



# CITY OF WASHINGTON Council Report

August 29, 2025

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## MAYOR – Liliya Stevens

- Attended a quarterly meeting City and PACVB staff reviewing how the City of Washington is promoted by the Peoria Area Convention and Visitors Bureau. Currently Steve Brown sits on the PACVB Board as our City's representative.
- Attended the following Bicentennial Celebration Week activities:
  - Rove & Ramble on the Square Bicentennial Kick-Off Night.
  - "Skycentennial" drone show sponsored by the Bicentennial Committee.
  - "Then and Now" parade organized by the Washington Park District and Chamber of Commerce. The City had two (2) entries; the street sweeper with the slogan 'Sweeping through history since 1825' and elected officials riding on top of the WFD ladder truck utilizing the parade theme of 'then and now' by former elected officials wearing tee shirts with the word 'THEN' and current elected officials wearing tee shirts with the word 'NOW' printed on the front and back.
  - Brookhill Garden Railway open house. Bob Lee has permanent railroad tracks set up throughout his backyard with working model trains running along the tracks.
  - "Bark-Centennial" organized by Bobbi Ceres-Volk at the Dog Park in Meadow Valley Park.
  - Tres Rojas sponsored "Bags, Balloons, and Bottles" event at the winery.
  - Historical Society sponsored Beard Judging Contest.
  - Participated as a member of Rotary as part of "Bicentennial Bites" held at Countryside where our Rotary booth successfully sold onion rings.
  - Attended Five Points Fridays Bicentennial Celebration.
  - Attended/spoke at the "Bi(ke)centennial 200 Family Bike Ride". In past years I have helped with this annual family bike ride and was honored when asked to say a few words at the beginning of this Bicentennial ride.
  - Attended the Washington Bicentennial Antique Tractor Pull held on the former Georgetown Apartments property was organized by Tazewell County Road Commissioner Scott Weaver and Dane Nafzinger.
  - Attended the Ceremonial Tree Planting at Washington Park commemorating the 200th tree planted. The Washington Park District, the City of Washington and the Washington Town & Country Garden Club partnered in the 200 trees by 2025 Bicentennial Project.
  - Attended the Time Capsule Dedication at Washington Park. The City of Washington contributed a City of Washington lapel pin, the Bicentennial version, and an ornament featuring the fountain/Washington Square.
  - Attended and honored to be asked to choose a "Mayor's choice" vehicle and presented the Mayor's Award to the owner of the vehicle during the Washington Bicentennial Food Truck Frenzy and Custom Car & Bike Show.
  - Concluded the Bicentennial Committee planned August 14-23rd celebration week by attending Shawn Degenhart and the Gospelfest Singers and Choir at Five Points.
  - Attended and participated in Lowe's Red Vest Day on August 22nd. Our WFD partnered with E.P. Lowe's associates who volunteered to unpack kitchen items at the fire station kitchen that was recently renovated. The WFD had previously been selected as a recipient of Lowe's Hometown Grant.

- As secretary of our Washington Rotary Club, attended our Tuesday weekly meetings.
- Participated in weekly staff meetings.
- Invited and participated with department heads discussing - going forward - how Washington will tell its story, connect with residents etc. through a rebranding process.
- Attended and participated by checking in persons attending the last Wednesday of the month Senior Luncheon hosted by the Washington Park District held at Five Points.
- Listened to current commercial property owners interested in sharing ideas of new developments within the City limits.

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#### **CITY ADMINISTRATOR – *Dennis Carr***

- We have selected Dewberry to perform the Citywide Space Needs Study and our initial scoping meeting is scheduled for September 5<sup>th</sup>.
- The Strategic Goal Setting Session survey has begun and the community has until September 10<sup>th</sup> to complete the survey. As of noon on Thursday, we have had 460 submissions.
- We have begun work on identifying a voice and tone for our outward communications to make them more uniform.
- Staff is looking to present some ideas to council as it pertains to a City brand at an upcoming Committee of the Whole for discussion and direction.

