



City of Ellensburg, Washington

2025 Year in Review

2026 Ellensburg City Council

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City Staff Senior Leadership Team:

Heidi Behrends Cerniwey, City Manager
Christopher Horner, City Attorney
Dan Carlson, Community Development Director
Brad Case, Parks & Recreation Director
Josephine Camarillo, Library Director
Jim Goeben, IT Director
Nicole Klauss, Public Information Officer
Ryan Lyyski, Public Works Director
Jerica Pascoe, Finance Director
Buddy Stanavich, Energy Services Director
Kelle Vandenberg, Arts & Economic Development Manager
Ken Wade, Police Chief
Lisa Young, Human Resources Director



City Attorney's Office

The City Attorney's Office (CAO) for the City of Ellensburg includes two full-time employees: the City Attorney and the Executive Assistant, who also serves as the City's Public Records Officer and Deputy City Clerk (funding for this position is shared with the Finance Department). In 2026, prosecution services were transferred by contract to the Kittitas County Prosecutor's Office, which eliminated the Assistant City Attorney's position.

Major Accomplishments

- Processed 57 public records requests with production of several thousand pages of records while also providing general public record advice to all departments.
- Advised Ellensburg Police Department Records Division on multiple public records requests. The City Attorney's Office also meets annually with the Ellensburg Police Department Records Clerks to review new legal or other developments specific to law enforcement records.
- Prepared or assisted in the preparation of 25 new or amending ordinances that were adopted by City Council in 2025, including:
 - Two franchise ordinances
 - Amending the City's Land Development Code
 - Adding a new chapter of City code to address street banners, sidewalk flags, and decorations
 - Amending the Comprehensive Plan
- Prepared, assisted in the preparation of, or reviewed 32 resolutions that were adopted by City Council in 2025, including:
 - Council support for the KVH property tax levy initiative
 - Amending the City Council Rules of Procedure
 - Submitting a public transportation (transit) .2% sales and use tax ballot measure to the voters, and repeal of the existing TBD .2% sales and use tax.
- Provided confidential legal advice and analysis to City staff on various matters throughout the year.
- Reviewed numerous contracts, interlocal agreements and other agreements for legal compliance and risk management purposes (including, but not limited to, the fieldhouse replacement RFQ; opioid litigation settlement funds; cold weather shelter).
- Assisted in successfully negotiating an agreement for the Kittitas County Prosecutor's Office to handle prosecution of City cases starting January 1, 2026 and oversaw the transition of cases from the City to Kittitas County.



City Manager's Office

The City Manager's Office is responsible for execution of City policies and budget expenditures established by the City Council, providing administrative direction to all City departments, and overseeing budget expenditures approved by the Council and results of those programs, services, and investments. The City Manager is the chief administrative officer of the City and directly supervises the City Attorney, Police Chief, and Directors of Human Resources, Library, Finance, Public Works, Energy Services, Parks & Recreation, Information Technology, and Community Development; the Arts & Economic Development Manager, the Public Information Officer, and Executive Assistant.

Major Accomplishments

The City Manager provides guidance and support to all City departments and divisions to deliver services and to achieve goals and priorities set forth in the City Council's Strategic Vision. Adopted priorities for 2024-2029 include five pillars: Dedicated Parks and Recreation Resources; Sustainable Economic Development; Affordable Housing and Living; Infrastructure and Energy, and; Safety, Civic Engagement, and Cultural Inclusion. Highlights in 2025:

Dedicated Parks & Recreation Resources

- Unity Park project was completed and performed in its first year as an event space, hosting community events such as Hoedown in the Downtown and movie night in the park. Contracted with Kittitas County Chamber of Commerce to operate a seasonal Visitor Information Center at Unity Park. Arts Commission unveiled the art installation "Harmonize," by Crista Ann Ames. And the water feature at Unity Park was tested and will be operational for the 2026 season.
- Received the Heart of Downtown Award for Unity Park by the Ellensburg Downtown Association.
- Maintained Bicycle Friendly Community Silver status, since 2015, and celebrated Bike Month with a community event.
- Continued planning activities and solicitation of developers to construct Ellensburg Fieldhouse, a proposed indoor recreation facility at Rotary Park, which would pursue construction of the facility through a private/public partnership as allowed by RCW 35.42 (Lease-Lease back).
- City made improvements to Kittitas Valley Memorial Pool HVAC and flat roof and repaired sloped roof. Conducted tour and education session for community on pool operations and maintenance history. City Council approved funding for engineering and design of a new sloped roof \$535,000 to replace the sloped roof in 2026.
- Repaired a pedestrian bridge at Irene Rinehart Riverfront Park.
- Completed a comprehensive City Parks & Facilities Tree Inventory as part of the new Urban Forest Management Plan.
- Provided location at Rotary Park for The Walls That Heals, a replica of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C.

- Implemented Parks Department fee increases—the first increases in over 30 years for some programs. Continued community education on how parks are funded.
- Parks initiated the process to update the Park, Recreation, Open Space and Sustainable Funding Plan, which included a community survey and public engagement about park priorities.

Sustainable Economic Development

- Facilitated development of the Kittitas County Economic Development Partnership to refine how economic development is coordinated in Kittitas County. The Partnership is a collaborative model for transformative county-wide economic development and includes members of the Conference of Governments, Central Washington University, and all economic development organizations.
- Continued partnerships with Kittitas County to inspect bridges, complete road maintenance (chip seal) 5.56 miles of City streets, stripe roadways, and coordinate flood response.
- Worked with owners and agents of prospective developments to consider projects in the City, including the 1+ million sq. ft. WinCo Distribution Center project, and many others.
- Developed the Ellensburg Downtown Beautification Plan in partnership with Ellensburg Downtown Association.
- Established the Ellensburg Creative District (ECD) Wayfinding Plan and led the efforts for the installation of Phase I district wayfinding signage and implementation. Held and led Ellensburg Creative District Summit with 25+ attendees.
- Assisted in the formation of the Ellensburg Mural Society, a community-led organization committed to the preservation, restoration, and development of murals and graffiti abatement in the City.
- Supported in the application process for the 2026 Places Conference, bringing an anticipated 450+ attendees to Ellensburg for a three-day event.
- Continued progression of design and incremental infrastructure improvements to entrances into Ellensburg with Gateway I (complete), II (90% design with construction anticipated in 2028 if grant funding comes through), and III (under design) to improve stormwater treatment, non-motorized transportation, and roadway function and aesthetic of University Avenue and Vantage Highway.

Affordable Housing & Living

- Received Department of Commerce Connecting Housing to Infrastructure (CHIP) grant for Pathways Place (78 units) and Odd Fellows Lodge #20 (24 units) housing projects.
- Habitat for Humanity completed the second phase at Stuart Meadows (six homeownership units). Six more units are planned in 2026 to complete this project. The City contributed \$765,000 in affordable housing funds and managed and coordinated use of a \$1.395 million State CHIP grant.
- Funded HopeSource's acquisition of eight (8) rental units at Addison Place, which opened in 2025. The City contributed \$1,200,000 in affordable housing sales tax funds to the project, which also received a grant from Kittitas County.
- First & Pine property – 16-17 units in planning phase. After two revisions, Council approved a townhouse homeownership partnership project by Manastash Architecture Planning & Development, TM Construction and HomeSight. All ownership units will be reserved for households with incomes up to 80% of the area median.
- Held an accessory dwelling unit information session featuring information from lenders, architects, realtors, planning, building and utilities staff.
- Secured 2-year Cold Weather Shelter lease; completed site improvements and partnered with Kittitas County for operations (through contract with HopeSource; enhanced by volunteer support) at Grace Episcopal Church site on B Street in Ellensburg.
- Completed significant amendment to the Land Development Code to clarify language and rectify timeline requirements.

Infrastructure & Energy

- Restructured departments to establish the Energy Services Department to add capacity and better serve Ellensburg's energy future. Hired new Energy Services Director and other critical positions to meet safety, reporting, sustainability, telecom, and clean energy goals.
- Developed Transportation Safety Action Plan for the City and surrounding Urban Growth Area. The Plan was funded by a federal grant award through the Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) program and aims to reduce and eliminate serious injury and fatal crashes for all modes of transportation.
- Completed the Craig's Hill Water Pressure Improvements Project, which installed a pump house and booster pumps to create a new pressure zone in the vicinity, increasing available fire flow and allowing for full and more efficient use of Craig's Hill water tower.
- Replaced a major 24-inch valve on the concrete water main along Dry Creek Road.
- Completed utility extension project to create system redundancy for the City's infrastructure along Seattle Avenue between Willow Street and Magnolia Street.
- Received \$438,000 in grant funding from Department of Commerce for Fiber Extension and Fixed Wireless Broadband project to help eliminate the broadband gap in rural Kittitas County, bringing high-speed internet to nearly 500 unserved households northwest of the City limits and fiber service to three outlying City water wells.
- Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) fiber buildout to connect the last major City facility completed.
- Administered State-funded Home Electrification and Appliance Rebates (HEAR) rebates for low-to moderate-income households and small businesses to install heat pumps, heat pump water heaters, induction stoves, heat pump clothes dryers, and electric service upgrades for new high-efficiency equipment.
- Developed a ballot measure to repeal the 0.2% Transit Benefit District Sales & Use Tax that expires every 10 years and replaced it with a 0.2% Transit Tax that does not expire which was approved by Ellensburg voters (65.33%) during the general election.
- Ellensburg Central Transit updated system to allow passengers to subscribe to real-time detour or delay service alerts via SMS or email.
- Launched Ellensburg Central Transit Strategic Plan update including a survey to learn about residents' experiences and priorities related to services.
- Secured two Transportation Improvement Board (TIB) grants for street improvement projects adding a roundabout at Umptanum Road and Anderson Road intersection and funding for an overlay on South Canyon Road in 2026.
- Held first Ellensburg Recycling Event in partnership with Waste Management, Central Washington University, and Ellensburg Glass Recycling Cooperative.
- Converted intersection of Helena Avenue and Airport Road/Walnut Street into a 4-way stop.
- Replaced curb and driveway concrete on Pfenning Road that was placed out of tolerance with project specifications at no additional cost to the City.
- Added three new bus shelters located at Rotary Park; Ruby Street and South 4th Avenue; and Umptanum Road and Ruby Street.
- Completed Water Street Overlay Project—stretching from Main Street/Manitoba Avenue to Bender Road. The project included an overlay of Water Street, brought 145 ADA ramps up to code, and upgraded five intersections to the latest video detection technology, which includes bicycle detection. The project was primarily funded (approx. \$3 million) by a federal Surface Transportation Program (STP) grant. This was the largest overlay project in the City's history.
- Finished construction of the Reecer Creek Levee Phase 2 to help mitigate the impacts of flooding in West Ellensburg, protecting people, property, and benefiting the environment.
- Continued work on Urban Forestry Management Plan, which is funded by grant from Department of Natural Resources. Launched a survey to learn about residents' priorities related to trees and management of the City's urban forest. The project will be completed in 2026.
- Coordinated annual Arbor Day free tree giveaway program, providing 57 trees to City residents.

- Maintained Tree City USA certification—and for the third consecutive year, the City will receive Tree City USA Urban Growth Award.
- Approved two (2) telecommunications franchise ordinances. Developed new fiber permit application to facilitate consistent and efficient review of fiber construction projects.
- Completed the Anderson Road Sewer Extension Project Phase 2 which installed over 4,000 feet of 18" sewer line from the intersection of 3rd Avenue and Lincoln Street to connect with the Phase 1 project. This project removed the lift station which reduces maintenance for the wastewater system.
- Created a new chapter of City code to address street banners, sidewalk flags, and decorations.
- Approved annual Comprehensive Plan amendments to update the City's Capital Improvement Plans and revise Chapter 9 to Access, Engagement, & Belonging.
- Launched Ellensburg 2046 Comprehensive Plan Update: Hometown Heart — Bright Future required 10-year periodic update. Held an open house event to get feedback from community members.

