



THURSTON COUNTY PUBLIC WORKS ANNUAL REPORT

2024



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ABOUT PUBLIC WORKS

MISSION

To provide excellent public services in all areas of our business.

VISION

The premier public works organization, accountable and transparent in all services we provide to our community.

VALUES



ACCOUNTABILITY

We take responsibility for our actions and the resulting outcomes.



CUSTOMER SERVICE

We provide our customers with the highest level of service and quality.



INNOVATION

We strive to continuously improve process, performance, and results.



SAFETY

We demonstrate an uncompromising commitment to safety.



TEAMWORK

We work together toward achieving a common recognized end.

ORG CHART

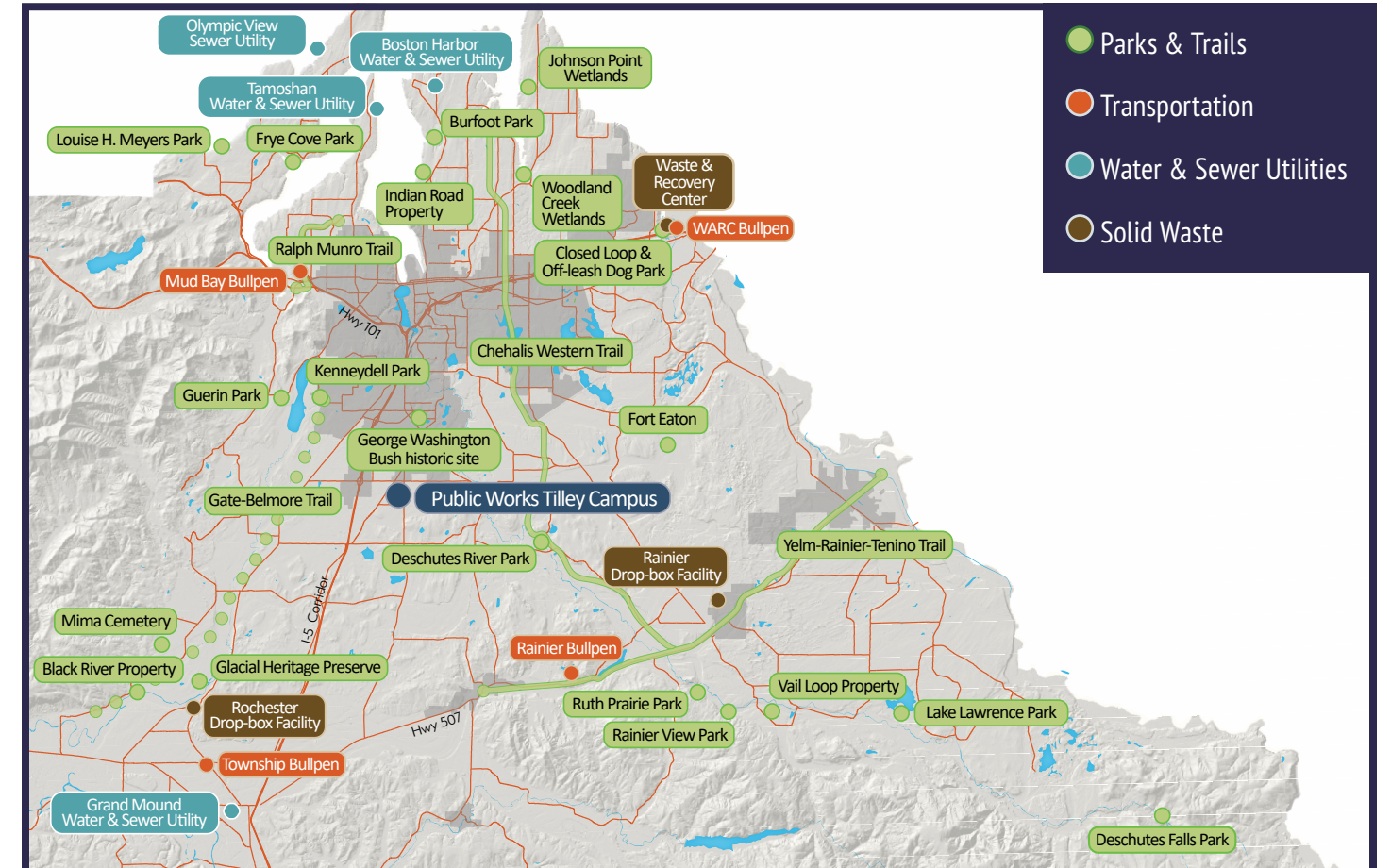
Public Works is one of the largest departments in Thurston County. The department budgeted for **220 full-time positions** in 2024. In addition to its full-time employees, the department also employed **14 seasonal workers**. Below is the breakdown of the department's six divisions.

DIRECTOR'S OFFICE 2					
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR					
OFFICE OF THE COUNTY ENGINEER 58	ROAD OPERATIONS 66	SOLID WASTE 32	WATER RESOURCES 26	BUSINESS SERVICES 25	ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES 11
Construction Engineering	Drainage	Administration & Planning	Noxious Weed Management	Asset Management	Administrative Support
Design Engineering	National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System	Community Litter Cleanup Program	Storm and Surface Water Inspection & Assessment	Communications	Safety & Training
Development Review	Roadway	Facilities Operations	Technical Services	Finance & Procurement	
Real Estate Services	Roadside	Recycling & Waste Reduction	Water & Sewer Utilities	Program Project Management	
Survey	Parks & Trails	Scale & Tollhouse Operations			
Traffic Engineering and Operations					

00 Full-time position count

THURSTON COUNTY INFRASTRUCTURE

The Public Works Department is responsible for maintaining a wide range of infrastructure programs and projects connecting communities throughout Thurston County.



1,026
MILES OF ROAD

107
MILES OF SIDEWALKS

1,000
STREET LIGHTS

17,000
TRAFFIC SIGNS

150
BRIDGES

3
SOLID WASTE FACILITIES

4
WASTEWATER SYSTEMS

3
WATER SYSTEMS

2,578
ACRES OF PARK LANDS

1,170
MILES OF PUBLIC STORMWATER CONVEYANCE

56
MILES OF TRAILS

DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

As we prepare the Thurston County Public Works 2024 Annual Report, I'm provided the opportunity to reflect on another year of progress, innovation, and commitment to serving our community. This year, we continued to adapt to change, embrace new opportunities, and remain steadfast in our mission to provide excellent public services.

In 2024, we experienced transformative developments within the county, including the implementation of an enterprise resource planning system, the onboarding of a new County Manager, and the transition to a five-member Board of County Commissioners. Within this environment of significant change and opportunity, Public Works has upheld its dedication to delivering impactful services. Through organizational innovation and a focus on operational excellence, our team remains a cornerstone of county infrastructure and community well-being.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS FROM 2024:

- **Staff Growth and Development:** We celebrated an internal promotion rate of 35%, showcasing our commitment to investing in our team through training, mentorship, and professional development opportunities, and welcomed new talent with 70 job openings. These actions have strengthened our workforce and fostered a culture of excellence.
- **Improved Space Planning and Efficiency:** The Tilley campus underwent significant space planning and coordination efforts to support our growing team and enhance operational efficiencies. These updates demonstrate our ability to adapt our resources and innovate to meet the changing needs of our staff and the community.
- **Strategic Funding Success:** We secured approximately \$18 million in grants, allowing us to complete critical projects and support community-focused programs. This success underscores our ability to leverage resources effectively to maximize community impact.
- **ARPA Projects:** Significant progress was made on American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funded projects, with over \$7.4 million allocated by the Board of County Commissioners for water, sewer, and pavement preservation initiatives. These projects are on track for timely project completion, ensuring we meet critical deadlines and deliver long-term benefits to residents.

CONTINUED FOCUS ON STRATEGIC GOALS:

- **Asset Management Program Expansion:** The addition of new staff and a successful mowing pilot program utilizing new technology tools has bolstered our asset management progress, providing real-time data that enhances planning and operations.
- **Enhanced Safety Standards:** With a continued focus on safety training and awareness, we've seen improvements in workplace safety metrics. Initiatives like individualized CDL driver training, expanded membership in the department's Safety Team, and enhanced platforms for providing safety reporting and training are key drivers of this success.
- **Records Management Improvements:** We've streamlined records management processes to improve information accessibility and reduce costs, further demonstrating our commitment to operational efficiency.

As we look ahead to 2025, I remain incredibly proud of the dedication and resilience of our Public Works team. Together, we will continue to rise to the challenges of a growing community, ensuring that our efforts address and exceed the needs of the residents we serve.

Thank you for your continued support and partnership in our shared commitment to build a stronger, more connected Thurston County.

