



## CITY OF WASHINGTON

# City Administrator Report to Mayor and Council

February 13, 2026

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**ADMINISTRATOR – Jeff Fiegenschuh**

**To: Mayor Stevens & City Council**

**From: Jeffrey A. Fiegenschuh, MPA, ICMA-CM, City Administrator**

**Date: February 11, 2026**

**Re: Bi-Weekly Report**

I wanted to provide a brief update and outline several items that I will be expanding on in greater detail in the coming days. This memo is intended to reaffirm the city's current strategic focus areas, as approved by the City Council, and to highlight additional operational priorities and an upcoming organizational and community planning effort included in the proposed FY budget.

## Top 10 Strategic Goals Approved by City Council

The following priorities reflect the key strategic areas Council has identified for focused attention and action:

### **223 Property Strategy**

Develop a clear desired outcome and implementation strategy for the 223 property to guide future use and development.

### **Community-Wide Sidewalk Initiative**

Launch a comprehensive sidewalk initiative to place sidewalks along roadways throughout the community, including exploration of a Safe Streets Sidewalk Initiative and prioritization of high-traffic routes to schools.

### **Freedom Parkway Comprehensive Development Plan**

Advance a comprehensive development plan for the Freedom Parkway corridor and surrounding areas.

### **Washington Plaza Comprehensive Development Plan**

Continue implementation of the Washington Plaza plan to support its growth as a vibrant neighborhood destination.

### **Space Needs Study Implementation**

Begin implementing recommendations from the City's space needs study to ensure our facilities align with current and future operational needs.

### **Reinvent the Good Neighbor Days Festival**

Reevaluate and redesign the Good Neighbor Days Festival, including:

- Review of the festival site
- Review of the Chamber agreement
- Active engagement of key stakeholders

### **Plan Washington / Business Route 24 Coordination**

Engage IDOT and the community to demonstrate support for Plan Washington and coordinate the redesign of Business Route 24. Explore opportunities for the corridor to support a downtown entertainment district and encourage private hospitality and entertainment investment.

### **Targeted Development Financial Assistance**

Identify and prioritize specific properties and areas where the City may consider development-related financial assistance to support strategic growth.

### **Business Route 24 Streetscaping**

Plan for and fund streetscaping improvements along Business Route 24 in advance of a future reconstruction project.

### **Performance Expectations and Compensation Review**

Establish performance expectations supported by an annual review process and conduct a comprehensive compensation analysis to support recruitment, retention, and organizational stability.

I will provide monthly updates to the City Council on progress related to these strategic goals. In addition, staff will regularly review progress, challenges, and next steps during bi-weekly leadership meetings to ensure accountability, coordination, and forward momentum across departments.

## **Other Areas of Focus**

In addition to the strategic priorities outlined above, the following operational initiatives will require continued attention over the coming months:

- **FY 2027 Budget Development:** Implementation planning is underway, with formal budget meetings scheduled to begin at the end of February.
- **Police Department Collective Bargaining:** Early preparation and coordination for upcoming negotiations.
- **Sewer Trunk Line Project Coordination:** Continued engagement with staff, legal counsel, and affected property owners to move the project forward.
- **Downtown TIF and Building Concerns:** Ongoing meetings with a concerned property owner related to building conditions and TIF-related matters.
- **Internal Leadership Coordination:** Weekly staff meetings and bi-weekly leadership sessions to maintain alignment, communication, and accountability.

- **Professional Leadership and Continuing Education:** Service as President of the ILCMA Downstate Board and participation in professional development, including the upcoming ILCMA Winter Conference in Normal.

## FY Budget – Strategic Planning Initiative

In alignment with these priorities, funding has been included in the upcoming fiscal year to conduct an organizational and community strategic planning initiative. This effort is intended to:

- Align Council priorities, staff capacity, and community expectations
- Establish clear implementation strategies and timelines
- Support long-term decision-making and resource allocation
- Develop organizational vision, mission, and values statements.

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

- Met with UCM to discuss surface maintenance alternatives for Pinetree, Shellbark, and our MFT project for this year. We were recapping the past years program, what has been successful, and what are things we can adjust to make the program better moving forward.
- We are continuing to work on the 2026 MFT Project. As we are projecting costs and looking at the future drainage project in North Rolling Meadows, we are looking to avoid North Rolling Meadows this year. We have Washington Estates, South Rolling Meadows, Pintail and Drake, Muller, Jackson, Shellbark and Pinetree tentatively scheduled for this years program. The Pinetree and Shellbark roadways will need a little more attention than the standard program, so we are looking at a double lift for these two.
- The Catherine Street Phase 3 Reconstruction has been put out for bid. The letting is the afternoon of Friday February 13<sup>th</sup>. As long as we feel the bids come in reasonable, we will place the award in the first Council meeting in March for approval. Utility relocation work can begin before May 1, but the project itself will not have pay item work done until the next budget.
- TWM is working to finalize the Adams Street drainage priority project plans. This will be the last of the priority projects being paid for with the Stormwater Bond. The remaining priority projects will be covered with the stormwater funds that remain after the bond payments.
- I have a rough draft version of a Traffic Calmy Policy ready for some minor texts edits. We are tentatively looking to have this at the March or April Committee of the Whole meetings for Council discussion.
- Met with the residents of 716 Catherine to discuss the removal of willow trees that are within the ROW. Utility pole relocations are necessary for the new sidewalk that will be installed throughout Phase 3 of the Catherine project. When the poles are relocated the lines will be in direct conflict with the trees. Ameren’s forestry rep informed us that it would be best to remove them. Ameren worked with the resident and applied for the “Right Tree, Right Place” tree replacement program, which if approved, will provide the resident with new trees that will be planted on their property.
- Met with Lonewolf Concrete to show them the ADA ramps that need to be completed on roads southeast of the square. It is a requirement that ramps be updated to the current standards when a mill and overlay is done, which we did as a part of the storm sewer priority project. Lonewolf

plans to begin work on the new ADA ramps within the next couple of weeks. A total of 44 ramps will be installed and updated to the current ADA standards.

