

City Bridges

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Fall 2004

News to keep you connected to Albany City government

Water System Plan, Financing To Be Discussed at September 15 Town Hall Meeting

Town Hall Meeting Scheduled

The Albany City Council and the Mayor's Water Task Force will host a Town Hall meeting Wednesday, September 15, 2004 at 7:00 p.m. in the Little Theater at South Albany High School, 3705 Columbus St. SE. At the meeting, the Water Task Force will present its recommendations regarding Albany's water system and answer questions. Discussion will include the needs of the water system, recommended funding strategies including rates and system development charges (SDCs), proposed rate structure changes, and the potential for a low-income assistance program.

The City has received several questions regarding existing and potential future water rates, some of which are included below. These questions and many others will be discussed at the Town Hall meeting:

"Why did the water rates increase last fall?"

The water rate increase last September was required to help finance water system improvement projects including the Joint Water Supply Project (JWP) with Millersburg (Albany's share is \$28.1 million), diversion dam and fish screen improvements for the Santiam-Albany Canal (\$5.3 million), and hydropower improvements (\$1.1 million).

Dam and fish screen improvements are required by the federal government for safe fish passage, and hydropower improvements are required to restart existing hydropower facilities located at the historic Water Treatment Plant on Vine Street. The JWP represents a cooperative effort between Albany and Millersburg by combining resources to save money and to secure a safe drinking water supply for the future.

Albany's existing water treatment plant serves both Albany and Millersburg residents and operates at maximum capacity several times a year. As more people

move to Albany and future industries and commercial businesses open, additional water supply will be needed to serve these customers. The JWP will help meet the needs of these future customers in addition to increasing security by having two treatment facilities with separate sources of water that will benefit all customers.

"Are more rate increases planned in the future? How will this money be used?"

For three years, the Water Task Force has been working on identifying and prioritizing the needs of the water system and developing the most cost-effective way of paying for the required improvements. Based on the needs of the water system and sensitivity to recent rate increases, the Task Force developed a plan that, they believe, minimizes rate increases by addressing only the highest priority needs first and delaying others. In order to fund the highest priority needs and keep up with inflation, the Water Task Force is recommending that the City Council adopt a rate increase program that would generate increased water revenues of 2.5% effective January 1, 2005, and another 2.5% effective January 1, 2006, with subsequent increases equal to inflation plus 1% annually through 2014.

The City Council is ultimately responsible for any change to the water rates and will be considering the recommendations of the Task Force. For more information on the financial needs of the water system, see the Water System Financial Plan available on the City's website at <http://www.cityofalbany.net/publicworks/watersystem> and at Albany's public libraries.

"Why do the rates need to change again so soon?"

In addition to keeping up with inflation, future rate increases are needed to fix exist-

ing problems with the Santiam-Albany Canal, Vine Street Water Treatment Plant, pipes, pump stations, and reservoirs. These improvements are required to meet regulatory requirements, increase water pressure and fire flows, decrease service interruptions, and restore capacity.

For more information on the needs of the water system, see the Water Facility Plan available on the web at <http://www.cityofalbany.net/publicworks/watersystem> and at both public libraries.

"How do Albany's water rates compare with other Oregon cities?"

Right now, Albany's rates are among the highest in the state. However, it is important to remember that other communities are facing potential water supply shortages in the near future and are currently seeking opportunities for expanding their water supply. These communities will likely see rate increases similar to Albany's as they begin to pay for the improvements. It is important to realize that recent investments in the Joint Water Supply project with Millersburg should provide both Albany and Millersburg with enough water for the next several decades without further expansion or substantial investment in water supply. Although it does not solve the problem of higher bills right now, knowing Albany's water supply is secure for the future may help take the sting out of the current water bill.

"But many people are on fixed incomes and cannot pay their monthly water bill. Why doesn't the City do anything to help those people?"

In creating the proposed water rates, the Water Task Force spent a lot of time evaluating the effects on different water customers. Members of the Water Task Force realize some residential customers may have difficulty paying their monthly water bill and further recognize that residential customers who are senior citizens or disabled have little opportunity to change their financial situation in the future. As a result, the Task Force is recommending that the City begin a low-income assistance program for qualified senior citizen or disabled water customers.

