.52.130(2)(b)(ii), which allows employers to release a three-year employee driving record abstract to their insurance carriers. The same RCW also says that the Washington State Department of Licensing (DOL) can offer employers periodic employee driving record reviews and updates for a fee by contract. See RCW 46.52.130(3)(b)(i).

Since many things can affect an agency's risk in this area (including the number of driving employees, their driving records, how often and far they drive, the type of vehicle used, who owns and maintains the vehicle, and other factors), an agency's policies and practices regarding reviews of employee driving records might also be different depending on the employee and their day-to-day work responsibilities.

Given the many variable risk factors involved, the agency should consult both its attorney and its insurance carrier on this topic.

By the Construction Management Committee

SEATTLE WATERFRONT PROGRAM TRANSFORMING THE HEART OF THE CITY

The Seattle Waterfront Program (*www.seattle.gov/waterfront*) is a series of nine capital projects designed to revitalize Seattle's downtown waterfront. The transformative project recently won three 2026 Chapter Project of the Year awards, to join a previous 2025 win. Spanning from Pioneer Square to Belltown, it is enhancing public spaces and improving connectivity along Elliott Bay following the removal of the Alaskan Way Viaduct. The initiative, supported by community input and engagement, is part of a broader effort to create a "waterfront for all," balancing urban development with natural beauty. The Program will add over 20 acres of landscaped green space along the downtown waterfront and represents the largest public investment in Seattle since the 1962 World's Fair that brought the Space Needle to the city's skyline.

Managing a Successful Delivery

Brian Kittleson of HNTB serves as Construction Engineer for the transformative Seattle Waterfront Program, a once-in-a-generation initiative reconnecting the city to its waterfront. Over the past five years, he has helped lead the successful coordination and delivery of several major components of the program, including the Waterfront Main Corridor Project, the iconic Overlook Walk and the new Seattle Aquarium Ocean Pavilion, and the revitalized waterfront main corridor. Through a strong partnering approach, consistent communication, and coordinated field operations, the team successfully minimized schedule impacts and controlled costs while maintaining momentum across complex construction activities.

HNTB, alongside joint venture partner Jacobs as Waterfront Partners JV, has

partnered closely with the City of Seattle's Office of the Waterfront and Civic Projects to provide comprehensive construction management services. Their work has included pre-construction systems setup, contract administration for nine construction contracts, field engineering and inspection, project documentation, and contract close-out. The partnership builds on HNTB's previous involvement with the Alaskan Way/SR 99 Viaduct Replacement Program, which laid the groundwork for the Seattle Waterfront Program to move forward successfully.

The program's key projects include:

Alaskan Way and Elliott Way (2026 Project of the Year)

Alaskan Way is being rebuilt into a multi-modal corridor that caters to vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians. Elliott Way, which opened in 2023, created a new connection between the waterfront and Belltown and includes two vehicle lanes in each direction, sidewalks, and protected bike lanes. Known together as the Main Corridor, both projects will create connections to surrounding parks, businesses, and neighborhoods, encouraging economic activity and improved accessibility throughout Seattle's waterfront. Additionally, over 500 new street trees and green stormwater infrastructure will be incorporated to enhance sustainability.

Marion Street Pedestrian Bridge

The Marion Street Pedestrian Bridge is a connection serving thousands of ferry passengers traveling to and from Seattle's primary ferry terminal, Colman Dock. Completed in 2023, the bridge was widened to accommodate the large volume of commuters and modernized with ramp and elevator options to improve accessibility. The new bridge and the adjacent Alaskan Way roadway provide connection to over 10 million annual users.

Waterfront Park (2026 Project of the Year)

The Waterfront Park project, also known as Pier 58, creates a new pier structure within Elliot Bay that features public event space, a new aquatic-themed play structure,

landscaping, and water features. The design includes a promenade with family-friendly amenities, such as play areas, seating, and shaded areas and opened in 2025.

Union Street Pedestrian Bridge
The new Union Street Pedestrian Bridge was completed in 2022. The new structure includes the installation of a new elevator and staircase, integration of a public art fern structure and offers an improved direct connection from downtown to the central Waterfront area.

