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City of Orting

NEWSLETTER

Our Mission: Making Orting a better place to live, work, play and do business, while preserving our strong sense of community.

Mayor Drennen's Monthly "Trailside" Report - Renewing Our Commitment to Clean Water

Wastewater treatment and recovery is a valuable resource and something most of us don't think much about once we flush a toilet or wash our dishes—unless of course, a plugged line reminds us otherwise. But that's where the process begins for our city's Water Resource Recovery Facility team. These dedicated operators play a vital role in protecting the pristine waters

of the Carbon River. By removing solids and bacteria from wastewater, they return clean, safe water back to the river, supporting salmon habitat and the broader ecosystem. This water is no longer a waste product; it reenters the natural cycle to be used again. After all, our planet's supply of water has been circulating for millions of years.

Our city has come a long way in how we handle wastewater. In early years, homes, businesses, farms, and private systems often discharged directly into ditches or local rivers. That changed in the late 1930s as we began collecting wastewater through a public system and conveying it to Imhoff tanks on the Carbon and Puyallup Rivers. However, by 1972 these tanks were failing, releasing raw sewage into the rivers. In 1973, spurred by the Clean Water Act, we upgraded to a lagoon-only biological treatment process that has served us well for decades and remains a key component of our system today.

By the early 1990s, growth in the valley meant the lagoons alone could no longer meet the city's needs. In 1997, Orting built an innovative treatment facility that could meet—and exceed—all state environmental standards. This was a major milestone for our community. Under the leadership of Mayor Sam Colorossi and Parametrix Engineering, and with a strong "can-do" attitude, the city repaired its collection system, reduced inflow and infiltration, and constructed a new treatment plant using limited resources. Citizens played an important part in this process, repairing side sewers as well as providing general project support. The result was a modern system combining advanced treatment with our existing lagoon process, producing clean water safely reintroduced to the Carbon River.

When I took office in January 2026, I encountered a challenge similar to those addressed by former Orting leaders - a treatment system that is once again approaching a time of renewal. Working with Interim City Administrator Mark Bethune, we thoroughly assessed the state of our Public Utilities. A capital improvement plan calling for \$120 million in upgrades over two years was ready for submission to the Department of Ecology. But we knew we needed to explore more cost-effective solutions to avoid placing this burden directly on our citizens.

Together with our engineers and the Department of Ecology, we developed a phased 20-year capital improvement plan. This approach allows us to repair and renew our existing technology rather than replace it entirely. By focusing on the most critical points of failure, replacing aging equipment, reducing water infiltration, and upgrading to modern systems, we can continue to protect our rivers while managing costs responsibly.

This year, we plan to take several key actions including:

- Removing stored solids from the lagoon to restore capacity.
- Starting a flow monitoring program to identify sources of excess water entering the system.
- Advancing priority repairs and upgrades, ensuring long-term system reliability.

While this path still requires investment, it is far less costly than building an entirely new facility—a step that would have meant substantially higher utility bills for everyone. In the coming months, City Council will review the revised rate study and capital improvement plan to finalize our direction. I'm deeply appreciative of the hard work behind this forward-thinking approach—one that both preserves our community's natural treasures and keeps our utilities sustainable and affordable for the people of Orting.



Sincerely,

Scott Drennen

Alternative Vehicles: Laws, Safety, and Community Guidelines

by Police Chief Devon Gabreluk, Orting Police Department

As the weather improves and more residents begin spending time outdoors, the City of Orting continues to see an increase in the use of alternative forms of transportation throughout the community. In addition to traditional passenger vehicles, our streets, sidewalks, and trails are regularly shared by motorcycles, electric scooters, electric bicycles, all-terrain vehicles (ATVs), golf carts, and other non-traditional transportation devices.

While these vehicles can provide convenient and enjoyable methods of travel, it is important that operators understand the laws, safety considerations, and responsibilities associated with their use.

Motorcycles remain one of the most common alternative vehicles operating on our roadways. Riders are reminded that Washington State law requires a valid motorcycle endorsement for operation on public roads, and helmets remain mandatory. Because motorcycles are smaller and often more difficult for motorists to see, drivers are encouraged to carefully check mirrors and blind spots before turning or changing lanes.