Safety, Civic Engagement, & Cultural Inclusion

- Hired and onboarded new City Attorney to provide comprehensive legal services to City Departments, following retirement of incumbent.
- Negotiated a service agreement for the Kittitas County Prosecutor's Office to handle prosecution of City cases starting in 2026.
- Hosted City Council and advisory board/commission meetings in-person and virtually to provide options to community access.
- Hosted a gang awareness community presentation to share what residents can do to address the concerns gangs pose to the community.
- Used FLOCK automatic license plate reader (ALPR) system tool to contribute to crime prevention with many successful cases.
- Acted on results from evidence-based policing practices and police/community safety survey and partnered to expand the juvenile Handle with Care program and referred 527 children to services.
- Continued partnership with Ellensburg School District for School Resource Officer program.
- Appointed Sarita Dasgupta as the 2026-2028 Ellensburg Poet Laureate.
- Continued to provide accessibility and translation services, especially English to Spanish.
- Ellensburg Public Library held a library card design contest, announced the winning design, and ordered new cards featuring Megan Pickerel-Winer's artwork.
- Hosted Concerts in the Park, Touch-A-Truck, Jr. Rodeo Parade, Youth Gladiator Dash, National Night Out, Cop on Top, Bike Month community rides, Coffee with Council, Ignite the Arts, and flood mapping open house events, among others.
- Designed and facilitated two community conversation workshops and one Braver Angel's Common Ground workshop to discuss diversity, equity and inclusion and Chapter 9 of the City's Comprehensive Plan.
- Partnered with community organizations for Juneteenth holiday event.
- Co-hosted the Historic Preservation Month Open House and Award Presentation.
- Held City Council Candidate Information Session ahead of filing week to provide an overview of the City's form of government. Held four Ellensburg Academy sessions with City 101, budget workshop, water and wastewater, affordable housing, historic preservation, a day in the life of a police officer, and more.
- Launched Pod People, a podcast discussion club at the Library.
- Awarded \$1.62 million Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) for new building HVAC system at Library/Hal Holmes Community Center.
- Served as pass-through entity for \$900,000 federal USDA grant for FISH warehouse facility improvements.

Maintain a Well-run City—Organizational Effectiveness

- Reinforced importance of Core Team Values for excellent service delivery through onboarding, communications, and talent management system.
- Conducted training and coordination for board and commission staff to improve effectiveness and consistency.
- Refined roles, authority, and membership of Environmental Commission, Utility Advisory Committee, Ellensburg Transportation Advisory Committee (formerly Public Transit Advisory Committee) to distribute oversight functions and clarify responsibility for staff.
- Established new City employment web interface to provide better experience for applicants; participated in two job fairs; facilitated several job shadow opportunities and internships across City functions.
- Coordinated wellness activities to improve morale and health of City employees, prepare for Well City award (2% reduction in health insurance premiums), and encourage emergency preparedness of staff.
- Completed customer-focused improvements to customize payment dates and revise late payment notices to utility billing services.
- Encouraged City staff serve on professional association boards and service committees to represent Ellensburg: American of Public Works Association (APWA); Washington Finance Officer Association (WFOA); Washington City Management Association (WCCMA); Western States Information Network (WSIN), etc.
- Initiated new utility outage notification system to improve diagnostics of electric system outages and two-way communications with customers.
- Developed legislative priorities to frame City position on policy issues to allow staff and lobbying consultants to advocate for City interests at state and federal levels.
- Managed organization to achieve a balanced budget and solid financial position.
- Maintained compliance with Washington State Climate Commitment Act (CCA) by reporting and carbon allowance purchase/trading to cover electric and natural gas utility emissions.
- Made cybersecurity policies, infrastructure, and technology improvements to protect public data and interests.
- Received clean audit report from Washington State Auditor's Office for 2024 Financial Reports, federal funding (single audit), and Accountability Audit.
- Conducted process improvement actions to create efficient services for centralized contracts and records management.
- Closed out 30-year agency activities and audited Ellensburg Business Development Authority (EBDA).
- Transitioned to new health insurance benefit plan for non-union and OPEIU employees, which saved taxpayer dollars.
- City moved toward Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) replacement project kickoff, which will improve City's core operations and processes including finance, accounting, payroll, HR, supply chain, and more.



Communications

The Public Information Officer provides communications support to all City departments. The City communicates via the website (www.ellensburgwa.gov), social media, e-newsletters, text and email notifications, advertising and press releases, print publications such as utility bill inserts and mailers, at events, and in person.

Major Accomplishments

- Continued use of traditional and social media in City communications to advertise events, programs, and initiatives.
- Provided accessibility and translation services, especially in English to Spanish materials.
- Began implementation of accessibility required through federal web content accessibility guidelines (WCAG 2.1, Level AA).

Benchmarks

- City social media platforms had a combined 11% increase in followers in 2025.
- More users access the City website throughout the year. Website page views were up 1.7% over the previous year, at 645,908 views. Website users were up 14.62% at 221,951, and 54% of visits were via desktop. The top five most searched terms on the City website were "pool schedule," "pool," "jobs," "pool use schedule & fees," and "library."
- More people watched more City Council meetings on YouTube. In 2025, the total views of City Council meetings on ECTV's YouTube channel were up 3.52% at 7,353.
- The City sent out 12 editions of the e-newsletter, "Ellensburg Insider," an annual printed newsletter that was direct mailed to 10,548 addresses, 29 press releases, and regular updates to the City website and social media.



Arts & Economic Development

The Arts & Economic Development Manager works closely with the City Manager, department staff, City Commissions, and external partners to direct, plan, lead, and coordinate economic development activities (0.5 FTE) and expand the creative sector (0.5 FTE) for the City.

Major Accomplishments

- Coordinated and participated in the development and formalization of the Kittitas County Economic Development Partnership, a collaborative model for transformative county-wide economic development. This partnership includes all municipal members of the Conference of Governments, Central Washington University, and all economic development organizations within the county. It is tasked with the implementation of the Kittitas County Economic Development Strategic Plan.
- Participated in or led special projects for future development in Ellensburg/County (2025/2026):
 - Ellensburg Fieldhouse (funding)
 - Public Facilities District (feasibility planning)
 - Value Added Wood Products Task Force
 - Downtown Parking Survey and Traffic Count
 - Lean Charter with SAO for Commercial Permit Process Improvement
 - Ellensburg 20-year Comprehensive Plan, Economic Development element
- Drafted the Ellensburg Downtown Beautification Plan in partnership with the Ellensburg Downtown Association, the Lodging Tax Advisory Committee, City of Ellensburg Parks & Recreation.
- Worked with community partners and outside agencies, developed the Ellensburg Community Calendar, (launching Spring 2026) that connects multiple organizations' event calendars for a comprehensive one-stop shop for events and activities in and around Ellensburg.
- Developed the Ellensburg Creative District (ECD) Wayfinding Plan with City Council approval and led the efforts for the installation of Phase I district wayfinding signage and implementation in partnership with ArtsWA, WSDOT, Central Washington University, and the Ellensburg Arts & Cultural Alliance. Also secured \$12,500 in grant funding to pay for the project.
- Hosted and led Ellensburg Creative District Summit with 25+ attendees that helped shape the Scope of Work and district priorities for 2025/2026.
- Led ECD Strategic Planning efforts and wrote and submitted Annual Report to ArtsWA.
- Held key meetings with state leadership (Rep. Tom Dent and Rep. Alex Ybarra) on the importance of the creative sector driving economic growth in Central Washington. Participated in Inspire Washington's Advocacy Roadshow.
- In partnership with the cities of Moses Lake and Soap Lake, developed a Central Washington collaborative partnership to drive regional economic development of the creative sector.

- Assisted in the application process for the 2026 Places Conference through Washington State Main Street and Washington State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP), helping to secure Ellensburg as the location for the 2026 Places Conference, bringing an anticipated 450+ attendees to Ellensburg for a three-day event.
- Assisted in the formation of the Ellensburg Mural Society, a community-led organization committed to the preservation, restoration, and development of murals and graffiti abatement within Ellensburg.
- Onboarded six new commissioners/committee members to serve on the City's Arts Commission and the Lodging Tax Advisory Committee, respectively.
- Coordinated the selection, installation, and unveiling ceremony for a significant sculpture in Unity Park titled, 'Harmonize' by local artist, Crista Ann Ames.

Ellensburg Arts Commission

The Ellensburg Arts Commission supports artists, creators, innovators, and organizations throughout the community to enrich the arts and drive economic growth of the creative industry in Ellensburg. To successfully achieve its mission, the Ellensburg the Arts Commission focuses on five primary areas: project grants, First Friday Artwalk, City art collection/public art, poet laureate, and the Ellensburg Creative District.

Major Accomplishments

- Added three new Arts Commissioners with professional experience in graphic design, dance, photography, and education.
- Added two new Art Walk Venues in 2025.
- Commissioned and installation of 'Harmonize' at Unity Park by artist Crista Ann Ames
- In partnership with the EDA, formalized the Ellensburg Mural Society.
- Created new event Ignite the Arts to help drive traffic during the slow summer holidays.
- Held six (6) separate community calls for artists and community awards.
- Selected Kara Hunnicut as the City of Ellensburg's Arts Treasure Awardee; Mike McCloskey selected as the City of Ellensburg Arts Advocate Awardee.
- Awarded \$24,500.00 in annual project grants.
- Completed and submitted Ellensburg Creative District Annual Report to ArtsWA.
- Completed Ellensburg Creative District Phase I Wayfinding signage project; completed Year 3 Ellensburg Creative District Strategic Planning RACI (Responsibility, Accountable, Consulted, and Informed) chart.
- Worked with community partners on the implementation of the Ellensburg Community Calendar to bridge community and University community events for mutual benefit and awareness.
- Organized and led a free grant writing workshop for community individuals and organizations in partnership with the Ellensburg Arts and Cultural Alliance.
- Increased year-over-year data collection and reporting for the Arts Commission and for the Creative Sector in Ellensburg.
- Selected Sarita Dasgupta as the City of Ellensburg 2026-2028 Poet Laureate

Benchmarks

- Completed six successful calls and/or applications for artists projects and honors.
- The Arts Commission committed 49% of the 2025 budget to support Project Grants.
- The average total award amount given in 2025 for project grants was \$2,227.00.
- The Arts Commission has awarded \$191K in grants over the last eight years.

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Commission

The Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Commission operates under the authority of Chapter 1.88 of the City Code and is responsible for advising the City Council on diversity, equity and inclusion matters with the mission to support Ellensburg in celebrating the Ellensburg community that welcomes and is supportive to all residents and visitors because doing so enriches each individual's life and the community's wellbeing and vitality.

Major Accomplishments

- Updated the Commission's Listening Tour policy and pre-session script to strengthen consistency and community trust.
- Continued relationship-building with liaisons at the Ellensburg School District, Ellensburg Downtown Association, and Central Washington University.
- Three Commission members attended the Braver Angels Community Workshop as listeners to hear multiple perspectives from the community.
- Met with the City's Arts & Economic Development Manager to discuss opportunities for Commission involvement in citywide inclusive arts initiatives.
- Commission members served on the Juneteenth Event Subcommittee and attended the celebration.
- Created a grounding statement used at the start of Commission meetings, including definitions of diversity, equity, inclusion, accessibility, and belonging, as well as examples of how Commission work aligns with each principle.
- Provided multiple equity-informed advisory recommendations to City Council, including guidance on the docketed Comprehensive Plan process and other policy issues related to inclusion and community wellbeing.
- Attended City Council meetings to offer public comment and address ongoing public criticisms and misinformation regarding the Commission's work.
- Requested and participated in a joint study session with City Council in June 2025.
- Attended a Planning Commission Study Session to discuss the DEI Commission's recommendations to City Council regarding the Comprehensive Plan – Chapter 9.
- Received a briefing from City staff on the 2025 Comprehensive Plan update process; several Commission members also individually participated in Community Conversations about the future of the Commission and the DEI chapter in the Comprehensive Plan and attended the Common Ground Workshop as listeners as part of the Comprehensive Plan docketing process.
- Invested significant time drafting an equity-informed version of Comprehensive Plan Chapter 9 and formally recommended its adoption as part of City Council's review in place of the alternative draft, which was ultimately adopted. The Commission held a Special Meeting to prioritize and advance this guidance to Council.

Benchmarks

- Wrote 12 proclamations.
- Awarded \$5,000 in grant funding.
- Hosted four (4) listening tours.

Lodging Tax Advisory Committee

The Lodging Tax Advisory Committee operates under City Ordinance No. 4111 and is responsible for reviewing proposed changes to the lodging tax rate, exemptions, and use. Tax proceeds may be used for tourism promotion, the acquisition and operation of tourism-related facilities, and other uses as authorized by State law.

Major Accomplishments

- Downtown Trash Receptacle Replacement Plan: Worked with multiple City departments, the Ellensburg Downtown Association, and the Lodging Tax Advisory Committee (LTAC) to dedicate \$60,000 in funding toward the replacement of the downtown trash receptacle bins. This is a 2025-2026 project.
- Ellensburg Community Calendar: Working with community partners to develop a one-stop-shop community event and opportunities calendar that is hosted on MyEllensburg.com. This calendar utilizes API technology to connect all Chamber, EDA, CWU, and community partner events. It also allows any community organization/individual to add their event to the calendar with tracking metrics. This is a 2025-2026 project.
- Welcomed new Lodging Tax Advisory Committee member from the recreational sports tourism industry.
- Added capacity with the addition of a Visitor's Center at Unity Park, serviced through the Professional Services Agreement with the Kittitas County Chamber of Commerce.

Benchmarks

- Allocated funding to 17 events and/or organizations through the Consolidated Lodging Tax Grant process with Ellensburg contributing \$97,595.29 in funding to support the grants in 2025.
- Council recommendation and approval of allocating an additional percentage to share the administrative cost to support the Consolidated Lodging Tax Grant Program to create a more streamlined process for scoring and reimbursement.



