



City of Red Lodge

Public Works Monthly Activities Report

February 19 – March 18 2021

Prepared to summarize monthly activities of the Public Works Department, City of Red Lodge. This is a brief description and update of the near or present long-term projects, maintenance, ad hoc and administrative activities the Public Works department is engaged with ongoing.

Each the projects tabled here is listed within the City’s Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). The CIP was last updated 2019 and is kept on the City Website for review or download: <http://cityofredlodge.net/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/Red-Lodge-2019-CIP-Final.pdf> Although the CIP represents a 5-year plan, this table only contains ‘near’ projects – those within present focus.

Public Works Capital Improvement Projects (2020/2021)					
Year	Category	CIP Project Title	2019 CIP description	2019 Cost Estimate	Status
2020	Parks	New Swimming Pool	page 15	\$1,600,000	Phase I – City approved and moved into project planning for construction
			---		Phase II – potentially stepped up due to success of fundraising committee. Seeking City approval to move onto preparation of a plan and design
2020	Wastewater	Collection System I & I Study	page 9	\$20,000	Waiting on good weather to resume – result will be reported in Updated PER
2020	Wastewater	Updated Preliminary Engineering Report (PER)	page 9	\$50,000	Action pending, I & I study precedes (Engrs not yet tasked)
2020	Water	Preliminary Engineering Report (PER)	page 5	\$80,000	Completed – copy at City Hall for Public Review
2021	Storm Sewer	PER Phase 1 - Storm Sewer	pages 13-15	\$2,600,000	Applied for Grant, Engr Phase 1 planned for 2021 – waiting on notice of award
2021	Water	7th Street (+ 2 blocks sewer)	pages 5-7	\$112,000	Plans completed early Feb. and awaiting DEQ approval – anticipated mid-March
2021	Water	Grant Avenue(+2 block sewer section)	Pages 5-7	\$225,000	Plans completed early Feb. and awaiting DEQ approval – anticipated mid-March
2023	Water	S Hauser (4 block section)	Pages 5-7	\$337,500	Plans completed early Feb. and awaiting DEQ approval – anticipated mid-March
2021	Water	Pressure Reducing Valves (PRVs)	Pages 5-7	\$300,000	Plans completed early Feb. and awaiting DEQ approval – anticipated mid-March

Accomplishments/Milestones:

- Bid period for City Pool Engineering closed and awarded
- Approval to move ahead with Phase 1 Construction of the pool – during City Council March 9

- Phase 2 for approach to plan and design in progress (resolution 3568)

Focus Next Month:

- Interstate Engineering and Public Works will begin to plan and schedule activities of the pool project.
- Continuation of Wastewater collection system I & I Study

Challenges or Concerns:

HOLDING “GRANT ELIGIBLE” STATUS for water/wastewater capital project grants by sustaining & proving sufficient city funding for maintenance of water/wastewater systems.

- Keeping and utilizing 2018 Grant funding for capital projects requires the City to establish a budget for water/wastewater maintenance that proves maintenance does not suffer for capital improvements
- Resolution 3386 details water/wastewater fee schedules based on engineering rate metrics but may not increase adequately through time in relation to price indexes and cost of living. The fee schedule is meant to be adjusted, republished and approved every 5 years and is not relative to actual annual price indexes.
- We’ve begun sharing a resolution of intent (3567) to adjust the water/wastewater fee schedules annually according to the City’s documented rate tables and an annual modifier (the inflation rate of the Montana Average Annual Consumer Price Index) with a cap of 3% (as the maximum allowable modifier).
- Using the State published annual average inflation rate to adjust the fee schedules, the City may sustain a fair maintenance fee schedule without the need to create new rate tables and pass an amended resolution every 5 years. It also ensures the City remains grant eligible and may continue receiving funding for water & sewer capital projects.

FUNDING FUTURE STREET PROJECTS - City Street Projects will ideally follow completion of storm sewer projects but funding is not readily available. Funds from gas taxes (1% annually) are minimally sufficient to cover costs of patching and repairing streets. Although there are plenty of loans available, there are no grants found for Street Improvement projects: curbs, sidewalks, bedding/pavement, boulevards, planting vegetation, etc.(“complete streets”). Unless the City begins growing & saving funds for “Complete Street” projects near future, there won’t be any funds for implementation of Capital improvement projects as outlined in the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). Creation of a “Streets District” or special improvement district (SID) is necessary to move ahead with any of the capital street projects.

- Whatever funding mechanism the City puts in place, the desire is to make sure it provides for all city streets – a city wide mechanism avoids further creation and management of separate neighborhood SIDs.
- There is an existing SID for streets already created for Country Club Estates on the west bench. Any City-wide funding solution proposed will need to specify how to prevent a doubled payment condition (for contributors to the existing SID) yet is in balance with any city-wide streets program. Payments need to be equitable among all City property owners.