Similar to rate increases, implementation of a low-income assistance program

must be approved by the City Council. For more information on the proposed low-income assistance program, see the Water Financial Plan available on the web at <http://www.cityofalbany.net/publicworks/watersystem> and at the public libraries.

"Will future residents be paying their fair share?"

Yes, future water customers pay for the effects of growth on the water system. When a new customer connects to the water system, they are required to pay a system development charge (SDC). Water SDCs help pay for past and future improvements to the water system required for new customers. SDC revenue helps keep existing water rates down while providing money to build projects that expand the water system so it can serve new customers. Like all existing water customers, these new customers are subject to the same rates that fund the operation, maintenance and replacement of existing facilities once they are connected to the system.

A public hearing on proposed new water SDCs is scheduled at the October 13, 2004 City Council meeting.

Establishing and administering SDCs is complicated and designed to provide equity to current and future water system customers. For more information on water system SDCs, you may refer to the *Water SDC Methodology* document, available at the libraries and on the City's website at <http://www.cityofalbany.net/publicworks/watersystem>.

These questions and many more are addressed in three key documents available on the City's website and at the Albany public libraries. These documents are the *Water Facility Plan*, *Water System Financial Plan* and *Water SDC Methodology*. The *Water Facility Plan* evaluates the existing and envisioned future water system and determines the improvements that will be required to serve the Albany community until the City is fully developed. The *Water System Financial Plan* develops a strategy to pay for operation and maintenance of the water system for the next 10 years, as well as the prioritized needs identified in the *Water Facility Plan*. The *Water SDC Methodology* uses information provided in the *Water Facility Plan* to determine the maximum allowable SDC that can be charged to new water customers.

If you would like to email your questions to the City prior to the September 15, 2004 Town Hall meeting, or are unable to attend but have questions you would like answered, send them to chris.bailey@cityofalbany.net, or call 917-7629.



City of Albany Directory

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Dick Olsen 926-7348

Doug Killin 926-6829

Ward II Councilors:

Sharon Konopa 928-3067

Ralph Reid, Jr. 928-7382

Ward III Councilors:

Bessie Johnson 791-2494

Glenda Fleming 791-5244

City Manager:

Steve Bryant 917-7505

City Hall Phone Numbers

General Information 917-7500

Ambulance Billing 917-7710

Building Inspection 917-7553

City Council Message 917-7503

City Manager 917-7501

Downtown

Carnegie Library 917-7585

Engineering 917-7676

Finance Office 917-7520

Fire Department 917-7700

Human Resources 917-7501

Main Library 917-7580

Mayor's Message 917-7502

Municipal Court 917-7740

Parks & Recreation 917-7777

Planning and Zoning 917-7550

Police Department 917-7680

Public Information Office 917-7507

Senior Center 917-7760

Transit 917-7667

Water and Sewer Billing 917-7547

Water/Sewer/Streets 917-7600

Emergencies (Fire, Police, Ambulance) Dial 911

City Bridges Info

City Bridges is published by an editorial team from the City of Albany. Questions and input about this newsletter can be directed to the City Manager's Office, 333 Broadalbin SW, P.O. Box 490, Albany, OR 97321-0144.

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Library Bonds Ready for November Vote

In just over 50 days, citizens of Albany will find ballots in their mailboxes for the General Election on November 2, 2004. One major local measure concerns the renovation and expansion of the Main Library at 1390 Waverly Drive SE.

In the past four years, citizens have taken part in a Library Design Task Force, feasibility study, Town Hall meetings, and citywide phone and mail surveys, all to assess the needs and plan for the future of Albany's libraries.

As a result, the City Council has placed a request for \$12 million in General Obligation bonds on the November ballot. According to current estimates, the bonds, if approved, would cost property owners an additional 46 cents per thousand dollars of assessed value. As property values increase, that figure should get smaller.

More than 65% of Albany residents have active library cards. The community has a 90-year tradition of strongly supporting its libraries. The proposed library ballot measure is the next phase of that tradition.

