

ADOPT *from A1*

sudden increase in debris, the city is suggesting residents be aware of any pools or flooding.

"It's just something that they can help out with," said Stewart. "We do our best to prepare and get our crew out there to take the sweeper and clean the streets, but sometimes we don't get everywhere and it's just nice to have some added help if folks are able to assist. It's not mandatory. It's also nice when people pick up garbage in the community and put it in the trash can. It's certainly not their responsibility, but it helps make our community a better place to live and potentially helps reduce damage that might occur from certain events."

Still, many residents voiced disagreement on social media that the city would ask for assistance

when utility bills already charge for stormwater.

"I mean, that's legitimate. That's our responsibility and we certainly try to get there," said Stewart in response. "If someone is inclined to assist, that's great. If not, residents can call the non-emergency line at the police department."

The Cottage Grove Police Department's non-emergency number is 541-942-9145.

"The last thing we want is somebody to have some damage," said Stewart.

In the past, some residences have experienced flooding which has moved onto property and into garages.

"So we've added additional storm grates, but we also make a point when we know storms are coming to make sure those grates are clean," said Stewart.

He also advised residents to be aware of where they put garbage cans as they



PHOTO COURTESY OF KENNETH MICHAEL ROBERTS

Drains such as this on Main Street were recently cleared by a city volunteer.

can block gutters and cause pooling and flow into others' property.

There is no formal way to "adopt" the drains; the city simply recommends resi-

dents take note of drainage systems and either clear clogs themselves or call the city.

When clearing a storm drain, the city recom-

mends:

- Use a rake, shovel, or broom - not hands.
- If possible, clear the drain before it starts raining.

· Clear surface debris only. Let city crews handle garbage or any hazards in the catch basin.

· Pile leaves on the street surface near the gutter or edge of the road if no gutter. Keep the gutter, ditches and street grates free of leaves.

· Clear about 10 feet on both sides of the drain.

· Wear reflective clothing for traffic safety.

· Only clear drains that are along the curb. Don't clear drains in the middle of a street - leave that to the city.

· Be careful of standing water to avoid slipping or stepping on sharp objects.

· If children are helping, make sure adults are supervising.

· Don't lift heavy storm drain grates.

To address additional questions, contact the Public Works Department at 541-942-3349, or email at publicworks@cottagegrove.org.

CITY *from A1*

imately resulted in her separation from city employment.

A city source said that an employee had been let go for a "violation of city policies," but the city would not elaborate on which policy or policies.

"Because this involves a personnel investigation, not all aspects of the investigation may be made pub-

lic at this time," said City Manager Richard Meyers to *The Sentinel*. "The city wants to reassure the public that its commitment to providing a high level of public service continues during this time."

Ferguson had not responded to a request to comment as of press time.

For almost two decades, Ferguson had been working for the City of Cottage Grove, putting her fingerprint on or being a key actor in coordinating numer-

ous projects and programs.

Last year, for instance, Ferguson helped secure federal funding for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Local Foods, Local Places program. In response to Ferguson's application, the agency selected Cottage Grove to participate in the program, marking the city as the first community in Oregon to receive the opportunity.

The program committed a total of \$25,000 in direct assistance to be made

available to the city as well as a formalized structure to work with a broad range of agricultural, environmental, public health, architectural and economic development experts to help develop an action plan, set goals and identify local assets that can support the local food economy and contribute to downtown and neighborhood revitalization.

Over the years, Ferguson has been behind several

other projects such as: the preparation of the state's model Development Code for adoption by the Cottage Grove City Council; the creation of a Historic Preservation program (which included the establishment of the Historic Landmarks Commission); achieving a national historic designation of the Cottage Grove Armory; the establishment of a floodplain management program; coordination of the development of the Main Street Refinement Plan and All-America City Park Refinement Plan; and assistance in developing the city's stormwater management plan and Transit Development Plan.

Well-known for her grant-writing ability, she also worked on or assisted with a number of grants which helped fund projects such as the Safe Route to Schools program, South Lane Wheels transportation, Highway 99 and Main Street transportation and growth management, Armory exterior and renovation work, downtown historic preservation, bicycle and pedestrian path funding and federal trail maintenance.