Community Development Department

The Community Development Department (CDD) is responsible for providing guidance and coordination for all land planning and development activities throughout the City. The department consists of three divisions – Building, Planning, and Housing.

In 2025, the department included ten (10) staff members, with the Community Development Director having oversight of all three divisions. The Planning Division includes the Planning Manager, three Planners, and a Planning Technician. The Building Division includes the Building Official, Building Inspector, and Building Permit Technician. The Housing Program Manager staffs the Housing Division.

The goals of the department are three-fold:

- Implement and further the community's vision for future growth, including development patterns and design, through implementation of the Comprehensive Plan, administration of the land development code, and housing action plan.
- Provide timely, accurate, consistent, and impartial review of all land development permits including subdivisions, zoning, and environmental/critical areas.
- Ensure all new or existing structures are constructed and remodeled in accordance with the current City Building and Fire Codes.

Major Accomplishments

- Began work on the 10-year Periodic Update of the Comprehensive Plan, including hiring consultant team, conducting public outreach, reviewing existing documents, and working with consultants to complete drafts of the Land Capacity Analysis and Climate Hazards and Impacts Assessment.
- Completed the 2025 Annual Docket of Comprehensive Plan Amendments including the following amendments:
 - Annual update of the six-year Capital Improvement Plans
 - Revised Chapter 9: Access, Engagement, and Belonging
- Completed significant amendment to the Land Development Code, including:
 - Code update to allow co-living housing in accordance with ESHB 1998
 - Two applicant-initiated code amendments
 - Substantial code cleanup to correct contradictions, clarify language, and rectify timeline requirements
- Managed and coordinated use of affordable housing sales tax funds and Department of Commerce Connecting Housing to Infrastructure (CHIP) grant for Stuart Meadows affordable housing project.
- Received CHIP grant for Pathways Place and Odd Fellows Lodge #20 Housing Project.
- Processed project amendments for the 1st and Pine Townhomes affordable housing project.

- Worked with Affordable Housing Commission and City Council to fund HopeSource's acquisition of eight (8) rental units at Addison Place.
- Supported Cold Weather Shelter lease, site improvements, and partnership with Kittitas County for operations at Grace Episcopal Church.
- Processed 146 development review applications, including:
 - 32 pre-application meetings
 - 6 Preliminary Short Plats
 - 5 Final Plat Approvals
 - 6 Boundary Line Adjustments
 - 5 Site Development Permits
 - 46 Critical Area Permits
 - 7 Landmark Certificates of Appropriateness (COA)
 - 3 Site Specific Rezones
 - 3 Administrative Variances
- Issued 251 building permits, 243 mechanical/plumbing permits, and 18 sign permits.
- Conducted 3,754 building inspections.
- Large-scale commercial/institutional project plan review, permitting, and inspections, including:
 - WinCo Foods Distribution Center
 - CWU Academic North Building
 - CWU Multicultural Center
- Received, investigated, and processed 8 code enforcement requests.

Benchmarks

Residential Permits & Units Issued by Housing Type								
Housing Types	2022		2023		2024		2025	
	Permits	Units	Permits	Units	Permits	Units	Permits	Units
Single-Family	51	51	55	55	58	58	55	55
Duplex	0	0	0	0	5	10	0	0
Multifamily	2	68	1	16	2	23	0	0
Manufactured Home	1	1	0	0	3	3	0	0
Total	54	120	56	71	68	94	55	55

Commercial Building Permits & Valuation								
Type of Permit	2022		2023		2024		2025	
	Permits	Valuation	Permits	Valuation	Permits	Valuation	Permits	Valuation
New Buildings	6	\$2,931,785	7	\$4,771,123	5	\$4,848,318	11	\$53,876,122
Addition & Alterations	16	\$8,303,905	52	\$4,137,310	41	\$6,712,798	35	\$3,904,423
Repairs & Re-roofs	10	\$1,115,442	12	\$731,904	12	\$517,185	7	\$371,679
Demolition	3	0	2	0	2	0	2	0
Other	0	0	3	\$305,898	12	\$5,420,245	5	\$322,000
Total	54	\$12,351,133	76	\$9,946,235	72	\$17,498,546	60	\$58,474,224

Planning Commission

The Planning Commission operates under the authority of Chapter 1.14 of the City Code and is responsible for:

- Reviewing and making recommendations to the City Council pertaining to the long-term Comprehensive Land Use Plan and the zoning ordinances.
- Conducting hearings and making decisions and/or recommendations on a variety of land-use applications including permits, annexations, rezones, and subdivisions.

Major Accomplishments

- The Planning Commission held a joint study session with the Affordable Housing Commission in July to discuss Inclusionary Zoning possibilities.
- The Planning Commission conducted a public hearing and made a recommendation to approve two Comprehensive Plan amendments. These amendments included updates to the City Capital Improvement Plans and replaced Chapter 9 with a revised version: Access, Engagement, and Belonging.
- The Planning Commission conducted a public hearing to consider Land Development Code Amendments and made recommendations to City Council. City staff proposed a large code clean-up including two citizen proposed updates, and two staff proposed updates. Citizen-proposed updates included adding an exemption to Temporary Use Permits, and a repeal and replace of the binding site plan code section. The staff proposed updates included required updates to housing code sections, and a large code clean-up to remove contradictions and add clarity.

Benchmarks

- The Planning Commission held ten meetings and one executive session during the 2025 calendar year.

Environmental Commission

The Environmental Commission operates under the authority of Chapter 1.60 of the City Code and is responsible for advising the City Council on environmental matters with the mission of maintaining and enhancing the uniquely livable and sustainable environment enjoyed by City residents. The commission is responsible for administering the water quality grant program as well as advising City Council on matters to promote bicycle use within Ellensburg.

Major Accomplishments

- Recommended awarding of \$10,000 in community grant funds from the Stormwater budget. The grants funded \$10,000 to Mid-Columbia Fisheries for the Adopt a Stream & Backyard Buffer program.
- Discussions continued regarding the Commission's role, purpose, and involvement related to the Sustainability and Energy Plan and code changes.
- Participated in recycling event and Bike Month.

Benchmarks

- The Environmental Commission met 10 times in 2025.

Affordable Housing Commission

The purpose of the Affordable Housing Commission is to support the development of safe and affordable housing and related services in the City, by assisting the City in determining gaps in housing, and by making recommendations to the City Council for addressing the identified affordable housing needs of City residents.

Major Accomplishments

- Habitat for Humanity completed second phase (six homeownership units) at Stuart Meadows.
- Funded HopeSource's acquisition of eight rental units at Addison Place.
- Completed wetland reconnaissance at Catherine Property.
- Hosted Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) information session in coordination with Kittitas County and local professionals.
- Contributed to Kittitas County's updated five-year homeless housing plan.
- Supported Cold Weather Shelter lease and site improvements at Grace Episcopal Church.
- Reviewed and recommended developer project adaptations for 1st and Pine townhomes.
- Began housing policy review for Comprehensive Plan periodic update.
- Received Connecting Housing to Infrastructure Program (CHIP) grant for Pathways Place; applied for 2026 funding for Odd Fellows Lodge #20 Housing Project.

Benchmarks

- 14 new affordable units (six homeownership and eight rental) completed with City support.
- 100 income restricted housing units in three developments planned or under construction with City support.
- Received three funding applications for a total value of \$3,500,000. Council allocated \$1,200,000 for one project; the two remaining applications (received in November) will be considered in 2026.

Landmarks & Design Commission

The primary role of the Ellensburg Landmarks and Design Commission (LDC) is to identify and actively encourage the conservation of Ellensburg's historic resources. This work is commonly achieved through maintaining the register of historic landmarks, and regular review of proposed changes to those facilities. The Commission strives to raise community awareness of Ellensburg's history and built environment, and to serve as the City's primary resource in matters of heritage, historic planning, and preservation. The Commission operates under the authority of Chapter 15.280 of the Ellensburg City Code.

Major Accomplishments

- The LDC co-hosted the third annual Historic Preservation Awards event at the Kittitas County Historical Museum on May 3, 2025. Attendance and participation in Historic Preservation Month and the awards event have increased year after year.
 - Awards presented in 2025 were the Commercial Restoration Award, Residential Award, two Commission Awards, and the Community Selected Award.
 - The Ellensburg community voted for the BF Reed Building to receive the 2025 Community Selected Award.
- The LDC and Kittitas County Historical Museum hosted the second annual "Ellensburg History Quest" to celebrate Historic Preservation Month in May.
 - Participants were led through the Historic Downtown district on a challenging yet fun scavenger hunt to identify important historical Ellensburg structures and learn more about their significance.
 - Those who completed the scavenger hunt successfully were awarded with a Historic Ellensburg tote bag full of historic preservation goodies.
- Uncertainty surrounding funding availability for the Certified Local Government Grant awarded to the LDC in 2025 caused delays in starting the Interactive History Map project. Staff worked with the Department of Archaeology & Historic Preservation to confirm funding and extend the grant to 2026. Staff then worked to hire a consultant to assist with completing the project in 2026.
- Provided letter of support to the Ellensburg Downtown Association for their proposal to host the 2026 PLACES Conference. Ellensburg was selected as host community and will hold the 2026 PLACES Conference from October 7-9, 2026.
- The LDC reviewed and made recommendations in consideration of the 2026 City of Ellensburg Historic Preservation Grants:
 - Ellensburg Dance Ensemble – Collins Building Professional Services: \$14,225.94.
 - Sadie Thayer – Historic Resource Inventory: \$8,000.

Benchmarks

- Number of regular meetings: 12
- Number of special meetings: 1
- Number of new members: 1
- Number of COAs approved: 6

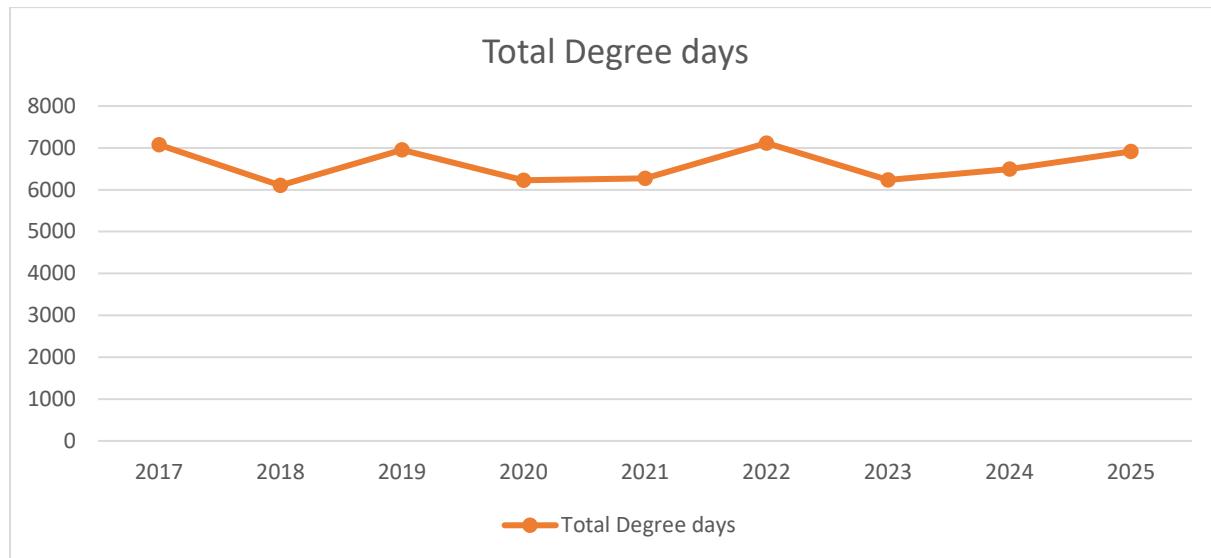
Energy Services

Gas Division - Natural Gas Utility

The Energy Services Department is responsible for the City's Natural Gas Utility, which operates and maintains the natural gas distribution system. The Gas Utility employs one (1) foreperson, six (6) FTE field personnel, one (1) gas engineer, one (1) engineering specialist, one (1) operations supervisor, and two and a half (2.5) FTE administrative, management, energy supply, rates, sustainability, conservation, and finance positions. All are working together to provide safe, reliable, and affordable natural gas service to customers.

The Natural Gas Utility, established by the City in 1956, is the oldest municipal natural gas utility west of the Mississippi River. The Utility's service territory was established by the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (UTC) and includes the City limits, urban growth area, and surrounding areas. The Utility serves roughly 5,000 customers delivering approximately 6.6 million Ccfs annually over 140 miles of underground mainline piping. The Utility purchases its natural gas supply through an Asset Management Agreement with Shell Energy North America and uses Williams Northwest Pipeline for transportation of the gas. The process used to purchase gas in the wholesale marketplace is complex and relies on the judgement and expertise of staff to forecast, execute, and procure low-cost reliable energy for customers.