The 30-year-old Main Library was built when the town was half its current size and has exceeded its capacity to store materials and effectively meet ever-increasing needs.

In the past two years alone, both circulation (checking out books, magazines, etc.) and visitors to the library have increased over 17%, though the Libraries' hours have remained unchanged. Nearly 300,000 visitors have checked out more than half a million items in that time.

This past year set another record for participation in the children's Summer Reading Program and attendance at multiple story times. So far this year, more than 13,000 kids have attended more than 300 programs at the Libraries. The proposed Main Library expansion includes four times the space now available for children and their programs.

Additional information about the proposed library expansion and the bond measure is available by contacting Library Director Ed Gallagher at ed.gallagher@cityofalbany.net.

Windows Reopened at Carnegie Library

Boards have been removed from the Downtown Carnegie Library windows, the exterior window frames and panes have been sealed and painted the original color, and most of the windows now open. For those of you without central air-conditioning, you can imagine the delight for Library staff to be able to open more than one window and have durable screens for keeping out bugs while letting in fresh air.

Renovating the windows was funded jointly by the City of Albany and the Albany Public Library Foundation. Stop by on your lunch hour or break or during an afternoon stroll and enjoy the fresh air ambiance.

Police Put Special Levy Dollars to Work

In November, 2002, the citizens of Albany passed a fire, ambulance, and police levy which went into effect in July 2003. On the first anniversary of the levy, we thought you might like to know where your dollars are being spent.

First, we want to introduce you to our new Crime Analyst, Pat Hurley. Pat, a West Point graduate, comes to us from the United States Army where he was assigned to military intelligence for eleven years. He brings experience from around the world in gathering intelligence and analyzing it. Because this is a new position for the Albany Police Department, Pat has built computer queries that gather data from our current system as well as available state and federal data bases. He has

traffic control, found property and other non-emergency calls. You will see them around town in their distinctive dark blue Ford pickups. You can identify them by their unique uniform shirts of royal blue

able service to the community and the department by encouraging interaction with various groups and addressing specific community needs.

Finally, we have hired four new Police Officers and a Communications Specialist that were also funded by the levy. It takes six to nine months to effectively train each new Police Officer and they are in various stages of the training process.

The addition of personnel and equipment provided by the levy funds enables the Albany Police Department to fulfill our mission of "Excellence through Service."

If you would like to get a first-hand look at the department and what we do, we have two programs to assist you.

The Citizen's Academy is an 8-week program that begins September 7, 2004. It meets on Tuesday evenings and two Saturdays and is designed to give the citizens



Crime Analyst Pat Hurley



Community Service Officers Ryan Knoll, Matt Leonard, Sherri Jacobson, Lynn Hinrichs, Gerry Morris, Jim Dohr

provided valuable information to patrol officers to assist them in targeting crime areas and where crimes are likely to occur. Pat has also been instrumental in assisting the Detective Division with major cases by linking various suspects to multiple felony crimes. In his short time with the Albany Police Department, Pat Hurley has proven to be a valuable addition to our team.

Second, we have hired three additional Community Service Officers. Prior to the levy, the Albany Police Department had three Community Service Officers. With the additions to this unit, we are able to deploy them more effectively. Four of the Community Service Officers are assigned to assist patrol teams seven days a week from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. They are primarily responsible for animal complaints, abandoned vehicles, and City code violations. They also assist patrol officers with

over navy blue. These non-sworn officers have allowed our patrol officers to concentrate on more serious crimes and directed patrols such as traffic enforcement.

The other two Community Service Officers continue to provide valuable programs to the citizens of Albany through our Community Resource Unit. Some of these programs include Neighborhood Watch, Citizen's Academy, SALT/SASSI (our senior programs), child safety classes, and others. While these Community Service Officers are not out on the street on a daily basis, they provide an invaluable



Chief Joe Simon swears in officers Nathan Ard and Rick Hawley

of Albany an in-depth look at the Albany Police Department.

The other option is our ride-along program, where a citizen may be allowed to ride with a patrol officer for four hours. You will see the Albany Police Department as it functions at the street level.

