



Celebrate Public Works

The theme for this year's National Public Works Week is "Ready and Resilient!" The poster reinterprets the superhero who lies within every public works professional.

"Ready and Resilient" highlights the ability of these professionals to perform their regular duties and be ready at a moment's notice to act as first responders during natural disasters and overcome challenges.

Public works superheroes help keep communities strong by providing vital infrastructure services. They make our communities great places to live and work.

Your organization can join public works professionals around the world in celebrating these superheroes by utilizing many of the **resources offered by APWA**, including posters, proclamations, and social media tools.



Homelessness Crisis

**EUGENE FINDS NEW SOLUTIONS
IN A PANDEMIC**

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President's Message

By John Lewis / City of Oregon City

Spring 2022 is here! It turns out that I'm writing this message on the last day of masking mandates in Oregon. Breath...It's great looking forward to this new norm and noting the poignant aroma of enthusiasm for the balance of 2022. You don't think enthusiasm has an aroma? Well, neither does money, but it's often suggested as such when talking business. Public Works is business, and I'm enthusiastic for several reasons. I hope you will take a moment and consider a few of these reasons to get ENTHUSIASTIC!

Oregon – It seems like Oregonians are getting back to normal, and we're seeing COVID relief and recovery funding through the \$2.6 billion in federal recovery funding for Oregon provided through the 2021 American Rescue Plan. Much of this money will be focused on the kind of work we do.

National – The \$1.5 TRILLION-dollar fiscal year 2022 Omnibus Appropriations Bill represents billions of dollars for many critical areas including a strong investment in public infrastructure including water, transportation, housing, parks, energy, and a long list of other public works.

APWA – OREGON CHAPTER

We're back to in-person events – On behalf of the staff and Board, I invite you to take advantage of what the Oregon Chapter is offering in events, including our training events, and Spring Conference in Seaside on April 18 - 20 – *The Tide is Turning... Let's Get Together!* More information on page 10.

Leaders abound – Oregon APWA is blessed with some amazing professionals. As we look back on 2021 and Delora Kerber being awarded a Top 10 Leader Award and look forward to our own Jenifer Willer as our Top 10 Leader Nominee, we can't help but celebrate that the Chapter gets such an opportunity to connect with so many capable members like Delora and Jenifer. More information on page 4.

Board of Directors – The Oregon Chapter has 12 volunteers who make up the Chapter's Board of Directors—dedicated individuals from across the state who rally regularly to ensure the Chapter business remains on track. *(continued)*

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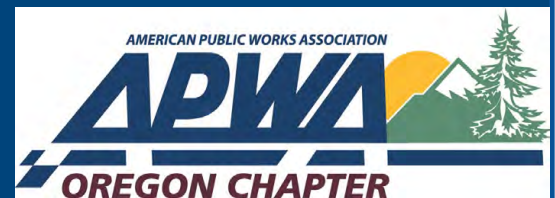
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President's Message Continued

As a Chapter Board, we focus on advancement in areas of professional development, public works outreach, advocacy, and administration. This Board has a long tradition of embracing and demonstrating the APWA core values of diversity, inclusivity, partnership, service, accountability, and sustainability.

First Ever Summer Camping Trip – This year, we have arranged for an APWA Summer Camping Trip, and we picked a location that is centrally located. I invite you to join us on June 24 - 26 to share with us your enthusiasm and outdoorsmanship. More information on page 10.

Our future has a lot to be optimistic about, and I hope you enjoy your work. It's important work: your community needs you and our Chapter needs you. I'm involved with Oregon APWA because I love the enthusiasm so many of our members have for what they do. I hope 2022 is a chance to "Get Together" and to continue to highlight what we love to do in the service of others.

Courtesy Announcement

AN SMPS JEDI EVENT

The Inclusive Partnership Mixer

Meet XBE firms & go beyond just checking the box!

This networking event is designed to help firms build relationships with DMWESB-Certified, Self-Certified and BIPOC-led firms.



smps
Oregon

WEDNESDAY, MAY 18
4:00 -6:30 PM PST
REDFOX COMMONS

\$55 Member & \$65 Non-Member
Register online at smpsoregon.org

Registration and information on the SMPS-Oregon website: [link](https://smpsoregon.org)

Support the Scholarship Foundation

Learn how you can support the scholarship foundation and our future public works leaders: [link](#)

Willer National Top 10 Leader

Eugene City Engineer Jenifer Willer, P.E., has been selected as a 2022 National Top 10 Public Works Leader. APWA National President Stan Brown personally contacted Willer with the good news on March 22.

"Thank you so much to the Oregon Chapter Board for nominating me...I am a little bit in shock," Willer said after getting the call from Brown.

In his letter of nomination, Oregon APWA President John Lewis praised Willer's drive, expertise, and commitment. "I know Jenifer is doing what she loves in the service of others and that has proven successful in that others love what she does," Lewis wrote. He also pointed out that Willer brings to the profession degrees in political science, law, and engineering. "In my opinion, Jenifer is the epitome of a leader in that she brings excellent ideas, comes ready with justification to support those ideas, often has resources to realize the ideas, and is supportive through to execution," Lewis said.



Joining Lewis in support of Willer's Top 10 nomination were ODOT managers, public works directors from around the state, and private consultants and citizens who work with Willer in a variety of roles.

"It is my sincere hope that APWA will recognize Jenifer as a 2022 Top Ten Leader for her incredible leadership at the City and Oregon APWA and most importantly for the work she has done to make lives better for the people of Eugene every day," said Eugene Public Works Director Matt Rodrigues..