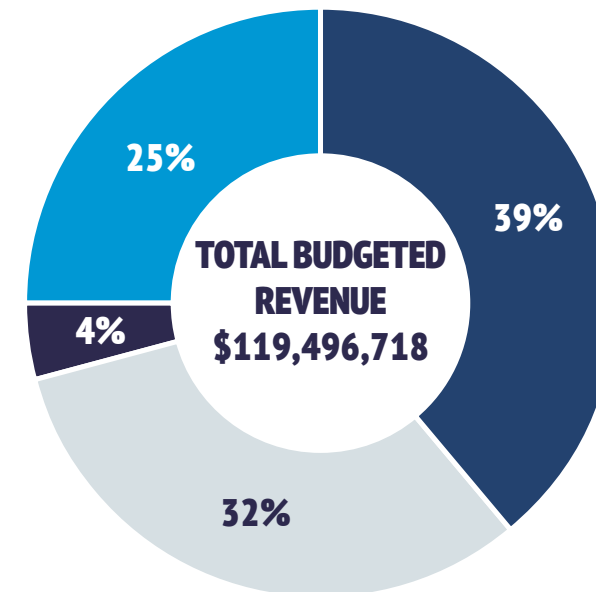


Sincerely,

Jennifer D. Walker, PMP
Director, Thurston County Public Works

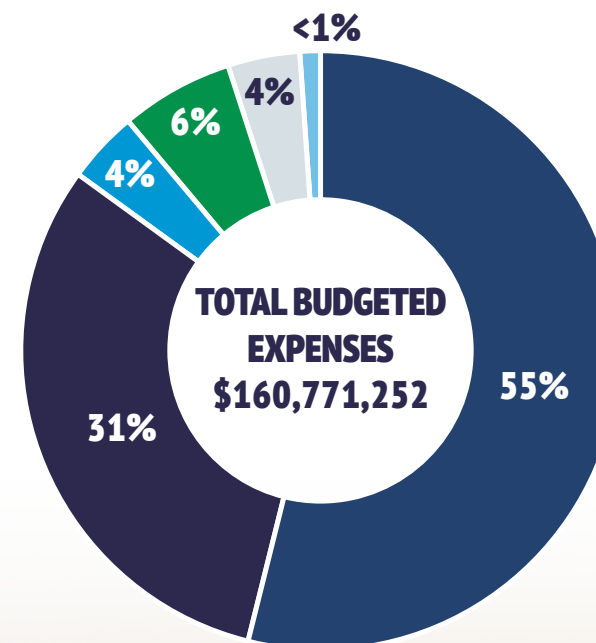
2024 BY THE NUMBERS

TOTAL BUDGETED REVENUE



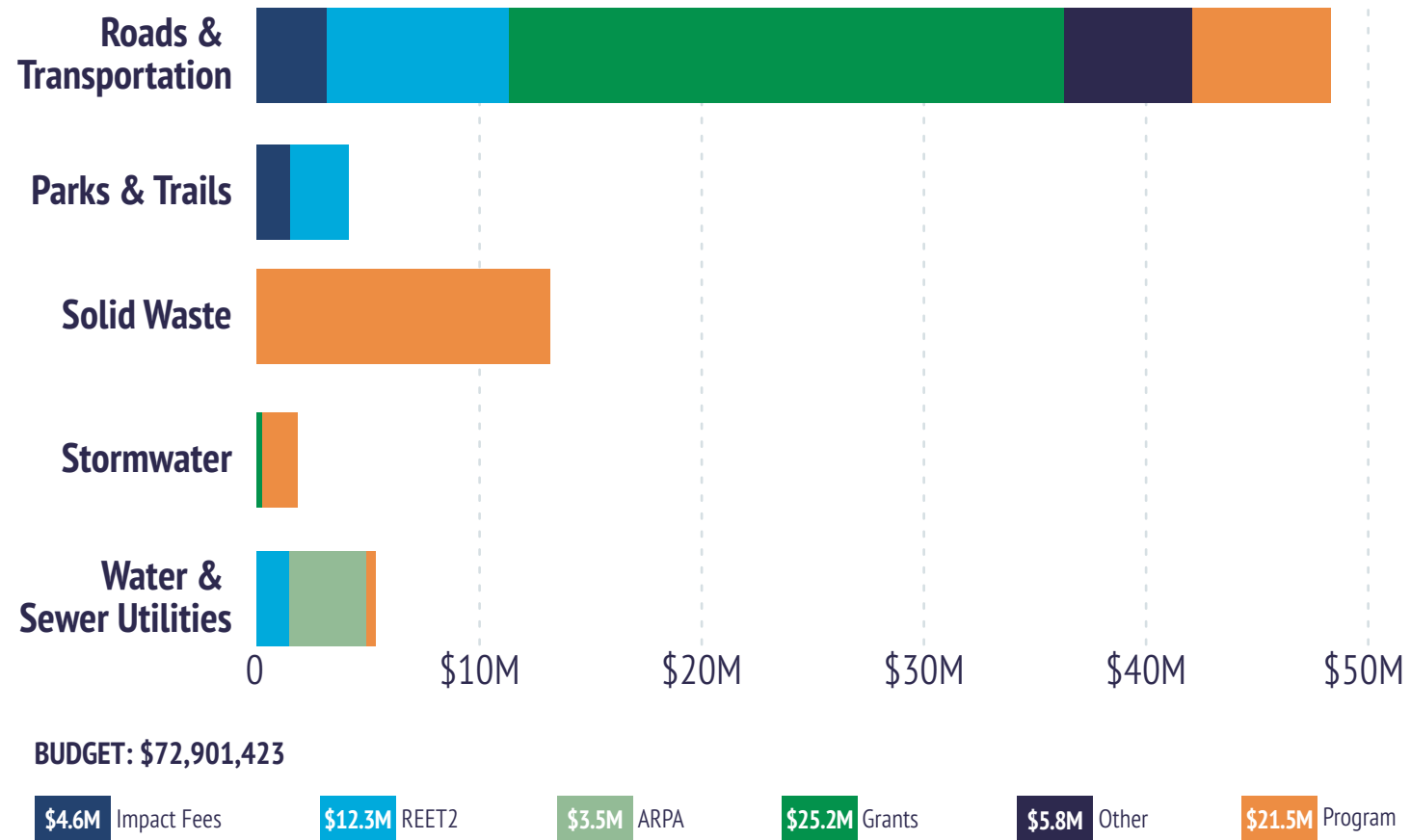
- 39% FEES & ASSESSMENTS: \$46,222,658**
- 32% TAXES & ENTITLEMENTS: \$38,754,197**
- 4% OTHER: \$4,549,641**
- 25% GRANTS: \$29,970,222**

TOTAL BUDGETED EXPENSES

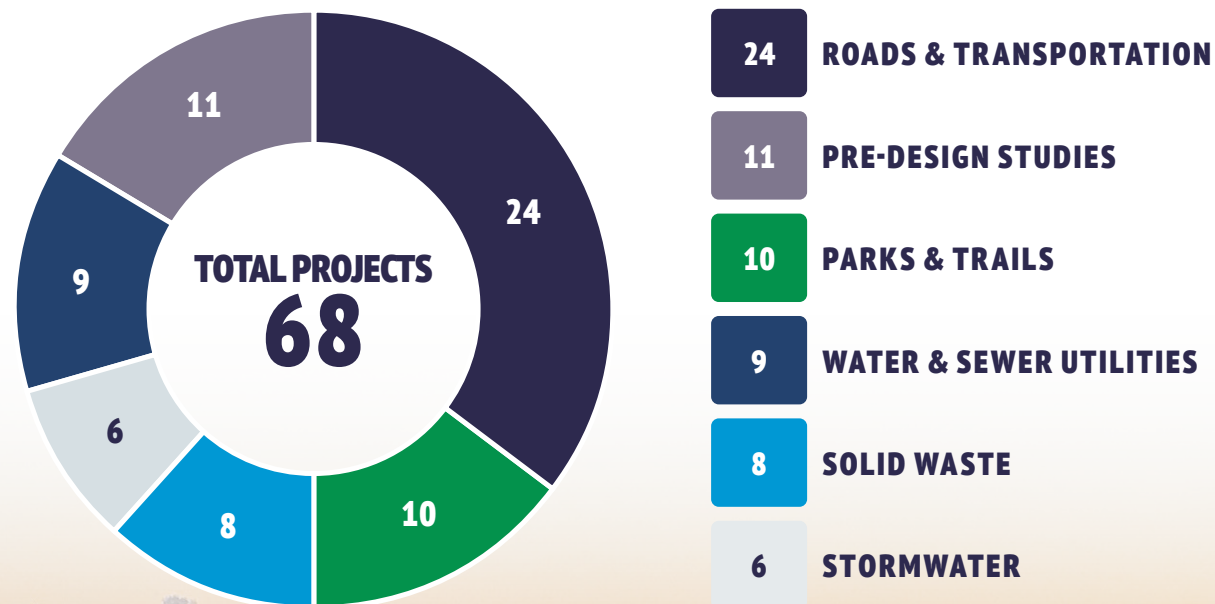


- 55% ROADS & TRANSPORTATION: \$87,265,568**
- 31% SOLID WASTE: \$49,719,388**
- 4% STORMWATER: \$7,079,581**
- 4% WATER & SEWER UTILITIES: \$9,944,372**
- 6% PARKS & TRAILS: \$5,997,271**
- <1% NOXIOUS WEEDS: \$765,072**