Another common question received by the Orting Police Department involves the operation of ATVs and utility-type vehicles on city streets. At this time, the City of Orting has not adopted a local ordinance authorizing general ATV use on public roadways. As a result, ATV operation within the city is prohibited unless the vehicle fully complies with Washington State equipment requirements and is properly licensed through the Washington State Department of Licensing for roadway use. Many residents are surprised to learn that the presence of headlights or turn signals alone does not automatically make an ATV street legal.

Use of the Foothills Trail

The City of Orting has adopted portions of the Pierce County Code relating to parks and trails, specifically Chapter 14.08 - "Park Code," which governs areas such as the Foothills Trail.

Pierce County Code 14.08.060 identifies prohibited activities within parks and trails and states:

"It is unlawful for any person to knowingly move on a trail other than by human power, horse power, or other micromobility device."

To better understand what is permitted on the Foothills Trail, it is important to review the definition of a "micromobility device" contained in Pierce County Code 14.08.030. The code defines a micromobility device as:

"A personal transportation device, such as bicycles, scooters, skateboards, roller skates, roller blades, unicycles, mono wheel devices, surreys, electric personal assistive mobility devices, and Class 1 and 2 electric bicycles, as defined by RCW 46.04.169, and motorized foot scooters. A micromobility device includes all human-powered devices, including devices powered by more than one person, and excludes personal transportation devices that contain an internal combustion engine."

Washington State law further defines an "electric personal assistive mobility device" under RCW 46.04.1695 as generally being either:

- A self-balancing, two-wheeled Segway-type device; or
 - A self-balancing, single-wheel device;
- provided the device is not capable of traveling faster than 20 miles per hour.

Based on these regulations, the following devices are generally permitted on the Foothills Trail:

- Human-powered devices such as bicycles, skateboards, roller skates, rollerblades, scooters, unicycles, mono wheel devices, and surreys;
- Class 1 electric-assisted bicycles;
- Class 2 electric-assisted bicycles;
- Electric motorized foot scooters;
- Segway-type electric mobility devices with a maximum speed capability of 20 miles per hour; and
- Self-balancing, single-wheel electric devices limited to 20 miles per hour.

The following types of vehicles and devices are prohibited on the Foothills Trail:

- **Golf carts;**
- **Any motorized device capable of traveling faster than 20 miles per hour;**
- **Any device equipped with an internal combustion engine, excluding authorized government or emergency vehicles.**

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In some circumstances, golf carts may be legally operated on certain city streets within Orting; however, those areas are limited and do not include roadways with speed limits greater than 25 miles per hour.

Electric scooters and electric bicycles have also become increasingly popular, particularly among younger riders. While these devices can serve as effective transportation alternatives, operators should recognize that they are not intended for unsafe operation in heavily congested pedestrian areas. Parents are encouraged to discuss safe riding practices with their children, including helmet use, visibility, and maintaining awareness around vehicle traffic and pedestrians.

The City has also seen increased use of emerging electric mobility devices, including electric skateboards, one-wheel devices, and compact personal transportation systems. While many of these devices are legal to own and operate, users are expected to do so responsibly, yield appropriately to pedestrians, and avoid reckless or unsafe behavior.

As technology continues to evolve, transportation methods are changing rapidly. The goal of the Orting Police Department is not simply enforcement, but education. We want residents to understand the applicable laws and safety expectations before collisions or injuries occur. The overwhelming majority of operators use these devices responsibly, and we appreciate the efforts of those who help keep our streets, sidewalks, and trails safe for everyone.

The Orting Police Department encourages all residents to remember several important safety principles:

- Wear appropriate protective equipment, including helmets;
- Remain visible, particularly during low-light conditions;
- Follow traffic laws and posted speed limits;
- Understand where certain devices are legally permitted to operate;
- Avoid distracted operation, including the use of phones or headphones;
- Respect pedestrians and shared-use spaces; and
- Do not allow another person to operate your vehicle or device unless they are doing so legally. Owners may be held criminally or civilly liable for unlawful operation, particularly when minors are involved.

Public safety is a shared responsibility. Whether traveling by car, motorcycle, bicycle, scooter, or another form of transportation, we all play a role in maintaining a safe, respectful, and enjoyable community.