"Jenifer is a leader in seeking improved, sustainable construction practices," wrote Oliver Snowden, retired Lane County Public Works Director and a citizen member of Eugene's Street Repair Review Panel. "She has an easy, relaxed manner in working with the committee. She has the ability to convey her thorough knowledge of pavements and pavement repair methods in a way that is understandable to a lay audience."

'Your selection puts you in a very elite group of winners since the inception of the program in 1960. The American Public Works Association is proud to have you represent the public works profession and our association!'

Rhonda Wilhite, APWA Awards and Chapter Relations Associate

Willer has worked for the City of Eugene since 2005, most recently as City Engineer, where she manages 84 full-time-equivalent positions, a division operating budget of approximately \$15 million, and a capital budget of approximately \$33 million.

Her job-related technical and managerial accomplishments include a sustainable pavement preservation program, engagement with staff and citizens, an active role in ODOT's local agency certification program, inclusion through her work on ADA projects, and innovation through FHWA's Every Day Counts initiative as well as in ways to accomplish more with less money and less impact to the environment through the recycling of road-construction materials.

Willer has shown commitment to advancing others in their careers, by creating and facilitating an internal Project Management Essentials training at the City of Eugene. She also chairs Oregon APWA's Education Committee.

Willer has been a member of Oregon APWA since 2005. She served on the Chapter Board from 2013-2019, including a term as Chapter President in 2018. She received the Chapter's highest honor, the Bowes Award, in 2016.

[View the winning nomination](#)

APWA's Certified Public Fleet Professional Certification

THE NEXT STEP FOR FLEET PROFESSIONALS

At times, fleet can seem like a thankless profession. Dedicated fleet professionals work behind the scenes daily, making sure all other departments have the equipment they need to fulfill their mission, particularly during emergencies. But the COVID-19 pandemic made fleet even more essential. While many departments and personnel were afforded the ability to work from home, fleet professionals answered the call day in, day out to keep the fleets moving.

Given all the hard work you put in every day, it makes sense to take the next step in your career by obtaining your CPFP (Certified Public Fleet Professional) certification through APWA. Fleet managers need to have a broad array of knowledge such as budgets, operations, rate setting, risk management, HR, fuel infrastructure, and inventory management, just to name a few. Given the vast responsibilities, it's becoming more common for agencies to require or prefer incoming candidates to have a fleet certification.

The CPFP certification program was established in 2007 for fleet professionals by our peers. The certification program covers: Operations, General Management and Business, Asset Management, Financial Management, Human Resource Management, Risk Management, Environmental Management, and Information Management and Technology Systems.

This certification shows the leaders within your organization that you not only know your industry, but you can also obtain a certification from a leading organization. APWA offers assistance to those wanting to take the next step. A recommended reading list is provided covering all the topics you might encounter during the test, and certification mentors are available to help guide you through the process.

Consider taking the next step towards becoming a Certified Public Fleet Professional by visiting APWA's certification site on APWA National's website at [link](#).



"Speaking for me personally, obtaining my certification in 2008 helped change the course of my career, ultimately helping me reach the position of Fleet Manager. While it was a challenging process, it was also extremely rewarding as I learned from the instructional material, engaged with other fleet professionals, and ultimately took the steps for certification." – Keith Nicolson

Want to know more? Reach out to Keith Nicolson, CPFP, at 541-766-

Oregon APWA Listings



Looking to fill a position?

Look at what Oregon APWA offers.

- Free listings for public works jobs in the Pacific Northwest.
- Wide range of positions in the public and private sectors.

More information [online](#) or email oregonapwa@gmail.com

Scholarship Stories

Each year the Oregon APWA Scholastic Foundation awards up to 20 scholarships totaling more than \$30,000. Recipients of the scholarships are the future employees and leaders of public works!

Here is the story of one student, told in his own words, who received an APWA scholarship in the 2021-2022 school year.

[View more scholarship stories](#)



Trevor Luu

Portland State University

Michael Lindberg Scholarship

Trevor was born in Beaverton, Oregon, but spent the majority of his childhood growing up in China, Vietnam, and Taiwan, returning to Oregon to complete his high school education in the Beaverton / Hillsboro area. After having studied biology and political science for his undergrad, Trevor decided to pursue urban planning at Portland State University where his passions lie in pedestrian/bicycle planning, public transportation planning, and equity. His recent projects have included the development of a bicycle network plan for Independence, Oregon, a study of access to COVID-19 test locations by public transportation, and an economic strategy for Daytona Beach, Florida. Trevor is looking forward to using his skills to make public work improvements especially as they relate to pedestrian and bicycle planning.

In his spare time, Trevor enjoys spending time with his family, nature, studying foreign languages, cycling, volleyball, cooking, and listening to podcasts."

IN OTHER SCHOLASTIC FOUNDATION NEWS



Stockhoff to Head Foundation Board

Gary Stockhoff has been elected as 2022 president of the Oregon APWA Scholastic Foundation. Stockhoff is Public Works Director for Benton County. He has been a

member of APWA since 1996, and over the past decade has served as chapter historian and as a member of the chapter's Government Affairs and Engineering and Technology committees.

Other 2022 members of the 11-member Foundation Board include vice-president Matt MacRostie of Century West Engineering; treasurer Sue Nelson, retired civil engineer; secretary Eric Jones, retired public affairs manager; Dillon George of KPFF; Delora Kerber of City of Wilsonville; Ken Stoneman of David Evans & Associates; Dayna Webb of City of Oregon City; Tony Roos of Kittelson & Associates; retired development director Mike Bisset; and Scholarship Committee co-chairs Laurie Allen of ACMS Northwest and Todd Watkins of Washington County.



