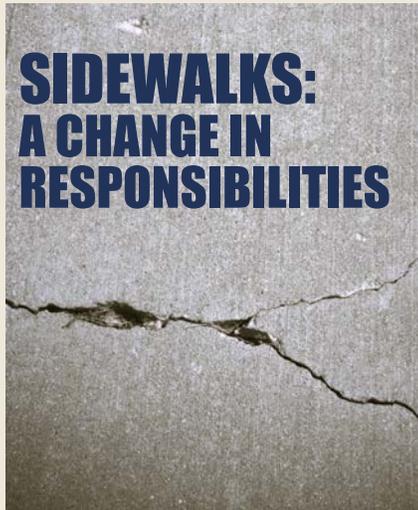


PUBLIC WORKS & UTILITIES

PAVING THE WAY FOR A BRIGHTER FUTURE BY EDUCATING, ENGAGING AND EMPOWERING OUR EMPLOYEES.

2012 June / July
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SIDEWALKS: A CHANGE IN RESPONSIBILITIES

The Development Services Center (DSC) Engineering section has taken on many of the City's sidewalk responsibilities. Commercial curb cuts, widening of residential driveways and sidewalk reimbursements are now handled at the DSC, second floor, County-City Building. Bernie Blum has moved to the DSC to assist with sidewalk duties. Long-time sidewalk guru Harry Kroos has moved into construction project management.

New construction inspections related to building permits are performed by the Building and Safety Department, also located on the second floor of the County-City Building. Sidewalk repair inspections and sidewalk repair complaints will continue to be managed by the Engineering Services Division at the Municipal Services Center, 901 W. Bond.

For more information, call Engineering Services at 402-441-7711.

DOLLAR\$ & CENT\$

Welcome to Dollar\$ and Cent\$, a column designed to help inform readers on the financial aspects of Public Works and Utilities (PWU). Seeing how divisions in the department are funded will give you a better understanding of PWU.

PWU managers often refer to the "color of money," but what exactly does that mean? Let's explore the color of money and explain how all money is NOT equal.

Let's begin by using the example of an individual's paycheck and other sources of income, such as overtime and a second job. Imagine that along with the various sources of income, there are "strings" attached to some of that income. Earned overtime money can only be used for groceries, income from a second job could only be used to pay a house payment and an income tax refund can only be used to pay off credit cards. What if unexpected expenses occurred where those funds were needed? Sorry, there ARE strings attached.

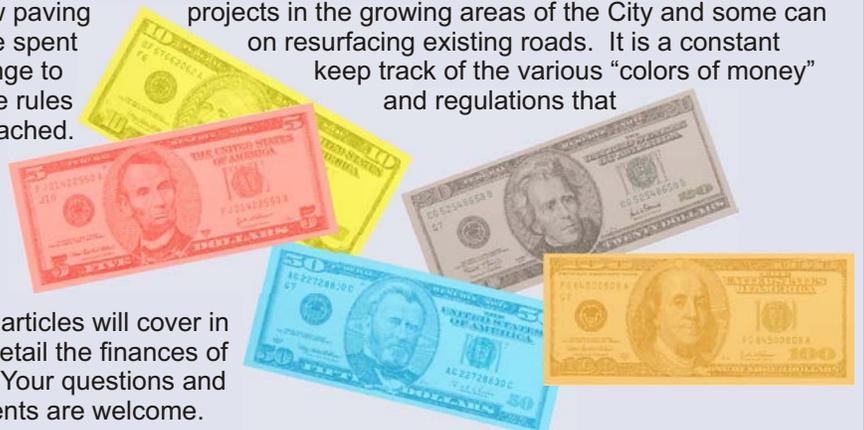
Fact – PWU has a \$97 million operating budget and manages a \$71 million capital improvement budget.

To keep track of nearly \$160 million, PWU managers use "business units" or cost centers. Business units assist management in keeping track of various sources of funds and the expenditures related to those funds.

Where does this money come from? There's the general fund, revolving funds, street construction funds, utility revenues, bond funds, State revolving funds, impact fees, tax increment financing, gas tax, wheel tax, snow removal funds, demonstration funds, stimulus funds and grants. The list could go on, but you get the point. These different funds represent the "color of money." Can you envision red, brown, blue, yellow and orange dollars?

For example, most federal funds have strings attached such as extensive environmental evaluations and procurement processes that need to be followed to obtain this money. Some portions of the City's wheel tax can only be spent on new paving projects in the growing areas of the City and some can only be spent on resurfacing existing roads. It is a constant challenge to keep track of the various "colors of money" and the rules and regulations that are attached.