Maintenance and Operations Activities		
Category	Maintenance Activity	Comments
Parks	Pruning & Debris Cleanup from City ROWs/property	Clearing/trimming larger limbs or topples following wind storms so plowing may proceed
Parks	Mowing apart from MOUs	Not in season
Parks	Equipment/Storage Facility Maint.	Not in season
Streets	Traffic Signs and Signals	Fixing/straightening few from plowing
Streets	Plowing	In progress as needed
Streets	Sweeping	Not in season
Streets	Sanding	In progress as needed
Water	Meter Maint/repairs	Check meters as monitoring indicates
Streets	Identifying Potholes, Patching/Filling	Beginning to assess condition
Streets	Alley Grading	Not in season
Water	Monitoring, testing, reporting	Monthly reports to DEQ/EPA
Wastewater	Monitoring & reporting	Monthly reports to DEQ/EPA & scheduling “smoke tests”
Wastewater	Supervisor Control & Data Acquisition (SCADA)	Working on SCADA for system

Storm Sewer	Monitoring retention pond drainage to creek	On-going
Fleet	Repairs	worked as needed
Equipment	Repairs	worked as needed
Computers	Upgrades/Updates	status excellent (new equipment in use)
Programs	Updates & retraining	Upgraded computers/programs and CDC training sessions on-going through DEQ
GIS	Data Collection & Data Management	In progress – on-going
Acquisitions	Aged out Equipment Replacements	Searching for new/leased road sweeper & sale of existing Searching for new/leased plow truck & sale of existing
Locates	Requests to check before digging	Year-round requests – may use SCADA for this
Controlled Burns	Debris collection, burning monitoring	As needed

Accomplishments/Metrics:

- ~ 12 “leak letters” have been sent to property owners where water meter monitoring indicates a homeowner potentially has a water leak in their private line (from the City main) that needs to be addressed.
- “Snow Party” conducted: costs ~40K each year to clear all the snow berms from Hwy 212 along main street and perpendicular street entrances. Crew starts at 2:00 a.m. and works through end of day til finished

Focus Next Month:

- Shaping up approach to line clay sewer lines before they deteriorate too far –preparing for opportunities with 3rd party contractors that may occur during fair weather
- Preparing to sweep, patch potholes, grade alleys
- Continue budget planning for fiscal year 21/22

Challenges or Concerns:

- The street sweeper the City has now costs more to continuously repair and operate than it would cost to buy a newer one. Public works seeks to sell the one it has to purchase a new/used one that operates more efficiently.
- Number of private water-line breaks and property owner expectations that City is responsible for fixing...Public works usually finds them, but owners are responsible for fixing the lines into their homes and many have not prepared financially (through insurance). PWs is finding many (home owner) copper lines are aging out.

Ad Hoc or Emergency Activities and Requests

This is one of the unplanned things that came along and needed to be addressed by Public Works this past month, but not all.

County Commissioner, Bill Bullock, requested collaborative effort at solving for flooding around two-mile bridge (anticipated Co. project planned for 2024 potentially stepped up and/or mitigated w/ City help)

- Effort remains on-going until resolved
- 2nd City/County meeting at two-mile site scheduled for March 22

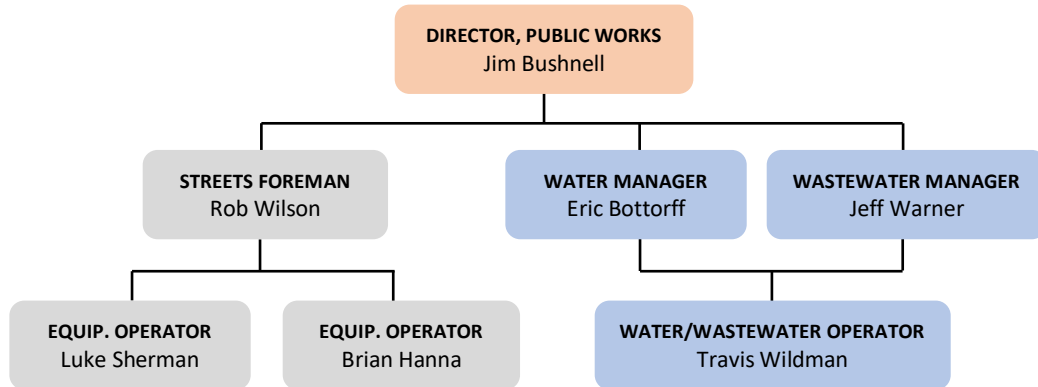


Brian Hanna and Eric Bottorff upgrading software.




Public Works Director, Jim Bushnell explaining GIS update activities

Administration & Personnel



Administrative and Personnel Activities

1. Training/Conferences/Workshops/State Legislative Sessions
Jim Bushnell planning to attend Montana Rural Water Systems Conference (MRWS) in Great Falls, May 19-21
2. Awards/Recognitions – none reported
3. Grant Applications/Proposals for Funding – just learned of 2.7 Billion COVID related grants available to water and sewer projects. Will apply for grant by deadline
4. Contracts – numerous 3rd party contracts reviewed, renewed, edited on-going
5. Budget Planning – Mayor has initiated activity among department heads outlining their budget requirements and requests for the fiscal year 2021/2022. Jim Bushnell is preparing the public works draft budget for continued joint budget planning sessions that began February 19.

Signed:  Jim Bushnell, Director Public Works 3/23/2021 Date

For supporting information see the following link <http://cityofredlodge.net/departments/public-works/>