

Longview's two major utility projects make progress

Earlier this year, we provided our customers with information about two significant challenges facing our water and sewer utilities and the tough choices facing the Longview City Council. The City Council and staff have studied the challenges and potential solutions for several years, and the City Council recently selected solutions to each challenge and staff is making progress toward implementing those solutions.

Drinking Water Solutions Decided

The City Council and staff evaluated the potential long-term solutions for continuing to provide a safe and reliable water supply, and on June 12, with the support of staff and Cowlitz PUD commissioners (Cowlitz PUD owns a 14% share of the treatment plant), the City Council decided to build a new groundwater supply and treatment facility at the Mint Farm Industrial Park.

A number of studies by technical experts evaluated the aquifer characteristics and water quality, the potential for groundwater contamination, and the initial construction costs and long term operation and maintenance costs. **This solution was determined to provide the highest level of reliability and the lowest long term cost for providing safe drinking water to our community.**

The Process Begins

After selecting the solution to resolve water treatment issues, the City Council awarded a \$280,600 contract to the firm of Robinson, Noble, and Saltbush to design the groundwater monitoring system and groundwater wells, and to assist the City to transfer and secure new water rights to use the groundwater supply and provide capacity for growth. City staff has also begun the process to hire engineers to design the treatment plant, transmission mains, and other facilities necessary to produce drinking water from groundwater.

Costs and Timelines

The current cost of the new groundwater supply and treatment system is estimated to be \$34 million, and we project that our new water supply will be providing water to our community sometime in 2011. The City has secured a \$478,000 federal grant and an \$8 million low interest loan, and is continuing to pursue additional grants and low interest loans to pay for this project. Based on the current funding sources, our customers are facing increases totaling about 35% above our current rates to pay for this water treatment project.

Water Treatment Issues:

- Reliability of an aging treatment plant
- Sediment buildup from the Cowlitz River
- Long-term supply and demand

Solution at a Glance:

- Build a new treatment facility with deep aquifer wells at the Mint Farm Industrial Park



This is an example of a microfiltration plant similar to what will be built at the Mint Farm Industrial Park.

Sewer Treatment Solution Confirmed

After several years of evaluating the potential solutions to our sewer treatment challenges at the West Longview Lagoons Treatment Plant, the City Council decided to abandon the existing treatment lagoons and divert all sewage to the Three Rivers Regional Wastewater Authority.

The option was determined to be the least-cost option for providing sewage treatment meeting state standards and providing capacity for growth in the city.

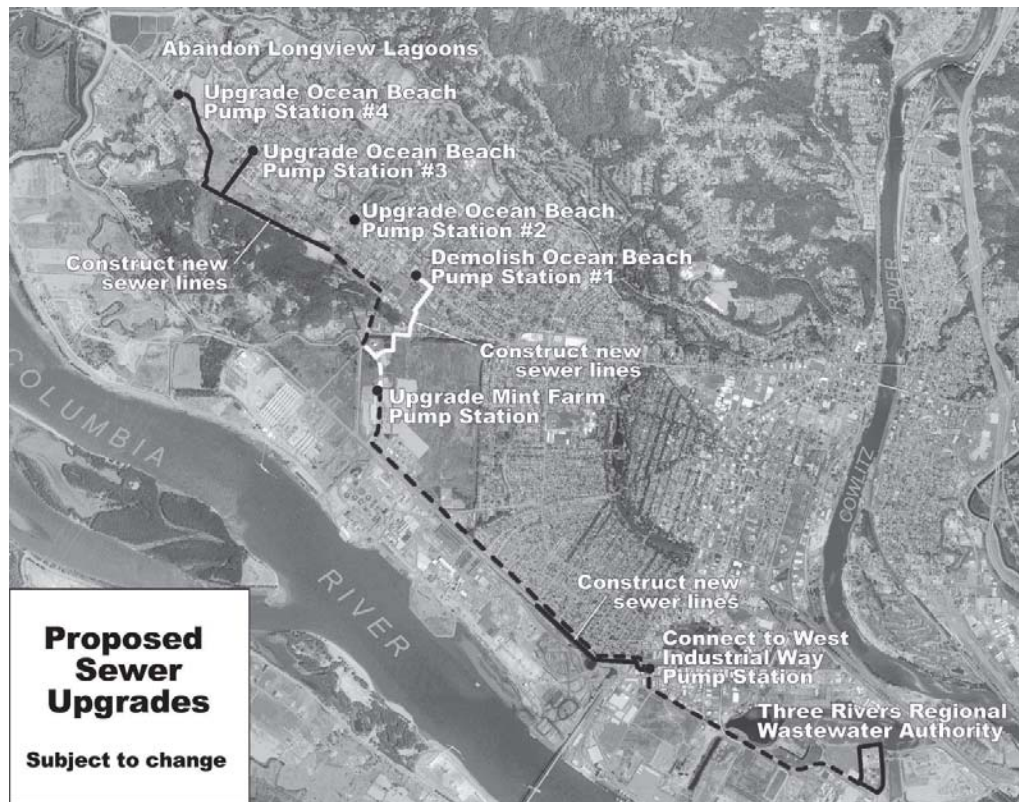
On January 24, the City Council approved a \$1,443,341 contract with Gibbs & Olson Engineers to design the pump stations and pipelines necessary to re-route sewage from west Longview to the Three Rivers Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant. City staff is pursuing various funding sources for this estimated \$24 million project, which, similar to the water treatment project, will be in service sometime in 2011. However, based on the current funding sources, our customers are facing increases totaling 28% above our current sewer rates to pay for this project.

Sewer Treatment Issues:

- West Longview lagoons treatment capacity used up
- West Longview lagoons operating permit cannot be renewed

Solution at a Glance:

- Abandon lagoons and divert sewage to Three Rivers Regional Wastewater Authority treatment plant



Stay informed

We encourage you to stay abreast of the process and to participate as much as you can in discussions as we move toward completing these projects. You may read more about our utility projects online at www.mylongview.com, including many of the water supply reports prepared during the evaluation period, or you may request project information by calling 442-5200.