

NEWBERG

CITY COUNCIL UPDATE

May-July 2024 Recap | Newberg, Oregon

Looking Back

24-25 Budget Approved. On May 15, the Budget Committee approved the 2024-25 budget in the amount of \$130M, less than the city's 23-24 operating budget, which was \$133.4M. To our knowledge, we are the only city of our size in Oregon that reduced its operational costs. Revenue projections decreased by 2%, largely due to the restructuring of System Development Charges for developers and builders, a decline in the number of building and planning permit fees, and one-time grants that were received in 23-24. The Budget Committee, comprised of the seven city council members and seven citizens, met four times in April and early May to review the proposed budget.

Urban Growth Analysis. In May the council and city staff continued to look at the costs and benefits associated with urban growth expansion. While this work continues, a pause is under consideration because the cost-benefit ratio appears to be unacceptable at this time. Even though city council goals include annexing land, the current process is too expensive. The price tag just to hire consultants to apply for expansion is about \$750,000; and even if successful, buildable land would increase only minimally. The council will continue to look for a positive change in land use laws. (With that said, the objective of adding industrial land has traction with the council.)

Glenn Cloyd is Sworn in. Council was delighted in July to welcome Glenn to represent District 3 on City Council. As soon as he took the oath of office, the council voted to name him the ex-officio member of the Planning Commission. Glenn, who will be running for the seat in November, will finish out the remaining six months of term left vacant by Molly Olson's resignation. Molly was appointed in December 2022 after the passing of long-time councilor Denise Bacon that October.

Council Awards Grant to Habitat for Humanity.

Council approved a \$28,580 Newberg Affordable Housing Trust Fund grant to Newberg Area Habitat for Humanity. It will be used to help finance the Habitat for Humanity homes on N. College near Deskins.

More Customer Service Initiatives On July 15th the Community Development Department presented to Council their new customer service strategies and initiatives in line with the council's goal for the city to "create a high level of customer service". The plan includes performance specific measures by which the team's success can be evaluated on an ongoing basis. Builders, developers and other residents are already seeing an improvement in both the process and timeline for obtaining permits for projects with the city.

Keller Engineering Comes Alongside the City. Also in July, Council approved hiring Keller Engineering to provide part-time engineering services in lieu of replacing two engineers who recently left the city's employ. It is anticipated that this arrangement with Keller will provide an annual cost savings of \$90,000 and at the same time provide a much greater depth and breadth of engineering expertise.

Looking Ahead

Road Repair Work Simplified. The city recently issued a competitive request for proposals to road repair contractors for crack and slurry sealing. We will see this work begun soon and will be done by the "1,000 square foot measure" which gives us the "most bang for our buck". The funds for these road repairs come from the Transportation Utility Fee (TUF) paid by residents on the municipal bill. Please note this is already paying off.

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Short Term Rentals – What do You Think? The Short-term Rental ad hoc committee is hosting an open house on **Thursday, August 22nd at 7pm** to share with residents their recommended policy on vacation rentals and to listen to residents' opinions. Residents who attend can enter to win an iPad (one entry per family attending the event). Please join us in the Denise Bacon Community Room of the Public Safety Building at 401 E. 3rd St.

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