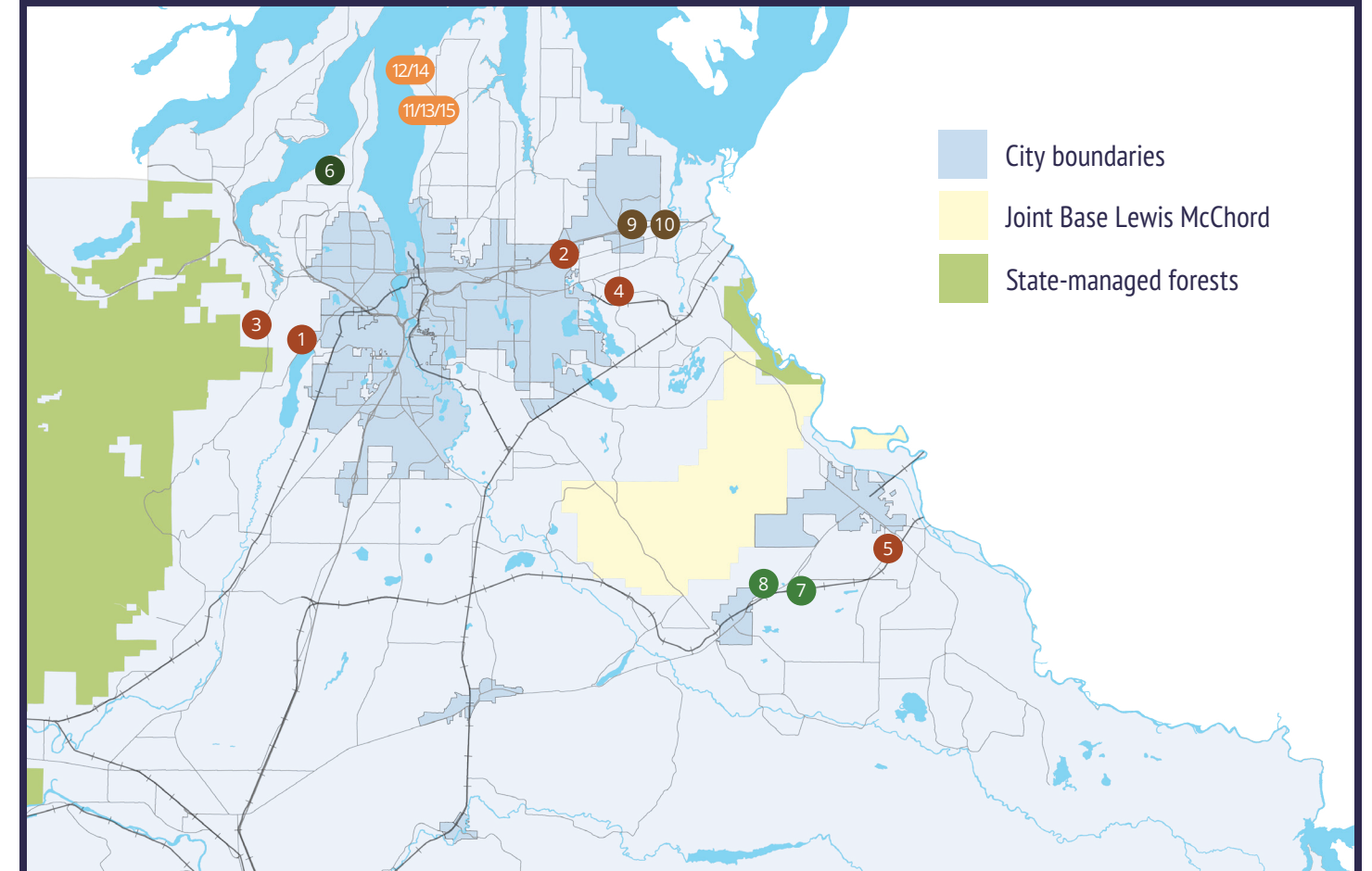
CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM PROJECTS



TOTAL ACTIVE PROJECTS



HIGHLIGHTED PROJECTS



ROADS & TRANSPORTATION

- 1 Black Lake-Belmore Bridge Approach Repair
- 2 Pavement Preservation-Pacific Ave SE & Yelm Hwy SE
- 3 Waddell Creek Rd SW Culvert Replacement
- 4 Marvin Rd Corridor Project Phase I
- 5 Morris Rd SE Paving

PARKS & TRAILS

- 7 Yelm-Rainier-Tenino Trail New Restroom and Pickleball Court
- 8 Yelm-Rainier-Tenino Trail Extension to Crowder Rd

SOLID WASTE

- 9 Waste and Recovery Center Compactor Replacement
- 10 Waste and Recovery Center Reconfiguration

FISH PASSAGE ENHANCEMENT

- 6 Green Cove Creek Fish Barrier Removal Phase I

WATER RESOURCES

- 11 Tamoshan Well Upgrade
- 12 Boston Harbor Wastewater Facilities Nutrient Reduction
- 13 Tamoshan Wastewater Facilities Nutrient Reduction
- 14 Boston Harbor Infrastructure Rehabilitation
- 15 Tamoshan Infrastructure Rehabilitation

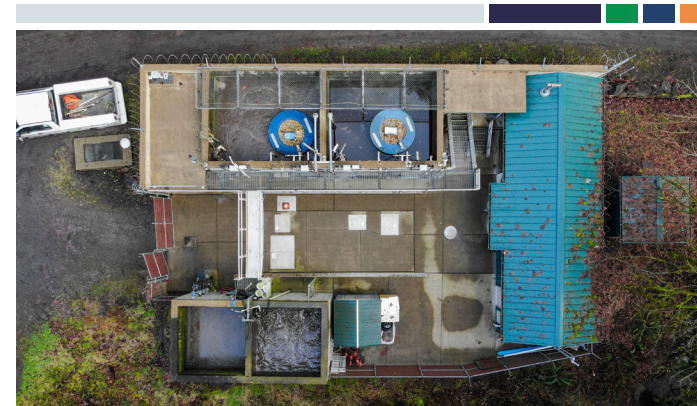
YEAR IN REVIEW

📍 SALMON RETURN TO GREEN COVE CREEK

Public Works reached a major milestone in the Green Cove Creek Fish Barrier Removal project in 2024. After removing a collapsed culvert at Country Club Road NW, adult chum salmon successfully migrated upstream for the first time since 1969. **Removing fish barriers helps fish move and spawn more effectively, contributing to a healthier and more biodiverse ecosystem.**

This project is funded through eight different sources, including a \$2.5 million grant from the U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Culvert Aquatic Organism Passage (AOP) Grant Program and \$5.7 million in federal grants.

This achievement showcases the county's commitment to improving infrastructure and environmental stewardship, improving fish passage, restoring natural habitats, and supporting local conservation efforts.



📍 TAMOSHAN AND BOSTON HARBOR ARPA-FUNDED PROJECTS

Public Works is improving the Boston Harbor and Tamoshan Water & Sewer Systems. These improvements reflect our dedication to providing high-quality public utilities and maintaining the health and safety of our environment. The Thurston County Board of County Commissioners (BoCC) approved using American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds to **improve access to clean drinking water and support vital wastewater and stormwater infrastructure.**

These enhancements will upgrade aging infrastructure, ensuring reliable and efficient services for the Tamoshan and Boston Harbor communities. The project includes modernizing water distribution and sewer collection systems to meet current standards and support future growth.

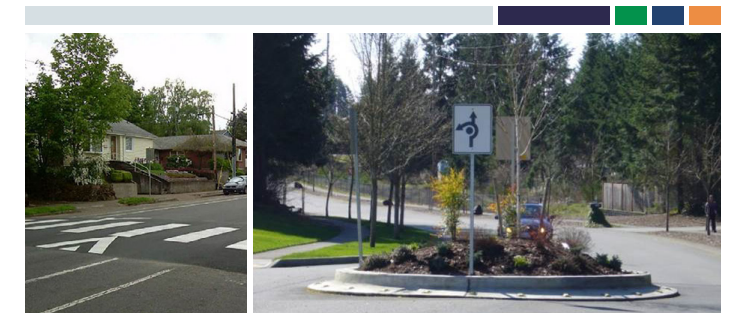
IMPROVING PERMITTING

In 2024, Development Review made big strides to improve the permitting experience. Ahead of new state requirements in 2025, we tightened intake standards, streamlined review steps, and improved coordination across departments. These updates **help applicants move through the process faster and with fewer surprises—making it easier to build in Thurston County.**



📍 PROTECTING LOCAL WATERSHEDS

This year, Public Works continued its vital work protecting Thurston County's rivers, lakes, and wetlands. The team focused on controlling invasive plants like knotweed and parrotfeather along the Chehalis River, yellow flag iris on Lake Lawrence, and purple loosestrife on the Black River. Efforts also targeted floating primrose-willow on Chambers Lake and variable leaf milfoil in Blue Lake. We continue treating Brazilian elodea in Long Lake and the Chehalis River. Our program remains committed to **helping landowners treat noxious weeds and protect the health of our shared environment.**



📍 NEIGHBORHOOD TRAFFIC CALMING PROGRAM

The Neighborhood Traffic Calming Program helps make local streets safer by working directly with neighborhoods to reduce speeding and improve safety. **The program combines education, community involvement, and physical changes to roads to encourage safer driving.**

In 2024, several neighborhoods saw meaningful improvements. A new traffic circle was installed at Cantergrove Rd SE and 21st Ave SE, a raised crosswalk on Seven Oaks St SE is planned, and speed humps on Mayes Rd SE are scheduled for construction in spring 2025. Shaped by resident input, these projects help slow traffic and make roads safer for everyone.

