

City News

November 2024

Water and Sewer Rate Increase

Veneta City Council voted to adjust water and sewer rates at last month's City Council meeting. Beginning in 2025, water and bulk water rates will increase from current rates by 3%, and sewer rates will also increase by 2%. The adjustments are consistent with the City's most recent rate study conducted in 2022, which recommended that City Council adjust water and sewer rates annually for the next five years and re-evaluate in 2028.

Veneta residents' water and sewer rates are based on the current and long-term costs of

providing services. Quality service requires coverage of all materials, services, and personnel expenses, while also anticipating future growth. With over 5,000 residents and growing, the City is projected to reach capacity of our sewer system and anticipates an increase demand for our water services. Due to this increased demand, the City is currently preparing to fund two future expansion projects: An additional water reservoir on Bolton Hill, estimated at \$2 to \$3 million, and a major expansion to the sewer plant, projected to cost \$5 to \$6 million.

(See "Rate Increase" on page 3)

Keeping Veneta's Drainage Ditches Clean: A Community Effort

As fall approaches and rainy weather sets in, it's crucial for residents to help keep Veneta's drainage ditches clear and functioning properly. Drainage ditches play a vital role in directing stormwater away from homes, streets, and properties, preventing flooding and erosion. To ensure these systems work efficiently, routine cleaning and maintenance are key.

Blocked or clogged ditches can lead to pooling water, street flooding, and even damage to

property and public infrastructure. When debris like leaves, branches, or trash accumulates, it obstructs the natural flow of water. Over time, this can result in standing water, which encourages mosquito breeding and other health hazards.

How You Can Help? Residents are encouraged to regularly inspect and maintain drainage ditches adjacent to their properties by:

(See "Drainage" on page 3)

Upcoming Holiday Events

November 27 - 12:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m.
Kiwanis Thanksgiving Feast at
Mid Lane Cares, 25035 W. Broadway

December 5 - 6:00 p.m.
Tree Lighting, Veneta Elementary
School, 88131 Territorial

December 12 - 7:00 p.m.
Veneta-Fern Ridge Light Parade
Map will be in December newsletter

December 14 - 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
S.A.N.T.A. Toy Giveaway, Veneta
Elementary School, 88131 Territorial

December 21 - 9:00 a.m.
Kiwanis Holiday Food Basket Giveaway
at LDS Church, 88068 Huston Rd

CIVIC CALENDAR NOVEMBER 2024

All meetings held at City of Veneta,
88184 8th St, unless otherwise noted

5	Planning Commission Meeting	6:30 p.m.
	2024 General Election	 VOTE
6	Park Board Meeting	4:30 p.m.
11	Veteran's Day Observed	 Closed
13	Economic Development Committee Meeting	2:00 p.m.
15	Business Assistance Committee	9:00 a.m.
18	City Council Executive Session 5:30, followed by City Council Meeting at 6:30	6:30 p.m.
21	Municipal Court	8:30 a.m.
28	Thanksgiving Day Observed	Closed
29	Day After Thanksgiving Day	 Closed

Department Updates

ADMINISTRATION

- At the request of the Veneta Park Board, the City hosted the Veneta Haunts event so it would be covered by the City's insurance. The Park Board's evolving by becoming more active in fundraising and their levels of event engagement—hosting, sponsoring, or tabling. This means that City support also needs to evolve a process to make sure staff understands the Park Board's levels of support and what each requires for insurance, fees, and staff involvement. Thank you to the Park Board for bringing positive energy to our community!

PUBLIC WORKS

- This year's budget includes starting the Bolton Hill Sports Complex project this spring so the City's engineering consultants are developing the scope of work for bid documents. In collaboration with Territorial Sports Program, City staff recently provided guidance on electrical design. For example, running conduit for future sports field lighting, power to the dugouts and storage building, security lighting around buildings, and general background lighting (minimizing light pollution to neighboring residents).
- The City provided a letter of support for Oregon Country Fair's proposal to the Oregon Department of Forestry for training, education, and tree plantings to address the Emerald Ash Borer infestation hitting Oregon. We'll also partner on providing training space for larger groups.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- The Oregon Department of Revenue officially approved Holte Manufacturing's application for Veneta's Enterprise Zone property tax exemption over three years. The property subject to tax exemption is the milling machinery for manufacturing drilling tools installed in June 2023. The program will exempt new machinery and equipment over \$1,000 per item. Holte will need to add 10% to their workforce starting from the time of approval, averaged over the last 12 months.