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#### **FINANCE – Paulette Hurd & Joanie Baxter**

- Review of all capital requests on ClearGov, agreeing to capital slides, reconciliation with funding sources, and compilation of summaries by fund and funding source for Council meeting.
  - Completion of Fund Balance projections for General Fund, Water Fund, and Sewer Fund for Council meeting.
  - Started personnel analysis for budget process, including salaries and insurance.
  - Continued reformatting and adding narrative for Digital Budget Book.
  - Began on-boarding and training/transition process including set-up of new computer and access to software platforms
  - Jill processed and we reviewed payroll for February 13, 2026.
  - Continued consideration of SharePoint and determined file storage options including potentially moving to Cloud based environment with Tyler accounting software.
  - Utility Billing (January 17, 2026 - February 13, 2026)
    - A total of 5,553 bills were processed for February, including 957 emailed bills (17.2%)
    - A total of 556 penalties were assessed for delinquent January bills
    - A total of 28 disconnects were processed for February, including 15 owing a balance, 13 with credit balances
    - A total of 2 accounts for January disconnects
    - New accounts and account closings processed:
      - 16 ins
      - 16 outs
    - Leak detection through RNI and Sensus Analytics software – 38 leaks were caught and residents/businesses notified
    - There were 18 new residents in January
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#### **PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT – Jon Oliphant & Joe Boyer**

- We received Washington Tourism Grant applications for the 2026 Ledgestone Open, which will be held from July 30 to August 2, and for the PDGA Master Worlds, which will take place from September 22-26. We have reviewed the info and approved \$2,500 funding requests for both. This will be the 16<sup>th</sup> annual Ledgestone event. It takes place on 15 area disc golf courses and it will once again be the largest tournament in the world. This year's event will host 2,500 competitors from more than eight countries and nearly every state. There were about 3,100 room nights booked during the week that the competitors were in the area for last year's event and it has a significant regional economic impact. The PDGA Master Worlds tournament will be hosted here for the second time following the inaugural hosted event in 2022. That event brings 1,100 players to the area that stay an average of eight days apiece. Five Points is the headquarters for both of the tournaments and relationships have been established with some Washington restaurants and Tres Rojas to further the local economic impact. These are two of the biggest events in the region and Nate Heinold has done a fabulous job overseeing their growth.
- Work has been completed on the tentative departmental FY 26-27 budget.
- A local buyer has a signed letter of interest for the purchase of the 120 and 126 Walnut properties. A closing is tentatively scheduled for mid-April and it is anticipated that the

continuation of the redevelopment of those buildings would occur sometime after the closing. Both buildings are planned to be utilized as event space.

- Additional discussion is planned regarding the possible 122 N. Main TIF redevelopment agreement. The property owner, Cliff Vieira, plans to be in attendance to provide further feedback on the project. He has asked for Council consideration of an agreement with three equal payments with the third of those contingent upon the submittal of proof of a signed lease with a tenant. Staff seeks direction on the framework for an agreement at Monday's Council meeting.
- The new O'Reilly Auto Parts store has indicated that its soft opening is scheduled for February 28.
- Staff has met with the Communications Specialist to begin mapping departmental website modifications as part of the larger website creation.
- Staff continues to be pleased with the exterior renovations being done at 313 Court Street. Staff is hopeful that the necessary interior improvements will also be done in the near future.
- Staff has received plans for the new G.Y.M. building to be located on N. Cummings directly south of The Hub. Staff anticipates that the building permit will be issued sometime next week, pending some minor revisions.

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#### **PUBLIC SAFETY – *Chief Stevens***

- As the weather warms, we annually see increased traffic issues. Officers are making a broad spectrum of enforcement stops resulting in both warnings and citations or arrests.
- Between January 10 and February 11, Washington Police officers made 10 DUI arrests involving both alcohol and drug impairment. These incidents occurred across a wide range of hours, from 10:26 AM to 2:39 AM, with the majority taking place between 7:00 PM and midnight. Each of these stops represents a situation where an impaired driver was taken off the road before a crash or serious injury could occur.  
Impaired driving continues to be a significant traffic safety concern. We are sharing these details to help prevent further incidents by encouraging everyone to plan ahead. We urge residents to make safe choices and use designated drivers or other reliable transportation options. Our goal is to keep our community safe and stop tragedies before they happen.
- The February outdoor warning siren test (tornado sirens) showed no problems. Ragan Communication observed a siren where they replaced a rotator control board and that test was also normal.
- We have indoor and outdoor painting quotes and will begin overdue indoor work ASAP. Outdoor work may await the new fiscal year.
- The Police Department assisted Code Enforcement in carrying out a court-ordered search warrant to address life safety concerns. By working together, the two departments combined their specific skills to ensure the situation was handled safely and followed all legal requirements. This partnership highlights our commitment to keeping the community safe through effective teamwork.

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#### **PUBLIC WORKS – *Brian Rittenhouse***

- Hoerr has completed some of the CIPP lining for the current fiscal year FY 25-26. Staff will continue to work with them to get the project completed before the end of the fiscal year.
- Street sweeping has and will take place during warmer days.
- Staff installed a drainage tile along the side of the Street Department's west building. This will help drain water that builds up along the building that floods the office sometimes.

- Staff are repairing/installing new fence posts at the Diebel Road property.
  - Staff repaired a water leak at the intersection of Court and Spring.
  - Staff continues to work on the budget.
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