Pike-Pine Renaissance
Stretching nearly one mile from Pike Place Market – one of Seattle's most popular tourist destinations with more than 10 million annual visitors – to the densely populated residential district of Capitol Hill, the Pike-Pine project features widened sidewalks, improved lighting, enhanced crosswalks, additional seating areas, and heavy landscaping.

Overlook Walk (2025 Project of the Year)
The Overlook Walk is a new elevated public park that connects Seattle's waterfront to its urban core, allowing pedestrians to walk from Pike Place Market to the waterfront without crossing Alaskan Way. It features expansive views of Elliott Bay, Mount Rainier, and the Olympic Mountains, along with informal play areas, public plazas, and terraced landscaping. This new structure connects and integrates into the Seattle Aquarium's new Ocean Pavilion facility. Overlook Walk was opened to the public in October 2024.

Pioneer Square
The Pioneer Square neighborhood street improvements include reconstruction of several blocks of streets and sidewalks and the addition of landscaping, decorative bollards, and brick pavers. Similar to the Pike-Pine improvements, the goal of this project is to build a connection to the Waterfront by extending the aesthetic and landscaping features into this surrounding historic neighborhood.

Bell Street Park Extension
The Bell Street Park Extension expands the existing park corridor, adding more landscaping, lighting, and open spaces into the Belltown neighborhood adjacent to the Pike Place Market area.

Promenade Restroom (2026 Project of the Year)
The Promenade Restroom provides a new public restroom space adjacent to the new centrally-located Waterfront Park (Pier 58). The new restroom, which opened in 2025 is designed with six private all-gender stalls and is being integrated into the architectural and landscaping themes of the Elliott Way Promenade.

The waterfront transformation reflects years of planning, environmental review, and community input. Over 10,000 Seattle residents have contributed to shaping the vision for Waterfront Seattle, which is set to create 20 acres of public space.

Portions of this article were originally published in HNTB's Designer *magazine and are reprinted here with permission.*

Kudos Wall

Let's celebrate public works!

Kudos to Ellen Tiedemann, Enrique Borges, and Adib Altallal for Building the Next Generation of Public Works Leaders

Ellen, Enrique, and Adib have gone above and beyond in supporting the Emerging Professionals Committee by helping plan and lead committee events that strengthen engagement and participation. Their impact extends far beyond committee growth, they are creating a welcoming environment for emerging professionals while fostering meaningful connections with seasoned public works leaders who serve as mentors. Through their leadership and dedication, they are helping build a stronger, more connected public works community for the future.

–Emerging Professionals Committee

Kudos to the City of Olympia Water Operations Crews for Going Above and Beyond

The City of Olympia Water Operations crews provided outstanding service and coordination support to Pivetta Brothers Construction during the replacement of an asbestos concrete water main along Fones Road as part of a larger roadway reconstruction project. The work required careful management of water shutdowns, rapid response to changing field conditions, and troubleshooting unexpected equipment issues – all while much of the work was performed at night due to heavy traffic volumes in the area.

While construction coordination is a standard part of the job, the Olympia crews consistently exceeded expectations through their responsiveness, flexibility, and commitment to collaboration in the field. Their willingness to be available whenever work was underway helped keep the project moving safely and efficiently. Special recognition goes to crew lead Dave Norton, whose leadership and dedication played a major role in the success of this challenging project.

–Jim Rioux on behalf of the City of Olympia Public Works

Kudos to the City of Redmond for Earning Prestigious APWA Accreditation

This prestigious 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. "Achieving full accreditation from the APWA is a meaningful accomplishment for Redmond," said Mayor Angela Birney. "It is a testament to the dedication of not only our Public Works Department, but of staff across the City – all of whom worked diligently for this result. Accreditation reinforces our commitment to providing the community high-quality, well-managed services." Redmond joins just 12 other accredited agencies in Washington state.

–APWA WA Chapter

Kudos to Dana DeLeon for a Lasting Impact on Tacoma's Watersheds

Dana DeLeon's depth of knowledge in watershed science and stormwater management has had a lasting impact on the City of Tacoma. Her leadership in protecting water quality and advancing municipal NPDES compliance, particularly in a city facing significant legacy pollution challenges, has been truly consequential. We have greatly valued the opportunity to collaborate with Dana on Tacoma projects over the years and extend our sincere congratulations as she enters her well-deserved retirement.

