Eugene Water & Electric Board
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March 11, 2020

Dear Neighbors,

We are writing in follow-up to the March 5, 2020 East 40th Avenue Water Storage Improvement Project informational meeting. Our goals for the meeting were to introduce the project team, share early information about plans for EWEB's water storage facilities, and hear comments and concerns from neighbors who live adjacent to the site.

If you were not able to attend, please feel free to reach out to the project team to hear what you missed. We would be happy to fill you in over the phone, in person, or via email.

If you were at the meeting, thank you for investing time in a conversation with us about the future of the East 40th site. We appreciate the constructive dialogue about ecological protection, public access, construction impacts and other topics.

It's clear that the property at East 40th Ave. is highly valued for its community and neighborhood benefits, and that it is important to retain those benefits as much as possible, even as we deal with aging infrastructure and other challenges.

As discussed at the meeting, construction of new water storage at East 40th is part of a larger Water Storage Improvements Project that also includes replacing the water tanks at College Hill and Hawkins Hill.

The scope of the East 40th project includes two primary activities:

1. Building two 7.5 million gallon water tanks along with connecting piping in Patterson St.
2. Re-landscaping and improving the remainder of the property

<u>The soonest this work would begin is 2021.</u>

There are two primary drivers for this work:

<u>Resiliency:</u> The water tanks at College Hill and Hawkins Hill are part of the "base level system" that serve the entire community of Eugene. The tanks are old and not built to modern seismic standards. As we upgrade aging water storage infrastructure, EWEB is moving toward a distributed water strategy--replacing the large (15-20 Million Gallon) tanks at College Hill and Hawkins Hill with 5-6 smaller (7.5 MG) tanks, including 2 tanks at E. 40th. The reason for this strategy is resiliency – moving from consolidated to distributed drinking water storage mitigates the risk of losing all our water in a major disaster.

<u>Water Quality & Reliability:</u> In order to replace the aging tanks at College Hill and Hawkins Hill, we need to first

build “replacement storage” at E. 40th. If we take any of the base level reservoirs out of service without first building replacement storage, we risk not having enough water for our community, particularly during high demand and/or for fire suppression, and we risk water quality and reliability issues resulting from not having enough pressure in the system.

EWEB has owned the property at East 40th since the 1950’s for this purpose and we have no other suitable property at the correct elevation to build new water storage facilities.

After construction, EWEB plans to re-landscape the site and maintain public access to the open space. These efforts include enhancing the oak habitat on the northwest side of the site.

Neighbors will be invited to weigh-in on this design process, including landscaping, walking paths, and other features that honor the special nature of the 10-acre open space and ridgeline. We expect the public design process to start this spring.

Throughout the design and construction process, EWEB is committed to open and frequent communication with neighbors. In that spirit, we compiled some of the themes we heard at the March 5 meeting. This isn’t a comprehensive list, but please be assured we captured all questions and comments for consideration as work progresses.

We’ve also included the project team’s contact information so that you can easily reach out to us if you have additional comments or questions going forward.

Thank you again for partnering with EWEB in this process. We are excited to work together with you and other community members to improve the resiliency of our water system.

Sincerely,
Jen Connors, Communications Specialist
Laura Farthing, Senior Civil Engineer
Jeannine Parisi, Customer Relationship Manager

Contact the Project Team:
Call 541-685-7899
Email water.storage@eweb.org

Project information and updates:
eweb.org/waterstorage

Q&A Themes from March 5, 2020 Neighbor Meeting

TIMELINE (e.g. When will construction begin? What is the timing between construction of tank #1 and tank #2?)
We are working with the City of Eugene on permitting requirements to ensure we follow the proper process. Ideally, construction will begin at E. 40th in mid-2021 to coincide with the dry-weather season. The sequencing of the second tank at E. 40th is somewhat of a moving target at this stage of planning. We will keep neighbors up-to-date on the planning process and communicate early and often so that you have as much advance notice as possible prior to any work beginning.

ECOLOGICAL CONCERNS (e.g. What ecological enhancements could be made? Wildlife impacts?)
EWEB is committed to retaining and restoring as much natural open space as possible at the site. In particular, we plan to retain much of the Douglas fir habitat along the south ridge, and invest in enhancing the Oak habitat on the northwest side of the property. Deer, turkey, birds and other wildlife are common at EWEB water storage sites throughout Eugene, and especially in the south hills. Future enhancements to oak habitat at E. 40th will make the property even more inviting to wildlife such as Western bluebird, Western meadowlark, White breasted nuthatch, bats, deer and other species that depend on oak savanna and woodland areas.

TREE IMPACTS (e.g. How will EWEB make tree removal decisions?)
Initial siting plans call for placing the tanks in a location that preserves the large, healthy white oaks on the northwest side of the property. To accomplish this, several trees will need to be removed on the east side, including a few of the large firs. However, EWEB will try to save as many trees as possible and will replant based on a community-inspired landscape design. We recognize the value of preserving healthy, high-value trees, while taking into consideration other interests, including safety, cost, neighbor preferences, aesthetics, and public uses. Decisions about which trees can be retained and which must be removed will be made with an effort to balance these interests. We will mark trees and communicate with neighbors in advance of removal.

PUBLIC ACCESS (e.g. What areas will be open to public use? Keeping the area safe, clear of litter, graffiti, etc.)
The water storage tanks will be fenced to prevent public access and protect drinking water. The rest of the property will remain open to the public. EWEB staff will visit the site regularly to perform maintenance and routine security checks.

AESTHETICS OF NEW TANKS (e.g. What will the tanks look like from our homes? How will the tanks be screened?)
EWEB will provide architectural renderings to help show what the site will likely look like with the new tanks in place. In general, the new tanks will be round, concrete, 200-220 feet in diameter and surrounded by decorative fencing. The tanks will be partially buried and vegetative screening will be used to visually obscure the facilities.

CONSTRUCTION IMPACTS (e.g. Hours of work? Potential for blasting?)
Immediate neighbors will experience construction impacts such as noise, dust and traffic from heavy equipment. Blasting is allowed, but earthwork decisions like this are up to the contractor, so blasting is not a given. The project team will communicate with neighbors more about methods to complete the earthwork as construction gets closer. Construction plans, schedules and mitigation efforts will be shared with neighbors prior to beginning any construction activities, and we will communicate early and often throughout the project. Typical construction hours are 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday.