

Another Potential City Tax to be Aware Of...

letter from retiring member and President of our Board of Commissioners, continued from page 1

Why does this matter? According to the Association of Washington Cities, cities with populations over 50,000 that have reported their information to the Association are charging a water utility tax ranging from 8% to 21.5%. It is important to note: Special Purpose Water Districts do not, and can not ever charge a tax like this.

In Federal Way, the City recently passed an ordinance to increase utility taxes to help the City of balance their ailing budget. However the City of Federal Way does not have a water utility—they're trying to levy this tax onto special purpose water and sewer districts in their area—all of which are understandably challenging the city's desire to increase utility taxes to cover non-utility city expenses.

This is one reason I have been, and always will be, a strong proponent of Special Purpose Districts, because they are focused on one purpose: to provide the best possible water utility, for the least possible expense, with the most foresight towards the future.

As I say farewell to the community that I've been a part of since 1990, I want to remind you that a Special Purpose Water District has far more advantages to the citizen than a City-owned water district. Thank you for allowing me to serve you, and thanks to the dedicated staff of North City Water District for their focused attention on providing affordable, quality water service.

Interested in Becoming a Special Purpose Water District Commissioner?

North City Water District is seeking qualified applicants to fill the vacant Position #2 on the District's Board of Commissioners. This is position involves developing and maintaining positive working relationships and regular interactions with regulatory agencies, ratepayers, community leaders, and industry organizations. The appointed candidate will make critical decisions that will safeguard the services and resources of District customers.

Qualified candidates must be (1) a United States citizen, (2) at least eighteen years of age, and (3) a registered voter residing within North City Water District boundaries. For more information and application documents, please see the District's website. To learn more about the commissioner vacancy and application process, contact Diane Pottinger, PE, District Manager, at 206.362.8100 or dianep@northcitywater.org.

Status of Infrastructure in Washington

When the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) released infrastructure report cards back in May 2013, Washington state received a C grade due to lack of planned funding and inadequate maintenance. Their new report cards are scheduled to be released in early 2019.

Former ASCE Seattle Section President James Chae, PE, M.ASCE said "We cannot hope to have an A+ economy, with a C level infrastructure. Ailing infrastructure hurts our wallets and our livelihoods. Travel delays alone cost Washington State drivers and businesses more than 32 million hours a year, valued at over \$1.1 billion annually."

This is why North City Water District believes in proactive, regular capital improvements planning and maintenance to systematically improve our water system a little bit each year, so that the overall cost remains affordable to ratepayers. If we put off maintenance and reinvestment into our system, the next generation will bear more burden to improve the infrastructure.

Other ways we control infrastructure costs are by obtaining low interest loans (few opportunities exist for public water system grant funding, because these are targeted for failing systems), co-funding projects with developers in public/private partnerships, and bonding. Washington state's Public Works Assistance Account (PWAA) has been an invaluable source of low interest loans, but unfortunately, our State began diverting funds from this program six years ago. Thanks to the passage of the capital budget, ESSB 6095, the PWAA has given out over 45 loans since the first of 2018, totalling over \$90 million to help fund nearly \$560 million of projects in communities all over the state of Washington. We continue to work with our state legislators to encourage them to retain as much of this fund as possible for future projects, including ours.



WASHINGTON STATE
Public Works Board
Infrastructure is Fundamental



Issue 4: October • November • December 2018 Serving the communities of Shoreline and Lake Forest Park since 1931

From Our Board...

by Larry Schoonmaker, President

With mixed feelings, I am writing my last update as the President of the Board of Commissioners at North City Water District. I've had the pleasure of serving since 2006, when Commissioners Ricker and Haines asked me to consider the role. My previous experience as a commissioner in the Burien area gave me first-hand familiarity with special purpose district operations. I was a small business owner like most of the businesses in our service area, and my strong background in math and science were well-matched to the role. During my 12 year tenure, I'm extremely proud of our many accomplishments—from strategic infrastructure investments that will carry our system well into the future, increased resiliency of our water system through connections to a secondary water source, new electronic water meters, and our ongoing excellent track record for proactive maintenance and operations.

Best of all? *We've accomplished every one of these improvements without any taxes.*
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North City Waves Newsletter ~ a publication by North City Water District

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- 2) Follow us on www.facebook.com/NorthCityWaterDistrict
- 3) Sign up for news, alerts, free classes and more on our website at www.northcitywater.org

Three Ways to Stay in Touch

- Water System Planning, Part 4
- Project Update: Maintenance Facility
- Community Corner
- Design Contest Winner
- 4 Steps to Protect Pipes for Winter
- Wanted: Water District Commissioner
- Status of Washington Infrastructure

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The North City Waves Newsletter is brought to you by North City Water District, and its Board of Commissioners:

Larry Schoonmaker (President), Charlotte Haines (Vice President), and Ron Ricker (Secretary).

Feel free to contact us at PO Box 55367, or 1519 NE 177th Street, Shoreline, WA 98155.

