

City News

March 2023

Introducing the Elmira-Veneta Multi-Use Path

The Elmira-Veneta Multi-Use Path is a planned pedestrian and bicycle path designed to ensure better safety and connectivity for Veneta and Fern Ridge area residents. The City of Veneta, Lane County, and the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) are collaborating on the project.

At a recent Fern Ridge School District parent-student event at Elmira Elementary, the City shared posters and information to introduce the project to the community. People were excited about the safety aspects and the opportunity to experience the wetlands area more directly on the path.

Currently, there is no way to safely travel between Elmira and Veneta, unless in a motorized vehicle. Pedestrians and bicyclists are at risk due to high traffic volume and speeds along Territorial Road. The Elmira-Veneta Multi-Use Path project is a priority for the safety of school children and anyone else traveling between Elmira and Veneta.

The project is a 0.75 mile stretch of Territorial Road between Suttle Road (north end) and Veneta City limits (south end). The driving time on this stretch of road is approximately one minute, the bicycling

(See "Multi-Use Path" on page 2)

Water and Sewer Rate Increase

Veneta water and sewer rates will be increasing, as they do annually, based on the most recent rates study completed in 2022. Water rates are increasing 3% and sewer rates are increasing 2% in 2023. The annual increase will last through 2028, subject to City Council approval. For households who use the average 5,000 gallons per month, this equates to approximately a \$2.36 increase in your monthly utility bill.

Veneta residents' water and sewer rates are based on the current and long-term costs of providing services. Quality service requires that all materials, services, and personnel expenses are covered today

and in the future. It is the City's responsibility to consider the current water and sewer systems' capacities for supporting a larger, growing community—and be prepared fiscally to expand them.

Projections determine that the City can expect to fund two important projects in the near future: an additional water reservoir on Bolton Hill at a cost of \$2.5 to \$3 million and a major expansion to the sewer plant at a cost of \$4 to \$6 million. Management Analyst Cole Haselip explained that with 5,200 people and growing, now is the time to expand the sewer system,

(See "Rates" on page 2)

Pet of the Month Photo Contest

Does your pet like to be photographed? Do they have a funny personality or cute story that deserves to be shared? Submit a photo of your pet for a chance to be featured as the City of Veneta's Pet of the Month on our website and Facebook!

Submit your pet's photo (jpeg or png format), pet's name, age, breed/type, and any stories or background information to apowell@ci.veneta.or.us.



Meet Koda, she is a 3 year old Husky/Golden Retriever mix, she loves pup cups, car rides and her best friend Nibbler (a cat).



Koda has a sweet personality with a husky attitude. She loves to chase the ball, snuggle on the couch and watch the deer and squirrels outside.

CIVIC CALENDAR March 2023		
All meetings held at City Hall unless otherwise noted		
1	Park Board Meeting	4:30 p.m.
7	Planning Commission Meeting	6:30 p.m.
8	Economic Development Committee Meeting	2:00 p.m.
12	Daylight Savings Begins	
13	City Council Meeting	6:30 p.m.
15	City Council Work Session	3:00 p.m.
16	Municipal Court	8:30 a.m.
17	Happy St. Patrick's Day	
20	First Day of Spring	
31	Business Assistance Committee Meeting	9:00 a.m.

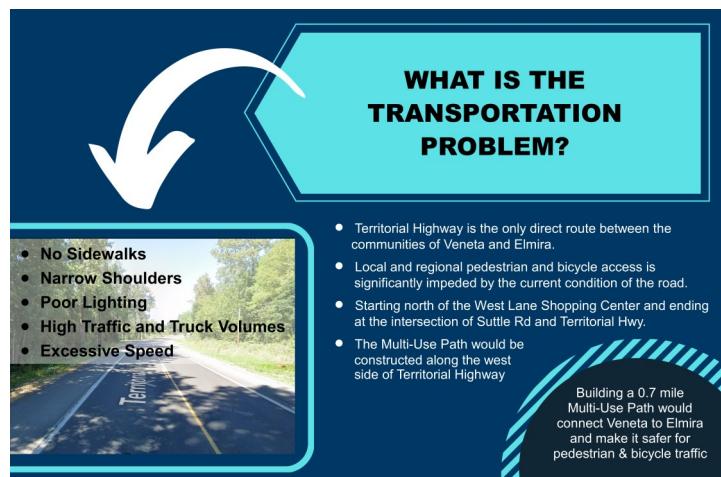
Multi-Use Path continued

time is approximately four minutes, and the walking time is approximately fifteen minutes.

The tentative path alignment is west of Territorial Road, running separate and parallel to it. A landscape buffer will be located between the shared-use path and Territorial Road. Pedestrian bridges will be built to traverse natural waterways at four locations along the path, and a high-visibility crosswalk will connect the shared-use path with the entrance to the Fern Ridge Wildlife Area parking lot.

With excitement and anticipation, Lane County is actively pursuing funding for Phase 1 of the construction project. Phase 1 construction would start in Elmira at Suttle Road, working south down Territorial Road, and ending at the Fern Ridge Wildlife Area. Phase 2 construction would continue from the Fern Ridge Wildlife Area, working south down Territorial Road, and ending at the West Lane Shopping Center. If you would like a brochure, they are available at the

front counter at City Hall. Watch for additional opportunities to learn more about this project by visiting the City website at www.venetaoregon.gov/planning/page/veneta-elmira-multi-use-path.



WHAT IS THE TRANSPORTATION PROBLEM?