New Scholarship Tribute to Dave Vargas

Oregon APWA's newest scholarship commemorates [Dave Vargas](#), a founding member of the chapter who died in 2017 at the age of 78. The \$500 Dave Vargas Memorial Scholarship at Oregon Institute of Technology was established to recognize civil engineering students at OIT and to financially assist those who are interested in

pursuing a career in the broad field of public works.

Full-time civil engineering students who have achieved junior standing at the beginning of the academic year of the award will be considered for the scholarship. Students who receive the award during their junior year will again be eligible to apply for the award during their senior year, assuming they maintain eligibility for the scholarship. Women and minorities are encouraged to apply.

The Vargas scholarship is one of 10 "tribute" scholarships offered by the Oregon APWA Scholastic Foundation. For a minimum initial contribution of \$1000 or more, the foundation will establish a tribute account. When contributions to the tribute account reach a minimum threshold value of \$10,500, the donor is entitled to name a scholarship to be awarded. All told, the Scholastic Foundation annually awards up to 21 scholarships totaling \$36,500.

For more information about tribute accounts or the chapter's scholarship program, contact any of the members of the Scholastic Foundation Board: [link](#)

Another Successful Extended School!

Heavy equipment rolled into Bend for the Street Maintenance and Collection Systems Spring Extended School in March. Much like the "Short School," the Extended School offers one additional day of education, 2.0 CEUs, and the Oregon Chapter-sponsored Equipment ROADeo. After a two-year Covid break, the students, exhibitors, speakers, and staff were thrilled to be back in person!



The ROADeo had 15 competitors. Winner Preston Langeliers from Newberg (left, with John Lewis and Russ Thomas) and runner-up Dylan Jackson from the City of Bend (right) will go to PWX in Charlotte to compete in APWA's National ROADeo.



Russ Thomas, Newberg Public Works Director, former Oregon APWA President

"Having been involved in the Oregon APWA Street Maintenance and Wastewater Collection school for almost 30 years, beginning as a maintenance laborer, and this year serving as the school chair in my position as a public works director, it is refreshing to return to the in-person instruction after being suspended for over two years due to COVID-19.

Witnessing the expertise of the equipment operators during the equipment ROADeo, the quality presentations by very knowledgeable public works staff and industry professionals dedicated to increasing the knowledge and skills of public works employees continues the legacy of the school that was instrumental in helping me prepare for my current position.

In addition to the training, the other extremely valuable component is the personal interaction between the attendees, learning from each, building a network across many agencies and disciplines, that ultimately helps everyone - and their agencies - perform at a higher level.

Seeing the new members of the public works profession in attendance and knowing the value it has added to my career, I strongly encourage other public works directors and managers to consider the value to their staff, agencies, and communities that the APWA short schools can provide."



John Lewis, Oregon City Public Works Director, current Oregon APWA President

"I just had the pleasure of attending a day of the Oregon Street Maintenance Collection Systems School in Bend. It's been years since I've attended one of these trainings. Aside from enjoying the interaction and competition at the Equipment ROADeo, I've appreciated getting exposure to quality topics on OSHA best practices and safer workplaces, lift station design, and sewer system assessments. All that in one training-packed day.

This evening I'm looking forward to interacting with the operations folks at tonight's exhibitor hosted social. If agency managers are not sending staff to these short school training opportunities, they are both missing professional development for their employees and their community is missing out on lessons learned from other agency folks.

But don't worry if you missed this school... another opportunity comes up in October!"

New Members

WELCOME

Please welcome the public works professionals who have joined Oregon Chapter APWA over the past several months. For information about the benefits of membership, email Oregon APWA Membership Chair Leslie Finnigan at lfinnigan@ufsrw.com.

James Baird, Eng & Operations Manager, Roseburg Urban Sanitary Authority, (541) 672-1551,
jbaird@rusa-or.org

David Balfour, President, Portland Valuation Group INC, (503) 330-8697,
dave@oregonvalue.com

Brittany Barker, Principal Engineer, City of Bend, (541) 317-3006,
bbarker@bendoregon.gov

Kyle Bartlett, Roseburg Urban Sanitary Authority, (541) 672-1551, kbartlett@rusa-or.org

Christopher Benn, Engineering Tech II, City of Milwaukie, (503) 786-7617,
bennc@milwaukieoregon.gov

Matt Bernards, Engineering Tech, City of McMinnville, (503) 434-7312,
Matthew.Bernards@mcminnville.oregon.gov

Brandon Boutros, Associate Engineer, City of Milwaukie, (503) 786-7541,
Boutrosb@milwaukieoregon.gov

Kelli Byrd, ADA Coordinator, City of Lake Oswego, (503) 635-0280

Neil Curley, Resource Recovery Division Manager, City of Portland Environmental Svcs, (503) 823-7757,
Niel.curley@portlandoregon.gov

Cory DeVore, Public Works Lead Worker, City of Fairview, (503) 674-2246,
devorec@ci.fairview.or.us

Brandon Dole, Sea LLP, (503) 226-3617, bdole@seallp.com

Gerald Fisher, Public Works Director, Independence,
gfisher@ci.independence.or.us

Steve Fox, VP/Regional Manager, Paragon Partners Consultants LLC, (714) 379-3376, sfox@paragon-partners.com

Patrick Gaylord, Oregon Geomatics Market Leader, David Evans and Associates Inc, (503) 499-0331, pmg@deainc.com

Robert George, Operations Manager, City of Portland Environmental Svcs, (503) 823-2412,
robert.george@portlandoregon.gov

Dan Graff, Water Lead, City of Beaverton, (503) 880-8231,
dgraff@beavertonoregon.gov