If you would like information on either program, please contact the Community Resource Unit at (541) 917-7683.

Annexations: Voters Will Decide These Measures

The November 2 general election ballot will include a variety of measures requesting annexation of various properties in the Albany urban growth boundary.

Many of the properties are so-called "islands," surrounded on all sides by property already inside the Albany city limits, or by the city limits and a body of water. Some of the others have been requested by the owners of the properties or as the result of agreements between the City and the property owners.

A 1998 amendment to the City Charter requires that the annexation of any land to the City limits must be submitted to the voters at large.

Here is a summary of the annexation measures:

West Albany island

1. This area totals about 300 acres and is located between the existing city limits and the Calapooia River on the west edge of Albany. The area contains 59 single-family homes, an electric power substation, 30 undeveloped parcels and three parcels that are too small for development. Upon annexation, about 210 acres would be zoned Open Space, and the remaining 90 acres would be zoned Single Family Residential.

Small islands

2. Three parcels totaling about 3.6 acres, located between Riverside Cemetery and the Calapooia River. Currently undeveloped. Zoning would be Open Space.

3. Two parcels totaling about 1.6 acres on the north side of Queen Avenue and

west of Broadway Street. Currently in use by an electric power substation and one single-family residence. Zoning would be Medium Density Residential.

4. Two parcels totaling about 2.9 acres on south Pacific Boulevard, north of Ellingson Road. Currently in use by Linn Veterinary Hospital, and one residence. Zoning would be Neighborhood Commercial.

5. Two parcels totaling 2.2 acres on south Pacific Boulevard, east of Pacific and south of Allen Lane. Currently developed with single-family homes. Zoning would be Industrial Park.

6. Four parcels totaling about 7.1 acres on the east side of Pacific Boulevard north of Beta Drive. Two parcels have homes and two have light industrial uses. Zoning would be Industrial Park.

7. One parcel, four-tenths of an acre, on the north side of Santiam Highway, west of Goldfish Farm Road. Property contains a personal storage building. Zoning would be Light Industrial.

8. Three parcels totaling 4.3 acres on the west side of Three Lakes Road and south of 18th Avenue SE. Property contains single-family houses and a church. Zoning would be Single Family Residential.

Delayed annexations

9. Ten parcels totaling about 14.4 acres on the west side of Three Lakes Road. Between 1989 and 1997, the owners of these properties signed agreements with Linn County and the City of Albany, agreeing to annex to the City once the

properties became contiguous to the city limits. In the interim, the properties were allowed to develop more intensely than would normally be allowed outside an incorporated city. Zoning would be Light Industrial.