- No Sidewalks
- Narrow Shoulders
- Poor Lighting
- High Traffic and Truck Volumes
- Excessive Speed

Building a 0.7 mile Multi-Use Path would connect Veneta to Elmira and make it safer for pedestrian & bicycle traffic

Rates continued

making at least one, if not both, of these projects a huge priority.

The most recent water and sewer rates study does not reflect the recent rising costs due to inflation, Haselip pointed out. The 2023 increases are actually lower than would be recommended if accounting for the full costs of similar projects being constructed today.

The City finances water and sewer services through system development charges, grants, and user fees - with the largest revenue source being user fees. The City hopes to fund water and sewer projects by increasing rates at a sustainable pace, in step with comparable, nearby cities' water and sewer rates.

To learn more about the 2023 water and sewer rate increases, please visit www.venetaoregon.gov/utilitybilling/page/water-sewer-rate-increase

Code Enforcement Survey: Complaint-driven vs Pro-active

Residents are encouraged to complete the one page Code Enforcement Survey included with this newsletter. The survey should only take 5 minutes.

You can also take the survey online by scanning the QR code to the right.



The purpose of the survey is to solicit input on how to improve the City's municipal code enforcement system. It is imperative that input is received in order to guide the future of code enforcement. Please note that any changes to the existing system would not be implemented until 2024.

Currently, the City utilizes a complaint-driven model so code violations are addressed as they come up. A pro-active model is being considered, wherein City staff identify and enforce code violations proactively. "Improving code enforcement is a high priority and will become part of the City Council work plan. We want to discuss the options with residents of Veneta," explained Management Analyst Cole Haselip. "We aren't settled on any one way to

improve the code enforcement process. It could mean going pro-active, staying complaint-driven, or a hybrid of the two."

The Code Enforcement Survey is part of a larger outreach effort regarding the matter, including a future town hall-style public forum and thorough discussion of the topic at a City Council meeting. The City hopes to achieve "a decision that matches with our community members' lives and desires," said Haselip.

The survey can be completed and dropped off at City Hall or taken online. To learn more about code compliance, Veneta's Municipal Code; and to take the survey visit www.venetaoregon.gov

The City of Veneta strives to provide the community with code enforcement services that meet their expectations. Please complete this survey to tell us what you think about code enforcement and if we should make changes to be more proactive.

City code enforcement is the process by which a local government agency ensures that residents and businesses within a city comply with various city codes, regulations, and ordinances. City codes can cover a wide range of issues, such as building codes, zoning laws, health and safety regulations, noise ordinances, parking regulations, and environmental codes. Frequent code violations are illegally parked vehicles, placing basketball hoops on the sidewalk, and tall grass. Code violations may lead to fines, penalties, court appearances, and other actions. The City strives to attain compliance before issuing penalties.

My contact with Veneta Code Enforcement has been due to: (Mark All That Apply)

Making a code complaint Violating a city code Haven't had contact with Veneta Code Enforcement

I have noticed the following issues in my neighborhood: (Mark All That Apply)

Tall grass (Over 10 inches) Basketball hoops on the sidewalk Junk left in yard (metal, wood, debris)
 Illegally parked vehicles RVs parked longer than 48 hours in front of people's homes Hazardous trees in yards
 Noxious Weeds Garbage receptacle left on sidewalk Other (Specify): _____

What are your thoughts on the City of Veneta's code enforcement (Select One)?



Very Satisfied



Satisfied



Neutral



Unsatisfied



Very Unsatisfied

Should the City of Veneta adjust its code enforcement model, and if so, how (Select One)?

Currently, the City of Veneta relies on a complaint-driven model for code enforcement. With this model, code enforcement primarily occurs after the City receives a written complaint, usually by a citizen. However, the City also acts immediately on complaints that present an imminent threat to the health and safety of residents and/or the environment.

Moving to a pro-active model of code enforcement would not require a written complaint. The code enforcement officer would regularly visit neighborhoods and identify all code violations to address. The primary benefit to the pro-active model is that code violations are more frequently addressed throughout the City. A downside is that it takes more resources to implement.

OPTIONS:

Maintain the current complaint-based system. No additional costs associated
 Reorganize the City's existing resources to pro-actively enforce priority code violations such as RVs parked in front yards, illegally parked vehicles, and tall grass. Enforce non-priority code violations as complaints are received. First year cost \$65,000. Ongoing annual cost of \$15,000 paid from property taxes
 Hire a full-time code enforcement officer to proactively enforce all code violations. First year cost \$180,000. Ongoing annual cost of \$130,000 paid from property taxes and potentially higher public safety fee
 Other (Please Specify) _____

PLEASE RETURN YOUR SURVEY BY FRIDAY 3/31/2023

How to return your paper survey: Drop off at City Hall: 88184 8th St.

Mail to: PO Box 458, Veneta, Oregon 97487

To fill out the survey electronically: www.venetaoregon.gov, the survey link is on the main page under "News"

The City of Veneta presents...



VENETA EATS

Join us for a fun, informative, and delicious night with **free food**, alcohol for purchase, **live music**, a guest speaker, and a panel with the following food businesses

Joy Cart

Food Cart



Crazy Al's

Bar & Grill



Temper & Mo

Chocolatier



March 30th 6:00-8:00PM

Fern Ridge Service Center

25035 W Broadway Ave, Veneta, OR 97487

Email apowell@ci.veneta.or.us with any questions

