

Attachment A
2007 Enhancement Master Plan
Public Education Opportunities

Public Education Opportunities

Overview

This appendix identifies learning opportunities for engaging and informing citizens about the site, treatment system, odor control system, building architecture, landscape architecture, and the future of wastewater treatment and water reclamation in Lake Oswego. Additionally, there are opportunities to integrate the plant more fully through landscape enhancements with Foothills Park and Tryon Creek State Natural Area, and with the cultural history and recreational opportunities provided by these parks. It is CH2M HILL's understanding that both the City of Lake Oswego and Portland Bureau of Environmental Services (Portland BES) are interested in finding opportunities to maximize the community's investment in wastewater infrastructure by educating the public about the importance of wastewater treatment and water reclamation, and by fostering a commitment to stewardship of the site and the adjoining waterways for adjacent neighbors and for the community at large.

Education elements can be integrated into the overall site improvements without undertaking costs that are solely targeted at public education. This can result in cost-effective development of the education elements in conjunction with larger capital projects. Another option would be to phase the education elements as funds become available or as partners are identified, adding the education elements after treatment plant or landscaping elements are already constructed.

Purpose

The purpose of public education and outreach is to showcase how the plant site protects public health and water quality by providing wastewater information, education, and interpretation. This is accomplished by interpreting attributes of the facility that protect the natural environment and by considering sustainability as it relates to all aspects of water on the site. It is also important that design components relate to and create an understanding that design has been accomplished in a manner that is sensitive to the historic and natural character of the area.

By integrating public education with architecture and landscape improvements, a vocabulary can be framed that is pleasing, contains learning surprises, and engages the public. The space can provide opportunities for showcasing architecture and landscape design and also for learning through interpretive features that are fun rather than didactic, demonstrating a commitment to the environment that is sensitive to the character, history, and ecology of the area. Through a focus on watershed and watershed health, it is possible to give wastewater treatment the correct context. In short, visitors to the riverfront will begin to understand, through interpretation and education, that wastewater treatment is an important and valued infrastructure that protects public health and the prosperity of the region.

Issues, Opportunities, and Constraints

Involvement

The TCWTP provides the opportunity to create a link between the site and the community through the following activities:

- School tours and related learning opportunities such as environmental curriculums
- Recreational opportunities such as water and walking/biking trails with interpretive signage
- Provision of some accessible areas for the impaired visitor
- Protection of sensitive habitat and migration corridors

Awareness

Engineers, architects, landscape architects, and public education specialists will be challenged by the City of Lake Oswego and Portland BES to become visionaries and create opportunities that can excite, educate, and inform the public about wastewater treatment in a manner that takes advantage of work that is already occurring and facilities that are already being constructed without adding new tasks done simply for the purpose of educating the community. This means that the project team must be creative in utilizing the project site to interpret wastewater treatment processes and make them understandable to the public. It means explaining 'how things work' in new and imaginative ways.

Access

Access to the site, including the parking area and the new administration building, provide an immediate opportunity to design spaces and education opportunities that interpret stormwater management and wastewater treatment.

To motorists along the Foothills Road, the facility needs to be identified not only by the structures but also by the aesthetics. If done in an attractive manner, it is possible to consider environmental learning as a drive-by experience with banners and signage.

Currently, there is no sense of a formal entrance or an established viewpoint to see and appreciate the facility's important infrastructure. The roadway and entrance could be designed to "invite" visitors. Fencing can be utilized to enhance view corridors and interpretive signage can be used to enhance understanding.



Opportunity

There are many opportunities to integrate the processes of wastewater treatment, its buildings, and the natural attributes of the site into a framework that educates and informs the community. There is an opportunity to demonstrate this through architecture, art, and landscaping providing an environmental connection between wastewater treatment, water, the water cycle, and what makes the region thrive.

Since the plant site has seen successive waves of development, there has not been an opportunity for a common design or learning vocabulary. The Enhancement Plan and subsequent projects on site provide an opportunity to anticipate new developments that can be implemented over time and ensures that the new treatment works are designed in a way that supports environmental learning as forethought and not afterthought. Signage can be done with a common design approach. Interpretive elements in the building can be changed over time. It is possible to design these elements through the use of interactive computer tools to eliminate the need for tour guides at the site. These interactive tools also could expand the age groups that may become exposed to wastewater treatment technology.

A multipurpose community center coupled with the existing Administration building could serve BES operations staff, as well as including interpretive materials that articulate the importance of wastewater treatment to the continued growth and prosperity of Lake Oswego and Portland. It could focus on the vast infrastructure that must be administered in order to ensure that water is treated correctly. Historic photos of the river, the water supply system and the wastewater treatment plant could be included to show the changes that occur over time due to growth.