Wholesale gas purchases in 2025 were 6,660,410 Ccf, which is less than the prior year's purchases of 7,113,540 Ccf. In 2025 the total degree days were 6,914, compared to 6,497 in 2024. Degree days are the difference between the daily temperature mean, (high temperature plus low temperature divided by two) and 65 degrees Fahrenheit and generally correlate to energy use.



Wholesale natural gas costs decreased in 2025. Looking back at 2025 the cost of natural gas delivered to the City's gate was \$0.3704 per Ccf compared to \$0.4416 per Ccf in 2024. Retail natural gas rates are based on a fixed distribution charge set by the City Council plus the cost of gas purchased and the utility taxes.

In 2021, the Washington State Legislature passed the Climate Commitment Act (CCA), establishing a comprehensive market-based program to reduce carbon pollution and achieve greenhouse gas limits set in state law. The City's Natural Gas and Electric Utilities are required to comply with these laws and invest utility funds in carbon auctions to cover emissions, effective January 2023. The Ellensburg City Council approved a natural gas increase, effective January 2024 to cover the estimated increased costs to the utility.

Two separate rate adjustments were created and added to current rate classes; "Legacy" – natural gas service addresses established on or before July 25, 2021 – were charged an additional \$0.2343/Ccf. "Non-Legacy" – for services established after that date, a rate adjustment of \$0.3626/Ccf. Low-income senior citizens, low-income disabled citizens, and non-profit customers (meeting the City's current definition) are exempt from this rate adjustment.

These rate adjustments added an average of \$13-\$20 a month to residential customer's bill in 2024 and 2025 (the lower end of the range is for legacy customers). However, individual bill impacts vary depending on weather, household use, and efficiency factors. Since the CCA's inception in 2023, Ellensburg has gross expenditures of over \$4.75 million—roughly 14% of total utility revenue—on CCA allowance auction purchases.

In 2025, 4 energy audits and 33 energy conservation measures were completed, providing \$45,365 in rebates to customers. Of these submitted projects, 10 were low-income measures completed in partnership with HopeSource, which combines money from multiple sources to install energy efficiency upgrades at no cost to the customer. The City provided \$32,093 in upgrades for low-income customers.

The State Home Electrification and Appliance Rebates (HEAR) Program Grant provided rebates and incentives for low-to moderate-income households and small businesses to install heat pumps, heat pump water heaters, induction stoves, heat pump clothes dryers, and electric service upgrades for new high-efficiency equipment. A total of 94 fuel-switching appliances (transition from fossil-fuel to electric equipment) installations were completed, and 53 were low-income projects in partnership with HopeSource.

The Utility operates multiple programs including:

- Public Awareness and Damage Prevention
- Distribution Integrity Management (DIMP)
- Operator Qualification (OQ)
- Leak Detection and Repair
- Pipeline Safety Management System

Major Accomplishments/Benchmarks

- Completed all required annual maintenance at frequencies above the State/Federal minimum requirements. These maintenance activities include:
 - Leak survey (one-third of the residential area surveyed including the business district, businesses, and public buildings outside the business district, CWU, and the 6-inch 145 psig feeder main).
 - Valve maintenance (approximately 1,080 valves checked).
 - Atmospheric corrosion survey (one-third of the gas system annually).
 - Regulator station maintenance.
 - Pipeline patrol tasks.
 - Abandoned ten (10) service lines and relocated or altered nine (9) services.
- Gas Meters:
 - 45 meters installed

- 42 meters retired
- 765 meters changed out
- Responded to 149 leak/CO calls of which 35 resulted in leaks detected.
- Performed 1,944 locate requests.
- Installed 2.58 miles of new gas main.
- Participated in and successfully completed two UTC pipeline safety audits.
- Completed a full system 6-year Corrosion Evaluation.
- Completed a system loop and service line for the WinCo development.
- Completed upgrades to the telemetry system for the Regulator Stations.
- Completed the Decarbonization Roadmap Workplan.
- Closed Out State Home Electrification and Appliance Rebates (HEAR) Grant.
- Grid Modernization (GRID2023) Grant # 24-92201-012 executed on 5/27/25.

Light Division - Electric Utility

The Energy Services Department is responsible for the City's Electric Utility, which operates and maintains the electrical distribution system. The Electric Utility employs one (1) foreperson and one (4) FTE linepersons, one (1) meterperson/apprentice and one (1) FTE operations supervisor, four (4) FTE in the light engineering department, and two and a half (2.5) FTE administrative, management, energy supply, rates, sustainability, conservation, and finance positions. All are working together to provide safe, reliable, and affordable electrical service to customers.

The Electric Utility, established by the City in 1891, is the oldest municipal electric utility in Washington State, is the exclusive electric utility within City limits and an optional utility within the urban growth area outside of City limits.

The Utility purchases its power supply from the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA), which is received at four points of delivery, and it owns a small community renewable energy generation facility. In 2025, the utility purchased 223,443 MWh of power from BPA with a peak demand of 45.8 MW; Central Washington University is the utility's largest customer. Wholesale electricity purchases in 2025 higher than the prior year's purchases of 222,681 MWh. The increased power demand trends continue following the record power purchases in 2022, marking the highest monthly consumption of all time for the City of Ellensburg. The power purchases in 2025 were the second highest for the City, surpassing 2024's electric demand.

The Utility owns and operates four electrical substations: East Ellensburg, Helena, Dolarway, and the BPA substations. Power is received at 115kV and distributed at 12,470V through the Utility's 14 feeders.

The primary distribution system consists of approximately 47 miles of overhead conductor and 84 miles of underground cable, 1,918 poles, 2,745 transformers, and 10,563 electrical meters.

Major Accomplishments/Benchmarks

- The number of distributed generation (DG) systems increased by 8.4% in 2025 with 16 customers installing systems on their home or business. These additions bring the total net-meter systems to 206 and 2,218 kW installed DG capacity on the City's electrical system producing an estimated 2,772,819 kWh's per year. The City has exceeded the 140% of RCW 80.60 required interconnections (1.49 MW required, 2.22 MW installed).
- The City's Renewable Energy Park has a total of 304 kW installed capacity and produces an estimated 380,000 kWh's per year.
- In 2025, 3 energy audits and 36 energy conservation measures were completed; 33 of the measures were submitted to Bonneville Power Administration (BPA), saving 564,030 kWh and providing \$159,878 in rebates to customers. Of these submitted projects, 9 were low-income measures completed in partnership with HopeSource, which combines money from multiple sources to install energy efficiency upgrades at no cost to the customer. The City provided \$24,003 in upgrades for low-income customers.
- There were 54 State Home Electrification and Appliance Rebate (HEAR) Grant measures that qualified for reportable energy savings (93,299 kWh) to BPA. 33 were low-income measures completed in partnership with HopeSource. HEAR grant recipients were not paid from BPA or City of Ellensburg funds, but energy savings were calculated for the electric customers. The State Home Electrification and Appliance Rebate (HEAR) Program Grant provided rebates and incentives for low-to-moderate-income households and small businesses to install heat pumps, heat pump water heaters, induction stoves, heat pump clothes dryers, and electric service upgrades for new high-efficiency equipment.
- Completed multiple primary extensions:
 - CBP Short Plat

- Katie Meadows Phase 2
- Mallard Meadows
- Foster Plat
- HWY 97 Transfer Station
- Completed the following projects and bids:
 - 2025-01 (1) 1000kVA pad 277-480
 - 2025-02 (2) 300kVA pad 277-480
 - 2025-07 XFMR Bid
 - 2025-09 Tree Trimming Bid
 - 2023 Pole Testing Bid
 - 2023 Capital Facilities Plan and 20 Year System Plan
- Crews completed 788 assignments in 2025:
 - 160 New Residential Services
 - 24 New Commercial Services
 - 16 Net Solar Meters Installs
 - 11 Power Outages
 - 12 After Hours Emergency Locates
 - 16 Structure Fires
- Other:
 - 2026-2029 Clean Energy Implementation Plan (CEIP) was submitted in December 2025.
 - New Net-Metering (solar) customers — 16, 8.4% increase.
 - Total Net-Metering Customers — 206.
 - Generating capacity — 2.4 MW, more than 3,000,000 kWh's annually.
 - New electric meters — 200 for a total of 10,563 1.8% increase over 2024.

Utility Advisory Committee

The Utility Advisory Committee operates under the authority of Chapter 1.50 of the City Code and was created for the purpose of providing a mechanism for the City Council to obtain benefits of recommendations, advice, and opinions on those matters affecting City energy and telecommunication utility policy and operations from a committee which may devote the resources necessary for careful consideration of such matters and which will increase customer participation and input to local government.

Major Accomplishments

- Project Reviews
 - 2024 Cured in Place Sewer Line Rehabilitation Project enhancing sewer infrastructure maintenance
 - 2025-26 Middle Reach Reecer Creek Flood Hazard Reduction and Floodplain Restoration Project - Phase II further enhancing flood management and ecological restoration
- Feasibility and Planning Studies
 - Wastewater Treatment Facility Renewable Natural Gas Feasibility Study: Results of the study deemed the project was not feasible.
 - 2023 Electrical System Plan advancing electrical infrastructure planning
- Public Works and Utilities Enhancements
 - Update of Public Works Permitting Fees Development Standards
 - Consultant Agreement Amendment #3 with Kennedy/Jenks Consultants, Inc.: Approved to enable updates and evaluations of the General Sewer System and Aeration Basin.
- Ordinances
 - Water and Sewer Connection Charge Waiver Ordinance
 - Expansion of Low-Income Utility Discount Program: Approved expansion to 40% AMI, broadening assistance to vulnerable populations.
 - Board and Commission Changes
- Energy Efficiency and Renewable Initiatives
 - Community Solar Expansion Program: Recommended Council to authorize participation in the community solar expansion program and approve \$250,000 annually in signing authority for incentive programs.
 - State Home Electrification and Appliance Rebates (HEAR) Program Grant
- Contracts and Consulting Services
 - Agreement for continued consultation for the Lead Service Line Inventory, maintaining a focus on water safety and compliance.
 - BPA - Provider of Choice Contract
- Planning and Strategy Initiatives
 - City of Ellensburg Decarbonization Planning Strategy Grant
 - 2024-2025 Annual Stormwater Management Plan Update
- Information Dissemination and Community Engagement
 - Wildfire Mitigation & Public Safety Power Shutoff Plan
 - 2025 Aquifer Level Presentation



Finance Department

Finance Department is staffed with 19.75 FTE and consists of Customer Service, Accounting, City Clerk, Administration, and Financial Systems. The Finance Department provides fiscal management for the City and has oversight responsibility of the financial activities of the City. This includes budget coordination, debt management, day-to-day accounting of the City's financial transactions, payroll and benefits, investments, financial reporting, contracts and procurement, utility billing and payments, and maintaining the City's official records.

Major Accomplishments

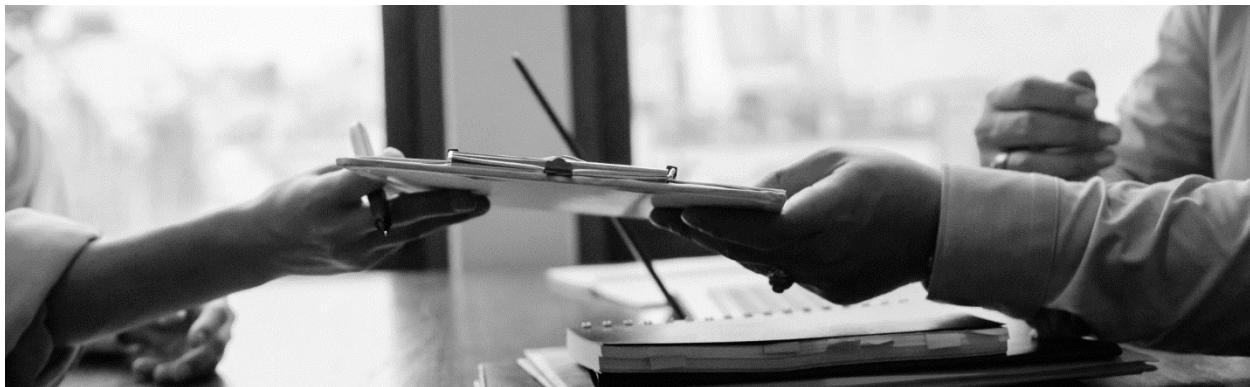
- Received an unmodified opinion on the fair presentation of the financial statements, accountability, and single audits.
- Completed the 2025-2026 Mid-Biennial Review Budget process.
- Presented timely monthly management reports to the departments.
- Processed 24 timely payroll runs.
- Continued clean-up and enhancements of the Customer Information Systems (CIS) utility billing software replacement project.
- Completed Contracts and Procurement Kaizen with State Auditor's Office (SAO).