COMMUNITY IMPACT

FIX-IT-FAIR

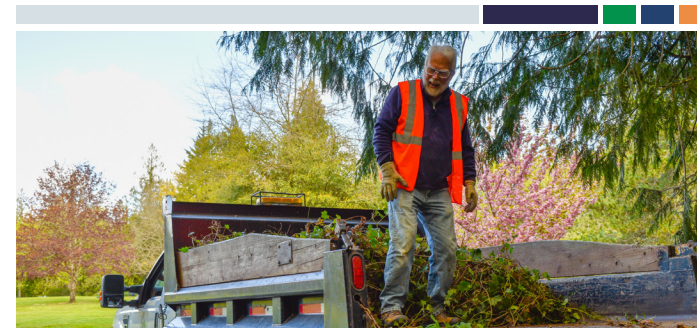
Public Works Solid Waste Division partnered with the Lacey MakerSpace for the county's first-ever Fix-It Fair. Lacey MakerSpace hosted the fair, where more than 24 volunteers worked to fix household items, appliances, clothing, and jewelry brought by community members. In all, they successfully fixed 66 items and assisted with six more. The 65 attendees chose to repair existing items rather than replace them, saving 347 pounds of resources from the landfill! 🌱



COMPOST GIVEAWAY EVENT

Rain or shine, our first-ever FREE compost giveaway was a huge success! Sixty-two Thurston County residents took home 20 cubic yards of nutrient-rich compost. That is a pile 22 feet long, 7.5 feet wide, and 4.5 feet high! The compost, made from food and yard waste, was donated by local organic innovator, Brady Trucking.

This event was possible thanks to a partnership with the Thurston County Master Recycler Composters and Intercity Transit. We're excited to continue this tradition and support a greener future for our community.



APWA GOLDEN HARDHAT AWARD

Thurston County Public Works was honored with the Golden Hardhat Award from the American Public Works Association (APWA) for the best use of the #IamPublicWorks hashtag! Thank you, APWA, for this honor!

[#IamPublicWorks](#) [#ThurstonCounty](#)



2024 TRAIL SAFETY EVENT

Parks & Trails hosted its first Trail Safety Event at the Chehalis Western Trail in Lacey. This event brought together trail users, Public Works, and the Sheriff's Office to promote safe and enjoyable outdoor experiences. Attendees learned about trail etiquette, safety tips, and available resources while engaging directly with county representatives.

Building on the success of this event, we look forward to continuing our efforts to enhance trail safety and accessibility in the years to come.

THURSTON YOUTH WIN! PROGRAM

In 2024, the Thurston Youth WIN! program made a successful comeback after a four-year break. The Watershed, Infrastructure, and Nature! (WIN!) program helps youth build leadership skills while protecting local water resources.

The program is a partnership between Thurston County Community Planning and Economic Development, Public Works Storm and Surface Water Utility, and the WSU Thurston County Extension. It provides \$600 stipends to eligible youth groups who complete service projects that help improve streams, lakes, and drinking water sources in unincorporated Thurston County.

In its soft relaunch, three youth groups completed three projects—clearing and restoring overgrown storm ponds through weeding, brush hauling, and trash removal. A total of 105 youth worked 420 hours and learned about how stormwater systems prevent flooding and pollution.

OFFICE OF THE COUNTY ENGINEER

Under the direction of the legislative authority, the Office of the County Engineer supervises the establishment, laying out, construction, alteration, improvement, repair, and maintenance of all county roads. Work groups include Design Engineering, Construction Engineering, Traffic Engineering and Operations, Survey, Development Review, and Real Estate Services.



WORK GROUPS

CONSTRUCTION ENGINEERING

The Construction Engineering work group administers and inspects capital construction projects and the pavement preservation program. The team ensures projects are constructed using the appropriate design standards and safety procedures while maintaining compliance with federal, state, and local labor and engineering requirements.

DESIGN ENGINEERING

The Design Engineering work group designs critical infrastructure projects for transportation, parks & trails, and stormwater systems. A staff of engineers uses a mix of in-house expertise and consultants to plan and deliver capital programs and projects.

DEVELOPMENT REVIEW

The Development Review work group answers permitting questions from the public and reviews and inspects private developments to be in compliance with Public Works codes and standards to protect the overall public interest. Development Review is the permitting arm of Public Works and is located in the Building Development Center at 3000 Pacific Ave SE, Olympia, WA 98501.

REAL ESTATE SERVICES

The Real Estate Services work group ensures compliance with federal law by acquiring necessary land and property rights for the county before any construction or rehabilitation project is undertaken. The team processes applications for utility companies to use county right-of-way, along with maintaining files, deeds, plans, and titles for county-owned properties. Real Estate Services manages all Public Works controlled properties related to real estate activities – including permits, leases, and disposal when applicable.

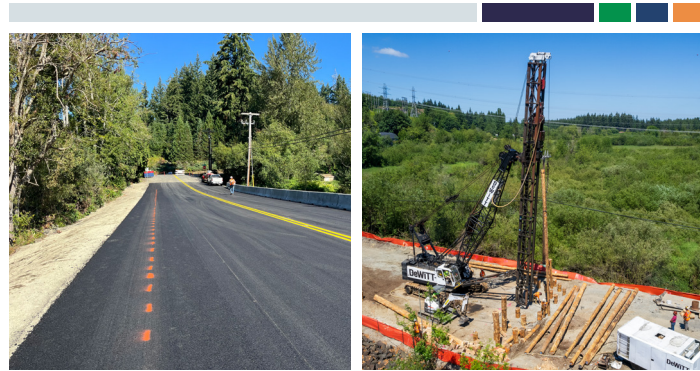
SURVEY

The Survey work group creates topographical maps of roads, trails, bridges, culverts, parking areas, and rivers to support project designs and public works teams, along with maintaining survey monument markers and references. The team also leads the department's drone program.

TRAFFIC ENGINEERING AND OPERATIONS

The Traffic Engineering and Operations work group designs, operates, and maintains traffic control devices on public roads in the unincorporated areas of Thurston County. Responsibilities include traffic signs, street lighting, road striping, speed studies, traffic engineering, Americans with Disabilities Act planning, traffic planning, outreach to neighborhood associations, and driver safety and awareness program coordination. Engineers on this team are also responsible for implementing the grant-funded Safe Routes to Schools projects.

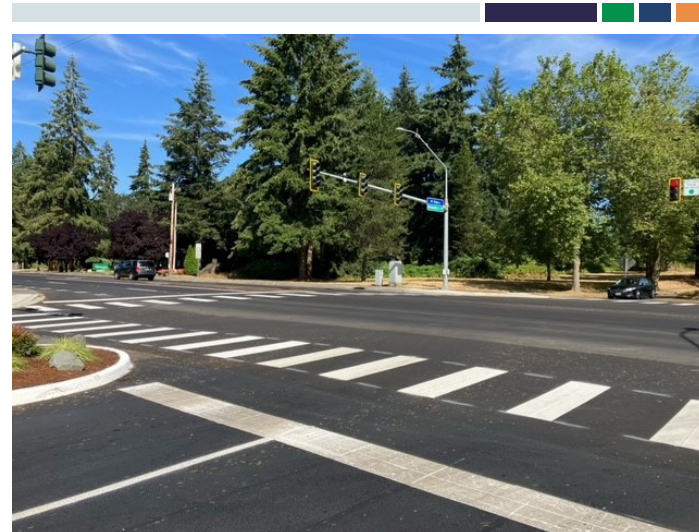
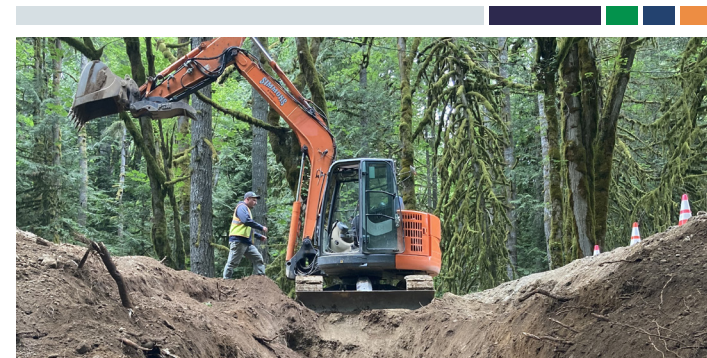
PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS



BLACK LAKE-BELMORE BRIDGE APPROACH REPAIR PROJECT

\$2.76M

Addressing critical safety concerns, this project focused on **reconstructing both approaches** to the bridge crossing over Percival Creek at the north end of Black Lake. Due to poor soil conditions, both approaches had settled by more than 2 feet, posing risks to vehicles and bicyclists. To stabilize the soils and rebuild the approaches securely, the project involved driving 540 piles, spaced approximately 5 feet apart, into the ground. Additionally, the construction included installing retaining walls and concrete barriers, further **reinforcing the structural integrity of the bridge approaches**. This project was a significant step towards ensuring the safety and durability of this crucial infrastructure.