Initiated by property owners

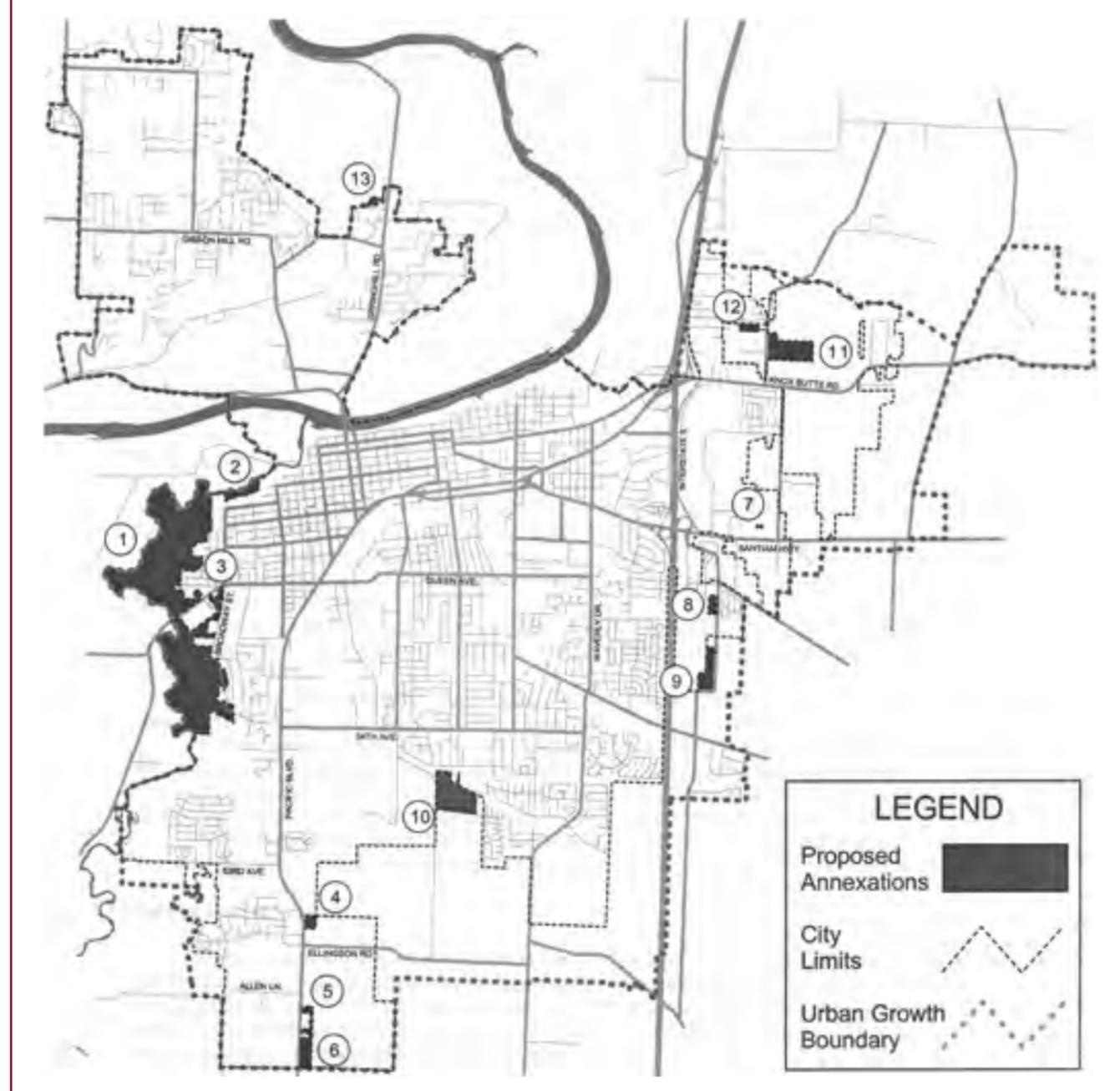
10. Two parcels totaling about 31.9 acres on the east side of Lochner Road, south of the Albany Santiam Canal. Property is owned by the Greater Albany School District and has been declared surplus. The small parcel is primarily wetlands. Zoning of both parcels would be Single Family Residential.

11. Five parcels totaling 27 acres on the east side of Clover Ridge Road north of Knox Butte Road. Each has a single-family home. Zoning would be Single Family Residential.

12. One 5-acre parcel on the west side of Clover Ridge Road south of Sommerset Avenue NE. The parcel contains a single family home. Zoning would be Single Family Residential.

Spring Hill Country Club

13. A portion of a 2.2-acre tract owned by Spring Hill Golf and Country Club, containing the clubhouse, swimming pool and part of the parking lot. As a condition of receiving city sewer service, the Country Club agreed to be annexed when the Albany urban growth boundary was amended to allow annexation. The City Council amended the urban growth boundary on August 11, 2004. Zoning would be Single Family Residential.



Recycle it!

(Editor's note: Albany-Lebanon Sanitation provides trash collection and curbside recycling services under a franchise agreement with the City of Albany. News about recycling will be a regular feature in City Bridges, courtesy of ALS.)

Instead of tossing out your yard trimmings and vegetable scraps, compost them in your back yard. Composting is easy and cheap and will help your garden grow healthy and strong. Compost provides nutrients, reduces the need for fertilizer, and can improve the quality of clay or sandy soil. It can also be used as mulch to control weeds and save water.

What is compost?