Greg Hamblet, Operations Administrator, City of Coos Bay, (541) 269-8918

Jeremiah Hess, Engineering Supervisor, City of Portland Environmental Svcs, (503) 865-6811,
jeremiah.hess@portlandoregon.gov

Wendy Higgins, PW Dept Support Tech, City of Grants Pass, (541) 450-6063,
whiggins@grantspassoregon.gov

Joy Keniston-Longrie, Environ System Mgr II, City of Portland - Transportation, (503) 823-1732, joy.keniston-longrie@portlandoregon.gov

Ryon Kershner, Roseburg Urban Sanitary Authority, (541) 672-1551, ryon@rusa-or.org

Keisuke Harry, Engineer, Kittelson & Associates, (503) 535-7509,
kharry@kittelson.com

Preston Langeliers, PW Road Supervisor, City of Newberg, (503) 537-1234,
preston.langeliers@newbergoregon.gov

Antonio Martos, Maint Supervisor II, City of Portland - Transportation, (503) 823-4243,
antonio.martos@portlandoregon.gov

(Continued on next page)

New Members

Shay McDonald, Admin Marketing Assistant, Foundation Engineering Inc, (503) 643-1541, smm@foundationengr.com

April Miller, Communications Coord, City of Springfield, Oregon, (541) 726-3684, amiller@springfield-or.gov

Brooke Mossefin, Communications Coord, City of Springfield, Oregon, (541) 744-4053, bmossefin@springfield-or.gov

Erik Nicols, Project Manager, City of Oregon City, (480) 784-7462, enichols@orc.org

Amanda Owings, Senior Transportation Manager, Otak, (503) 412-2381, amanda.owings@otak.com

Anne Pagano, Public Works Director, City of McMinnville, (503) 434-7312, Anne.Pagano@mcminnvilleoregon.gov

James Pex, (541) 797-6781, jdpey@yahoo.com

Robert Pyle, Maint Supervisor II, City of Portland - Transportation, (503) 823-5984, robert.pyle@portlandoregon.gov

Dzemila Sabanovic, Engineer III, City of Portland Environmental Svcs, (503) 823-7757, mia.sabanovic@portlandoregon.gov

Sid Scott, Scott Edwards Architecture, (503) 914-8672, sid@seallp.com

John Sharrard, Solution Engineer, ESRI, (909) 369-8903, jsharrard@esri.com

Monica Stone, Process Control Supervisor, City of Portland Environmental Svcs, (503) 939-5042, monica.stone@portlandoregon.gov

Misty Storey, Safety Training Coord, City of Springfield, Oregon, (541) 726-3761, mstorey@springfield-or.gov

Olaf Sweetman, Lane County, OR, (541) 682-6424, olaf.sweetman@lanecountyor.gov

Rachel Sykes, Public Works Director, City of Tualatin, (503) 691-3090, rskyes@tualatin.gov

Karen Tarmichael, Ofc Support, City of Newberg, karen.tarmichael@newbergoregon.gov

Lee Tumminello, Maintenance Supervisor II, City of Portland - Transportation, (503) 823-4983, Lee.tumminello@portlandoregon.gov

Cassandra Walling, Administrative Supervisor, City of Bend, (541) 317-3006, cwalling@bendoregon.gov

Dana Whitley, Maint Supervisor I, City of Portland - Transportation, (503) 865-6143, dana.whitley@portlandoregon.gov

Cori Wiessner, Engineer III, City of Portland - Transportation, (503) 823-5212, Cori.Wiessner@portlandoregon.gov

Mary Wisner, Engineering Assoc, City of Portland - Transportation, (503) 823-7801, Mary.Wisner@portlandoregon.gov

GREATER TACOMA CONVENTION CENTER
AUG 16-18, 2022

ACCELERATE TO ZERO
YOUR ROAD BEGINS IN TACOMA

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH:
Green Transportation Summit & Expo
California FUEL CELL PARTNERSHIP
DRIVING FOR THE FUTURE

A Word From the Committees



Scholarship Committee

(Co-Chairs Laurie Allen and Todd Watkins)

The Scholarship Committee would like to **honor and express our appreciation to Dr. Thomas Miller** who has served as the scholarship coordinator at OSU for years. This year I learned he is trying to be retired and only work one or two days a week. When his successor accepted another position within the university, no applications had been submitted. Tom resumed his role as coordinator and had five scholarship award recommendations to our committee within one week.

Then, when another campus advised they had no veterans registered in the engineering program, the Foundation Board approved rotating the scholarship to the next in line which was Oregon State University. The submission deadline was already closed but when I contacted Tom to explain the situation and ask for his help, he replied that “I am an Air Force veteran myself so would be honored to help.” Dr. Miller not only accepted the challenge to identify a student who met the eligibility criteria, but knocked it out of the park. He had the scholarship application of a veteran (Marine) and DD214 to us in less than four hours on a Friday night!

Dr. Miller has always been so responsive and helpful. He’s taken challenges like a pandemic or last minute scramble to ensure students could take advantage of the financial assistance our Chapter makes possible in stride. Thank you Dr. Miller for your support and efforts over the years. While we will miss working with you, we wish you well once you do get to enjoy retirement.