PAVEMENT PRESERVATION—PACIFIC AVE SE & YELM HWY SE

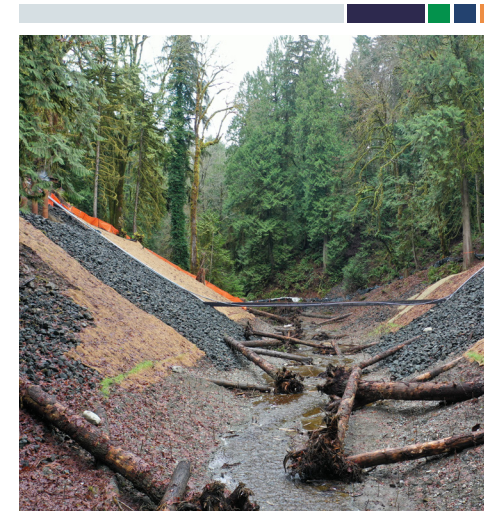
\$4.3M

The county enhanced its pedestrian infrastructure and **extended the pavement life of approximately 2 miles of two major arterial roadways**. It also improved commute conditions, impacting the daily travel of approximately 44,500 vehicles through Yelm Hwy SE from Rich Rd to Lacey City limits and Pacific Ave from the previous Lacey City limits to Union Mills. The successful completion of these mill and overlay projects not only delivered immediate improvements to road quality but also **ensured extended road durability for another 15 years**, marking another substantial investment in the county's critical infrastructure.

WADDELL CREEK RD SW CULVERT REPLACEMENT

\$325K

Three roadway culverts were replaced near the Lake Lucinda area to prepare for pavement preservation on Waddell Creek Road. A total of 188 linear feet of culvert near the end of their service life were replaced, **preventing potential road failures and ensuring the longevity of the new road surface**.



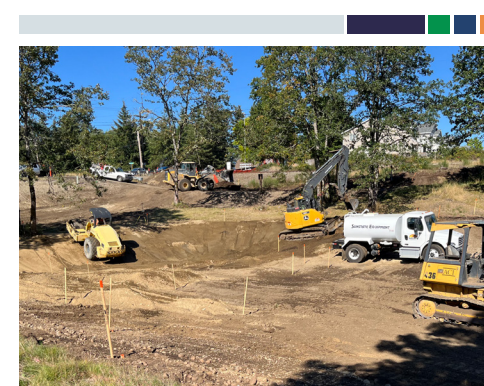
GREEN COVE CREEK FISH BARRIER REMOVAL PHASE 1

\$9.4M

A 5-foot diameter metal culvert carrying Green Cove Creek under Country Club Rd NW collapsed in 2021, **creating a near-total barrier for fish to move upstream**. Crews installed a 3-foot diameter pipe inside the original pipe as part of an emergency repair project in November 2021; however, the repair was temporary.

After removing more than 20,000 cubic yards of dirt and the damaged culvert, crews placed new streambed material and wood to stabilize the channel in time for the salmon to return in November.

Construction of a new 150-foot bridge on Country Club Rd NW at Green Cove Creek is set for construction in 2025 and is estimated to be open to the public in October 2025.



MARVIN ROAD CORRIDOR PROJECT PHASE I

\$11.6M

This project **addresses driver, pedestrian, and bicyclist safety and mobility** by installing a single-lane roundabout at the intersection of Marvin Rd and 19th Ave and 10-foot-wide shared-use paths on both sides of Marvin Rd from 22nd Ave to Union Mills Rd. Phase I focused on safety improvements from 22nd Ave SE to Union Mills Rd SE, including speed limit reduction and the removal of old train tracks. Other improvements include the addition of street lighting, protected flashing pedestrian crosswalks, and stormwater collection and treatment. This project is anticipated to be completed in 2025.

BY THE NUMBERS



3.6

LANE MILES OF ROADWAY REPAVED



67.5

LANE MILES OF ROADWAY CHIP SEALED



8

CAPITAL PROJECTS COMPLETED



63

PARCELS ACQUIRED FOR COUNTY PROJECTS



5,000

TRAFFIC DEVICES INSPECTED



500

MILES OF ROADWAY CENTERLINE AND FOG LINES PAINTED



808

DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS RECEIVED

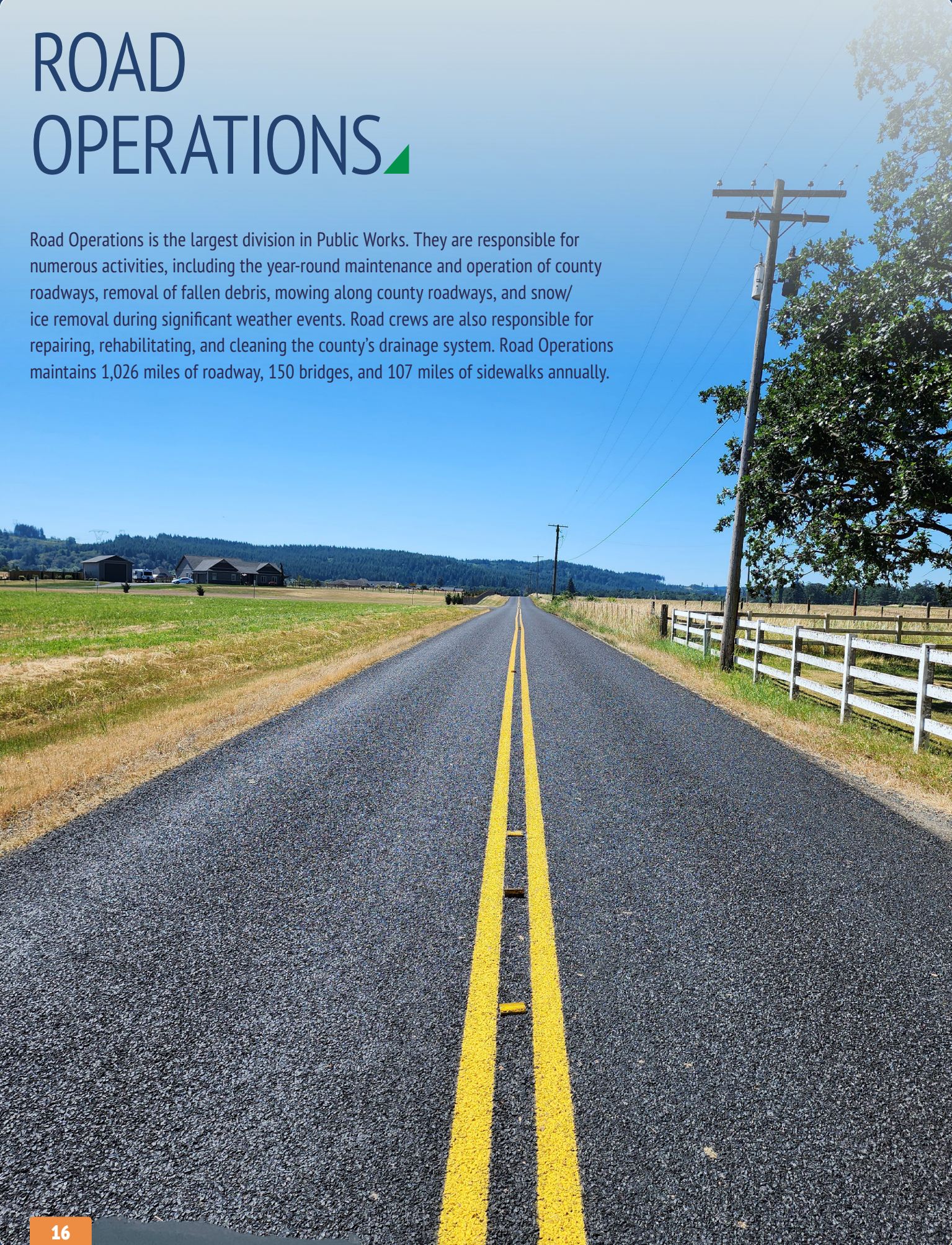


1,008

DEVELOPMENT INSPECTIONS COMPLETED

ROAD OPERATIONS

Road Operations is the largest division in Public Works. They are responsible for numerous activities, including the year-round maintenance and operation of county roadways, removal of fallen debris, mowing along county roadways, and snow/ice removal during significant weather events. Road crews are also responsible for repairing, rehabilitating, and cleaning the county's drainage system. Road Operations maintains 1,026 miles of roadway, 150 bridges, and 107 miles of sidewalks annually.



WORK GROUPS

DRAINAGE

The Drainage work group maintains drainage ditches and repairs and installs catch basins and culverts. Teams remove sediment, rubbish, and debris from and make repairs to drainage structures to preserve the condition and capacity of storm drainage facilities.

NATIONAL POLLUTANT DISCHARGE ELIMINATION SYSTEM

The National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System work group maintains stormwater conveyance systems along roadways. This involves cleaning catch basins and culverts and sweeping roadways to reduce flooding and pollutants entering waterways. The work of this group is largely focused on maintaining compliance with the Western Washington Phase II Municipal Stormwater Permit.

ROADWAY

The Roadway work group maintains and preserves the pavement on roadways. The work associated with this program includes repairing potholes, cracked pavement, and sub-grade deficiencies. Additionally, teams prepare road surfaces for preservation projects and ensure paved county roads are passable for drivers.

