



## **CITY OF FORT BRAGG**

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### **MEMORANDUM**

**DATE:** August 8, 2017  
**TO:** Public Works & Facilities Committee  
**FROM:** Tom Z. Varga, Public Works Director  
**SUBJECT:** Update on Public Works Department Activities

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The past two months have continued to be very busy for the Department of Public Works. Most notably has been the unfortunate uptick in water main breaks. On the evening of July 17, an 8-inch water main in the harbor area broke and over 300,000 gallons of water was lost. Water pressure dropped through much of town until the flow was reduced. The break occurred due to an old pipe failing under the high water pressure at one of the lowest parts of the water system. A week later on July 24, another break occurred on Elm Street just west of Main Street within the construction zone of the Portuguese Hall alley rehabilitation. While construction related, it was not caused by the contractor. When the soil over a 6-inch water main was removed, a pipe connection separated. The material holding the pipe pieces together was old and worn out. Similarly, there has been a marked increase in water service leaks throughout town. The soil around water meters and other water service line connections at the water mains shrank during the recent multi-year drought. This last winter was wet and allowed the soil to expand back to its normal volume. The shifting of the soil has been enough to pull on the small water service pipes and pull connections loose creating leaks. City crews from the streets, water, and waste water divisions have been putting in long hours trying to keep with the extra workload caused by these breaks and leaks. Their dedication and hard works is to be commended.

The current, major construction project is the Street and Alleys Rehabilitation. Four alleys will be improved: Starbuck's alley, Sears alley, Portuguese Hall alley, and a residential alley from Chestnut Street to Walnut Street east of Whipple Street. Three streets will also be improved: N. Sanderson Street, all of S. Franklin Street, and Boatyard Drive. Construction is proceeding with underground work first, then surface improvements, and ending in paving. As luck would have it, shallow water service lines were uncovered in three of the four project alleys. Additional time was necessary to lower these water service pipes before the rest of the alley work could continue. This task was finished last week. Consequently, all but the Portuguese Hall alley storm drainage improvements are now finished. This work will be completed as soon as the needed parts arrive. Demolition and of replacement of concrete improvements around the alleys is now underway. In general, paving can be expected to occur during the latter part of August into early September.

This year's rehabilitation work on the Guest House will be finishing in August. GOC Construction did a very nice job re-roofing the entire building and adjacent storage building. They also performed a variety of minor repairs. Horizon Brothers will return shortly to repaint the building.

Public Works has been collaborating closely with Community Development on Bainbridge Park improvements. We have been assisting with securing the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding as well as preparing the construction documents. Many of the improvements identified in the recent Bainbridge Park Master Plan are being built this year. Parlin Forks crews will be used where possible to control costs. A disappointing first bid for constructing the rest of the project is being followed up by a re-bid that should be considered by Council at a Special Meeting on September 4.

A great deal of energy is being put into securing funding for the upcoming Waste Water Treatment Facility Upgrade Project. This project will replace old trickling filters with a modern aerobic treatment facility for processing the City's waste water in an efficient and cost effective manner. The application for United States Agriculture Department (USDA) Rural Assistance funding is seeking up to \$5,000,000. The effort to meet USDA's needs for the application sometimes seems to be almost as large as the funding amount itself. However, the application has finally been accepted and the process continues to move forward.

The new water storage tank project next to the City's corporation yard on Cedar Street is making good progress. It will be a 1,500,000 gallon tank approximately 90 feet wide almost 40 feet tall. The contract for design and soils investigation was recently awarded by Council. The soils work has already been accomplished and design is underway. Construction is anticipated to start before the end of the year with the new tank ready for use next spring. We will have three water tanks with two being actively used. A big advantage of this project is the retirement of a 1950's vintage tank and the ability to take other tanks off line for much needed maintenance.