–Dylan Ahearn, Rebecca Dugopolski, Matt Fontaine, James Packman, and many others at Herrera Environmental Consultants

Kudos to Susann Babaei for Bringing Public Works History to Life

Kudos to Susann Babaei, Co-Chair of the History Committee, for her outstanding leadership and dedication in developing the topic for the 2026 Spring Conference, organizing the research and presentation teams, and delivering an engaging presentation that drew a standing-room-only audience. In addition to her conference contributions, Susann has authored at least four articles for the Chapter's Public Works magazine, with another currently in progress. Her passion, professionalism, and commitment have helped strengthen and grow the History Committee to 28 members. Thank you, Susann, for your continued dedication and service to the committee and the public works community.

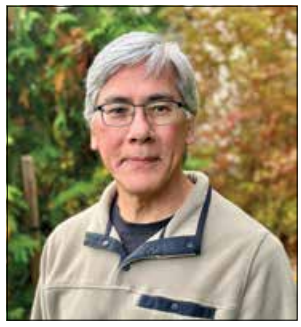
–History Committee

Kudos to Doug Christenson For Your Dedication to Stormwater

Congratulations to Doug Christenson, PE, LG on his retirement. Thank you for all your contributions to the City of Lacey's Public Works – Water Resources Division over the years. We appreciate all of your hard work and dedication to the stormwater field. It has been a pleasure to work with you and we wish you all the best!

–Julianne Chechanover, Matt Fontaine, Rebecca Dugopolski, and many others at Herrera Environmental Consultants

Kudos to Cory Olson and Joseph Averill for Advancing Leadership Through Certification



APWA certifications validate the expertise and leadership capabilities of public works professionals across key disciplines, including stormwater management, infrastructure inspection, fleet management, and supervisory and executive leadership. These credentials are designed to support career advancement, enhance professional credibility, and strengthen workforce development within municipalities and public agencies.

Congratulations to our chapter's newly certified professionals: Joseph Averill, CPII, Sr. Engineer, City of Redmond; Cory Olson, CSM, Stormwater Program Coordinator, City of Spokane Valley.

–APWA Washington Chapter

INVESTING IN THE FUTURE OF PUBLIC WORKS:

APWA WA Chapter Scholarship Programs

By Liam Olsen and Alex Johnson, Scholarship Committee Co-Chairs

The Washington Chapter has been providing higher education scholarships for more than 20 years and, in 2006, established the Jack Pittis Memorial Scholarship. Over the last 20 years, the Scholarship Committee has continued to grow and adapt our program to meet the needs of our growing chapter.

CDL SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITY

In 2025, the Scholarship Committee launched another scholarship opportunity for Maintenance & Operations professionals who need a commercial driver's license (CDL). Maintenance & Operations is a crucial component of public works departments. M&O workers are the frontline employees and first responders who ensure our infrastructure systems are safe and functional. However, many M&O positions require a commercial driver's license, and the costs of the CDL classes can be prohibitive for employees and agencies alike.

The Chapter's CDL program offers two $3,000 CDL scholarships annually to current public works employees or people seeking a job in public works. With the first year completed, we looked forward to being able to repeat our success in 2026. However, the number of applications more than doubled in our second round, so we are currently exploring the possibility of expanding this program to a bi-annual opportunity.