Transportation Committee

(Co-Chairs Mike McCarthy and Darren Hippenstiel)

The Transportation Committee has been **hosting lunchtime webinars** on transportation topics every couple of months. Join us for informative and interesting sessions (and free PDHs). If you would like to suggest a topic for a future webinar, please e-mail Mike McCarthy at mmccarthy@tualatin.gov and Darren Hippenstiel at dhippenstiel@kittelton.com

Also visit the Transportation Committee page on the APWA Oregon website to see links to past presentations: [link](#)



Awards Committee

(Co-Chairs Jennifer Garbely and Sheila Sahu)

We are **looking for two volunteers** to join two fun co-chairs on the awards committee. A few hours each month to promote Oregon Chapter and National applications for awards and then in late summer to review applications and prepare for the awards ceremony. I can guarantee the process will be awarding. You can contact Jennifer Garbely at garbelyj@milwaukieoregon.gov if you are interested.

Have you thought about what amazing people or project you’ll nominate for an award in August 2022?

The year is flying by and it is time to start thinking about awards. APWA Oregon wants to hear about the projects completed this past year, the outstanding young leaders in our community, what sustainability practices people are implementing, our Everyday Heros, and who is excelling at Communications in the Oregon Chapter (Bulldog). In order for you to be honored for your amazing work we need a nomination form filled out. As the weather is getting nice take some pictures to include with your application!

Guidelines & Nomination Forms: [Award Applications](#)

Applications due: Monday, August 15, 2022

Direct questions to Jennifer Garbely at Garbelyj@milwaukieoregon.gov

Upcoming Chapter Events

April 18-20, 2022—Spring Conference in Seaside, Oregon

The annual Spring Conference is gearing up to offer local fun on the Oregon Coast. With a shorter format of Monday through Wednesday, a lot will be happening in a short amount of time! Due to this change, the usual Golf Tournament will be held later; watch our website for information as it becomes available. We are excited to partner with Clatsop Community Action, Clatsop County's non-profit agency for a Canned Food Drive. We request attendees bring non-perishable and canned foods for the Canned Food Drive being held all three days of the conference! Monetary donations can be made directly to the organization; please use the link on the registration webpage. Click [here](#) for more information about the spring conference.



April 27-28, 2022—Preventive Maintenance for Roadway Surfaces in Redmond, Oregon

After four years, we are looking forward to providing education to street maintenance workers at the Preventive Maintenance for Roadway Surfaces at Eagle Crest Resort in Redmond. Registration recently opened, so if you know someone that can benefit from this class, share the [class link](#) with them!

June 24-26, 2022—First-Ever Summer Camping Trip

A few Oregon APWA outdoor enthusiasts, including 2022 Chapter President John Lewis and Board member Shannon Williams, have produced a plan to try something different this year, and friends and families are invited to join in the fun.

This year we have arranged for the First-Ever Summer Camping Trip in a centrally located spot, a few minutes outside of Sweet Home, Oregon. The summer camping season is just a few months away and we hope you can still find room in your busy summer schedule.

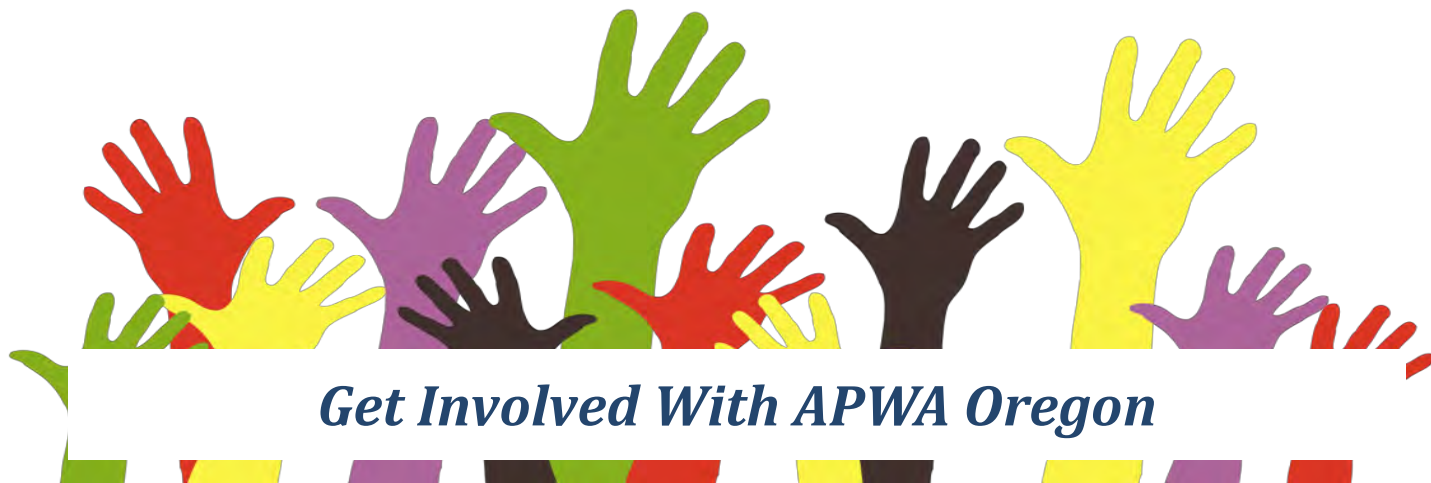


Foster Lake is a beautiful place, and Sunnyside County Park is located along the lake's eastern edge. We have reserved one of the two group sites so there is lots of room for RVs and tents. We fully expect to engage in lots of ways, including the typical APWA social activities and ways to share our families through outdoor fun and games.

So pull up your best lounge chair and get fully relaxed at the First-Ever APWA Summer Camping Trip! Check out the [information flier](#), or reach out to [John](#) or [Shannon](#) if you have any questions.

**READY
AND
RESILIENT**

**National Public Works Week
May 15-21, 2022**



The Oregon Chapter is an association of more than 800 professional engineers, technicians, operations staff, public works directors, business people, contractors, consultants and many others who join together to exchange ideas and information, promote education and training, and work as a team to meet professional and community needs.