Future articles will cover in more detail the finances of PWU. Your questions and comments are welcome.



STRONG LINGS

"THERE IS NO 'DIVISION' AMONG OUR DIVISIONS."

Miki Esposito

PWU Director Miki Esposito is pleased to announce the April/May Strong Linc Award recipients for the workplace principle of **professionalism**. Please congratulate these Strong Lings for their valued service.

Gail VanSlyke (*Business Office*) He possesses a cordial, professional and positive attitude that helps put customers at ease. He goes above and beyond, assisting customers at their homes after hours with high bill issues, restoring water service or education. He takes pride in his work, gives the best of himself and encourages co-workers to do the same. Gail is a "difference maker" in the workplace.

Louise Weyer, Tina Queen, Amy Cornelius-Jones and Mary Lowe (*Engineering Services*) Due to the volume of road work, this team is fielding a larger than normal number of calls from upset citizens trying to navigate the City. They remain professional and courteous, which is essential, as they are the first contacts for the Engineering Services Division.

Mary Lowe (*Engineering Services*) She was a finalist for the Leadership Link Administrative Professional of the Year. She works in a professional manner with a wide range of customers providing a successful customer service experience. Her work is vital to the mission of delivering the Capital Improvement Program.

Holly Lionberger (*Engineering Services*) Her coordination and presentation on the Almira Lane water district was clear and informative. Expressing empathy, she communicated complex technical information in an understandable way. Holly's credibility as a civil engineer is highly valuable. She is an exceptionally gifted City representative.

Michelle Zuhlke (*Engineering Services*) She responds to challenges involving the website with dedication, skill and competence. The [detour maps](#) are the latest example of her great work with the City's website. Her results reflect the pride she takes in her work.

Connie Thoreson (*StarTran*) She works with staff and StarTran Advisory Board members to facilitate meetings. She serves as liaison to the Automatic Vehicle Locator Program, maintaining current bus routes and schedules. Connie maintains an overview of administration plans and responsibilities. Connie is often the "face" of StarTran.

Amber Null (*Traffic/Streets*) She excels at customer service in a positive professional manner and received a written customer thank you for such service. Amber was a finalist for the Leadership Link Administrative Professional of the Year. She is the "go-to" person in the office for all Street and Traffic Operations staff.

Bob Kunath, Don Gunning, Steve Koch (*Traffic/Streets*) These men helped clear snow from traffic signals during Super Bowl Sunday. Bob and Don are not part of the signal shop, but volunteered their time. With their help, a majority of the signals were cleared that Sunday.

Tina Baker (*Solid Waste Operations*) She prepared information to facilitate the farm management program. She initiated contact with agencies to acquire GIS information for parcels of City-owned farm property outside of Lancaster County in preparation for managing the program.

Meagan Pratt (*Water*) She responds to one-call customers professionally, promptly and courteously. She works with article contributors and the Citizen Information Center as part of the newsletter team. Meagan is a team player and makes our Department look good.

Ellen Wright (*Watershed Management*) She exhibited professionalism and constraint in coordinating the [Artistic Rain Barrel Event](#) in conjunction with Earth Day on April 22.

The next workplace principle will focus on **safety**. Nominations are due to Miki no later than **July 20**.

John Ottoson is Retiring!

After 38 ½ years, John Ottoson is retiring! Over the years, John has worked with surveying, right-of-way obstructions, permits, traffic counts and crash records.



John and his wife Alta have been married for 34 years. They have three children and three grandchildren. During his free time, John enjoys spending time with family, participating in church activities, golfing, exercising, reading and traveling the globe visiting his children and grandchildren. John has been an exemplary employee and good friend to those who know him. Good luck in retirement, John!

Kennedy Receives Mayor's Award of Excellence



StarTran Bus Operator Michael Kennedy was presented the Award of Excellence by Mayor Chris Beutler at the May 14 City Council meeting. In February, Kennedy observed a man in a motorized wheelchair stuck in the mud and tipping sideways. Kennedy stopped the bus, turned on the flashers and helped the man safely cross the street.

Kennedy's "Good Samaritan" actions were above and beyond the call of duty. StarTran is proud to have excellent employees like him.



**Tuesday
JULY 3**

Uncle Sam Jam at Oak Lake Park

**Saturday
JULY 7**

Oak Lake Cleanup, 10 a.m. to noon

Saturdays

AUGUST 4 and 11

Rain Barrel Classes

Southeast Community College
8800 "O" Street, (room CEC 102)
9 to 11 a.m.

