



Water Quality
Protection
Surface Water Management
Wastewater Collection & Treatment

Gregory L. Geist
Director

April 27, 2020

City of Oregon City Commission
625 Center Street
Oregon City, OR 97045

SENT VIA EMAIL

Re: City of Oregon City's Proposal to create a Sanitary Sewer Infiltration and Inflow (I&I) Program

Dear Mayor Holladay and Commissioners,

As Director of Clackamas Water Environment Services, I offer my enthusiastic support for the proposal by the Public Works Department of the City of Oregon City to create an innovative Sanitary Sewer Infiltration and Inflow (I&I) Program to reduce the amount of stormwater that enters the sanitary sewer system. I believe this project will benefit Oregon City, Oregon City residents and the Clackamas Water Environment Services Service Area.

I especially appreciate the plan's forward-thinking policy that would require the cooperation of private properties identified as sources of excessive flow and leakage in the collection system to work to reduce I&I by replacing their sanitary sewer service laterals or disconnecting direct connections.

The proposal correctly asserts that "reducing I&I provides benefits to the public by reducing capacity issues for treatment at the Tri-City Wastewater Treatment Plant." Indeed, this program will yield great benefits to our regional system, which includes Oregon City. The reduction of I&I also helps prevent possible rate increases for both retail and wholesale customers, which includes Oregon City.

I&I increases costs in a variety of ways, which can be passed on to ratepayers. For instance, the need to increase capacity because the sewer system is being inundated with "clean" rain water can require installation of larger pipes, bigger pumps and the need to build a larger additional treatment capacity, all of which are expensive projects. Also, increased water levels in the sewer system due to I&I puts added strain on pipes and pumps and leads to premature deterioration and expensive replacements. Increased pump run times result in higher electricity bills. Treating additional flows results in higher costs for operations and chemicals.

At WES, reducing I&I remains one of our highest priorities. Providing our customers with cost-effective and reliable service is our main goal. WES operates and maintains five water resource recovery facilities, 23 pumping stations and more than 340 miles of pipes. When our system functions efficiently and is sized appropriately, our customers are better served. By preventing damage to our infrastructure and equipment, we protect customers from higher rates.

Our mission is to provide wastewater resource recovery and watershed protection services
to our community so we can live, work, and play in a healthy environment.

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www.clackamas.us/wes/

I am heartened to hear that the Oregon City Public Works Department's proposal has been well received by stakeholder and citizen groups in Oregon City. I also applaud and thank Oregon City Public Works Director John Lewis and his team for their excellent research and development of this progressive proposal. I look forward to learning about other sewer-related improvement projects they are currently working on.

WES has enjoyed and benefitted from partnering with John and his team over the years, and we look forward to more cooperation and collaboration in the future.

I respectfully encourage you to support and provide guidance for the City of Oregon City's Public Works Department and its Sanitary Sewer Infiltration and Inflow Program.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Greg Geist", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Greg Geist
Director, Water Environment Services
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Oregon City, OR 97045
ggeist@clackamas.us

cc: John Lewis, City of Oregon City Public Works Director