



CITY OF WASHINGTON Council Report

November 26, 2025

MAYOR – Lilija Stevens

- Our 1st “WHIP-mas” Tree Challenge, a fundraiser for Washington Helps Its People (WHIP), is generating lots of participation and excitement since our Washington City Council challenged City Hall staff, the Police Department and Public Works during the November 10th City Council meeting. Each of three groups built their Christmas Tree, I mean WHIP-mas Tree using non-perishable food items, then challenged three other groups. And the Challenge continues!! Check out the City’s FB page for heartwarming posts/pictures of the many creatively built WHIP-mas trees!
- Speaking about Christmas trees...the week before Thanksgiving, our Public Works crew was busy installing a new 26’ Christmas tree at Washington Plaza. The October 13, 2025 Committee of the Whole minutes explain both short-term and long-term goals for this tree. 2025 is the City’s Bicentennial year. This tree commemorates the City’s Bicentennial year. This tree also symbolizes the future of Washington Plaza. The Plaza’s new owner’s desire to put in a green space supports a both a Council goal from our recent Goal Setting session and the City’s Comprehensive Plan for the Plaza as a community gathering place. The Square Park is the anchor on the east side of the City, with a future green space at the Plaza (the general area where Christmas Tree is located) being the anchor on the west side of our City.
- Please join us on Monday, December 8, 2025 from 5:30pm to 7:30pm at Washington Plaza. Music will be provided by the D50 Band and Choir for our 1st Plaza Christmas Tree lighting. Santa will be in attendance as well as The Grinch. The Park District and Washington District Library have activities planned...as well as a special showing of Elf at the Plaza movie theater!
As the City FB invite states, ‘Let’s make Washington shine bright this season.’
- Many homes are already in the Christmas spirit shining brightly...Submissions will be accepted from December 1-20th for the City’s 1st Annual Christmas Decorating Contest. Check out the City’s FB page for details.
- Thank you to Brickhouse BBQ restaurant for hosting our November Let’s Talk Washington event. Our largest crowd to date was in attendance the Monday before Thanksgiving. LTW is a monthly event where community members have an opportunity to informally interact with City staff and elected official(s). Although as of this writing, the location/date has not yet been finalized for our December Let’s Talk Washington...the place to check for information about LTW is on the Mayor page of the City’s website. I look forward to seeing you at our next Let's Talk Washington!

CITY ADMINISTRATOR – Dennis Carr

- Five Christmas trees were assembled and placed in front of City Hall for each of the School Districts to decorate. St. Pats and the High School have decorated their trees.
 - Attended the Peoria Chamber of Commerce Thanksgiving Luncheon.
 - Met to formalize the schedule for the Washington Plaza Tree Lighting. It will take place on December 8th.
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ENGINEERING – *Dennis Carr, Ross Fuller & Mike Genard*

- The new concrete driveway approaches have all been poured for phase II of the Catherine Reconstruction Project. All of the existing sidewalk removals have been carried out. Stark is currently working on the grading and rock placement for the new sidewalk. UCM will be placing the surface lift of asphalt for the new road on Wednesday November 26. Stark's concrete crew will remain on-site when the weather allows to set forms and pour the new sidewalk.
 - The milling and paving operation for the Stormwater Priority Project on roads SE of the Square has started. All disturbed areas throughout the roadway have been milled. The contractor is currently placing the binder lift of asphalt throughout these sections of the roads. Due to rapidly changing weather, the portions of roadways that were not disturbed by the storm sewer installation will remain intact for the time being. They will be milled and overlaid at a later date when the weather allows.
 - The North St. SRTS project has been completed apart from the crosswalk at Main St. that was installed incorrectly. Tazewell County Asphalt has been instructed to remove and replace the asphalt patch that they did to make it ADA compliant. This will be completed by Wednesday November 26. All traffic control has been removed, and the new sidewalk has been opened to the public.
 - The Grant St. SRTS Project has also been completed. The temporary mailbox bank has been removed, and mail is being delivered to the residents' permanent mailboxes. We will be providing a punch list of items that need to be addressed by the contractor before the project is closed out. New curb has been slipped throughout the mainline for phase II of the Catherine St. Reconstruction Project. Stark's concrete crew is currently working to get inlets set to the correct elevations and forming up the remaining curb that will be poured by hand. We anticipate having all the new curb installed by the end of next week.
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FINANCE – *Joanie Baxter*

Vacation

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT – *Jon Oliphant & Joe Boyer*