ROADSIDE

The Roadside work group manages the vegetation along county roadways, bridges, and stormwater facilities. The work includes shoulder mowing, slope mowing, and brushing, ensuring roads and sidewalks are passable and drivers have adequate sight distance for safe travel.

PARKS & TRAILS

The Parks & Trails work group maintains facilities and grounds to ensure that the parks & trails are safe, clean, and usable for residents and visitors. The team also works with community organizations and individuals to promote environmental education, restoration, and preservation.

BY THE NUMBERS



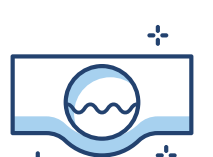
2,528
MILES OF
ROADWAY SWEEP



1,100
NUMBER OF CATCH
BASINS CLEANED



15,172
FEET OF DRAINAGE
SYSTEM CLEANED



2,627
FEET OF CULVERT
PIPE INSTALLED



6,078
TONS OF
ASPHALT PLACED



1,278
SERVICE REQUESTS
RECEIVED



157,787
GALLONS OF
BRINE APPLIED



3,643
LANE MILES OF
SHOULDER MOWED

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS



CDL WINTER READINESS TRAINING

To prepare for winter weather, Road Operations, Parks & Trails, and Traffic Operations employees completed hands-on training and evaluations for commercial vehicle operation. With support from experienced drivers and a certified coordinator, staff practiced operating 10-yard manual transmission trucks while plowing and applying sand or brine. This effort reflects Public Works' commitment to professional development and teamwork, **ensuring we're ready to serve the public when it matters most.**



MORRIS RD SE PAVING PROJECT

This project was needed due to the degradation of the road surface. Morris Road is set to be fully rebuilt in the next few years. This paving was done to extend the road's lifespan until the larger project is finished. This project was completed using 1,886 tons of fiber reinforced asphalt on a two-inch overlay and paved 3.2 lane miles of roadway. This work **improved safety for the motoring public and will reduce the need for maintenance in the coming years.**

\$329K

ROADS BOOST EFFICIENCY WITH ORGANIZATIONAL IMPROVEMENTS

Public Works partnered with a consultant to review and strengthen the Road Operations division structure and staffing. The study focused on five key areas: industry best practices, technology use, workload, organizational structure, and performance management. Feedback from staff and expert recommendations led to several key improvements, like launching a formal asset management program, creating a robust training plan, and balanced supervisory roles. **These changes have helped streamline operations and improve efficiency.**

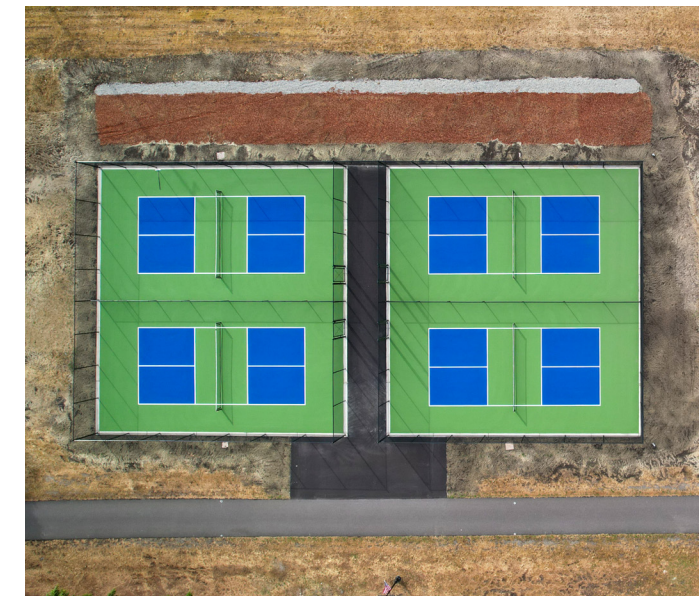
2024 PAVEMENT PRESERVATION

The Pavement Preservation program enhances the county's road safety and driving conditions and reduces costly repairs. In 2024, Public Works completed projects including 67.5 miles of roadway chip seal, 3.6 miles of roadway repaving, 105 pothole repairs, and road marking improvements. **Pavement preservation keeps the road in good shape, saves money, and reduces the need for frequent fixes.**

PARKS & TRAILS

Public Works Parks & Trails program is responsible for stewardship of the county's 2,578 acres of park lands and 56 miles of trails. Thurston County Parks include Burfoot, Frye Cove, Kenneydell, and Deschutes Falls. Trails managed in Thurston County include the Chehalis Western Trail, Yelm-Rainier-Tenino Trail, Gate-Belmore Trail, and Ralph Munro Trail. Public Works also partners through interlocal agreements for parks & trails maintenance with the cities of Rainier, Tenino, Lacey, and Olympia, as well as the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife.

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS



PARTNERSHIP WITH CITY OF RAINIER-PICKLEBALL COURT AND NEW RESTROOM

\$1.1M

As part of a collaborative effort, Thurston County and the City of Rainier partnered on two projects that **enhance the recreational experience for county residents and trail users.** A new prefabricated restroom building was installed in Rainier near the city-owned Wilkowski Park to replace an outdated and deteriorating portable building. The new restroom will serve both users of the Yelm-Rainier-Tenino Trail and Wilkowski Park. Additionally, Thurston County contributed Park Impact Fees and Real Estate Excise Tax (REET2) funds to the City of Rainier to plan, design, and construct four pickleball courts, a concrete walkway, and picnic table pads.

PRESERVING OUR TRAILS FOR THE FUTURE

Thurston County's 38 miles of paved trails are a valued community asset, and Public Works is committed to keeping them safe and accessible. Recognizing the importance of long-term care, the Board of County Commissioners invested \$200k of annual funding that Public Works leveraged to secure a \$1.6 million grant to fund trail preservation.

Public Works has developed a strategic maintenance program that uses condition data, mapped project areas, and estimated repair costs to guide future work. In 2024, staff assessed more than 1,400 individual trail defects and created a detailed report outlining how and where to prioritize repairs and a process for ongoing reassessment. A new data visualization tool and project rankings support smarter planning and funding decisions. The \$1.6 million from the Federal Highway Administration's Carbon Reduction Program will support preservation work along the Chehalis Western Trail near Chambers Lake and north Olympia.

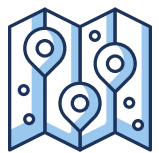


YELM-RAINIER-TENINO TRAIL EXTENSION TO CROWDER RD

As part of the Thurston County's Trail Connectivity Program, Public Works completed a 0.24-mile extension of the Yelm-Rainier-Tenino Trail. This new segment stretches south from the Tenino Depot Museum to Crowder Road SE, **expanding access to the county's popular non-motorized, multi-use paved trail.** The Yelm-Rainier-Tenino Trail now offers even more opportunities for walking, biking, and enjoying the outdoors—connecting more people to nature and each other across southern Thurston County.

\$352K

BY THE NUMBERS



918,750
TOTAL PARKS &
TRAILS VISITS



80,000
DOG WASTE BAGS
DISTRIBUTED TO PARKS &
TRAILS USERS



2,578
ACRES
MANAGED



56
MILES OF TRAIL
CORRIDOR MAINTAINED

SOLID WASTE

The Solid Waste Division is responsible for operating and maintaining the county's primary solid waste transfer station—the former landfill in Lacey known as the Waste and Recovery Center (WARC), and two drop-box facilities near Rainier and Rochester. These facilities provide essential garbage, organics, and recycling services to support Thurston County's population of more than 300,000. In addition to the operation and maintenance of the facilities, the division is responsible for solid waste planning, recycling, and waste reduction. The Solid Waste Division collaborates with Thurston County's Public Health and Social Services Department to provide county residents with information regarding the correct disposal of hazardous wastes and other materials. Additionally, the division partners with the Washington State University Thurston County Extension Master Recycler Composter Program to educate residents about waste reduction and best recycling practices.

WORK GROUPS

ADMINISTRATION & PLANNING

The Administration & Planning work group oversees the administration and planning of solid waste facilities, programs and services for Thurston County. The team is responsible for creating and maintaining solid waste and recycling vendor contracts, developing the Solid Waste Management Plan, and coordinating with the Thurston County Solid Waste Advisory Committee.

SCALE & TOLLHOUSE OPERATIONS

The Scale & Tollhouse Operations work group provides front-line customer service at the WARC and the two drop-box facilities, collects tipping fees, operates scales, and schedules trailer transfers. The Solid Waste Scale & Tollhouse Operations staff are available seven days a week at the WARC, and three days a week at each drop-box facility.

RECYCLING & WASTE REDUCTION EDUCATION & OUTREACH

The Recycling & Waste Reduction Education & Outreach work group develops and implements programs in alignment with the county's and partner municipalities adopted Solid Waste Management Plan. The team also provides information and resources to internal customers and the public on diverting materials from the county's waste stream through methods focused on waste reduction, reuse, recycling, sustainability, and proper management of solid waste.