Compost is a dark crumbly mixture of decomposed organic matter such as grass clippings, leaves, twigs, and branches. Compost contains nutrients, holds nutrients in the soil until plants can use them, loosens and aerates clay soils, and retains water in sandy soils.

What can you put in compost?

Anything that was once alive will naturally decompose. However, some organic wastes – such as meat or dairy products – should not be composted at home.

How does composting work?

Composting is part science and part art. Even the first-time composter can make good quality compost. Use the guidelines below to get started.

Recipe for success

A compost pile is a teeming community of microorganisms that process yard debris to produce compost. To provide essential nutrients for the microorganisms, mix two parts carbon-rich (brown) materials, such as brown leaves, to one part nitrogen-rich materials (green), such as grass clippings, as you build your pile. A pile with these proportions of carbon to nitrogen will promote large populations of microorganisms and produce compost quickly. Other proportions of brown to green materials will create good compost, but will decompose more slowly.

- | YES! Do compost: | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Green (one part) | Brown (two parts) |
| • Fresh grass clippings | • Old potting soil |
| • Green leaves | • Twigs |
| • Plant stalks | • Dried grass and leaves |
| • Hedge trimmings | • Shredded newspaper |
| • Annual weeds without seed heads | • Straw |
| • Vegetable and fruit scraps | • Wood chips |
| • Coffee filters and tea bags | |

- | NO! Don't compost: |
|--------------------------------------------------------|
| • Diseased plants |
| • Weeds with seed heads |
| • Invasive weeds such as quack grass and morning glory |
| • Pet wastes |
| • Dead animals |
| • Bread and grains |
| • Meat or fish parts |
| • Dairy products |
| • Grease, cooking oil or oily foods |

Did you know that the Linn County Fairgrounds has a composting demonstration site? Visit it today and find excellent information on setting up your own home composting system!

New City Forester on the Job

Craig Carnegie joined the City staff in July as City Forester. He holds a master's degree from the University of Oregon and has a background in environmental design, planning, and natural resource management.

Before coming to Albany, Carnegie had lived in Oregon for over a decade. He worked in Portland and started a family before accepting a position as the Landscape Administrator for the City of Fayetteville, Arkansas. He has family not far from Fayetteville, and wanted his daughter to get to know them. His wife, Jennifer, is from Portland, and both knew they would return to Oregon to settle down. When the City Forester position opened in Albany, Carnegie felt it would be a good match for his experience and education.

The City Forester is part of the Environmental Services Section of the Public Works Department. The scope of the City Forester's work includes looking at ways to integrate trees and other vegetation to enhance watershed health and protect the quality of life for Albany residents. This approach to urban forestry is an important part of the job, Carnegie said.

"Trees and other vegetation help control storm water (reducing the effects of flooding), abate air pollution, shade our streets and parking lots, provide habitat for urban wildlife, and create beauty within the city," he said.

The City Forester also considers the economic benefits that Albany's urban forest provides.

"Research shows that trees and other green assets of a city can help generate economic growth," Carnegie said. "Studies show trees raise the value of property by adding curb appeal, shoppers are more likely to go and stay at a well-treed shopping center as opposed to one with few or no trees, businesses looking to start up or relocate often consider livability issues in their decisions, and people overwhelmingly prefer to live in cities with lots of trees."



A city with a healthy urban forest makes good business sense, he said. Of course, where there are trees there can be conflicts, whether it's with people, trees and sidewalks, hazardous conditions, or trees under power lines. Albany residents should be aware that removal of trees greater than six and one half

feet in circumference (about 25" diameter) requires a permit, issued through the forestry program. Removal of street or public trees is determined by the City.

Goals for the urban forestry program are to plan well for the future, inform the public of the value of trees, and have a management strategy to deal with problems.

"An urban forestry program should be multi-faceted in order to meet the wide

array of challenges found within this green infrastructure," Carnegie said. He said he is looking forward to finding balanced solutions to these challenges, and to a positive experience working for the City of Albany.

Carnegie can be reached at craig.carnagey@cityofalbany.net

Albany Adopt-A-Street

The Albany Public Works Department is establishing a new program for residents who want to help beautify the City. Similar to successful Adopt-A-Highway programs across the country, Adopt-A-Street will allow individuals or groups to agree to care for a specified length of street and associated right-of-way property.