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#### **ENGINEERING – *Dennis Carr, Ross Fuller & Mike Genard***

- The Grandyle project is progressing well. New sidewalk and ADA ramps have been installed on Grandyle. Stark is currently working to remove and replace driveway approaches to make everything ADA compliant. We have been in contact with all residents who are affected by driveway closures. Upon the completion of the driveway approaches, all that will need to be done before closing out the project is landscaping. We anticipate that this project will be completed by the second week of September.
- The Grant St. SRTS Project is progressing well. Forms have been set up in preparation for the new sidewalk installation. We replaced a badly deteriorated culvert that ran beneath Grant St. There are some adjustments needed on the new manholes that have been installed to ensure that they match the new sidewalk. Once the adjustments have been made, new sidewalk will be poured beginning next week.
- Some of the new manhole and inlet structures have been delivered for the Cedar St. Stormwater Priority Project. We were on-site for the delivery to ensure that all the structures were placed within the ROW and not obstructing the view at intersections. We are hoping to see this project begin by the third week of September. Residents will be notified before work begins.
- We are still waiting for the new construction permit for the Catherine St. Project. Work will resume once this is received and we get a verbal approval for the operating permit from the IEPA.
- Lonewolf has completed all the current concrete replacement requests for the 70/30 program. We were informed by a resident that two ADA ramps at the corner of Chestnut/White Oak do not allow their child to easily access his bus because of the ramps settling behind the curb. These will be replaced in the coming weeks.
- American Asphalt has completed all of the Hot In-Place for this year's MFT project. Staff will not work with UCM on when they will chip seal and fog coat.
- After the rejection of the Candlewood Bridge Bid, plans have been adjusted and a new letting date of September 11<sup>th</sup> has been selected. We have had 4 separate contractors request plans. We are hoping to have the awarding of this project on the second council meeting in September.
- The mayor and I have assembled an Community Advisory Group for the upcoming Business 24 reconstruction project. IDOT is still working through finalizing a contract with the design engineer which will formally kick off their design.

- IDOT put up message boards informing us that their resurfacing of Business 24 will begin next week. We will work on trying to get construction updates communicated out, but it is not a City project, so there is not always good continuous communication to staff.
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## **FINANCE – Joanie Baxter**

- FY24-25 Audit of which field work began August 4, 2025:
    - Completed Fixed Assets, Leases and Subscriptions, including entering assets on the Depreciation Schedule and in DebtBook and reconciling between the two
    - Finalized all journal entries for depreciation, leases, and subscriptions
    - Calculated restricted fund balances for HR Sales Tax for Infrastructure and for Stormwater Management
  - Preparation of estimated payroll for 2026 for Workers Comp renewal
  - Participation in branding workshop meeting for management staff
  - Meeting with Amanda regarding posting of information for electric aggregation.
  - Continuation of documentation of processes as related to audit functions – Police Pension Fund, Prepaid Expenses, Grants, Debt, Fixed Assets, Leases & Subscriptions
  - Began preparation of Police Pension Fund Annual Report for FYE 4/30/2025. This report is due in October but must be provided to our actuary so that tax levy requirements will be available by the October quarterly meeting.
  - Jill processed and I reviewed payroll for August 29, 2025
  - Utility Billing (August 16 – 29, 2025)
    - A total of 27 cutoffs were processed for July billing and 30 door knockers were distributed and 26 payment arrangements made
    - A total of five notices were sent for delinquent accounts from August disconnects
    - New accounts and account closings processed:
      - 12 ins
      - 26 outs
    - Leak detection through RNI and Sensus Analytics software – 49 leaks were caught and residents/businesses notified
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## **PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT – Jon Oliphant & Joe Boyer**

- The September PZC meeting has one case: A variance request of Robert Gaul at 2230 Northridge Lane. There are three components of the variance: 1) A 5' setback variance to allow an existing gravel driveway to be improved as concrete to the property line; 2) A 2' side yard setback variance to allow for the construction of a replacement accessory building to be 3' from the side property line; and 3) A 6' front yard setback variance to allow for the construction of a covered porch to be 19' from the front property line. Staff recommends approval of each of these with the caveat that a 1-hour rated firewall be installed on the accessory building wall parallel to the property line.
- With each of the Washington Commercial Building and Property Improvement Grant Program agreements having been approved, the owners of Cherry Tree Shopping Center are also planning on undertaking substantial repairs to its parking lot. This is separate of the items within its grant scope. The first phase of the parking lot improvements is expected to begin soon and will continue into 2026.
- O'Reilly Auto Parts will soon begin construction on the middle of three outlots at the intersection of Centennial Drive and McClugage Road. Site grading began this week and utility extensions will be initiated soon to prepare that lot and the others for development. The company plans to start construction on its new store this fall. Staff has been coordinating with other participants in the Northern Tazewell County Enterprise Zone to begin preparing an application to expand the EZ to add the Villages of Creve Coeur and Metamora as well as to add territory in East Peoria and Washington. This would include

the remaining land near Centennial and McClugage that is not currently in the EZ. Sherwin Williams would still like to construct a store in Washington but that is not likely to begin until at least 2026.