Benchmarks

Workload Measures	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Active Business License	1,797	1978	2,100	2,206	2,261
Avg # of items on agenda	21	41	35	34	17
# of 90 day past due accounts w/ balances over \$100	*755	35 **		1309	91
# of monthly utility bills generated in 12 months	130,591	132,415	**121,791	140,458	140,082
# of final accounts billed	4,497	4,013	4,137	4,582	5,483
Payroll checks processed	5,418	5,563	5,907	6,276	6,319

*Governor's Proclamation 20-23.5

** Result of implementation of new utility billing system on 12/11/2023.



Human Resources Department

The Human Resources (HR) Department is committed to recruiting and retaining highly qualified and professional staff members to model and foster the City's core values of Compassion, Courage, and Conviction, and who promote and maintain a high level of service to the residents of Ellensburg as well as City staff. HR's purpose is to ensure supervisors and employees are supported in the following areas: recruitment, classification of positions, compensation, benefits, leave programs, employee wellness, motivation, and recognition, training, performance tracking, labor relations, legal compliance, safety, and risk management.

Major Accomplishments

- Timely review and completion of Affordable Care Act (ACA) reporting.
- Recruitment:
 - Completed many successful recruitment processes resulting in 94 new hires.
 - Moved recruitment from Formsite to BambooHR for improved candidate experience.
 - Participated in two job fairs at Ellensburg High School and Bite of the Burg.
- Satisfied training and compliance objectives, including:
 - Completion of annual HSI training modules.
 - Completed evacuation drills for all City buildings and partnered with KVFR to test emergency systems and protocols.
 - Hosted onsite trenching and shoring training and hearing tests.
- Coordinated a variety of fun employee events throughout the year with the help of the Wellness Committee, including the third annual Tournament of Champions program, service awards, an employee appreciation BBQ, holiday cocoa parties, an annual City/County Softball Game, and a variety of other friendly competitions.
- Met benchmarks to enable the City to apply to be a "WellCity" designation through the Association of Washington Cities (AWC) Employee Benefits Trust which provides a 2% reduction on premiums.
- Completed the first Emergency Preparedness Activity Workbook for employees.
- Continued seeking ways to enhance efficiency and operations to improve the internal and external customer experience.
- Completed negotiations with three (3) collective bargaining groups (IBEW, OPEIU, and Teamsters Police).
- Updated the Civil Service Rules and Regulations with the assistance of the Police Department and City Attorney.
- Designed framework in Laserfiche for digitizing employee personnel files and recruitment files.
- HR assumed lead duties of Risk Management, including claims administration.

Benchmarks

- HR Staff Members: 3 Full-Time

Year	Total Employees (FTEs* as of Dec 31)
2016	188
2017	193
2018	196
2019	198
2020	198
2021	199
2022	199
2023	214
2024	216
2025	220

*FTEs based on Finance Records – these numbers have been corrected in this annual report.

YEAR	HIRES				TERMS			
	Total*	Full-time	Part-Time	Other**	Total*	Full-time	Part-time	Other**
2016	86	17	2	67	62	14	9	39
2017	64	9	5	50	62	7	1	54
2018	71	5	5	61	65	10	5	50
2019	96	23	3	70	70	19	0	51
2020	38	11	3	24	77	14	6	57
2021	79	17	4	58	79	14	4	61
2022	83	13	4	66	91	21	5	65
2023	89	23	3	63	56	9	3	44
2024	75	16	3	56	81	15	27	39
2025	94	27	1	66	91	22	1	68

* The total for hires and terms includes employees who moved from one position type to another within the organization, but it does not include internal transfers of the same type (e.g., full-time to full-time).

** "Other" includes any non-regular employee, such as temporary employees.

Civil Service Commission

The Civil Service Commission consists of three members that are residents of the City. The Civil Service Commission oversees rules and regulations regarding the manner in which examinations for positions under the Police Department may be held for appointments and promotions. This includes approving/establishing eligibility lists for various classes of positions. The Commission conducts all hearings and make related decisions necessary for the proper enforcement of the Civil Service Act and the Civil Service Rules and Regulations.

Major Accomplishments

- Three (3) Entry-level Police Officer Eligibility Lists were established, and five (5) Probationary Police Officers were hired.
- One (1) Code Enforcement Officer Eligibility List was established, and one (1) Code Enforcement Officer was hired.
- The Civil Service Rules and Regulations were extensively reviewed and revised to align more closely with the model Civil Service Rules and Regulations to reflect current practices and update language and formatting. The Commission approved the proposed Civil Service Rules and Regulations in April of 2025.
- One Commissioner's term expired on December 31, 2025, and the new year began with a vacancy. As of current, the position is vacant.

Benchmarks

- In 2025 the Civil Service Commission held six (6) regular meetings and two (2) special meetings.



IT Department

The Information Technology (IT) Department provides cybersecurity, hardware and software support, collaboration and productivity, infrastructure, data, backup and disaster recovery, Internet, voice, consulting, and Geographic Information System (GIS) services to the City. The department operates and maintains the City's local area networks at 10 facilities, a wireless workforce mobility network, and the Ellensburg Community Television.

The department has 9 FTEs.

Major Accomplishments

- Formation of the Technology Committee for IT governance to assist the City with technology decisions, projects, and budgeting
- Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) replacement vendor selection and implementation (multi-year)
- Enterprise Asset Management (EAM) asset lists and attributes completed
- Cybersecurity Improvements
- Bitwarden rollout for all employees
- Printer network segmentation
- Nessus vulnerability scanner
- FortiGate HA firewalls with redundancy
- Initial implementation phase completed for Laserfiche software (records management, forms, and workflow)
- Added multiple forms to augment business processes
- Records Management procedures and training added
- CityNet – editor and user trainings
- NetMotion – VPN client implementation and migration, with improved functionality and efficiency
- GovAI – implementation with AI Policy
- Combined Fund Drive integration
- GIS public facing maps recreated
- Moved from Windows 10 to 11

Benchmarks

Workload Measures	2025	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020
Supported users	301	301	296	280	290	

Board and commission users	79	79	79	93	80	
GIS users	87	80	82	64	64	
Computers	215	215	301	297	285	252
Mobile devices	95	95	93	78	65	9
Servers	55	55	55	64	66	7
Managed switches	26	26	26	27	27	20
Network printers	53	53	53	62	62	4
Desktop printers	49	49	49	35	36	-
IT support tickets	2532	2532	2074	2225	2270	1458
Major IT projects	91	91	88	35	40	11
Computer replacements	80	29	23	77	33	47
GIS maps created	41	25	24			
GIS major projects	15	32	43			
GIS support tickets	243	218	164			



Telecommunications Utility

The Telecommunications Utility was established by the City in 2014 and was managed by the IT Department in 2025. In 2026, the utility oversight will be transferred to the Energy Services Department with addition of a new Telecom Business Manager position. The utility owns over 30 miles of fiber optic cable and manages the City's municipal area fiber-optic network.

The utility provides the City and its telecommunication customers highly reliable and geographically redundant access to the Internet, 1-10 Gigabit Ethernet transport, and dark fiber to City departments, government entities, local businesses, and the public.

The utility is an open access internet provider and provides telecommunications services to:

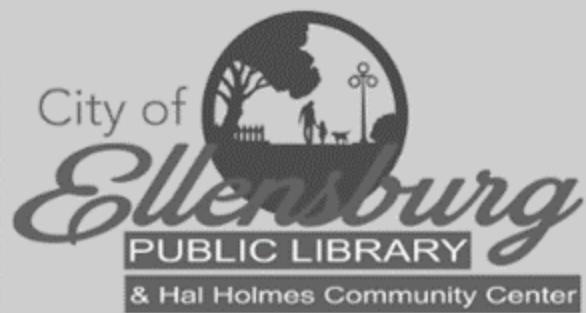
- Kittitas County
- Central Washington University
- Ellensburg School District
- Kittitas County PUD
- Kittitas County Fire District
- Kittitas Valley Community Hospital
- KITTCOM, Kittitas County's emergency dispatch center
- Department of Fish & Wildlife
- Kittitas Reclamation District (KRD)

Major Accomplishments

- Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) fiber buildout to connect the last major City facility completed.
- NTIA Grant Middle Mile Fiber and Wireless Tower Construction completed.

Benchmarks

Workload Measures	2025	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020
Added fiber cable feet	5,200	34,530	3,200	2,235	11,110	3,750
Anchor institutions	9	9	9	9	9	9
Customers	23	27	27	26	26	
Sites	43	47	47	47	47	
Outages	0	0	0	0	0	1
Traffic control signals	21	20	19			
Utility telemetry systems	3	3	3			



Library / Hal Holmes Community Center

Located in historic downtown, the Ellensburg Public Library serves the community by providing a diverse collection of materials and electronic resources, community space, and educational programming to encourage lifelong learning. The library protects intellectual freedom and access to information and ideas. It also provides the community with a safe, welcoming environment and skilled assistance. Adjacent to the Library, the Hal Holmes Community Center is a multipurpose conference facility highly used by the community and statewide groups for trainings, meetings, and social events.

Library/HH operations include 11.1 FTE with five divisions (Hal Holmes, Adult Services/Local History, Youth Services, Technical Services, and Circulation). The collection includes nearly 50,000 books, 12,000 audio visual items, 94 magazine/newspaper subscriptions, and 20 online database subscriptions. The Library's virtual collection includes 29,845 downloadable e-books, 27,945 e-audio books and 5,744 e-magazines totaling 63,534 items. Approximately 100,000 people visit the library annually to request services, use the public computer workstations, check out materials, and attend programs. Nearly 15,500 library cards are currently active, and circulation of materials is approximately 200,000 annually. The Library/Hal Holmes hosts and co-sponsors an average of 400 programs per year for adults and youth, bringing in just over 16,000 attendees.

The Local History/Northwest history collection contains a multitude of books, local family histories, art, photographs and negatives, bound volumes of the Daily Records, Manastash Ridge Journals, scrapbooks, minutes and ephemera from various clubs and organizations. In addition, library patrons have access to Ancestry.com, Heritage Quest, and Family Search. Historic photographs are also available in digital format.

Major Accomplishments

- Implemented new library card design featuring local artist Megan Pickerel-Winer.
- Library awarded \$1.62 million Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) with support from Public Works and Finance Departments for new HVAC system.
- Natalie Hammerquist featured as the 2025 One Book One County author for her book, Medicinal Plants of the Pacific Northwest.
- Participated in Kittitas County Health Department focus group aimed at shaping county's 5-year Homeless and Affordable Housing plan.
- Library was a host site for FISH Food Bank offering free lunches for kids 17 years old and younger every Tuesday and Wednesday in the summer months.
- Library currently is participating in the Collaborative Access for Rural Empowerment project based out of the University of Montana to develop a curriculum to help people with disabilities in rural communities. Four libraries in the U.S. were selected to participate.

- Hal Holmes Community Center Reservations: 776

Benchmarks

- 5.7% increase in County contribution funding
- -8% decrease in youth summer reading program participation
- 55% increase in adult summer reading program participation
- 4% increase in electronic item downloads
- -1% increase for overall circulation

Ellensburg Public Library Board

The Ellensburg Public Library Board operates under the authority of ECC 1.66 and is an advisory board to the City Manager and City Council concerning operations of the library. The Board may give advisory opinions in the following matters:

1. The supervision, care, and custody of all property of the library;
2. The annual budget for the operation of the library during the ensuing year;
3. The appropriateness of buildings for library purposes; and
4. The purchase of supplies and materials, equipment, and services for the library's operation.
5. Development of policy for the selection of books, periodicals, maps, materials, and information services for the library's operation.
6. Such other acts as may be requested by the City Manager or City Council relating to the orderly and efficient management and operation of the library. [Ord. 3937 § 1, 1994.]

The members of the Library Board are strong advocates for library services in the community. All board members have an obligation to keep informed about developments in the Library, to be involved and to work with the Library Director to ensure that local library services are the best possible.

Major Accomplishments

- Board planned and facilitated Library's 115th birthday celebration on January 15, 2025, with library tours, live music, and refreshments. Nearly 200 people attended, including two local news stations, KIMA and KAPP TV.
- Board chair presented to Ellensburg Morning Rotary Club about library history and its beginnings.
- Library Policy - Fines and Fees was reviewed and approved.

Goals and Objectives for 2026

- Currently developing User Satisfaction Survey
- Currently developing Levels of Service document
- Continue to review and update Library and Hal Holmes policies



Parks & Recreation Department

The Parks and Recreation Department is responsible for serving residents of all ages in the Ellensburg community. The department plans, organizes, and manages the City's parks and recreation programs including a park acquisition, development and improvement program, park maintenance and city beautification program, and comprehensive recreation program.