The Chapter is run almost entirely by volunteers. To keep doing the great things our chapter does — events/ luncheons, newsletters, announcements, contributing to specifications standards, etc. — volunteers work together to plan and execute.

Ways to Get Involved

Step 1. Become an APWA member. More information on becoming a member is on the [Chapter website](#).

Step 2. Find the right spot to plug in. What's your passion? What's your level of availability? There's a spot for you! Here are some options:

Join a Committee! Check out Committee Central webpage ([link](#)) to see all the Chapter's committees. Contact the Chair to get plugged in.

Street Maintenance & Collection Systems Schools need you!

APWA Oregon Chapter offers Street Maintenance & Collection Systems Schools twice a year; one in the spring and one in the fall. The spring school includes an Equipment ROADeo. Our "School Committee" strives to put together a technical program that offers a minimum of 2.0 CEUs for full attendance at each of the schools. These schools utilize a 20- to 25-member committee for all three disciplines that help in recruiting appropriate speakers and topics for the schools. ODOT T2 is a huge support for these schools and offers Roads Scholars programs for one of the tracks.

We currently have some committee member spots to fill; specifically for the "streets" and "safety" committee. If you are interested or know someone who would be a great asset for us, consider sending them our way! If you need additional information, please email Maggie Vohs, APWA Events Director, at cameomag@gmail.com.

Know someone who would exceptionally serve the Chapter? Nominate them for the Chapter Board. Contact John Lewis, Chapter President, for more details (jmlewis@orc.org).

Have more questions?

Contact Leslie Finnigan (lfinnigan@ufsrw.com) to find out more about joining APWA and getting involved.

Follow Us On Social Media

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Homelessness Crisis

FINDING NEW SOLUTIONS IN A PANDEMIC

By Brian Richardson, Public Affairs Manager, City of Eugene

The COVID-19 pandemic reshaped our habits and forced many of us to rethink our work and processes. For Eugene Public Works, this new workflow included the management of two large temporary camps for unsheltered people, and significant support to minimize the impacts of unsanctioned camps in the right-of-way throughout the city. Creating this new network of workflows and resources included many lessons learned and will continue to inform how Eugene Public Works and the City of Eugene operate.



Figure 1. Safe Sleep Site serves as temporary solution for unhoused crisis.

Stay-in-Place Guidance

When the world shifted in March of 2020 out of concern of the coronavirus, so did the City's practice of routinely cleaning and clearing unsanctioned encampments on public property. Instead, and in accordance with Centers for Disease and Control and Prevention (CDC) guidance, the City shifted to supporting people staying in place to limit campers' movement and potential spread of the virus. City personnel began checking in with these public encampments, providing information and sanitary supplies, and removing trash and excess debris.

Throughout the early stages of the pandemic, Public Works crews continued assessing encampments. However, with the stay-in-place guidance from the CDC, crews would only close and clean an area for a few specific reasons:

- Sites posing extreme risk to health and safety.
- Proximity to park facilities like playgrounds, sports fields and paths, or to sensitive environmental areas like waterways.
- Sites blocking access to public properties, sidewalks, or roadways.

Surging cases

By fall 2020, COVID-19 cases were again surging. At the same time, some encampments were becoming unsanitary and unsafe. The scene was familiar to cities along the Interstate 5 corridor: widespread trash and debris; scorched ground where people were openly burning; trees and other foliage cut and mangled; encampments frequently sprawling and blocking sidewalks; needles and human waste creating safety and sanitation problems and damaging the overall community's sense of safety and livability. Reports of crime also increased. (Continued on next page)



Figure 2. Garbage left behind after Public Works closed an area near the Willamette River.

Homelessness Crisis

TEMPORARY SANCTIONED CAMPS (CONTINUED...)



Figure 3. People staying at temporary camp in Washington Jefferson Park.

One of those locations was on property owned by the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) along Washington and Jefferson streets. Dozens of tents lined the right-of-way. Nearby residents became increasingly frustrated, sharing that they no longer felt safe and the sanitation issues were creating problems.

On December 2, 2020, after the City signed a lease agreement to take over management of the area from the ODOT, crews closed the area so it could be cleaned. People living in the right of way had to leave so the area could be restored. Many local homelessness advocates banded together to defend encampments and question the City's motives and lack of clarity with its stay-in-place practices. During the closure, the City had public information officers on scene to hand out information about the work and answer questions from the public. This allowed crews to safely perform the cleanup work.

Following the closure and cleaning, many of the campers immediately moved into the adjacent Washington Jefferson Park. In an attempt to clarify what would be allowed for urban camping during the pandemic, the City created criteria. These criteria included where people could not be:

- Neighborhood [parks](#)
- Blocking bike paths or sidewalks
- Near homes and businesses

There were also several behavior-based criteria intended to minimize the impact on those living and working nearby:

- Limit excessive trash and debris
- No excessive drug use
- No verified reports of criminal behavior

Staff immediately shared these new criteria with local social service providers, advocates for the unhoused, and people experiencing homelessness. Creating clear, consistent guidelines established a baseline that was easier for people to follow and created a sense of accountability.

Large Temporary Sanctioned Camps

In addition to Washington Jefferson Park, people started camping on an undeveloped City-owned property about a mile away. To maintain health and safety standards for the unhoused campers and nearby residents, the City procured sanitation, water and garbage services at both locations. Right-sizing these new services was challenging as the camp populations grew. In addition to health and safety concerns, the area experienced an increase in criminal activity. Eugene Police, which was facing its own resource challenges, utilized overtime to provide coverage at the parks to suppress illicit activities.