UPCOMING CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS

City street closures and detours
lincoln.ne.gov
(keyword: detours)

**Wind-Powered
Traffic Lights
to Get
Real-World
Testing**



[govtech.com/technology/
Wind-Powered-Traffic-Lights-
Real-World-Testing.html](http://govtech.com/technology/Wind-Powered-Traffic-Lights-Real-World-Testing.html)

**Solid Waste
Plan 2040**



Solid Waste Management Plan for Lincoln and Lancaster County

lincoln.ne.gov (keyword: solid waste plan)

Public Works Day Celebrated During Waterfest

Public Works Day was recognized June 9 at Holmes Lake Park in conjunction with the City's fourth Waterfest celebration.

The event was an extension of National Public Works Week, which started in 1960 as a way to honor the men and women who maintain our country's infrastructure. At the event, the public was invited to visit with PWU staff and see some of the department's big equipment. Displays and activities offered families an opportunity to learn more about the community they live in and how citizens use Public Works and Utilities every day from "first brush to last flush."



2011 Mayor's Award of Excellence Honorable Mention: Jose Regueira



Mayor Chris Beutler recognized StarTran Bus Operator Jose Regueira with the 2011 Mayor's Award of Excellence Honorable Mention Award at the April 16 City Council meeting.

On April 13, 2011, a passing motorist notified Regueira of a fire coming from the rear of the HandiVan he was operating. Regueira stopped immediately and unloaded his wheelchair bound passenger, notified StarTran dispatch, then put out the fire with his extinguisher before Lincoln Fire and Rescue arrived.

The fire was under the rear of the vehicle, dangerously close to the fuel lines and fuel tank. Regueira's quick actions stopped the fire from spreading and prevented a potential deadly situation from occurring. *Congratulations and great job, Jose!*



June is National Safety Month

Office personnel are encouraged to contact Risk Management for a computer desk assessment as part of National Safety Month – an annual observance intended to educate and influence behaviors around the leading causes of preventable injuries and deaths. This year's weekly themes are employee wellness; ergonomics; preventing slips, trips and falls; and driving safety.

Distraction-free driving starts with you. Sending or receiving a text takes a driver's eyes off the road for an average of 4.6 seconds, the equivalent of blindly driving the length of an entire football field at 55 mph. Check out the facts and statistics at www.distraction.gov.

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SAFETY IS DIRECTOR'S TOP PRIORITY



One of the goals of the PWU Safety Committee is to keep safety issues in the front of every employee's mind. A priority of the committee's major efforts is the annual Spring Safety Workshop, held earlier this year on April 25 and 26.

Director of Public Works and Utilities Miki Esposito emphasized the importance of safe working habits and that no task is too important to do in an unsafe manner.

"The safety and security of our employees is a top priority for me as Director," she said. "I am in strong support of establishing an even more robust, consistent, comprehensive department-wide safety program. Over the next two years, we will work together to create such a program for the continued safety, health and well-being of our valuable and cherished employees."



The safety workshop was attended by a majority of PWU employees. Presenters included Rick Hoppe, Mayor's Chief of Staff; Laurie Klosterboer from the Nebraska Safety Council; Robert Luckey of Miller Fall Protection; and Keerun Kamble, City of Lincoln Wellness Coordinator.

Water Conservation Poster Contest Winners



A total of 181 Lincoln fifth-grade students participated in the annual "Be Waterwise" poster contest sponsored by the Mayor's Water Conservation Task Force. The top two entries were submitted by Jalyn Colon, Pyrtle Elementary School, whose artwork is displayed on a StarTran busboard, and Cole Becker, Morley Elementary School, whose artwork is displayed on billboards at various Lincoln locations.

Congratulations to all the winners! Thank you for your help in promoting good water conservation practices.



An area photo of the composting facility at 6001 Bluff Road.

COMPOST PROGRAM NEARING ANNIVERSARY

The City composting facility has processed 370,000 tons of grass, leaves and wood wastes since opening nearly 20 years ago. Yard waste separation occurs annually from April 1 to December 1. By diverting yard waste, 1.3 million cubic yards (or 2.67 years) of landfill space has been retained, a value of over \$11.2 million since fall 1992.

LinGro compost, which is produced from yard waste, is an excellent soil conditioner. Wood wastes are ground into chips and used as bulking material in yard waste windrows to facilitate the composting process.

Solid Waste Operations works with UNL Extension to provide [backyard composting classes](#). Residents can produce a similar soil conditioner and avoid collection and disposal fees by composting yard wastes and other organic materials in their own backyards. Workshops are offered at the Pioneer Park Nature Center, as well as select Lincoln City Libraries. For more information and the composting workshop schedule, visit lincoln.ne.gov (keyword: **compost**)

PUBLIC WORKS & UTILITIES

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