The City's Parks and Recreation Department has six (6) program divisions as follows:

Youth Program Division is responsible for the development and maintenance of programs for youth. The City runs most of the programs from the Stan Bassett Youth Center building. **Senior Services Division** is responsible for developing adult programs like exercise programs, dancing, trips, and computer workshops. **Athletics Division** offers youth basketball leagues boys and girls in grades K-8, youth volleyball for kids in grades 3-8, coed adult volleyball, and adult 3-on-3 basketball. The City offers weekly youth sports camps through a partnership with Skyhawks sports during the summer and offers Tiny Tots sports for kids 3-5 years old throughout the school year. **Aquatics Division** is responsible for the operation of the Kittitas Valley Memorial Pool and Fitness Center (KVMP). The **Recreation Division** offers a wide range of recreation events throughout the year for all ages and interests including the Daddy Daughter Dinner Dance, summer movies and concerts, and the Flashlight Egg Hunt. **Park Maintenance Division** is responsible for the maintenance of the City's parks and downtown. The City maintains 18 parks with a total of 250 acres.

Staffing for the department consists of the equivalent of 27 full-time employees with an annual operating budget of \$4.08 million.

Major Accomplishments

Stan Bassett Youth Center (SBYC) - The SBYC has a single full-time Youth Center and Athletic Programs Coordinator as well as a part-time Recreation Leader and five (5) part-time Recreation Aides.

- The SBYC offers traditional afterschool activities to youth, including homework help, arts and craft activities, games, active games, as well as cooking and nutrition activities.
- School year attendance
 - Average 50 youth per day
 - Early Release Wednesdays Average 65 youth per day with highs of 95 youth
- Summer attendance and Summer Trips:
 - SBYC's summer attendance (not including trips) was 18 youth per day
 - SBYC's 25 summer trips had 321 of 325 available trip spots filled, an average of 12.8 youth per trip (max of 13 youth per trip)

Athletics - The Youth Center and Athletic Programs Coordinator oversees a number of part-time sports officials, roughly 8 to 12, who officiate games, lead sports camps, and setup/teardown/clean facilities.

- Youth Sports Program:
 - Tiny Tots Sports: basketball, t-ball, soccer: 338 youth registered
 - Coed Kinder and Girls' 1st to 8th Grade Youth Basketball: 213 total youth on 27 teams
 - Boys' 1st to 8th grade Youth Basketball: 277 total youth on 35 teams
 - Coed Youth Volleyball – 3rd to 8th grade: 173 total youth on 20 teams
 - Youth Running Club: 80 youth registered (80 total spots available)
- Adult Sports Programs:
 - Adult Open Volleyball: 33 total teams.
 - The Leagues were split into two divisions Recreational and Competitive, to fit a variety of interests and playing abilities.
 - Spring League: 17 teams (9 Recreation and 8 Competitive)
 - Fall League: 16 teams (9 Recreation and 7 Competitive)
 - Adult Open 3-on-3 Basketball: 6 teams

Adult Activity Center

- Celebrated national volunteer month in April honoring all 14 volunteers that helped throughout the 2025 year. The volunteers served a total of 763.5 hours for the year.
- Held an active aging event in October for community members to attend. Had over 35 different organizations and 150 participants. This event allowed participants to get more information on resources in the community.
- Started chess activity and added another day for card making.
- AAC offered 15 different trips throughout the year.
- Senior Lounge at the Kittitas County Fair was held Labor Day weekend. There were about 241 visitors and 26 volunteers.
- Held the Thanksgiving Dinner at the Armory on November 26 and served around 300 people with the help of 44 volunteers.
- AAC had a total of 387 active participants and 265 user fee sales.
- AAC had a total of 9,581 participants check in for activities throughout the year, an increase of 900 more people than 2024.
- Center experienced a very smooth transition for three months while full-time staff was out on leave and a temporary coordinator was in place.
- Had a total of 206 hours used for rentals.

Parks Maintenance Division

- Rebuilt the footbridge at the pond outfall crossing at Irene Rinehart Riverfront Park.
- In collaboration with the Ellensburg Rotary Club, hosted the Vietnam Veterans "Wall That Heals" the first week of September at Rotary Park.
- Painted the Rotary Park restroom and youth baseball/softball complex building.
- In partnership with Top Tier Sports, hosted 425 baseball teams across 11 baseball tournaments during summer season.
- The department dedicated approximately 1,640 personnel hours to the Central Business District: watering, weeding, planting, pruning, and removing trees, repairing irrigation systems, and maintaining Unity Park.
- Spent approximately 250 hours making repairs and covering up graffiti due to vandalism.
- Helped facilitate the completion of the new ADA bathroom ramp at Irene Rinehart Riverfront Park.

Kittitas Valley Memorial Pool & Fitness Center

- 2025 attendance number at the KVMP:
 - 53,333 General Admission (51,309 for 2024)
 - 1,738 Swim Lessons; Continued relationship with Kittitas Valley Healthcare covering the cost for all level 1 classes (515 classes)
- 205 yearly passes were processed through a partnership with Central Washington Disability Resources (226 for 2024).
- Implemented a user fee increase (first in eight years) for facility use fees, approved by City Council.
- Due to the closure of the CWU pool in June, Ellensburg Area Swim Team (EAST) and the Ellensburg Girls High School Swim Team relocated to KVMP.
- Provided space for EHS Girls Swim Team to host a home dual meet which honored their graduating seniors
- Annual shutdown in August to perform facility maintenance including sloped roof repairs.
- Capital Projects: Flat roof repair, HVAC replacement, PDH Circuit B compressor replacement
- Continued to make efforts to program for families and offer reduced rate swims.
- Continued the Indoor Ironman event for February 2025 (28 = Community, 6 = COE Wellness Program).
- Continued with Ellensburg, Cle Elum-Roslyn, and Kittitas School special services swim sessions.
- Hosted Damman (K-5) and Thorp School (1st & 2nd grade) District swim lessons.
- Continued to work on scheduling for Ellensburg School District to bring back the 1st & 3rd grade swimming lessons.
- Hosted 69 table rentals and 45 facility rentals.
- Hosted a Family Float-In movie showing "The Grinch" with 40 people = 13 families.
- Partnering with Suncadia, got 1 staff person certified as ARC Lifeguard Training Instructor.

Recreation

- 3rd year of the Pumpkin Flotilla at Irene Rinehart Riverfront Park (17 registrations and 34 pumpkins in 2025)
- Brought back the FREE 'Movies in the Park' program
 - 2 offered at Unity Park. Showings ranged 50-70 attendees
- Programmed 5 bands for 'Concerts in the Park' and partnered with Ellensburg Public Library for 1 band for 'Concerts in the Park' (6 bands total)
- Partnered with City Health & Wellness Committee to offer the Youth Gladiator Dash
 - 141 participants (209 participants for 2024)
 - After 12 years, raised the fee from \$10 to \$15 to help cover costs for t-shirts and medals.
- Egg Scramble and Dog Biscuit Hunt were well attended with no rain.
- Jr. Rodeo Parade had 50 registrations (60 registrations in 2024).
- Missoula Children's Theatre had 57 participants with 'Rapunzel.'
- Started managing Community Garden rental plots at Wippel Park; 7 ADA garden beds; 31 standard garden beds; 20 households managed 38 total beds.
- 160 park shelter rentals (June 1st – October 6th) (159 for 2024); North Alder Street Park shelter was the most rented park shelter (42 rentals).

Administration

- Completed construction on Unity Park, which included finishing the water feature and installation of the sculpture 'Harmonize.'
- Fieldhouse Project – worked through the validation process of the alternative delivery method which resulted in the City changing direction and pursuing a public private partnership option

which would result in the city entering into a ground and building lease to operate a 60,000 (approx.) square foot facility.

- Kicked off the '2026 Park, Recreation, Open Space and Sustainable Funding Comprehensive Plan Update.'
- Oversaw the coordination of the 'The Wall That Heals' and local volunteer group to ensure it was a highly successful event at Rotary Park.
- Development and implementation of department fee increases. For some programs these were the first increases in over 30 years.

Parks & Recreation Commission

The Parks and Recreation Commission operates under the authority of Chapter 1.16 of the City Code and is responsible for making recommendations to the City Council pertaining to recreation programs and parks development and operation, encouraging and promoting all forms of recreation programs and activities that employ residents' leisure time in a constructive and wholesome manner, and periodically reviewing and making recommendations for revisions to the Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Plan.

Major Accomplishments

- Ongoing participating in the development of the 2026 Park Plan Update



Police Department

The Ellensburg Police Department (EPD) remains steadfast in its mission to maintain peace and order within the community. EPD's dedicated team, consisting of 31 commissioned officers at full capacity, employs both traditional and innovative policing strategies to address crime, focusing on education, crime prevention, and enforcement. The Police Department actively seeks to reduce its involvement in non-criminal matters, thereby conserving police resources and empowering citizens to participate in community safety initiatives. In 2025, EPD effectively managed 14,481 calls for service, representing a 10% decrease from 2024.

Patrol Officers deliver essential services, including investigating crime scenes, engaging in community outreach, and conducting traffic enforcement. Officers patrol neighborhoods and schools, responding to diverse calls such as noise complaints and family violence. Their primary goal is to ensure safety while maintaining approachability to foster positive community relationships. Officers frequently collaborate with local service providers to assist individuals experiencing mental health or substance use crises. Resource cards are distributed to connect individuals with appropriate services. Community engagement is further enhanced through initiatives like National Night Out and Cop on Top.

Major Accomplishments

- Partnered with Central Washington University for the Community Health and Safety Experience (CHASE) program, providing practical insights for students seeking a career in the law and justice field.
- Launched a DRONE program in 2024, flying 50 missions with 33 hours of total flight time in 2025.
- Hired five new officers; four graduated from the academy, and one is attending (at year end). Filled the second code enforcement officer position.
- Implemented the Flock automatic license plate reader (ALPR) system in 2024, contributing to crime prevention with many successful cases in 2025.
- Established the Juvenile Handle with Care program in 2024. In 2025, there were 527 children referred to services.
- Initiated graffiti abatement efforts in 2024. In 2025, 46 locations were cleaned with community group assistance.
- Conducted a comprehensive community survey to assess public concerns.
- Produced and shared educational safety videos via social media.
- Mental health referrals decreased by 21% compared to 2024, returning to pre-pandemic levels.

Animal Control: The Ellensburg Police Department's Animal Control Officer plays a crucial role in enforcing City ordinances related to animals, focusing on proactive enforcement and education to reduce non-compliance and prevent incidents like animal bites or animals running at large.

Benchmarks

- Animal code calls (791) decreased by 7% from 2024 (853).
- Dog bite calls (24) reduced by 25% from 2024 (32).

Code Enforcement: The Code Enforcement division handles tasks such as parking enforcement and nuisance ordinance management. In 2025, despite staffing challenges with a vacancy, the division focused on managing Resident Parking Zones (RPZ), downtown enforcement around Central Washington University, and addressing quality-of-life issues like garbage, weed abatement, and snow and ice removal.

Benchmarks

- Parking calls (1,989) decreased by 31% from 2024 (2,924).
- Code Enforcement calls (437) increased by 224% from 2024 (135).
- Proactive Code Enforcement (529) decreased by 39% from 2024 (869).

Commitment to Community: The Ellensburg Police Department is dedicated to the safety, well-being, and quality of life for all residents. We express gratitude for the unwavering support and partnership with community members, businesses, and service providers. As we continue into 2026, EPD remains committed to ensuring Ellensburg is a safe and vibrant community.



Public Works Department

The Public Works Department administers the Engineering, Shop and Warehouse, Stormwater, Street, Transit, Wastewater and Water divisions, as well as the Traffic Impact Fee Fund. The administrative arm of this department is comprised of the Public Works Director, the Finance Officer, and the Administrative Assistant, who oversee and assist all divisions in the daily operations.

Details regarding each division's function, personnel and accomplishments are listed on the following pages.

Arterial Street Fund

The Public Works Department administers the Arterial Street Fund, which is responsible for the construction of complete streets, bridges, traffic signals, and trails.

A major portion of the funding for the Arterial Street Fund comes from both state and federal grants. This fund also receives a portion of the gas tax distributed to municipalities on a per capita basis. City sales tax received is often used to fund asphalt overlays, provide grant matches, and fund non-grant projects.

There are no FTEs associated with the Arterial Street Fund.

Major Accomplishments

- **Water Street Overlay:** The Water Street Overlay project was primarily funded by a Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) grant and milled and repaved 2.35 miles of roadway. The project also upgraded 148 ADA ramps to meet current ADA requirements, installed durable pavement markings/striping, and upgraded vehicle detection at 5 signalized intersections within the project. The federal funding for this project was made available to Washington agencies in late 2024, as other states had not met their required funding obligation goals, allowing those unused funds to become available for agencies that had the ability to fast track projects and get funds obligated in extremely short timeframes. The City's past track record of expeditiously completing projects led to the \$3M grant funding for this project.
- **Mountain View Ave. and Bull Road Traffic Signal:** The design for the installation of a traffic signal at this intersection was completed in 2025. The project also includes the installation of a multi-use pathway on the east side of Bull Road from Mountain View Avenue to Gregory Place, it will also widen the south leg of the intersection to allow for the installation of a northbound left turn lane. The traffic signal will be an 8-phase signal and include protected pedestrian crossings on all sides. The construction of this project is scheduled for 2026 and will be funded through Arterial Street, with reimbursement primarily coming from the Traffic Impact Fee fund.
- **Vantage Highway Improvements:** Staff secured grant funds for improvements on Vantage Highway from Alder Street to Vista Road. The improvements will include a multi-use pathway on one side of Vantage Highway, a 6-foot sidewalk on the other side, road widening, street illumination, and a storm drainage system. Staff completed the consultant selection process, and the design phase began in late 2025. Design and permitting will be completed in 2026, with construction anticipated to begin late 2026 or early 2027.