On behalf of the men and women of the Orting Police Department, thank you for doing your part to help keep our roads, trails, and neighborhoods safe.

Upcoming Important Dates & Events

- May 25 - City Offices Closed (Memorial Day)
- May 27 - Council Study Session 5:00pm, Regular Council Meeting 6:00pm
- June 1 - Planning Commission Meeting
- June 10 - Council Study Session 5:00pm, Regular Council Meeting 6:00pm
- June 19 - City Offices Closed (Juneteenth)

Helpful Links & Information



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Orting Recreation Facility Rentals: Reserve Space for Your Party or Gathering Today!

Looking for the perfect spot for your next event? Orting Recreation has you covered!

Reserve the beautiful Gazebo or Picnic Shelter at Main City Park, or book the Orting Station building or the versatile Multipurpose Room in the Library building. Whether it's a family gathering, celebration, or meeting, we have the space for you.

Visit www.teamsideline.com/cityoforting for full details and to make your reservation today!



Mayor Drennen's Monthly Trailside Tribute - Dan Bunker

Some of the people who make our lives better are the ones we rarely see, working quietly behind the scenes. This month, I want to recognize someone who truly fits that description: Dan Bunker, owner of Business Solutions.

For many years, Dan has worked to help make our community stronger. You may know him as the person who's helped solve a challenge for your small business or provided printing needs for everything from team T-shirts to 30-foot banners, but his impact goes far beyond that. Dan is a reliable resource for community information and volunteer support for many of our city's largest events, as well as the sound system in our City Hall Council Chambers.

Time and again, Dan has volunteered his sound system equipment and expertise to bring energy and life to community events such as the Daffodil Parade, the Kingsmen Car Show, and Red Hat Days. His support has helped add vibrancy to our downtown, making these gatherings more enjoyable for everyone.

When our community needs a solution or a helping hand, Dan is always there—quietly, reliably, and ready to serve. Please join me in recognizing Dan Bunker for his many contributions to our city.



BUSINESS SOLUTIONS CENTER



Join us in celebration of America's 250th Birthday!

July 4th, 2026
11:00am-4:00pm
Main City Park & North Park
Orting, WA

FOOD - SHOPPING - ENTERTAINMENT - KIDS ZONE

Organized by the City of Orting and Orting Valley Farmers Market



Some of our Public Works team members during response efforts for a flooding event in early December 2025.



Celebrating Orting's Unsung Heroes: Public Works Appreciation Week

Each day in Orting, we rely on services that are easy to overlook until we need them most. Clean water from the tap. Safe streets to travel. Storm systems that help protect our community. Parks that give families places to gather and play. Behind all of it is the City of Orting's Public Works Department.

As we recognize National Public Works Week, May 17-23, we want to thank the dedicated team members who work year-round to keep our city running. Their work is essential to daily life in Orting, and their commitment helps make our community safe, healthy, and strong.

Public Works crews care for the systems and spaces that serve all of us. They maintain our water and wastewater systems, manage storm water infrastructure, repair and support streets, and help keep our parks clean, functional, and welcoming. These are not small tasks. They take skill, planning, hard work, and a deep sense of responsibility.

What makes this effort even more impressive is that Orting's Public Works team is small but mighty. Day after day, they respond to challenges, handle routine maintenance, and work behind the scenes to make sure residents have reliable utilities and services. Their efforts often happen early in the morning, late in the day, and in all kinds of weather. Much of their work goes unseen, but its impact is felt across our city every single day.

National Public Works Week is a chance to shine a light on these important contributions and to recognize the people who make them possible. The City of Orting is proud of our Public Works Department and grateful for the professionalism, care, and dedication they bring to the job.

To the City of Orting Public Works Department: thank you for all you do for our city, not just during National Public Works Week, but every day of the year.

Tree & Shrub Trimming Along Sidewalks: Help Keep Our Streets Safe and Accessible



The City is asking property owners to please inspect and trim any trees, shrubs, or vegetation that may be hanging over sidewalks or streets adjacent to their property. Overgrown vegetation can create safety concerns and make it difficult for pedestrians, cyclists, emergency vehicles, and drivers to safely use public spaces.