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Water System Planning, part 4

As part of our ongoing theme for 2018: The Year of the Water System Plan



1 Overview

Purpose, Policies, Rules and Regulations, Conservation, Customer Service, and long term water supply contract with SPU



2 Basic Planning Data



3 Existing Water System

Supply, Emergency, Facilities, Equipment, System, and Water Treatment



4 Minimum Design Criteria

For All System Components



5 System Analysis

Source, Storage, Pumping, Distribution, and Monitoring



6 Capital Improvement Planning



7 Operations & Maintenance

Personnel, Processes, Records, Water Quality, Safety, Emergency, Public Notification, and Preventive Maintenance



8 Financials

Water Supply, Cost of Service, Connection Charges, Funding, Capital Improvement Financing, Developer Policies, Standard Details and Specs, and Multi-Year Rate Study

System Analysis and Capital Improvement Planning

Section 5: System Analysis

Our system analysis involves review of all parts of our water system including source, storage, pumping and the water main (piping) network. Water systems serving a built-out community such as ours are typically faced with the following challenges: aging system components, increasing demand due to increased density, ongoing conservation constraints (the less water used, the less dollars collected for system operations and maintenance), limited funding sources for infrastructure upgrades, as well as stricter regulations.

Over time however, fire flow demands have the most impact on a water system. When a fire occurs, large volumes of water coming through one or two adjacent hydrants cause high velocities in the water mains, along with resulting low pressures at the higher elevation points in the system. Our goal is to optimize the way our system addresses these impacts as efficiently and cost effectively as possible. To that end, we developed a new pressure zone in the Ridgcrest Neighborhood, partially funded by developers back in 2013/2014, to help us to better meet our fire flows.

Water quality is another very important aspect of our system analysis. Since 2010, we have addressed water quality by adding a new supply station, upgrading our largest reservoir including a PAX Mixer for internal water circulation, adding two new water connections (one for supply, one for emergencies) to the Cedar River through Seattle's regional system (for proactive source redundancy), and additional sampling stations within our distribution system to help us monitor the water quality.

Our new North City/Denny Clouse Pump Station helps us monitor fire flows and water quality throughout our system (which is why we like to call this facility the "heart" of our system).

Going forward, we are evaluating the impacts of redevelopment in terms of increased demand on our system, and adequate water storage. We're exploring the possibilities of a new reservoir—either on the site of our new maintenance facility, or possibly across the street on the Fircrest site. However the Fircrest site is part of a state land trust that must be used for "highest and best use" (see RCW 79.02.410), so any changes (such as leasing or purchasing this property) must be approved by state legislature.

Section 6: Capital Improvement Planning

The following capital improvement projects/purchases are being considered over the next 20 years:

- Complete our new maintenance facility.
- Ongoing improvements for fire flow and water quality.
- Ongoing improvements to water system resiliency—to ensure our community has adequate water in the event of an emergency or major disaster.
- Operational and maintenance related projects, including telemetry upgrades, and booster pump station upgrade/replacement when they reach the end of their service life.
- Update District mapping and GIS—documenting the existing system ensures accurate planning and operations.

This section of our water system plan will be completed by the end of the year, after which we will identify what rate increase may be necessary. Given that there was no rate increase in 2018, we anticipate the 2019 rate increase to be between 6-8% as proposed in our last budget, with specific numbers to be identified in the upcoming budget. The final numbers will be communicated in the water bills, on our website, and in the subsequent newsletters.

If you have any questions about our Water System Planning process, give us a call at 206.362.8100.



Project Update: New Maintenance Facility

Work is continuing on our new maintenance facility site. The site contours have been completed, so the future pattern of traffic through the site is now visible. Underground utilities are almost all installed—sewer is the deepest, then water service pipes, storm water pipes, and finally the electrical.

During the initial planning and conceptual design stages of this project, we approached the City of Shoreline with an offer to collocate services on our site. The city was unable to commit to this offer, so we are now planning to use the space that would have been set aside for the City to relocate a booster pump station in the future. Fortunately the larger-sized water mains that this booster pump station will need were already included in the

design of this project, so we won't have to dig up the site when we're ready to install the station in the future.

Other site work completed to date includes new curb, gutter and sidewalks on two sides of the property. New asphalt, fencing, the last remaining sidewalk, and some landscaping will be completed by the end of November, weather-permitting.

Back in early September, the District submitted building plans for a new maintenance building, a wash structure and a decant facility. The decant facility permit is ready, however, we were required to resubmit plans to the City in late October for the other two buildings. If all goes smoothly, we expect to put those buildings out for construction bid in early December (weather permitting), award the contract, and begin construction in early 2019.

Community Corner

Over SIXTY! local gardeners attended our final fall Savvy Gardener Class in September. Greg Rabourn of King County native habitat restoration, and former co-host of KCTV's Yard Talk gave a funny, fact-filled presentation on how to go native in your garden. North City Water District offers 3 free gardening classes each year as part of the Saving Water Partnership. Stay tuned for next year!

For the second year in a row, District staff participated in the LFP Picnic in the Park on September 8th, where our staff provided water from the water filling station, played bean bag toss with the kids, and answered questions about water and conservation.

Upcoming Events

Save the Date - Annual Tree Lighting Saturday December 1

Mark your calendar for our annual tree lighting event (atop our big reservoir) featuring refreshments, live music, and a visit from Santa and his elves.

WE HAVE A DESIGN WINNER!

Thanks to all the kids who entered our Design-A-Bag contest on how to use water wisely. We received 18 wonderful entries and selected the winners at the November 6th Board Meeting. Grand Prize Winner Amanda D. (age 10) will have her design printed on canvas re-usable bags that will be distributed at community events during 2019. See all the designs on our website at www.northcitywater.org!



4 Easy Steps to Protect Your Pipes for Winter



1. Disconnect and drain all garden hoses.
2. Insulate all exposed exterior pipes and faucets.
3. Insulate interior pipes and faucets in cold areas (including unheated attics, basements, garages and crawl spaces).
4. Locate your master water shut-off valve and test it prior to an emergency.