Engineering Division

The Public Works Department's Engineering Division serves as the liaison between the residents, contractors, City departments, and other agencies by supplying information, engineering and permit services, designing, and managing capital improvement projects, and responding to customer inquiries. The division issues Public Works permits and provides inspections to ensure construction is in compliance with applicable codes and standards. The Engineering Division provides general oversight of City capital improvement projects including the design and construction phases. Engineering services are provided for several other departments and divisions of the City and for the citizens of Ellensburg.

The Engineering Division employs a City Engineering Services Manager/City Engineer who oversees all engineering functions in the Engineering Division for the City's transportation system and Public Works utilities (stormwater, wastewater, and water). This division includes the Assistant City Engineer/Capital Projects Manager, two Civil Engineer positions, Development Supervisor, Engineering Tech (Capital Projects), Engineering Tech (Office), and Engineering Tech (Field) positions.

Major Accomplishments

- Executed an interlocal agreement with Kittitas County Public Works for the inspection of City-owned bridges.
- Executed an interlocal agreement with Kittitas County Public Works to utilize their contractor for the striping of City streets.
- Completed draft updates to the Public Works Development Standards. Staff had an administrative public hearing early in 2025 to consider the updates and receive any comments. Staff then presented the revisions to Council and received formal Council approval.
- Administered the citywide groundskeeping contract for all City departments.
- Designed, obtained bids, and constructed the annual Sidewalk Repair Program, transit stop improvements, and ADA upgrades.
- Managed the design and construction of numerous capital projects funded through several City budgets (arterial street, sidewalk, water, and sewer). Those capital projects will be included in the annual reports page for their respective budgets.
- Submitted two successful grant applications to the Washington State Transportation Improvement Board (TIB):
 - Anderson Road and Umptanum Road Roundabout
 - Canyon Road Grind and Overlay (Umptanum Road To Mountain View Ave.)
- Completed the Title VI Annual Report to the Washington State Department of Transportation. This report identifies federal grant dollars spent each year on capital improvements.
- Reviewed, approved, and inspected the following developments and construction projects:
 - Mallard Meadows Plat (Bull Road N. of I-90) Phase 3
 - 806 W. 15th Ave. – 6 lot short plat
 - Bender & Airport 9 (12 lot Plat)
 - 604 S. Anderson Road – Brown & Jackson Site Plan
 - 1607 W. Dolarway Road – Wales Commercial Buildings
 - Airport Road & Helena Ave. – NE corner Smith Duplex
 - Washington Ave. & Pine St. – Stalder Duplexes
 - 2603 W. Green Ave. – New Transfer Station
 - 503 E. Helena Ave. – Pooya Apartments
 - Bender Road & Airport Road – Sparks 12 lot plat
 - Dandelion Lane Extension – CBP Short Plat
 - Ellensburg Flats – Phase 2
 - Bender Road – Katie Meadows Phase 2

- Anderson Road – WinCo Foods Distribution Center
- 2900 block of N. Airport Road – Pierce Plat – still in review
- Dry Creek Road – Foster Phase 2 – still in review
- 2708 Triple L Loop – Starbucks
- Triple L Loop - Rivian EV Charging Station
- 2300 S. Canyon Road – truck stop fuel island
- Lightcurve Fiber Optic Infrastructure Upgrade Citywide
- Ziply Fiber Optic Infrastructure Installations Citywide
- Ellensburg Rodeo Arena Improvements
- Rolling Meadows 48 Lot Plat
- CWU North Academic Campus
- HWY 10 Storage Units
- Cottage Grove Short Plat
- 1200 S. Ruby St. – HopeSource
- Mallard Meadows – Temporary Parking Lot

Public Transit Division

The Public Works Department oversees the Public Transit Division. The Ellensburg Transportation Advisory Committee provides oversight of the transit system and reports to the Ellensburg City Council on those, and other elements as directed. The Transit Manager oversees and manages the operational activities of the Transit System.

Retail sales and use tax collected in Ellensburg Central Transit's public transportation benefit district is the primary revenue source. Other funding sources include the Associated Students of Central Washington University, state operating grant funding along with other miscellaneous revenues. The transit service operates six (6) Fixed Routes along with ADA Paratransit and a 24-7 Non-emergency Medical Transportation (NEMT) Cabulance service which operate daily within the City limits of Ellensburg.

Major Accomplishments

- 15 ADA Capital projects which include:
 - Three (3) new bus shelters located at Rotary Park, Ruby Street & South 4th Ave and Umptanum and Ruby Street.
 - ADA bus stop landing pads were installed at the following locations:

Cherry & Ruby Street (WB)	Mountain View & Maple (EB)
Dolarway at Davita Dialysis with bench seating (WB)	Mountain View & Maple (WB)
Dolarway & Prospect (WB)	Sprague & 7 th Ave (SB)
Water Street & Greenfield (NB)	Sprague & 7 th Ave (NB)
Alder Street at Student Village (SB)	Water Street & 26 th Ave (NB)
18 th & Alder NB	18 th & Alder SB

- Added Simplify Transit alerts where detours and delays are published on the website, social media platforms, Google maps, and TRANSIT and other rider apps. Passengers can also subscribe to get emails or text messages regarding alerts on the route(s) and bus stops they use.
- November 4, 2025, a ballot measure was put before the voters of Ellensburg to repeal the 0.2% Transit Benefit District Sales & Use Tax that expires every 10 years and replace it with a 0.2% Transit Tax that does not expire. The voters approved the ballot measure with a 65.33% majority.

Ellensburg Central Transit's ridership numbers for 2025

Service	2024	2025	Percentage Change
Fixed Route	117,871	115,740	-1.8%
ADA Paratransit	166	703	323%
Cabulance	200	313	56%

Ellensburg Transportation Advisory Committee

The Ellensburg Transportation Advisory Committee (ETAC) consists of seven members under the authority of ECC 1.84. In August 2025, Ordinance 4967 was adopted by the City Council to broaden the former Public Transit Advisory Committee to include the transportation system services and was renamed the Ellensburg Transportation Advisory Committee. The committee has seven members with one alternate member. The goal is to work together to improve and oversee public transit and the transportation system services in the City.

Major Accomplishments

- November 4, 2025, a ballot measure was put before the voters of Ellensburg to repeal the 0.2% Transit Benefit District Sales & Use Tax that expires every 10 years and replace it with a 0.2% Transit Tax that does not expire. The voters approved the ballot measure with a 65.33% majority.
- ETAC advanced a Transit Strategic Plan to identify priorities, values, and goals to be adopted in 2026.
- 15 ADA Capital projects which included three (3) new bus shelters with amenities and planned artwork.
- Invested in transit system improvements in conjunction with the Water Street Overlay.
- Completed 5+ miles of street maintenance (chipseal).
- Annual Sidewalk Repair Program

Benchmarks

Ellensburg Central Transit's ridership numbers for 2025

Service	2024	2025	Percentage Change
Fixed Route	117,871	115,740	-1.8%
ADA Paratransit	166	703	323%
Cabulance	200	313	56%



Shop & Warehouse Division

The Public Works Department administers the City's Shop & Warehouse Division, which provides other City departments with warehousing, inventory, central purchasing services, and fleet, equipment, and facility maintenance.

The Shop & Warehouse personnel consists of one (1) foreperson, one (1) warehouse person, one (1) purchasing position (unfilled), one (1) maintenance technician, one (1) maintenance/warehouse technician, one (1) lead mechanic, two (2) mechanics and one (1) Facilities & Fleet Manager who supervises the division and its administrative functions.

The warehouse person maintains an inventory of over 2,300 different items in the warehouse. The warehouse person and the Shop & Warehouse foreperson act as purchasing agents for other City departments and divisions. The maintenance/warehouse technician position provides maintenance services at the shop facility and serve as a backup in the absence of the warehouse person. The newly funded Warehouse purchasing position will be the primary purchasing agent for all Warehouse inventory in 2026.

The mechanics maintain over 190 pieces of shop-owned equipment and vehicles, as well as equipment owned by other City departments and divisions.

Major Accomplishments

- The 2025 year-end inventory variance was under 5%.
- Continued planning for additional office space at the Shop facility to support an increasing workforce.
- Filled a vacancy in the Maintenance Technician position.
- Started a project to install a backup generator and automatic transfer switch to power the warehouse building.
- Auctioned and sold entire surplus equipment backlog, generating roughly \$75,000 in funds, and freeing up valuable space at the Shop facility.
- Purchased a large dewatering pump for use by all divisions.
- Purchased an articulating boom lift for use by the Shop Division.
- Purchased a crane for the Mechanic Shop service truck.
- Purchased a service truck for use by the Water Division Plant Maintenance Position.
- Purchased a water valve maintenance trailer for use by the Water Division.
- Purchased a plate compactor and rammer compactor for use by the Street Division.
- Purchased one new patrol vehicle for the Police Department.
- Received the following equipment ordered in 2024:
 - UTV for use by the Parks Division.
 - Dump Truck for use by all divisions

Stormwater Utility

The Public Works Department oversees the City's Stormwater Utility Division, which operates under a National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Phase II Stormwater permit issued by the Washington State Department of Ecology. The first NPDES permit was issued in 2007, and the Utility was formed in 2009. The Stormwater Utility performs outreach education, looks for illicit discharges, reviews development and re-development plans and specs for both private and public projects to make sure they meet the City's Stormwater Utility Code, provides public input, and oversees the operation and maintenance of the shop as it relates to stormwater.

The Stormwater Utility maintains public infrastructure, creates public awareness about stormwater, enhances and improves water quality and natural resources while providing future development with solutions that meet City, state, and federal requirements. The division also administers the City's street tree program and employs one (1) Water Resources Manager, one (1) FTE Water/Stormwater Coordinator, and one (1) FTE Stormwater/Urban Forestry Tech position.

The stormwater system consists of:

- 49.17 miles of underground stormwater mains
- 2,504 catch basins
- 346 manholes
- 44 City-maintained stormwater swales

Major Accomplishments

- Revised the Interlocal Agreement (ILA) with Franklin Conservation District to provide stormwater community outreach and education for the remainder of the 2024-2029 Phase II Permit.
- Worked with a consultant on the Reecer Creek Floodplain Mapping and Levee Construction Project. This project constructed the new levee north of Dolarway in 2025.
- Worked with Plateau Archeological Consulting Services to obtain a permit with the Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP), and to conduct archaeological monitoring during construction of the Reecer Creek Levee north of Dolarway.
- The Gateway II Vantage Highway Stormwater LID Retrofit Project 90% design was completed, and the design grant was closed out through Ecology. Initial preparation for submission of the Gateway II Construction Funding Grant was initiated. The Gateway II project is anticipated to be constructed in 2028 if grant funding comes through.
- Submitted the Annual Report and Stormwater Management Plan to Ecology.
- Initiated work on the Flood Control Assistance Account Program (FCAAP) Grant Project, which was supported by a \$400,000 Department of Ecology grant, awarded in 2023. The project began in 2024 and was completed in 2025. The project mapped and modeled the City's storm system and compared previous modeling done by the Kittitas County Flood Control Zone District.
- Developed an ILA with Kittitas County to update the Whiskey and Mercer Creek floodplain maps based on new scientific data. Data from the FCAAP Project was incorporated into studies completed by the County. This ILA will be used to revise the existing Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) regulatory flood maps based on best available data, provide education about flood risk to the community.
- Cleaned and inspected 2,403 catch basins.
- Inspected over 70 stormwater outfalls to waters of the state (creeks).
- Conducted 329 tests of creeks from March through November. These tests are used to detect coliform bacteria in the water. This annual project supports the Wilson Creek Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) permit requirements.