We are requesting voluntary compliance by July 15th to help keep our community safe, accessible, and looking its best. Per City Code 8-7-2(A) - Nuisance Conditions; Abatement Required:

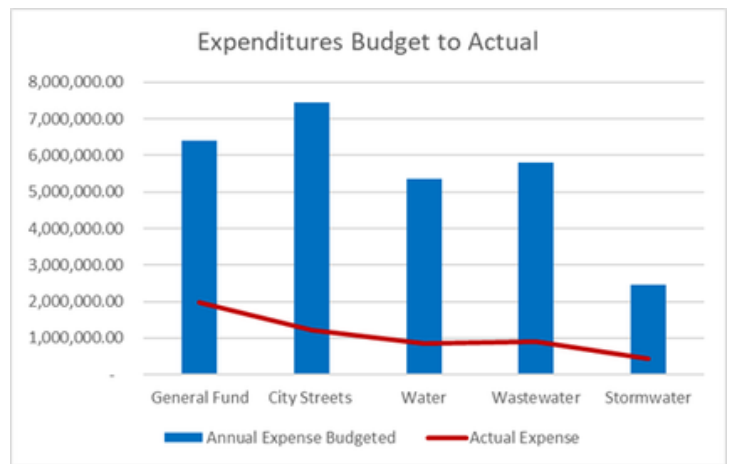
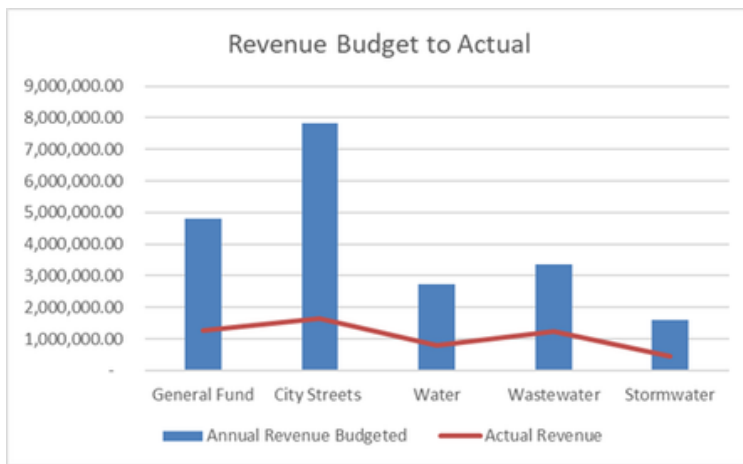
“Trees, plants, shrubs or vegetation or parts thereof which so overhang any sidewalk or street, or which are growing thereon in such manner as to obstruct or impair the free and full use of the sidewalk or street by the public are public nuisances.”

Thank you for helping us maintain safe and welcoming streets for everyone in our community!

Monthly Financial Report

Major Revenues and Expenses include:

- **General Fund:** Budgeted at \$4.8 million; revenues collected through April total \$1.27 million.
- **City Streets Fund:** Budgeted at \$7.8 million; revenues collected through April total \$1.66 million.
- **Parks Fund:** Budgeted at \$17.7 million; revenues collected through April total \$78 thousand.
- **Water Fund:** Budgeted at \$2.7 million; revenues collected through April total \$790 thousand.
- **Wastewater Fund:** Budgeted at \$3.3 million; revenues collected through April total \$1.2 million.
- **Stormwater Fund:** Budgeted at \$1.6 million; revenues collected through April total \$438 thousand.



- **General Fund:** Budgeted at \$6.4 million; expenses through April total \$1.96 million.
- **City Streets Fund:** Budgeted at \$7.4 million; expenses through April total \$1.22 million.
- **Parks Fund:** Budgeted at \$2 million; expenses through April total \$115 thousand.
- **Water Fund:** Budgeted at \$5.3 million; expenses through April total \$846 thousand.
- **Wastewater Fund:** Budgeted at \$5.7 million; expenses through April total \$897 thousand.
- **Stormwater Fund:** Budgeted at \$2.4 million; expenses through April total \$428 thousand.

Significant Changes for April:

- The City received notice that \$100,960 in grant funds will be available from the Department of Commerce to cover some construction costs related to the Pedestrian Bridge.