



Since 1889

CITY OF **MILTON-FREEWATER**

•Public Works Department•

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U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the City of Milton-Freewater Stormwater System Improvements Grant - OUR SUCCESS STORY!

By: Krista Gannon, Public Works Assistant/Project Aide

“A PERFECT EXAMPLE OF HOW GOVERNMENT CAN WORK TOGETHER!”

Even before the floods of 1996 the City of Milton-Freewater (City) had sought out ways to fund stormwater improvements and had even partnered with Umatilla County in attempt to secure federal funding to improve our stormwater system. In 2000 the City hired Anderson-Perry & Associates to prepare plans for piping the Milton Ditch. After all the potential to receive funding more or less ‘dried up’ the idea had to be put on the back burner due to the lack of funding available to complete such a task.

We waited & a good thing happened!

It all began to become a reality in late 2009 when the City was notified by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) that we had successfully been added to the list of appropriated earmarked grant funding to address and improve our stormwater infrastructure as well as complete an engineered plan for stormwater management. Around the same time of notification of funding we were also notified of the impending requirement by the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) that all drywells in our jurisdiction be mapped – so this had just taken on a whole other meaning of importance! With us facing more and more costly reporting and monitoring regulations each year staff with the blessing and direction of our Council jumped on board and sought out to secure the grant funding.

In mid-2010 staff met with our EPA Project Coordinator, Joel Salter for what would be the beginning of a solid five (5) year committed working relationship to complete and closeout this project. Joel’s expertise and professionalism is what helped us to move this from our *To-Do Wish List* to our *Accomplishment List*! By the end of 2010 our application for the funding was complete and submitted.

We were notified in early 2011 that the Grant Agreement was approved and ready for signature. On March 28, 2011 we received the formal approval from our proactive governing body – Our Mayor and City Councilors - to enter into the EPA Grant Agreement in the amount not to exceed \$582,000 in federal funding with an EPA cost share obligation not to exceed 55 percent (55%) and City cost share obligation being 45 percent (45%) equal to \$476,180 – which ended up being a 100% in-kind City labor match equal to 3,655 hours of labor performed by our many skilled Utility and Parks Maintenance workers. Our in-kind match also included the use of our City-owned equipment.

Staff worked to decommission the UIC’s for nearly a year solid before beginning the piping portion of the project.

Continued -

“We are incredibly grateful for this generous opportunity to work with the EPA to fund our project. This has been on our City’s “To Do wish list” for decades and without the help of our federal partners at the EPA we would not have been able to accomplish the project.

This is a perfect example of how government should be working together – And a big THANK YOU to Joel Salter, who has been wonderful to work with!”

- Linda Hall, City Manager



COMPLETED

“Without this funding opportunity we would not have been able to complete a project of this magnitude!”

- Dave Bradshaw, Public Works Superintendent

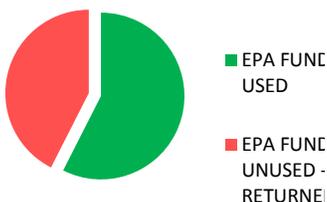


Project Completed ✓

- 44 UIC Structures Decommissioned
- Stormwater Master Plan Engineered and accepted by DEQ
- Piped 5,440 feet of previously open abandoned irrigation ditch for stormwater management.

EPA FUNDING

-Figure 1



As of December 31, 2015 we can say we are done with the original scope of work!

During the past five (5) years we were able to accomplish the following with the aid of this grant:

- Completion of an Engineered Stormwater Management Plan – Submitted and Accepted by the DEQ
- Completion of Engineered Underground Injection Control (UIC) Wells Abandonment Plan which included Environmental Reporting and Design Engineering.
- Decommissioned 44 UIC structures, or drywells preventing environmental impact.
- Installation of stormwater piping and catch basins to properly route the stormwater in the old Milton Ditch.
- Built swells in existing ditch system to help control the water and allow proper percolation.

Now that the grant period is over (as of December 31, 2015) and final grant closeout has been completed staff has a bit more piping to complete, however, it is well worth the added out of pocket in-kind labor and equipment!

Late this past fall after the original area planned for piping was completed, staff determined an additional area of the ditch that was not originally planned to be piped, ought to be piped since it was within the ‘scope of work’ as well as budget. Piping eliminates the existing problems such as debris that tends to pile up in the inactive ditch that could cause culverts to plug resulting in flooding. In turn the flooding would potentially cause damage to adjacent properties with safety being a priority since the area planned is in a residential area. Currently the ditch is open and then transitions into the stormwater pipe. Piping the entire area has been considered to be a triumph against the sporadic ditch overflow in the past that had occasionally caused the debris to form a dam like barrier resulting in water and debris backing up. Thankfully we have not seen substantial property damages since the flood of 1996 but by piping this area – we are sure to not see flooding threats in the future!

We were able to procure and purchase such pipe within budget with grant funds before the end of the project period – December 31, 2015. Even with the addition of area to pipe we were able to turn back unspent Federal funds in the amount of \$247,479 (See Fig. 1).

Due to weather restrictions with cold temperatures below freezing in late fall and early winter we were not able to get the additional piping installed. The City is currently taking advantage of every break in the weather to continue placing pipe as soon as possible absorbing any and all additional costs.

The City of Milton-Freewater City Councilors, staff and citizens will be forever grateful to have had the opportunity to secure the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Grant funding used to assist in protecting our community from stormwater overflow flooding as well as closing off open ditch areas in residential neighborhoods as a safety measure. The overall environmental impacts of the measures this project involved are by far the biggest accomplishments that will have a positive impact on our community for many decades to come which also address future potentially costly requirements.

With our sincere gratitude, we thank you for granting us this funding opportunity! ■