- Recorded 328 oxidation-reduction potential (ORP) and pH readings in City creeks, from March through December. This annual project supports the Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination (IDDE) permit requirements.
- Tested and coordinated disposal of 960 tons of street sweepings.
- Filled the newly created Water/Stormwater Coordinator position through promotion from the Stormwater / Urban Forestry Technician position.
- Filled the Stormwater / Urban Forestry Technician position through promotion from the Engineering Technician position.
- Initiated the Companion Storm Project, which will update and streamline the stormwater review process for private and public development for better compliance with the provisions of the updated 2024 Stormwater Management Manual for Eastern Washington.
- Submitted for and was awarded a \$120,000 Stormwater Capacity Grant through the Department of Ecology to support Phase II Permit Compliance activities.
- Initialed work on the Urban Forestry Management Project. The project will complete an Urban Forestry Management Plan, update the Tree Ordinance, create Street Tree Development Standards, conduct a City Parks & Facilities Tree Inventory, and create Outreach & Education materials for the public. This project is funded through the Washington Department of a Natural Resources' 2024 Community Forestry Assistance program.
- Reviewed permits and recommended to Council the removal of 24 street trees.
- Issued 79 tree permits for the planting, trimming or removal of trees located in the City rights-of-way.
- Coordinated the annual Arbor Day free tree giveaway in April. Through the program 57 Arbor Day trees were given to city residents, 45 were planted on private property and 12 were planted as new street trees in the City right-of-way.
- For the 2nd year, partnered with the Parks Department and Central Washington University's SLICE volunteers, to host an Arbor Day tree planting and trash cleanup event at Irene Rinehart Riverfront Park.
- Renewed the City's Tree City USA certification with the National Arbor Day Society. This requires meeting four program standards, including spending at least \$2 per capita on urban forestry activities. In 2025, the City exceeded this requirement by spending \$12.32 per capita to support urban forestry.
- For the 3rd year the City will receive the Tree City USA Urban Growth Award. This is given to communities that demonstrate exceptional tree care and go above and beyond the basic requirements of the Tree City USA program.

Street Division

The Public Works Department oversees the City's Street Division, which is responsible for maintenance of transportation improvements within the public rights-of-way. This work includes snow removal, pavement repair, pavement preservation, flood response, street striping, tree trimming, and weed control. The division has one (1) Street Foreman, seven (7) Heavy Equipment Operators and two (2) administrative positions who oversee the Water, Wastewater, Shop & Warehouse, and Street Divisions. Temporary employees are hired to supplement the work force during the spring and summer months. The primary source of funding in Street comes from City Sales Tax, along with a small portion of Motor Vehicle Fuel Tax.

The street system consists of:

- 91.05 miles of streets
- 115.59 miles of sidewalks

- 28 traffic signals

Major Accomplishments

- Crackfilled over five (5) miles of streets.
- Chip sealed approximately five (5) miles of streets
- Contracted for the painting of 74.56 miles as follows:
 - 5.10 miles of 4" yellow center stripe (skip)
 - 49.16 miles of 4" yellow "no passing" stripe (solid)
 - 20.09 miles of 4" white edge and turn lane (solid)
 - 0.21 miles of 4" white two-lane divider (skip)
- Swept City streets and generated over 900 tons of sweepings which were hauled away.
- Ground offset joints sidewalks at over 850 locations to eliminate tripping hazards.
- Responded to multiple callouts to remove debris in the road from accidents and high winds.
- Patched utility cuts in streets utilizing around 70 tons of hot mix and six tons of Easy Street cold asphalt mix.
- Performed pothole and utility patching during the winter months utilizing 10 tons of Easy Street cold asphalt mix.
- Performed repairs and maintenance work in 34 different alleys.
- Mowed City rights-of-way.
- Mowed and maintained the Reecer Creek Floodplain.
- Repaired a rip rap buffer in Wilson Creek alongside Willow Street just north of Brick Road.
- Provided sand piles and sandbags at three locations for public use during flooding.
- Performed tree trimming operations at 279 different locations including the removal of 10 large hazard trees.
- Performed sidewalk maintenance of paver stone sidewalks at 30 different locations.
- Assisted other divisions and the Ellensburg Police Department with emergency street closures.
- Facilitated many special events throughout the year with street closures and traffic control, including three parades.
- Performed approximately one-quarter of a mile of roadside ditch maintenance.
- Performed vegetation management and noxious weed control in City rights-of-way and City owned properties. The equivalent of approximately 130 acres of ground were managed.
- Performed a complete rebuild of the paved alley between Main St and Water St from Washington Ave to Capitol Ave.
- Performed a dozen minor creek projects to improve flows through City owned right away, and to mitigate possible flooding issues. This work was completed under the General Hydraulic Permit that was renewed with Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW).
- Performed maintenance on the two certified levees at Irene Rinehart Park, including tree removals and loose debris cleanup. This type of work is mandated by the Army Corp of Engineers to keep the levees certified.
- Repainted 59 crosswalks and a multitude of parking T's and L's in the downtown core.

Traffic Impact Fee Fund

The Public Works Department administers the Traffic Impact Fee (TIF) Fund. This fund is responsible for aiding improvement to transportation system capacity that will reasonably benefit new development.

The Traffic Impact Fees Fund was established in 2009 to be used for public facility improvements that will reasonably benefit new development. Impact fees are spent for improvements listed in the Six-Year Transportation Improvement Plan, on projects that are specifically identified in the adopted Traffic Impact Fee Study, and projects cannot be solely funded by Traffic Impact Fees. The City collects traffic fees at time of building permit issuance and the fee is based on peak hour trips generated by the project.

There are no FTEs associated with the Traffic Impact Fee Fund.

Major Accomplishments

Utilized the administrative portion of the TIF for:

- Completed Independent consultant reviews of select development submitted "Traffic Impact Analysis" reports, to ensure compliance with Traffic Impact Guidelines and to ensure peak hour traffic generated from proposed developments complies with the City's Level of Service (LOS) requirements outlined in the City's Comprehensive Plan.

Utilized the construction portion of the TIF for:

- Mountain View Ave. and Bull Road Traffic Signal: The design for the installation of a traffic signal at this intersection was completed in 2025. The project also includes the installation of a multi-use pathway on the east side of Bull Road from Mountain View Ave. to Gregory Place, it will also widen the south leg of the intersection to allow for the installation of a northbound left turn lane. The traffic signal will be an 8-phase signal and include protected pedestrian crossings on all sides. The construction of this project is scheduled for 2026 and will be funded through Arterial Street, with reimbursement primarily coming from the Traffic Impact Fee fund.

Wastewater Utility

The Public Works Department is responsible for the City's Wastewater Utility Division, which processes, tests, and discharges wastewater produced within the City of Ellensburg. Established by the City in 1908, the Wastewater Utility serves over 6,600 customers within the Ellensburg City limits. The utility provides an efficient and safe wastewater system for the community through the operation of a Wastewater Treatment Facility (WWTF) and the associated lab, which maintains compliance with all Department of Ecology regulations.

The Wastewater Utility employs one (1) Foreperson, three (3) FTE field collection personnel, four (4) Plant Maintenance/Treatment Plant Operators, two (2) Treatment Plant Operators, one (1) lab technician and three (3) administrative position who oversee the Water, Wastewater, Shop & Warehouse, and Street Divisions. The WWTF employees process an average of over 4.4 million gallons per day, or 1.6 billion gallons per year, of effluent.

The sewer distribution system consists of:

- 86.67 miles of sanitary sewer mains
- Two (2) lift stations
- 1,796 manholes

Major Accomplishments

- Hired a consultant to begin the design of the Return Activated Sludge (RAS) Building Improvements project at the WWTF. Construction for this project is anticipated for 2026 and 2027.
- Hired a consultant for the design of the addition of 5th Aerators and motor control center (MCC) improvements at the WWTF. Design will continue into 2026, with construction anticipated for late 2026 or early 2027.
- Worked with a consultant on an update of the City's General Sewer System Plan. This work is in the final review stages and will be adopted in 2026.
- Participated in the "Ellensburg Academy" presentations to help interested residents understand the City of Ellensburg Wastewater System.
- Negotiated an amendment to the Iron Horse Brewery Discharge agreement at their request to help them lower permitting costs to the DOE. The new agreement was extended another 5 years.
- Seven (7) Wastewater employees attained or maintained a Group II or higher Wastewater Operator Certification.
- Collections crews cleaned approximately 40 miles of sewer main with a vac truck and a jet.
- Crews installed storm features in the alley between Main and Water, Capitol and Washington, as a part of a complete paved alley rebuild project.
- Performed 150 side sewer inspections.
- Performed three (3) collection main repairs.
- The WWTF processed 1.29 billion gallons of influent.
- The WWTF reduced 1.41 million pounds of solids of incoming influent down to 293.8 tons of biosolids which were hauled off by a contractor for beneficial reuse per EPA requirements.
- Performed maintenance at the outfall within the Yakima River under the direction of WDFW.
- Anderson Road Sewer Extension Project Phase 2: Installed 4,150 LF of 18" sewer line from the intersection of 3rd Ave. and Lincoln St. to the end of the Phase 1 project. This also removed the lift station from the wastewater system and the sewer in this area is now only gravity main.

Water Utility

The Public Works Department is responsible for the City's Water Utility, which operates and maintains the City's water sources and distribution systems. Established by the City in 1933, the Water Utility has grown to serve more than 6,600 customers delivering over 1.63 billion gallons of water annually.

Water is pumped into the City's system from nine wells located throughout the City and surrounding area. The City also uses the Brooklane Well during summer months under an agreement with Central Washington University. The Utility has three pressure zones (upper, lower, and Craig's Hill), and two reservoirs: a 4-million-gallon reservoir on Craig's Hill and a 1-million-gallon reservoir at the Kittitas County Airport. It also operates and maintains a booster station and a transfer station.

The Water Utility employs one (1) foreperson, four (4) FTE field personnel, one (1) cross connection specialist, two (2) plant maintenance persons and three (3) administrative positions who oversee the Water, Wastewater, Shop & Warehouse, and Street Divisions.

The water distribution system consists of:

- 115.85 miles of water mains
- 1,031 fire hydrants
- 3,098 valves

Major Accomplishments

- Craig's Hill Pressure Zone Project: Completed construction of the Booster Pump project which installed a pump house and four booster pumps to create a new pressure zone in the Craig's Hill vicinity. This project increases available fire flow in the vicinity and allows for full and more efficient use of the Craig's Hill water tower.
- Seattle Ave. Utility Extension: The Seattle Ave. Utility Extension, a collaboration of, Public Works, Water, Gas, and Light to design and advertise and build a utility extension project that created system redundancy for the City's infrastructure along Seattle Ave. between Willow St. and Magnolia St. Built in early 2025, improvements include 1,000 linear feet of 8" water main, an air vac and hydrant; 500 linear feet of 4inch gas main; and 4,000 linear feet of electrical conduit.
- Dry Creek Rd 24" Valve Replacement: Replaced a 24" gate valve with a 24" butterfly valve on the concrete water main along Dry Creek Rd.
- The final Reservoir Siting Study for construction of a new reservoir was completed.
- Worked with a consultant on the Water Supply Management project.
- Contracted with a consultant to prepare the Aquifer Storage and Recovery Feasibility Study. Overcame several hurdles associated with the study, which included a consultant change and subsequent closeout of the existing Department of Ecology grant. A new consultant was selected, a gap analysis was done to identify the path forward from the previous work, and a new grant agreement is being developed with Ecology. The feasibility study is anticipated to be complete in late 2026 and is projected to be ready for a pilot study during the following biennium.
- Performed and submitted weekly, monthly, and annual water sampling as required by the Department of Health (DOH), including the new DOH required quarterly testing for PFAS.
- Completed and distributed the Consumer Confidence Report and certified it with the Department of Health.
- Completed the Water Use Efficiency Annual Performance report and submitted to the DOH.
- Replaced the pump and shaft at Whitney Well.
- Had the Kiwanis Well pump and motor removed and sent off for inspection.
- Participated in the "Ellensburg Academy" presentations to help interested citizens understand the City of Ellensburg water system.

- Completed a cathodic protection survey of the reservoirs.
- Replaced the rectifier at the Craig's Hill reservoir that was located in a vault and mounted the new rectifier on the side of the Craig's Hill Booster Pump Station.
- Conducted static ground water measurements at each well in March and October as part of a process to track aquifer levels. These level measurements will be reported to the Environmental Commission annually.
- Repaired 28 distribution main breaks caused by various circumstances, including contractor damage, or that were discovered during leak survey.
- Conducted a leak survey of the entire water distribution system, including a walking survey of the entire 24-inch transmission line.
- Installed 118 new water services and performed 130 meter changeouts. 119 ERTs were upgraded as well.
- Performed 6 hot taps (4-inch and larger) on distribution mains.
- Monitored and enforced the testing of 2,746 active cross connection devices on irrigation systems and businesses.
- Installed 11 new water services.
- Replaced the flow meter at City wells.
- Facilitated the installation of fiber optics to Hayward, Route 10, and Hayward Wells and began telemetry upgrades at those locations.
- Cleaned, repainted, and renumbered a large majority of City-owned fire hydrants and assisted KVFR with flow testing of every fire hydrant in the water system.
- Completed a pump and motor vibration analysis at all City-owned wells.
- Continued compiling data for the Lead Service Line Inventory as required. Notifications were sent out to addresses with service lines constructed with "unknown" materials.
- Successfully completed a Sanitary Survey of the water system with the regional engineer from the DOH with no findings.
- Navigated the third year of drought and an unprecedented surface water curtailment from the Department of Ecology. Water Resources team integrated into a network of drought response and technical advisory groups, and conservation measures were implemented by the City and large water users.
- Worked to transition compliance activities to the new Water Resources team. This work is ongoing to ensure a smooth transition.