COMMUNITY LITTER CLEANUP PROGRAM

The Community Litter Cleanup Program work group collects litter from roadsides, parks, trails, and illegal dump sites in the county. The program is a collaborative effort with the Road Operations Division, volunteers, court-assigned crew members, and in-custody workers from the Washington State Department of Corrections Cedar Creek facility. The program's primary objective is to support the community's environmental health by removing hazardous materials from areas where residents work and play.

FACILITIES OPERATIONS

The Facilities Operations work group manages the operations and maintenance of the WARC, Rainier and Rochester Drop-box Facilities, the Off-Leash Dog Park, and HazoHouse. This team is comprised of several smaller teams, which include:

- **Moderate Risk Waste Operations**—processes hazardous materials for residential and small-quantity generating commercial customers at HazoHouse
- **Environmental Operations**—manages the closed landfill
- **Building and Ground Maintenance**—maintains all solid waste facilities and associated 128 acres of land

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS



EDUCATION & OUTREACH TEAM SUCCESSES

The Solid Waste work group had a productive 2024. Their Community Litter Cleanup Volunteer Program involved 15 volunteers who filled 598 bags of garbage. The Solid Waste 2024 presentation series included free workshops in partnership between Thurston County Public Works, Lemay, Inc., and the Thurston County Master Recycler Composter Program. Topics in 2024 included the new business organics law, hard-to-recycle materials, multifamily recycling resources, and managing low waste events.



WARC COMPACTOR REPLACEMENT

\$2.9M

The transfer station trash compactor has experienced significant, ongoing, and increasing maintenance issues, resulting in extended downtime. Solicitation for a new compactor to replace the existing one occurred in the winter of 2024. Due to a significant lead-time needed to fabricate the machine, installation and training is scheduled for the fall of 2025. The new compactor will **improve the reliability of the transfer system, improving customer service and ensuring compliance with environmental regulations and permits.**

WARC RECONFIGURATION

\$20M

A master plan for the Waste & Recovery Center was finished in 2021. It recommended changing the layout of the facility to **improve capacity, safety, and efficiency, while also meeting current and future regulations.** Over the next two years, a consultant studied different development options for the facility. In 2024, they created a report outlining the recommended design changes and estimated costs. Public Works will now begin construction on these improvements, which will be completed over the next several years.

BY THE NUMBERS



261,251

CUSTOMER VISITS TO THE WARC



251,024

TONS OF WASTE PROCESSED AT THE WARC



24,378

CUSTOMER VISITS TO THE RAINIER DROP-BOX FACILITY



4,327

TONS OF WASTE PROCESSED AT THE RAINIER DROP-BOX FACILITY



18,516

CUSTOMER VISITS TO THE ROCHESTER DROP-BOX FACILITY



3,122

TONS OF WASTE PROCESSED AT THE ROCHESTER DROP-BOX FACILITY



22,068

TONS OF ORGANIC MATERIAL DIVERTED FROM THE WASTE STREAM



250,867

POUNDS OF ROADWAY LITTER COLLECTED

WATER RESOURCES

Charged with providing clean drinking water, flood reduction, and the protection of the county's water resources, the Water Resources Division is made up of Technical Services, Stormwater Operations, Water & Sewer Utilities Operations, and Noxious Weed Management.

WORK GROUPS

WATER & SEWER UTILITIES OPERATIONS

The Water & Sewer Utilities Operations work group supplies drinking water and/or wastewater services for approximately 850 county residential and business customers. The team manages three drinking water systems, including five wells, three wastewater treatment facilities, and one large on-site septic system. These systems operate 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Communities served by Thurston County Public Works include Grand Mound, Boston Harbor, Olympic View, and Tamoshan.

STORM AND SURFACE WATER INSPECTION & ASSESSMENT

The Storm and Surface Water Inspection & Assessment work group inspects and assesses the public network of storm drains, ditches, pipes, ponds, and other related systems across the county by providing inspections, making recommendations for maintenance, and managing inventory. The team also inspects private stormwater systems to ensure developers, homeowners' associations, and others with stormwater infrastructure are building and maintaining their systems in compliance with county laws and regulations.

TECHNICAL SERVICES

The Technical Services work group identifies, designs, manages, and provides operational support for Thurston County water, sewer, and stormwater infrastructure projects. The team also provides stormwater management technical assistance to public and private organizations. In addition, the team spearheads policy development and code updates for utilities and supports the implementation of and adherence to the Drainage Manual, Water and Sewer Development Standards, and the utility provisions of the Thurston County Code.

NOXIOUS WEED MANAGEMENT

The Noxious Weed Management work group implements the work plan of the Thurston County Noxious Weed Control Board. The team works with owners throughout the county to manage noxious weeds while protecting water quality, human health, native plants, habitat, agriculture, and recreation.

STORM AND SURFACE WATER INSPECTION & ASSESSMENT HIGHLIGHTS

In 2024, the Storm and Surface Water Inspection & Assessment work group kicked off an ambitious Comprehensive Study to shape the future of the County's stormwater management program over the next five years. This forward-looking initiative will set strategic goals, ensure compliance with state and federal permits, assess current utility rates and structures, and evaluate the County's asset management and capital planning strategies. Ultimately, the study will deliver key recommendations to strengthen our infrastructure, optimize resources, and prepare for future needs.

Alongside the study, the work group also launched two major capital projects aimed at improving local water systems. The Meadows Stormwater Ponds Retrofit Project is upgrading stormwater facilities to better protect Little McAllister and McAllister Creeks from erosion and pollution. The WSDOT US101 Schneider Creek Project is targeting water quality improvements in the lower reach of Schneider Creek, a vital part of the area's ecosystem. Additionally, a pre-design and feasibility study began for a potential stormwater retrofit along Kaiser Rd NW, laying the groundwork for future improvements in that corridor.

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS



BOSTON HARBOR WATER MAIN REPLACEMENTS AND INFLOW AND INFILTRATION REDUCTION PROJECT

\$2.9M

This project replaces approximately 6,000 feet of older and small-diameter water main in the Boston Harbor community. The project also rehabilitates portions of the STEP sewer collection system. The purpose of this project is to extend the lifespan and increase the serviceability of water and sewer infrastructure. Additionally, the project aims to **reduce infiltration and inflow to the sewer system, reducing wastewater treatment costs and improving treatment performance.**

TAMOSHAN WELL UPGRADE

\$210K

This project constructs an additional source of water supply for the Tamoshan community servicing 92 water utility customers. This project provides a new well drilled into a shallower aquifer, accessing a higher quality water source. This new source will **provide higher quality drinking water for the community and ensure ongoing compliance with regulatory requirements.**



BOSTON HARBOR AND TAMOSHAN WASTEWATER FACILITIES NUTRIENT REDUCTION

\$290K

This Department of Ecology grant-funded project makes improvements to the Tamoshan and Boston Harbor wastewater treatment plants to enhance nutrient monitoring and treatment at each of these facilities. The purpose of this project is to **improve water quality in Puget Sound** through compliance with the conditions of the Puget Sound Nutrient General Permit and to facilitate compliance with future permit requirements.



TAMOSHAN WATER AND SEWER INFRASTRUCTURE REHABILITATION AND REPLACEMENT PROJECT

\$2.8M

This project rehabilitates or replaces existing water and sewer infrastructure in the Tamoshan neighborhood. This work includes replacement of existing water service connections, rehabilitation or replacement of existing water and sewer mains and manholes, and installation of telecommunication conduits. The purpose of this project is to extend the lifespan and increase the serviceability of water and sewer infrastructure. Additionally, the project aims to **reduce infiltration and inflow to the sewer system, reducing wastewater treatment costs and improving treatment performance.**

WATER AND SEWER CAPITAL PLANNING

This project updates capital planning documents for the county's water and sewer utilities. Specifically, the project includes update of the following capital planning documents:

- Thurston County Part A Water System Plan
- Satellite Management Agency Plan
- Tamoshan Small Water System Management Plan
- Boston Harbor Part B Water System Plan
- Grand Mound Part B Water System Plan
- Grand Mound General Sewer and Wastewater Facility Plan

These planning documents identify capital projects required to serve growth in the county's utility service areas.

CHEHALIS AND DESCHUTES RIVERS NOXIOUS WEEDS PROTECTIONS

The Deschutes River project began in 2015 with initial treatments to eliminate noxious weed infestations covering the portion of the river south of Highway 507. Since 2018, Public Works has been surveying and treating the river from near Deschutes Falls in Yelm to the intake of Capitol Lake in Olympia.

The infestations along many stretches are mostly eradicated. In 2024, 25.2 river miles were surveyed and a total of 44 sites were treated.

As sites on the Deschutes are being eradicated, control efforts are being expanded to the Chehalis River. In 2023, a survey was done to map Chehalis River knotweed infestations. In 2024, these areas received their first year of treatment with a total of 13 sites being treated.

Controls continue for Brazilian elodea and parrotfeather on the Chehalis River. A dive crew was hired to manually pull Brazilian elodea, and they removed 17,050 pounds in 2024. In addition, Noxious Weeds staff has been treating parrotfeather on the Chehalis River since 2018 and efforts continued this year.