- The December PZC meeting will have one case: A preliminary plat for Mallard Crossing Extension 5. This would preliminarily approve the platting for 30 single-family residential lots. The 2014 preliminary plat for Mallard 5 showed 31 total lots and this most recent submittal provides for slightly wider lots than were previously approved. This section would complete the buildout of Mallard Crossing. Following the PZC's recommendation, a resolution to approve the plat will be scheduled for the December 15 Council meeting. The developer is hoping to begin infrastructure installation once the weather breaks in the spring.
- An HPC meeting was held for the Certificate of Appropriateness application for the former Foster's Jewelry building at 104 N. Main for proposed exterior renovations that will house Mud Creek Mercantile and for a COA application to allow for exterior renovations on the north façade at 122 N. Main for the former Bunk's building. The property owner and architect would like for the new doorway to be at roughly the midpoint of the north façade, as it leads to an interior vestibule which will contain the entry to the rear space but also serve as the secondary Americans With Disabilities Act-compliant means of egress for the front unit(s). The HPC approved both of the requests with the caveat that a sample of the planned dark red color be placed on the side of the 104 N. Main building so the commissioners can have an opportunity at the appropriate time to see the color to ensure it is within the general color palette as referenced in City Code.
- A TIF redevelopment agreement has been drafted and reviewed by the property owner for the planned renovation of the 104 N. Main building. It will be scheduled for a first reading ordinance at the 12/1 Council meeting and a second reading will be scheduled for 12/15. That work figures to begin shortly after agreement approval.

- Staff anticipates receiving a TIF application for the 122 N. Main renovation in the near future. This figures to be submitted in time to be tentatively scheduled for a discussion at the 12/15 Council meeting.
- Staff and the City Attorney have drafted a resolution to extend a farm lease agreement with John Guth to potentially continue farming the Memorial Gardens property, which is about seven acres and located directly south of Glendale Cemetery. The Council originally approved an agreement with Mr. Guth in 1995 and he has farmed the property since that time. However, staff discovered the last agreement between the two parties expired in 2002. There appears to have been no subsequent Council action since that time. The resolution would extend the agreement with Mr. Guth for two additional years. Mr. Guth has expressed interest in continuing to farm the property. As such, a resolution will be placed on the 12/1 Council agenda to extend the agreement through November 30, 2027. The City has received \$630 per year in revenue from the lease since 2004. It has been kept as hay most years with beans planted perhaps one out of every ten years. This helps ensure that there are no corn stalks or other taller vegetation that blow across the cemetery.
- The owner of 121 S. Elm Street has accepted an offer to sell the property. A closing is scheduled for mid-December. While staff will continue to seek legal remedies to address the house issues, staff is cautiously optimistic that the new owner will begin the work shortly after the closing.
- Staff participated in a training session for its use of ArcGIS Urban.
- Staff held its quarterly meeting with Discover Peoria staff. The primary discussion item was to begin a conversation about the creation of a community video that is included in the City's FY 25-26 agreement.

PUBLIC SAFETY – *Chief Stevens*

- Unexpected delays in electrical work and a fire suppression system have pushed back handover of the new building next to the fire department. PJ Hoerr has kept us as up to date as practical, given the shifts in timeline and availability of subcontractors and systems. We are identifying non-installed items such as furniture and an inventory system and arranging delivery after the handover date.
- Officers Taylor and Westbrook, Detective Thompson, and Chief Stevens participated in Central's Celebrating Central Heroes Community Day Kickoff Assembly, along with several other veterans and first responders. Washington is full of servant leaders.
- CodeRED—the city's vendor for geofenced emergency notifications—is currently offline in its legacy format. Alerts can still be sent, but only through Crisis24's new platform, which requires additional steps and takes more time until all clients, including Washington, are fully migrated. During this transition, the City of Washington can still issue alerts, but the process is more labor-intensive than normal. Crisis24, which recently acquired CodeRED, will compensate the City by providing two months of service at no cost in the next fiscal year.
- Chief Stevens and Sergeant Simpson are evaluating Axon technical products with the goal of identifying cost-effective improvements to department systems. They are also exploring digital submission of citation data through a vendor identified by Circuit Clerk Linc Hobson. Digital submission would decrease the number of times information and citations are handled, making transmission, record production and maintenance more efficient.
- Detectives are working with other agencies to share information on related burglaries that occurred recently both here and outside the city (including Washington addresses). We ask residents to ensure their vehicles and garages are locked and that they do not store valuables, especially firearms, in vehicles, whether locked or not.

PUBLIC WORKS – *Brian Rittenhouse*

- Staff put together the Christmas Tree in Washington Plaza. Staff will work on putting up the decorations prior to the Christmas Tree Lighting.

- Blunier Builders has started on the 700 Woodland Trail Public Works Storage Building. It is estimated to take a couple of weeks to finish the project.
 - The 1997 clarifiers at the Wastewater Treatment Plant were removed from service, cleaned, inspected and put back into service.
 - The water leak on Peoria Street was fixed and UCM paved back before the street markings were painted.
 - The City's insurance company has agreed to cover the cost to bring the Jefferson Street Storage Building's roof up to code. It is estimated to cost another \$75,000 to get the roof repaired to current building code.
 - Public Works is prepared for the snow season. We have seven plow routes that are staffed by public works employees during the day and at night. Staff will work through their respective routes until they are finished or until shift changes. Keep in mind that an entire route cannot be plowed all at once, that some residents will see snow removal first and some last. The expectation is that all routes are cleared before anyone goes home. Clean up of snow left behind by parked cars will take place as soon as possible.
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