In 2014, the city received the Heritage Excellence Award from the State of Oregon for preservation

work. Ferguson had helped the city gain a Certified Local Government designation, which opened up grant funding opportunities for preservation projects in the community.

With the loss of Ferguson, the city is left with just one senior city planner.

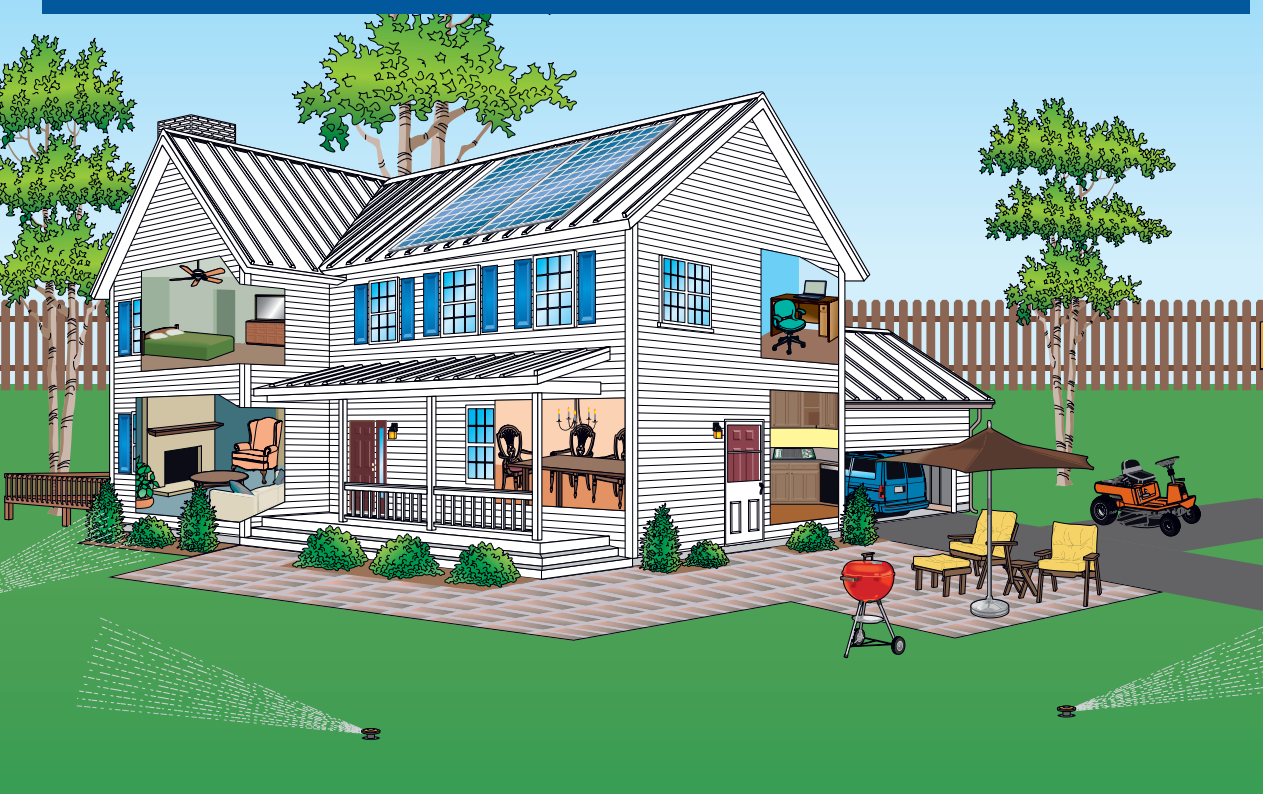
In July, as the new fiscal year began, Assistant City Planner Eric Mongan was promoted to a senior position, enabling a strategy in which one senior planner would focus on current work while the other would focus on long-range planning and grants.

Public Works and Development Director Faye Stewart could not elaborate on the replacement process, but acknowledged that in the meantime, the loss of a city planner may pose some challenges as work will likely shift to other individuals.

"[We're] working with formulating how to repropose the work, to make sure that it all gets done," said Stewart. "There's a lot of grant work. There's a lot of reporting on various different things that I'll probably find myself doing most of in the short term."

Functions such as Planning Commission work will proceed without disruption, Stewart added.

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