BY THE NUMBERS



110M

GALLONS OF WATER DELIVERED TO CUSTOMERS



85M

GALLONS OF WASTEWATER TREATED



9,250

PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE STORMWATER ASSETS INSPECTED



4,302

NOXIOUS WEED SITES MONITORED



12,800

PRIVATE DEVELOPMENT INFRASTRUCTURE STORMWATER ASSETS INSPECTED

BUSINESS SERVICES

Ensuring the efficient and strategic support of operations, the Business Services Division provides financial analysis and procurement support, stewards our infrastructure assets, fosters effective communication, and guides project planning for all Public Works divisions. The division is comprised of the Finance & Procurement, Asset Management, Communications, and Project Program Management work groups.

WORK GROUPS

ASSET MANAGEMENT

The Asset Management work group is responsible for the implementation and strategic oversight of the Public Works asset management program, this team ensures the longevity and functionality of the physical infrastructure. They help divisions develop a framework and implement processes to inventory and condition assess Public Works' infrastructure assets, provide information on ongoing maintenance and operations costs, create work planning efficiencies, sustain the level of service at the desired level, and provide reliable data for budgeting, financial planning, and strategic decision-making.

COMMUNICATIONS

The Communications work group develops and executes communication strategies to disseminate information to the public and internal stakeholders. This team manages public relations, media interactions, and digital communications, ensuring transparency and fostering community engagement. They also produce informational materials, manage crisis communications, and support divisions in conveying their initiatives and achievements to a wider audience.

FINANCE & PROCUREMENT

The Finance & Procurement work group manages all aspects of the Public Works financial system, including department budgeting, financial management, water & sewer utilities and solid waste billing, grant reimbursements, vendor payments, and payroll services. The team also provides procurement and contracting assistance to make sure external resources and services are in place to meet community needs and ensure Public Works' compliance with federal, state, and county policies and requirements.

PROJECT PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

The Project Program Management work group provides strategic direction and guidance on projects, programs, and processes to ensure the use of best management standards in the delivery of projects and prioritizes project resources department-wide. The team liaises with other county departments and outside agencies to coordinate long-range planning efforts. In addition, the team manages Solid Waste construction projects.

ENVIRONMENTAL

The Environmental work group provides management and oversight of environmental issues related to Public Works construction and maintenance activities. The team is the lead technical contact for addressing environmental and biological issues related to all necessary permits. Tasked with ensuring compliance and promoting sustainable practices, the team advises department management by presenting environmentally safe alternatives and recommending informed courses of action for each project.

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

ASSET MANAGEMENT PROGRAM ASSESSMENT

The Asset Management Program has made significant progress in improving the tracking and maintenance of public infrastructure. In 2024, the first two Asset Management Specialists were hired. Collaboration with consultants, Berry Dunn, led to an assessment of systems, completing a needs assessment and requirements documentation. Tests were conducted with new mapping tools to enhance real-time data collection for road maintenance, starting with mowing. This resulted in the successful creation of a pilot project with near real-time feedback for supervisors' desktop dashboards. The Parks & Trails program was incorporated into the VUEWorks Service Request process, and the VUEWorks mobile platform, WorkForceVUE, began implementation to enhance the Asset Management Information System. These improvements include mapping over a mile of previously uncharted guardrail. In the future, the system will cover snowplowing and street sweeping, **facilitating better decision-making, streamlined operations, and enhanced service delivery to the community.**

TC CONNECT IMPLEMENTATION

In July 2024, the county implemented a new enterprise resource planning (ERP) system designed to integrate essential business functions, including budget, finance and procurement, payroll, and human resources, in one comprehensive software platform. The finance and procurement team shouldered a significant load to prepare the department for this transition, participating in system user acceptance testing, designing new accounting program and payroll work activities structures, providing information for data conversion, and facilitating training in the new system. For example, the payroll team delivered 19 group training sessions tailored to Public Works work groups and finance staff led efforts with the implementation consultant to design and configure the inventory module. Staff invested countless hours to identify and troubleshoot issues, find solutions, and develop new audit tools, while continuing to pay vendors and employees and provide financial support to the department.

TECHNOLOGY UPGRADES

Public Works completed large-scale technology system upgrades in two high-usage conference rooms on the Tilley campus. The upgrades replaced failing and outdated equipment more than a decade old. These significant investments **ensure that our facilities are fully equipped to support both public and internal meetings, collaboration needs, and are prepared to handle critical emergency operations.**

PUBLIC WORKS REFERENCE GUIDE

The communications team coordinated development of a Public Works Reference Guide. This first of its kind resource is intended to provide historical and contextual organizational, division, and program information and is valuable as an onboarding tool for county leaders and new employees, as well as a helpful reference manual for Public Works staff.

BY THE NUMBERS



69

CONTRACTS
EXECUTED



41.68M

TOTAL CONTRACTS
VALUE



11

ON-CALL ENGINEERING &
PROFESSIONAL SERVICE
CONTRACTS SECURED



\$1.3M+

IN FEMA REIMBURSEMENT
FROM 2022 FLOODING
EVENT

ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

The Administrative Services Division manages essential administrative tasks and upholds rigorous safety standards within the department through the Administrative Services, Safety, and Training work groups. This division is responsible for records management, policies and procedures, recruiting, training, and safety.

WORK GROUPS

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

The Administrative Staff work group is responsible for a broad range of administrative duties, including managing records and ensuring that all divisions have the resources and support they need to operate efficiently. They also handle scheduling, coordinate meetings, facilitate employee onboarding, and assist with implementing policies and procedures to maintain the smooth operation of Public Works services.

SAFETY

The Safety work group develops and implements safety policies and procedures, conducts regular inspections and risk assessments, and provides training and resources to prevent accidents and ensure compliance with health and safety regulations. They are also responsible for emergency preparedness, ensuring the department is ready to respond effectively to any situation that may arise.

TRAINING

The training work group develops and manages required and elective training for the department. They are responsible for ensuring the department is in compliance with county-required training and state and federal mandated training. Their responsibilities also include new employee onboarding and the stormwater training plan. They are the liaison to the Human Resources training division and provide guidance and training for the county learning system.

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

ELECTRONIC RECORDS MANAGEMENT

The Electronic Records Management Project team has created and published document naming conventions to be used for all electronic records for consistency and searchability. They are also in the process of reviewing and evaluating the retention value of thousands of documents and have been able to destroy over 2,000 electronic records that are either transitory documents or have met retention. The team also recently created a training presentation for our new employees as part of our new employee onboarding program.



SAFETY

Safety at Public Works is shared responsibility. The Safety work group plays a key role in protecting our staff and the public. In 2024, the team completed over 70 job hazard analyses that covered more than 1,200 tasks. These reports help spot potential hazards before they become real problems and put strong prevention measures in place.

Elected team members serve one-year terms and take on important duties like investigating accidents and near-misses, recommending improvements to equipment, policies, and practices, and sharing safety updates with their divisions. This work helps to ensure that safety remains at the center of Public Works.

BY THE NUMBERS



3,000+
RECORDS REVIEWED



2,000+
RECORDS DESTROYED



4.8
NETWORK TERABYTES
REDUCED

CELEBRATING SERVICE

ANNIVERSARIES

5 YEARS

Corey Cereghino • Susan Clemen • Kyle Conway • Keevan Forbes-Kashani • Aaron Francis

Curt Gubbe • Carl Martin • Bryce Mode • Brandi Schroeder • Marcus Storvick • Ryan Paulson

10 YEARS

Dennis Baker • Jesse Casterline • Derek Davis

25 YEARS

Vern Prell • Bill Rowlands

30 YEARS

Dan Drewry



NEW HIRES

Trinity Knight • Dawson Pudelko • Lynzi Winn • Kyle Gropp • Mande Taylor
Derek Moody • Steven Cserfoi • Rian O'Hanlon • Matt Samuelson • Alex Wiser
Jake Gustafson • Rhiver Cox • Laurie Richardson • Maggie Brown • John Johnson
April Roe • Sherri Johnson • Adam Zimmerman • Kenny Watts • Ryan Frank
Kyle Aslakson • Hannah Kim • Nicholas Klepec • Ryan Ely • Matt Pecolatto
Adam High • Olivia Studebaker • Kaitlyn Caseday • Landon Cruickshank
Dylan Cribbs • Joe Davis

PROMOTIONS

Cole Mullenix • Ryan Guscott • Spencer Baier • Tyson Null • Melissa Smith
Leticia Hellebore • Ryan Ashley • Will Abitz • Ryan Paulson • Doug Coleman
Abbi Haley • Keevan Forbes-Kashani • Chance Petrich • John Williams
Casey Hallom • Dawson Pudelko • Albert McConathy • Elena Fernandez
Brycen Poston • Lynzi Winn

RETIREMENTS

Teresa Hoyer • Scott Pape • Dave Sutton
Brenda Reggio • Sheree Neumeier • Linda Abell • Bruce Longmire

IN MEMORIAM

Marie Casutt

HOW TO STAY ENGAGED WITH PUBLIC WORKS

PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR

Jennifer D. Walker, PMP

PUBLIC WORKS ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

Karen Weiss

COUNTY ENGINEER

Matt Unzelman, P.E.

COUNTY MANAGER

Leonard Hernandez

COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Carolina Mejia, District 1
Gary Edwards, District 2
Tye Menser, District 3
Wayne Fournier, District 4
Emily Clouse, District 5

TILLEY ROAD MAIN CAMPUS

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