RUTA JONES MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

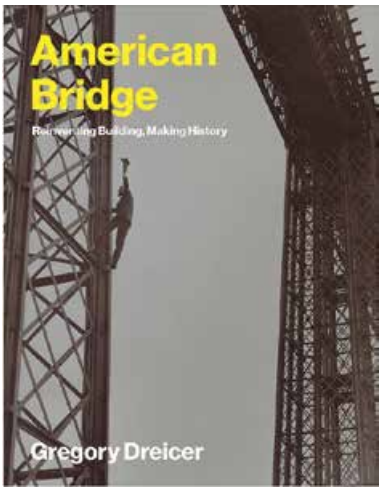
In 2024, the Chapter initiated the Ruta Jones Memorial Scholarship that offers a $1,000 training stipend to administrative professionals working in public works. Ruta was an active servant leader of the Washington APWA Chapter and a caring employee of the City of Wenatchee. As an administrative assistant at the City of Wenatchee for over forty years, she truly cared about and took care of those around her. Not only was Ruta a fixture at the City of Wenatchee, but she was also a pillar of the Washington Chapter and part of our APWA family. Ruta spearheaded the Chapter's annual fall conferences for over two decades. Ruta earned her degree in Business Administration from Central Washington University, and she relished any opportunity to continue her learning journey.

This application window is currently open, with submissions due by email on June 19, 2026. Please reach out to the administrative professionals at your agency or firm and let them know about this great opportunity.

The Chapter will continue the higher education scholarship program that awards more than $30,000 to students at four-year and two-year colleges who are pursuing a career in public works.

The value of public works is in the multitude of talents, perspectives, and experiences that each person brings to the team. The APWA WA Chapter is excited to offer scholarship opportunities that support professional development for a wide variety of individuals across the public works industry.

For questions or to join the Scholarship Committee, please reach out to the Committee Co-Chairs, Liam Olsen at *liam.olsen@jacobs.com* and Alex Johnson at *amjohnson@desmoineswa.gov.*



REVIEW OF *AMERICAN BRIDGE: REINVENTING BUILDING, MAKING HISTORY*

By Dale Clark, Business Development Director, Turner & Townsend

- **Book**: American Bridge: Reinventing Building, Making History
- **Author**: Gregory Dreicer
- **Publisher**: The MIT Press, 420 pp, January 20, 2026

Bridges are crossings, but they can also be starting points. For author Gregory Dreicer, a bridge begins the story of the built environment we live in today. His revealing and highly readable book *American Bridge: Reinventing Building, Making History* is the story of the lattice bridge and the innovations that resulted from the 1820 bridge design patent filed by Connecticut architect Ithiel Town (1784–1844). According to Dreicer, the benefits of Town's innovations have been as impactful to design and construction as the "Model T was to manufacturing."

Dreicer unearths and explores Town's contribution to architectural and engineering design that is primarily remembered today by "architecture buffs and covered-bridge enthusiasts." Town's 1820 patent coincided with America's need for bridges as part of an expanding road network and later for national and global rail systems. An original concept, Town did not draw on precedent for his lattice bridge design. While the design did not make Town famous, the patent's license fee and his thriving architectural practice did make him wealthy.

The innovative design was comprised of a lighter, yet stronger structural support system of standardized diagonal planks forming trusses that could "carry loads through multiple paths." The bridge's modular parts could be understood "as a unit (that is, a beam) or as a truss (an assemblage of parts)." A dependable design, it benefited from being reproducible in multiple variations and did not require a skilled workforce, enabling the "mass construction of bridges." Dreicer points out that "[the use of] standardized materials and parts makes it difficult to appreciate the achievement." The lattice became a model for mass construction in part because the structural elements were "smaller, simple, and uniform."

More than one hundred bridges using the Town lattice design remain, and the "the oldest-known surviving lattice (1832) designed by Ithiel Town" is a roof truss in the First Presbyterian Church in Fayetteville, North Carolina. Licensed by Town, the design cost one dollar per running foot, with a minimum fee of $100. Within two decades of his patent, "students in the Royal Bavarian Polytechnical School in Munich" were required to draw the lattice bridge as a part of their curriculum. Later in the nineteenth century, a French firm was using the lattice design to pre-manufacture bridges for Russia's railways.

Dreicer argues that the economic and efficient design of the lattice bridge is nothing less than the reinvention of the building. The features, design, and construction influences include modularity and standardization through a reproducible design, the development of a rigid yet lightweight structural system that could be preassembled independently and erected on site, and flexibility that allowed designers a "diversity of possibilities" that permitted "alterations and substitution." The lattice bridge looked essentially the same regardless of where it was built, a quality associated with industrialization.