- The City will be working with the University of Oregon's Real World Lane County applied research program to help lay the groundwork for developing the City's downtown lot between 2nd & 3rd Streets. The students will research impacts of developing the land and design a community engagement process for feedback on the development. They'll use case studies relating to the City's downtown development strategy, current zoning, expected impact, as well as community surveys/interviews to foster community feedback and participation in the project.

PUBLIC SAFETY

- Management Analyst Jacob Thode and Lane County Sheriff's Office Sgt. Colt Parker hosted a Business Public Safety meeting last month at the Fern Ridge Service Center to talk with businesses about their concerns and potential actions. It was a good turn-out by local businesses and a good conversation about finding answers together.
- Law enforcement is a hot topic in Veneta with the recent concern about commercial and construction site property theft and damage, along with the opportunity to increase the Lane County Sheriff's Office (LCSO) Veneta Substation sergeant role from 20-hours to 40-hours a week. Veneta's LCSO law enforcement contract is just over \$1 million annually for 4 deputies and a 20-hour/week sergeant. Veneta's program is funded by 50% of city property taxes, a \$6/month Public Safety Fee, and 50% of the City's state and local marijuana sales tax receipts.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

- The City received the final bills for the towing and destruction an abandoned RV on a city street. The total came to around \$2,200. This is becoming a statewide trend as many cities are forced to deal with abandoned RVs on city streets. Proactive code enforcement helps deter RVs from being parked for extended times to begin with, but ultimately the city needs to budget money to handle this need.



ATTENTION RESIDENTS:

A permit has been issued for a ceremonial discharge of firearms on November 9th from 11:15a.m. – 12:00p.m. at City Park on E. Broadway. There will be a Lane County Sheriff's Office deputy present during the discharge of firearms.

Residential Construction Around Town?

What's going on with all that construction around town? Here's a quick list of residential projects in various phases of development.

- "Tentative Approval" means that the plans have been approved.
- "Building Permits Issued" means that the development has moved past plan approval and is ready to begin infrastructure improvements.
- "Under Construction" means, well, infrastructure is under construction!

Current Residential Developments in Veneta		
Subdivision / Project Name	Number of Lots / Units	Notes
Oakley Estates (north of Jeans Road)	180 Lots	Phases I-II Under Construction (28 lots) Phases III-V: Tentative Approval Only
First Addition to Forest Grove (E. Hunter)	55 Lots	Under Construction
Blake's Mill (South of Cheney Ct.)	18 Lots	Under Construction
Applegate Landing Phases IV & V (South of Strike St.)	98 Lots	Tentative Approval Only
Madrone Ridge Phases IV & V (West of Oaks Orchard Rd.)	58 Lots	Tentative Approval Only
Andrew Heights (West of Hawk View Dr.)	33 Lots	Tentative Approval Only
Cheney Drive Apartments (West of Cheney Dr.)	128 Units	Building Permits Issued
Total:	442 Lots, 128 Units	

Rate Increase cont...

The City aims to fund water and sewer projects by adjusting the rates at a sustainable pace, in step with comparable, nearby cities water and sewer rates. One measure the City uses to assess rate affordability is the percentage of median household income spent on utilities annually. Compared to other localities, Veneta's water rates remain low and affordable within our region. However, the City's annual sewer costs are high-

er in comparison to those of nearby cities. The City of Veneta continues balance rate affordability while still supporting reliable service and infrastructure for our growing community.

As part of our commitment to affordability, the City provides utility financial assistance programs for residents who qualify based on their income level. For more information call 541-935-2191 or visit our website at www.venetaoregon.gov

Drainage cont...

- **Clearing debris:** Remove leaves, sticks, and litter from ditches.
- **Trimming vegetation:** Keep grass, shrubs, and plants trimmed to prevent them from overgrowing into the ditches.
- **Reporting issues:** If you notice serious blockages or damage to the ditch, contact the City's Public Works Department for assistance.

Best Practices for Ditch Maintenance

- Avoid dumping grass clippings, leaves, or other yard waste into ditches.
- Keep driveways, sidewalks, and streets clear of debris that could wash into ditches during a storm.
- If you have a culvert or drainpipe on your

property, ensure it's clear of blockages.

While property owners are responsible for routine upkeep of the ditches on or near their land, the City also plays a role in maintaining larger stormwater systems and addressing more significant issues. The Public Works team regularly inspects and clears public ditches, culverts, and storm drains, especially during the fall and winter months.

By staying proactive and keeping our drainage ditches clean, we can all contribute to reducing the risk of flooding and ensuring that Veneta remains safe and dry. Let's work together to protect our homes and neighborhoods from unnecessary stormwater damage this season!

For questions or concerns, please contact Veneta's Public Works Dept. at 541-935-2191.

