



College Place in Review

VOLUME 22, ISSUE 3

MARCH 2015

Mayor's Message

Quick Fact:

City Water Usage

January 2015

11,448,000

January 2014

16,671,000

YTD 2015

11,448,000

Total 2014

429,267,000

Your City Representatives Mayor

Julie L. Scott

Council Members

Melissa Williams

Adam Keatts

Marge Nyhagen

Loren Peterson

William Jenkins

Larry Dickerson

Bernie Yanke

City Administrator

Patrick H. Reay

The CARS Project is coming soon and the project is still on the projected construction timeline.

Having had conversations with various College Place residents who raised questions about the status of the CARS project, I wanted to give you an update.

First, by the time you read this, it is very likely that the contract for this major construction project will be decided, but you are correct in thinking that we wish this step had been completed in 2014.

Unfortunately, with the various federal and state funds available, the review and approval process took longer than anticipated or hoped.

In addition, we weren't able to award the bid on January 8, 2015. As the bids were opened, we discovered that our original engineering estimate was not in line with the set of four bids received for the project. It was a somewhat discour-

aging moment, but not that unusual, I have learned from Pat Reay, our City Administrator, and Robert Gordon, our City Engineer. The engineering firm that prepared the specifications for the project used their best information and research following the guidelines put together by the city for the project. As you might imagine, a 2-mile stretch of roadway that dates in parts back 100 years, (no, not the current asphalt, but rather the road bed) is a unique renewal project. And some of the details and city specifications in the original estimate were out of line with the actual costs of the bids received by the four contractors that bid in January.

Over the last few weeks the College Place staff and engineers have been refining the project specifications to bring the costs within the available city funds. The project team reviewed all items of the bids received and used that infor-

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529-6506
Police —525-7778 or 7773
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Friday
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mation and feedback from the bidding contractors to determine what elements were driving the costs above the original engineers estimate. (For example, grates surrounding the tree bases along the roadways proved to be of a particularly expensive design available from only one vendor – this spec was broadened to include a more widely available design, potentially saving hundreds of dollars per tree grate).

The bids also reflected a general challenge for the bidding contractors because of the complexity of working with multiple companies to lay the utility infrastructure underneath the new streets. College Place, unlike many towns in Eastern Washington, has multiple providers of the same services (you can choose Columbia REA or Pacific Power, for example as your electricity company in many areas of our city) and all of these companies must coordinate their work

on new systems that will be completed before the contractors can complete the roadway and lay the asphalt. As you might imagine, there are time and coordination risks for the construction companies reflected in their bids on the project.

The good news in this rather lengthy beginning stage to the project is that the city has learned more in analyzing the bids of each of the companies involved, and made the proposal for the project better.

Thanks for your patience now and later, as we actually begin the construction this spring. The project will be constructed over the next two construction seasons, with the project completion to occur in the fall of 2016.

CARS project updates are available on the City's website, at www.ci.college-place.wa.us