- Staff met with the new owner of the former Foster's Jewelry building and her general contractor. The owner has completed interior demolition and will soon begin interior renovations. Plans are anticipated to be submitted soon for desired exterior improvements, which will require approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness by the HPC. A TIF application also figures to be submitted soon for initial consideration by the Council. The goal is to complete all of the construction later this fall to accommodate the planned opening of Mud Creek Mercantile on the ground floor. That business currently operates in Morton but will move to the Square.
- According to the developer of the Protea Place development near the intersection of Business 24 and Cummings Lane, infrastructure construction will start shortly after Labor Day. While the hope is to have the first two buildings under construction before weather becomes an impediment, that may wait until the spring.
- Initial site work began on one of two remaining undeveloped lots on Mallard Way. Zero lot line duplexes will be built on the lot.
- Monday's Council agenda will also include a first reading ordinance to reduce the time allowed for paying for a nuisance abatement charge from 45 days to seven days. This is the recommendation of the City Attorney and would allow for liens to be recorded sooner and hopefully significantly reduce the possibility of a property sale prior to the receipt of an abatement payment as occasionally occurs. This was accidentally shown as a resolution on the August 18 Council agenda when it should have been listed as a first reading ordinance. In addition, that ordinance has been slightly modified to add language to allow for the City to collect a \$50 administrative charge to account for some of the staff time in the processing of nuisance violations.
- This month's PPUATS meeting included a presentation on new traffic counting software that Tri-County Regional Planning Commission staff have for member entities to be able to utilize. Unlike traditional counting equipment that is placed on the road, this product is portable and can either be placed near the road on a tripod or attached to a utility pole, traffic signal, or signage. It can provide instant data, not only for vehicles but also pedestrians and bicyclists. Staff may seek to use that in the near future.
- Staff has been thrilled at the progress being made on improvements to the house and grounds at 121 Peoria Street by the new owner. While more work remains, there has been a transformation of that intersection with Peoria Street.

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## **PUBLIC SAFETY – Chief Stevens**

- A second shift officer suffered minor injuries during a foot pursuit. The suspect was apprehended and charged with, among other things, resisting police (with injury).
- Officer Joseph Dubois began training with the new police K9.
- The department placed the speed trailer on the 100 block of Lincoln (northbound, near the helicopter) from August 18 – 23, 2025. The posted speed limit in this zone is 20 MPH. The 85th percentile speed was 28 MPH, meaning 85% of vehicles detected were at 28 MPH or less. The 50th percentile was 24 MPH. Of 4,387 vehicles detected, 3,359 were traveling over the speed limit. The average speed was 23 MPH, with the highest recorded speed at 42 MPH.
- The department placed the speed trailer on the 300 block of Wilmor (northbound) from August 10 – 17, 2025. The 85th percentile speed in this 25 MPH zone was 31 MPH, meaning 85% of vehicles detected were at 31 MPH or less. The 50th percentile was 26 MPH. Of 24,442 vehicles detected, 423 were clocked over 35 MPH. The average speed was 25 MPH.
- The State requires police supervising alcohol, tobacco, and e-cigarette sales compliance checks complete state certified training for those operations. WPD has not conducted compliance checks for several years and has scheduled training to make the checks possible. "Compliance checks," in this context means sending a person under age 21 to attempt purchases while under the supervision of police. The goal of

compliance checks is encouraging retailer compliance with age of sale laws. The minimum age for purchasing these products is 21.

- On August 29, 2025, the department formally swore in Officers Josh Kirby and Eric Erbentraut.
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#### **PUBLIC WORKS – *Brian Rittenhouse***

- Staff continues its annual detention basin inspections program. Staff will visually inspect, document and complete any maintenance needed after inspections are complete.
  - Staff continues its annual mainline valve exercising program. The IEPA recommends that valves be exercised yearly to ensure they operate correctly.
  - Staff has been working with PJ Hoerr to schedule the repairs to the Jefferson Street Shop which should begin sometime in September.
  - Staff repaired a water leak and patched the road on East Jefferson Street.
  - Staff continues to work with CMT to complete the chlorine switch over on the low-pressure plant #1 zone. Some equipment changes are needed to complete the switch. Staff anticipates the equipment being installed in the next two weeks.
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