With hundreds of people staying in these temporary camps, staff hired and trained site monitors. Site monitors proved to be invaluable assets as they built relationships with the people staying at the sites and consistently shared the criteria to better achieve compliance so campers wouldn't be asked to leave.

Dumpsters were available throughout the large temporary camps, but staff still found themselves gathering excessive amounts of garbage, discarded food and used needles. As weeks turned into months, this hard work became challenging for staff to keep up with and had strong, negative impacts on worker morale. In the fall of 2021, the City signed a contract with a local spill and environmental response company for trash, debris and hazardous waste removal. (Continued on next page)

Homelessness Crisis

SAFE SLEEP SITES (CONTINUED...)



Figure 4. Staff utilized a gridding system at temporary camp at 13th Avenue.

Staff also had challenges tracking and limiting a population that has traditionally been transient in nature. An administrative order in the spring of 2021 declared that no new people could move into the park. However, with such a large area to assess, it was hard to know who was new or who had appeared over the weekend. In both locations, staff implemented a grid system in which people could occupy a 12' by 12' predetermined section of the sites. This gave staff the opportunity to track how many spaces were occupied, and better identify and connect with campers. As people left their section of the camps, it was then closed and the number of people staying in these camps slowly declined.

Vehicle Camping

The number of people living in their vehicles dramatically increased during the pandemic, and specifically in industrial parts of the city. What was once a few known trouble spots turned into streets overwhelmed by campers and RVs, large piles of garbage and debris, increased reports of crime and intimidation, and human waste. Each passing month brought louder and more numerous demands for service from the business community.

As community members began working from home, the immediate, drastic changes in public behavior resulted in a huge loss in parking revenue. The Parking Services enforcement team was reduced, although it was inadequately equipped to manage the large number of people camping in their vehicles, even with pre-pandemic staffing levels. This was a clear case of COVID-19 indirectly impacting the City's ability to address a considerable community need that was itself exacerbated by COVID-19 considerations.

Unified Command

One of the biggest challenges in the City's unhoused response was coordination. Five of the City's six departments managed significant, separate roles in responding to homelessness, and it was hard to stay coordinated as each department had different goals, needs and operating practices. The City's executive directors believed it was time to take a new approach.

In March 2021 the City implemented a Unified Command, an Incident Command System that allows agencies with different legal, geographic, and functional authorities and responsibilities to work together effectively. Bringing different departments together into one team created space for shared goals and objectives, and significantly improved communications. The team could troubleshoot common problems and complaints from the public while working toward solutions that put people in safer situations than living in parks and rights-of-way.

Creating Safe Sleeps Sites

In April 2021, the Eugene City Council approved an ordinance to create more safe and lawful places for people to sleep, called Safe Sleep sites. The ordinance allowed for the temporary establishment of "safe parking" and "safe tent" sites that could provide options for individuals to legally park their vehicles or sleep in tents. The goal of the Safe Sleep sites was to quickly create more safe shelter spaces for the large number of people experiencing unsheltered homelessness in the community, and that these safe spaces have as few barriers to entry as possible and provide supportive services to help people access housing and long-term stability.

These sites could accommodate a larger number of vehicles or tents than previously allowed by code, up to 60 vehicles or up to 40 tents. Sites would be managed by social service providers who are responsible for compliance with rules and community agreements, monitoring who is allowed to be on-site, coordinating ongoing site infrastructure needs, being accessible and responsive to neighbor concerns, and coordinating with the City and other partners.

Establishing Safe Sleep sites is no easy feat. The Development Review Team (DRT) used a broad set of criteria to compile a list of potential shelter sites for tent and vehicle camping. Sites had to be larger than 0.66 acres, have reasonable access to a road, street, or bikeways, be within half a mile of public transportation, and not in a wetland or Goal 5 area.

Homelessness Crisis

INCREASED ENGAGEMENT (CONTINUED...)

In all, the DRT reviewed more than 300 public and private locations, with several dozen properties meeting the established criteria. Once selected, staff worked with the local Chamber of Commerce for outreach and engagement.

Increased Communication and Engagement

As community concerns grew and requests for service grew, staff quickly found that they needed to coordinate communications about the City's response to homelessness. A public information officer was appointed as part of the Unified Command structure to lead a small team of City staff in creating talking points for internal groups who had regular contact with the public, talking with residents who were severely impacted to better understand their needs and how their concerns could be mitigated, providing regular communications with interested parties and service providers, and to help provide answers on-site when there were park or right-of-way closures. Having this singular, consistent messaging proved critical in helping the community understand the complexity of the problem and the steps the City was taking to improve the situation.

The PIO team also started drafting and disseminating weekly reports about areas where urban camping was prevalent or causing increased questions and concerns. These reports first went to the Mayor, City Council and other City Executives, and soon expanded to an interested parties list for people who live or work near the urban camps.

When responding to complaints of unsanctioned camping, the PIO team was able to funnel information back to the Unified Command team, including community feedback about impacts, recurring hotspots, degradation of livability, and needs of the unhoused community and service providers. This furthered the strategic development of an informed response to the crisis within the City's capacity and legal authority.

As part of the Unified Command, the City also created a business liaison position. This person served as the primary contact for business owners. This not only helped the City better understand business concerns and needs, but allowed for improved communications to businesses owners as well as created a point of contact for when staff needed to better understand impacts and needs in regard to potential changes to parking regulations.

Opening Safe Sleep Sites



Figure 5. Safe Sleep site at 310 Garfield was created for vehicles and has remained at capacity since opening.