Volunteers Needed

The Love Project and Mid Lane Cares have several opportunities for volunteers. If you are interested in helping out, please contact Deanna at the Fern Ridge Service Center 541-935-4555.

Fern Ridge Community Services provides free dinners every Sunday and needs 10 volunteers each Sunday to



cook, serve, and clean up. Their long-term volunteers are burning out, and they may have to reduce their services.

You can sign up at: <https://www.fernridgecommunityservices.com/> click on the volunteer box under "Community Dinners".

Ribbon Cutting for Pickleball Courts; Dog Park Opening Spring 2025

The community is eagerly preparing for the grand opening of our brand-new Pickleball courts, which will feature an official ribbon-cutting ceremony on **November 18th at 3:30 PM**. Mayor

 Keith Weiss will be joining us to say a few words, followed by the much-anticipated ribbon-cutting moment to celebrate this new addition to our community's recreational facilities.

Additionally, attendees can look forward to a raffle organized for the event, providing a fun chance to win a prize and commemorate the day.

As the finishing touches are being added, the Pickleball courts themselves are almost complete, and recently, the surrounding ground and landscaping have been seeded. Following the ceremony, the courts will be open and ready for

use, bringing a vibrant new option for residents to enjoy.

Meanwhile the Bark and Whistle Dog Park is slated for an official opening in **Spring 2025**. The park will offer a variety of amenities, including benches, a drinking fountain for both people and pets, and picnic tables, among other features including ADA accessibility. These additions will be installed over time as the park prepares for its inaugural season next spring.

This expansion of recreational facilities is sure to enhance the quality of life for all residents, providing new opportunities for both social connection and outdoor activity. Be sure to mark your calendar for the Pickleball courts' grand opening and stay tuned for more updates on the Dog Park as spring approaches.

Public Safety Report - September 2024

Incident Type	Calls			Cases		
	Calls	Prior Year	5-Year Average	Cases	Prior Year	5-Year Average
Property (Thefts, Criminal Mischief, Trespass, Fraud)	32	36	89	9	12	43
Person (Assaults, Menacing, Harassments)	9	24	32	8	4	1
Public Order (Disorderly Subject, Citizen Contact)	97	91	53	0	2	0
Individual Welfare (Welfare Checks/OD, Missing Persons)	17	21	29	4	2	2
Vehicle (DUII, DWS, Illegal Parking, Traffic Hazard)	21	26	22	3	2	0
Offense Against State (Drug, Warrants, Local City Ord)	4	4	8	4	1	4
Civil (Civil Service, Eviction Process)	13	11	6	0	0	0
Neighborhood Watch	0	2	0	0	0	0
Traffic Stops	21	26	0	0	0	0
Total	214	241	239	28	23	50

VETERANS DAY PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, Veterans Day has its origins in the November 11, 1918, armistice which brought World War I to a conclusion; and

WHEREAS, The Allied victory of World War I affirmed the strength of great nations acting together for high purposes; and

WHEREAS the United States Congress passed a concurrent resolution on June 4, 1928 calling for the observance of November eleventh with appropriate ceremonies, and later provided in an Act approved May 13, 1938 that November 11th should henceforth be a legal holiday and should be known as "Armistice Day" to commemorate the end of what we now call World War I; and

WHEREAS in order to expand the significance of that commemoration and in order that a grateful nation might pay appropriate homage to the veterans of all its wars and who have contributed so much to the preservation of this Nation, the Congress, by an Act approved June 1, 1954 changed the name of the holiday to "Veterans Day"; and

WHEREAS, Veterans Day continues to be celebrated and commemorated with solemn observances in honor of all Americans who have served their country in times of war and conflict; and

WHEREAS, The courage, honor, sacrifice, and dedication which veterans of the United States armed forces have displayed in the cause of justice, freedom, and democracy are most worthy of recognition; and

WHEREAS, The residents of the City of Veneta thank, honor, and salute all of our community members who have answered the call to service to protect and defend our Nation.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Keith Weiss, Mayor of the City of Veneta, Oregon do hereby call upon all citizens to commend America's veterans and observe Monday, November 11, 2024, as:

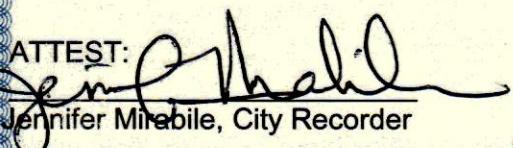
VETERANS DAY

and ask that the day be observed with appropriate ceremonies in honor of those who have served to preserve our principles of Justice, Freedom, and Democracy.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the City of Veneta, Oregon, to be affixed this 14th day of October 2024.


Keith Weiss, Mayor

ATTEST:


Jennifer Mirebile, City Recorder