By serving as a multipurpose community meeting area that includes interpretive materials about wastewater treatment, it can provide an opportunity for visitors to be able to make a personal connection to the content as they begin to see how the water usage is linked to the treatment that is provided at the plant.

Incorporating a community space on site provides the riverfront visitors and residents with a unique opportunity to learn about wastewater treatment and to begin to view wastewater infrastructure as a community asset. Through careful site development that celebrates water and informs and motivates visitors about how to protect the Willamette River's water heritage, the plant can begin to be viewed as a vital component of the community's future. One opportunity that could be evaluated is the construction of a new meeting space that could also serve as an education and plant tour center. This could be accomplished with a new structure, separate from the existing Administration Building, or it could be accomplished with an expansion of the existing Administration Building. Either way, this type of public space can provide many opportunities to connect the public with the plant process and functions.

Public art, landscape design, architecture, and engineering can be integrated to reveal how infrastructure (when carefully planned) unites the community, the natural environment, and human lives.

Educational opportunities include the following:

1. Interpretive Trail Systems



2. Plant Overlook from the above the site, or within the proposed plant entry area



3. Interpretive Lobby or Community space – creates an overview of the wastewater treatment process through static and interactive exhibits – We Treat it Right!



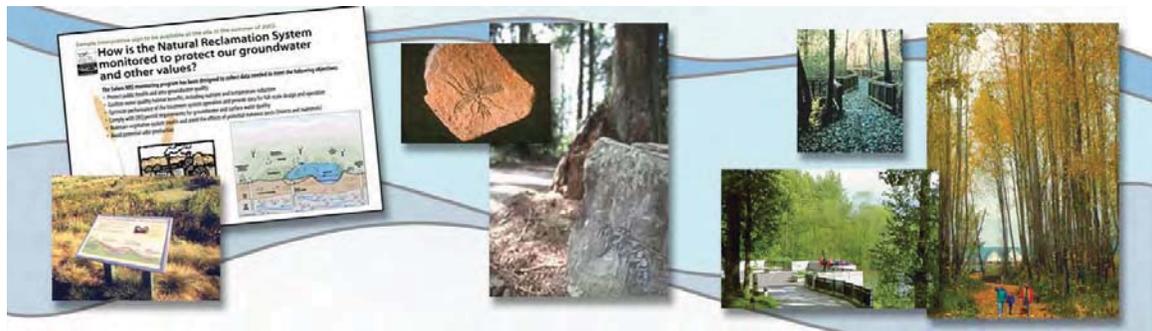
Implementation

Encourage Engineering, Architectural, and Landscape Design Collaboration

The experience of approaching the TCWTP will be shaped as successive treatment plant improvements are made—from the roadway to trails along the site and up to the buildings themselves, integrated engineering, landscape, architecture, and public education to maximize the impact of the project. The features that will be added will be sequenced with engineering and coordinated with architectural and landscape design.

The primary importance of engineering and infrastructure dictates the architectural and landscape strategies at the site while also informing the way in which education and environmental interpretation elements might be included. The TCWTP returns treated water to the environment and to the Willamette River. Though collaboration with architectural and landscape design, the safe return of water to the environment can be interpreted and celebrated. There may be elements such as interpretive kiosks, signs, and fountains that replicate the watershed and create an opportunity for the facility to become a learning environment with minimal costs and maximum impact. Community amenities such as trails can be designed to also incorporate learning elements. Art can be used as a vehicle for expressing ideas about water, the watershed, and wastewater treatment.

A tour path around the perimeter of the site can be designed for older children and adults.



Identify Environmental Education Opportunities

There are multistaged opportunities that should be recognized at the TCWTP. For instance, the lobby of the community space could include interpretive themes and messages in coordination with the architectural and landscape design. This could also be accomplished in the proposed plant entrance area or along the trails bordering the plant. The features could focus on themes of stewardship and water quality benefits of treatment plant improvements.

Exhibits can be designed that address wastewater treatment technologies and interpretative displays can be designed to describe the overall process.

Potential visiting exhibits from other locations as well as local artwork related to the environment could be showcased at the facility. A phased program of exhibit production will assure development of a few quality exhibits while allowing for exhibits to be expanded over time. Exhibits that are developed for the TCWTP such as CDs/DVDs that might

explain the wastewater treatment process can also be produced in quantities that will facilitate school outreach.

Identify Opportunities that Integrate Education with Plant Design

Illustrative opportunities from other places are shown below as a catalyst to discuss the types of ideas and treatments that could be employed along the Lake Oswego riverfront.



The attachment to this appendix contains examples of public education and outreach brochures.