Dreicer argues that the design's adaptability, which could be "replicated in any context, anywhere in the world," led to the emergence of a "transnational figure: the professional engineer." The evolving progression in design and construction of the lattice bridge from wood and iron to steel over the nineteenth century propelled the need for engineering. According to Corydon T. Purdy, a nineteenth-century engineer who specialized in bridge design, "it is only with the advent of steel that the engineer has become a necessity."

Dreicer's compelling account of Ithiel Town and the development of the lattice bridge is a springboard in *American Bridge* to a more expansive story of construction made possible on an industrial scale and "applied to designing and building the skyscraper." The narrative expands outward, showing the global impact of the lattice design, and upward, demonstrating how the design principles have been applied to the skeletal structure of the high-rise building. The lattice as a concept seems organic and natural, not something to have sprung from the mind of a single person. Dreicer characterizes Town as a "transitional figure who altered the course of his own life, along with architectural and engineering practice."

For those interested in the history of planning, designing, and building America's civil infrastructure, ***American Bridge*** published by The MIT Press, is just one recent title from the University Press system. Other titles include *Spanning the Gilded Age: James Eads and the Great Steel Bridge* by John K. Brown, *The Great Miscalculation: The Race to Save New York City's Citicorp Tower* by Michael M. Greenburg, and the *Way We Build: Restoring Dignity to Construction Work* by Mark Erlich. The titles are published by Johns Hopkins University, New York University, and the University of Illinois Press.

https://mitpress.mit.edu/9780262552110/american-bridge

American Bridge was provided to the APWA Washington Chapter by MIT Press for their review.

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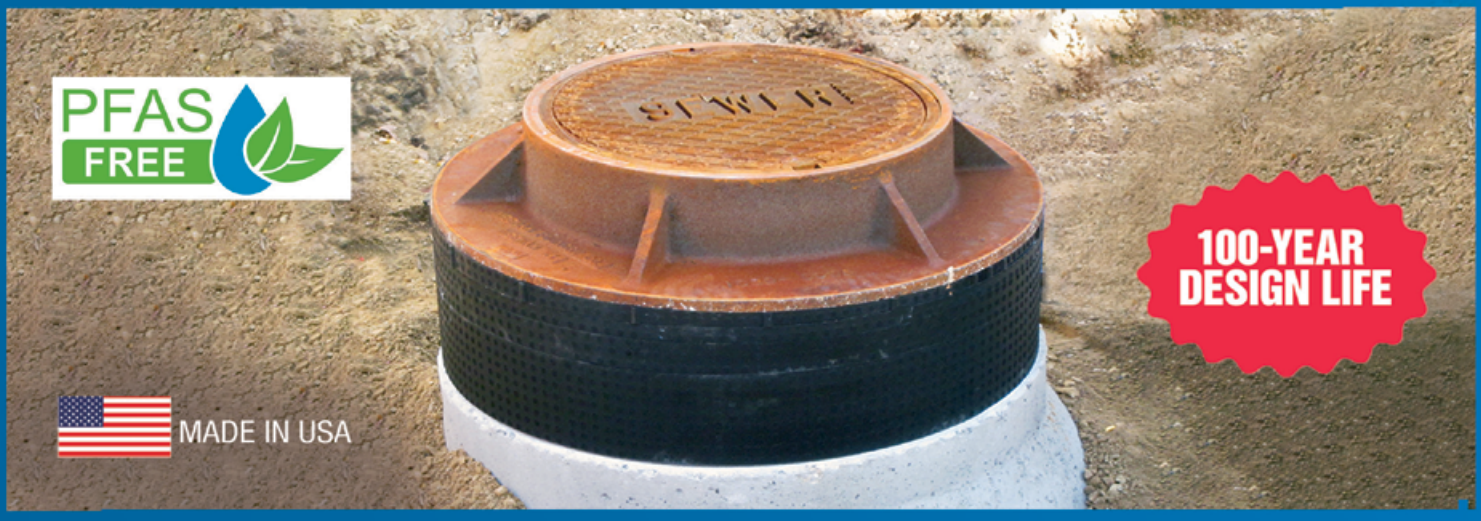

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