The City's original Safe Sleep site list was reduced to about a dozen potential locations. However, as new details emerged about specific sites, that list quickly narrowed. The City Council originally approved two sites and then an additional three.

The first task of establishing Safe Sleep sites proved to be the most challenging. Staff needed to identify a social service provider to provide oversight to the shelter. Very few providers have the capacity to manage upwards of dozens of people at one location, so creating multiple large-scale sites would be challenging. Luckily, the City was able to partner with St. Vincent de Paul Society of Lane County which has extensive experience operating shelters and the ability to scale up to manage additional sites. Despite workforce challenges that came with the pandemic, they were able to hire enough new employees to run two large Safe Sleep sites at neighboring properties.

Another success story came from the business community. A local pastor volunteered to help with outreach for people living in their vehicles on the streets. His energy and passion for creating solutions persuaded a local business leader to join forces and create Everyone Village – a shelter designed to empower healing, bolster food security, create jobs, and add to community resiliency.

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Homelessness Crisis

FUNDING (CONTINUED...)



Figure 6. Heather Sielicki with Everyone Village shows one of the homes at Everyone Village.

With social service providers on board, staff were then tasked with building and preparing the shelters to receive people. The sites were intended to provide safe, sanctioned locations for people who are unsheltered to be and stabilize. Site amenities include portable restrooms, hand-washing stations, garbage service, lighting, fencing, covered warming/cooling/meeting spaces, potable water, electrical power, and storage for belongings. One of the sites also required significant grading work. This tremendous amount of work to prepare the sites was frequently delayed by contractor and supply chain problems – another impact of the pandemic.

Funding

The City of Eugene incurred both one-time and ongoing costs associated with establishing and operating Safe Sleep Sites for tent and car camping. In December 2022, the City Council approved \$7.5 million in directly allocated ARPA funds to support development and operations of Safe sleep Sites as well as operations to mitigate the community impacts of unsheltered homelessness. Additionally, the local state delegation supported the City of Eugene's Safe Sleep sites and Rest Stop efforts with \$3.5 million in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding for land and site infrastructure.

Staff are working to develop cost estimates associated with establishing and operating managed sites for fiscal year (FY23) and beyond. In addition to the resources already budgeted for the current fiscal year, the State Legislature recently allocated an additional \$5.75 million

in funds to support sheltering unsheltered people and to provide sanitation services. This funding along with unbudgeted direct allocation ARPA funds will be presented to the budget committee and council for consideration to continue and potentially expand services in FY23. While the City's General Fund resources, various sources of ARPA funding, and one time funding from the state are being used to provide initial funding for this work, the City will consider additional approaches to extend funding for these services while a longer-term funding solution is sought in partnership with the County, State, and Federal governments and social service providers.

Transitioning to Safe Sleep Sites

As the first three Safe Sleep sites opened and started receiving people, staff found themselves yet another challenge to navigate. Many in the unhoused community have a distrust of the government and/or shelters providers, and so wouldn't automatically accept a shelter over camping in a park. In the weeks before the sites were to open, staff and workers from St. Vincent de Paul Society of Lane County connected with unhoused community members to show them the shelter features, share site operations and expectations, and dispel rumors. When the City closed Washington Jefferson Park for restoration in March 2022, nearly 75 percent of the occupied camp spaces at the start of the transition period chose to move into Safe Sleep sites.

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Homelessness Crisis

MOVING FORWARD (CONTINUED...)



Figure 7. Living quarters at Safe Sleep site at 410 Garfield.

Stay in Place Orders Lifted

When Governor Brown lifted the state's indoor mask mandate, the City lifted its temporary stay-in-place order for urban camping, bringing back the City's long-standing rules regarding camping.

Reinstating the urban camping rules is challenging. The City must address situations where unsanctioned camping impacts health and safety, use of the right-of-way, or the safe operations of schools, businesses and shelters. However, limited staffing capacity means that staff are unable to respond to all reports of unsanctioned camping. Situations with the greatest negative impact including debris or multiple sites are prioritized.

In response to established camping sites, staff provide a 72-hour warning (per recently-approved state law) and return no sooner than 72 hours to clean the site unless there are illegal activities other than camping occurring, and/or an exceptional emergency including but not limited to possible site contamination by hazardous materials, a public health emergency or other immediate danger to human life or safety. Additional conflicts arise when people are camping on land owned by ODOT, but under City lease. ODOT policies indicate people must be given ten days to remove their items and vacate an area, which is significantly longer than the state-mandated 72-hour warning. This can erode trust with neighbors who want action taken immediately, but don't appreciate the complex interaction of state laws with differing agency policies.

Moving Forward

As we move into spring, the UC and departmental teams involved in unhoused work are coordinating to identify changes to roles and responsibilities that will better align the mission of teams and add additional capacity to support homelessness operations. While the changes occur, the City will demobilize the UC with an emphasis on enhanced cross-departmental coordination and operational support. Some people will move back into roles in the organization that do not typically engage in homelessness work, while others will continue on in their typical work of reducing unsheltered homelessness and mitigating the impacts of urban camping.

However, due to the systems and relationships that have been built over the past two years during what has often been intense and emotional work, the City and its teams are better positioned to work together to help address the crisis of unsheltered homelessness facing our community.

With that said, everyone knows that we're a long way from creating and supporting the community capacity for meaningful, systemic solutions that provide better housing and daily living situations for all unhoused people. These efforts will need to cross political boundaries as well as find solutions in both the public and private sector and must include substantial assistance for people with mental health and addiction issues. Eugene's work over the last few years highlights a dedicated staff's ability to come together under a unified goal to overcome challenges that feel insurmountable and create positive change that impacts an entire community.