"The goal is to generate a greater sense of ownership among residents," says Chris Bailey, community outreach coordinator for the Public Works Department. The City has received several comments from people interested in such a program and is developing Adopt-A-Street to complement the popular "Down by the Riverside" stream cleanups held in the summer and fall each year.

Individuals, families, or groups can sign an agreement with the City whereby they promise to pick up litter along a designated street at least twice per year. The contract can be renewed for subsequent years. The volunteers provide their time and effort and the City provides the equipment including litter grabbers, trash bags, and debris removal. The City will also post signs along the roadways to recognize the commitment of volunteers in the program.

Anyone interested in volunteering with the Adopt-A-Street program can contact Chris Bailey at 917-7629 or by email at chris.bailey@cityofalbany.net.

Fire Station Treasure Hunt Set

The Albany Fire Department will host its annual Fire Station Treasure Hunt on Saturday, October 9, 2003, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

All four Albany fire stations will be open to the public for tours, activities, and demonstrations by firefighters. Visitors will learn about the variety of services the Fire Department provides and have some fun.

Pick up a Treasure Hunt map on the day of the event at any fire station. Once you've completed the hunt through all four stations, you can claim your treasure!

Albany fire station locations:

- 110 Sixth Avenue SE (Station 11)
- 120 34th Avenue SE (Station 12)
- 1980 Three Lakes Road SE (Station 13)
- 2850 Gibson Hill Road NW (Station 14)



Fall Leaf Pick Up Schedule

Although it may still feel like summer, soon the leaves will be falling, clogging our storm drains and gutters. Every year, the Public Works Department tries to remove as many leaves as possible so that they do not clog storm drains and create flooded roads when the winter rain begins.

Leaves will be collected three times this fall, during the weeks of November 1, November 15, and November 29.

The City recommends following these guidelines when gathering leaves for pick up:

- Leaf piles should be placed about a foot from the curb in case it rains before they are picked up. Leaving space between

the curb and the pile of leaves means water can drain down the edge of the street to the storm drain basins.

- Try to pile the leaves no earlier than the weekend before the scheduled pick up. Piling them earlier often means they blow away into storm drains or onto other property.
- Remember the leaf pick up may happen any day during the scheduled weeks, not necessarily on the same day as your regular garbage removal.

If you have any questions about the leaf removal program, please contact the Operations staff at 917-7600, or check the City of Albany website at <http://www.cityofalbany.net>.

At last!

Construction underway at Transportation Center

Construction of Albany's new Transportation Center is finally underway after many years of studies, planning, applying for funding and acquiring property. This spring, a \$6 million contract was awarded to James W. Fowler Co. to complete the first phase of the project. Buildings on site have been removed except for the original railroad depot and baggage building, which will remain. Most underground utilities have been installed and site work will soon move on to surface improvements and renovation of the depot building.

Public access is closed to the southern portion of the site while construction there continues. At the north end, the Amtrak passenger office has been relocated temporarily to a trailer located east of the depot. Free public parking for users of bus and rail service is now east of the Amtrak office.

The construction schedule anticipates that Amtrak will move into the renovated depot in spring 2005. Public access will shift from the current entry at Lyon Street to a new entrance at 12th Avenue while work is underway at the north end of the site.

The Albany Arts Commission has chosen a tower-style entry feature which may be added to project. The tower would be built at the Lyon Street entrance. The Greater Albany Rotary Club has asked to participate with the City on the entry feature and is considering installing a clock in the tower. The tower is being designed and will be added to the project if funding is available.

The intersection of Pacific Boulevard and Lyon Street will be rebuilt in the second phase. The \$2.7 million interchange project is scheduled for bidding this fall with construction completion targeted for summer 2005. The new design will allow more vehicles to get through the intersection and will revise the north entrance to the Transportation Center.

Construction should be complete in the summer of 2005 on all parts of the project that have funding. The City intends to complete the entire of the project as additional grant funds become available.

