

# City awards \$2.7 million street reconstruction contract

*Bids came in lower than expected*

**By David Sykes**

The Heppner City Council Monday awarded a \$2,719,894 contract to Pasco-based Premier Excavation, Inc for reconstruction of several of the city's badly deteriorated streets. Bids came in better than expected prompting City Manager Kraig Cutsforth to say all the work including sewer infrastructure would be completed. He added there would be \$250,000 left over for other needed work within the city. "I think we are going get some extra out of this," he told the council.

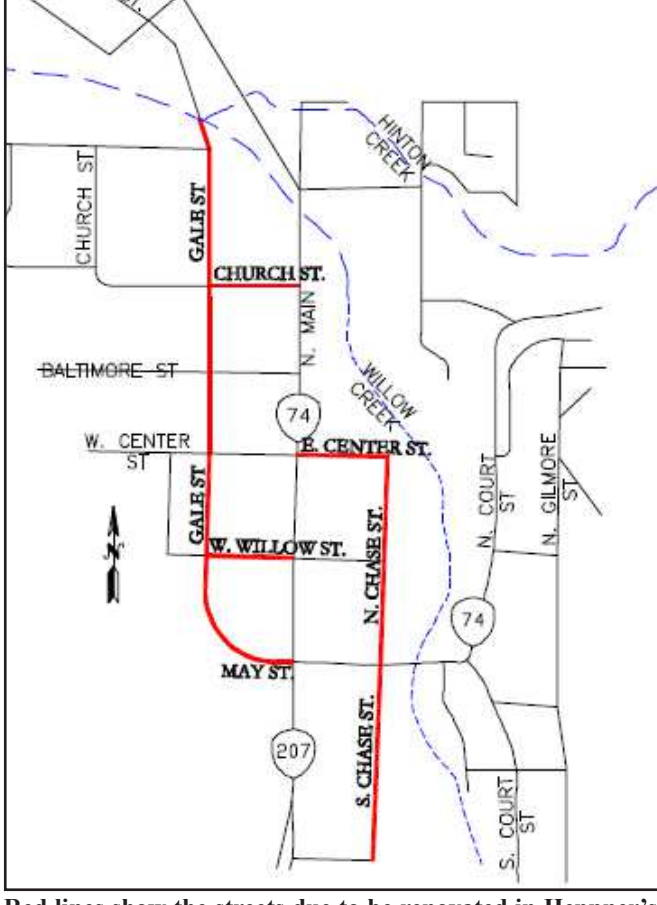
Streets scheduled to be completely redone are: Gale, Willow, Church and May. Part of Center street will also have work. Cutsforth said he should have a better idea when the project will start in about one month. The contractor has 12 months to complete the work. Cutsforth was especially pleased the city should have enough money to complete any needed sewer work that is discovered during excavation. Money for the project came from a grant from the State of Oregon.

Monday's council meeting Cutsforth showed the council new decorative streetlights the city will be installing. Two "sample" lights were displayed, and they, along with one other type, will be installed at the intersection of May and Main near city hall soon so people can see what they

Thirty of the decorative lights, and one pole, are scheduled to be replaced. The lights will be LED.

will replace the current halogen. "They will be brighter and cost less to light," Cutsforth said. One type of light has ballast and one does not. They are made out of light weight heavy-duty plastic. One of the lights has a "cap" on the top which forces the light down toward the ground for better lighting, Cutsforth pointed out. Citizens will have their chance to judge for themselves which light they like best when the "samples" go up.

In other business, the council heard that the city had received \$31,000 in COVID-19 payment money. The funds were used to purchase eight new picnic tables placed on the sidewalks in front of businesses downtown for eating. Also a new larger TV screen was bought for Heppner city hall to hold better Zoom meetings, and \$25,000 was given to the Heppner Chamber of Commerce to be used for distribution to local businesses hit hard financially by the virus shut



Red lines show the streets due to be renovated in Heppner's upcoming construction project.

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In other business the council heard from city attorney Bill Kuhn who said the paperwork is done and almost signed for the city to purchase a lot from

local businessman Jason Patterson on Chase Street. The city plans to use the lot to create parking for when the city has special events and parking is hard to find. The price is \$18,500.

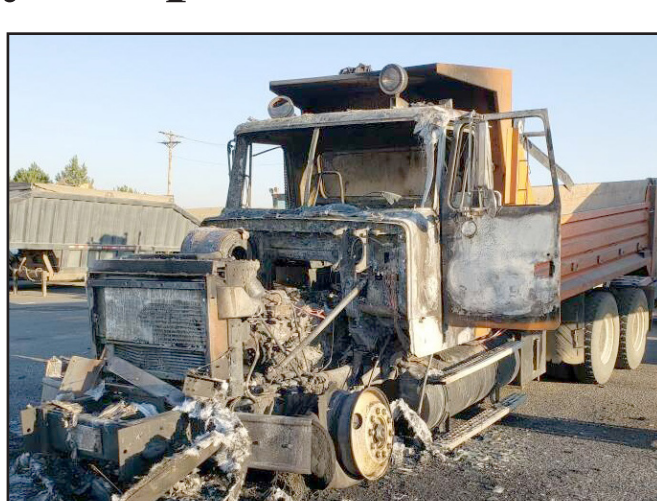


Heppner City Manager Kraig Cutsforth shows the two different styles of decorative lights the city is considering purchasing. Three of the “sample” lights will be installed downtown at the Main and Main intersection so everyone can see for themselves what they look like.

## Truck burns at county shop



**A dump truck at the Morrow County Public Works shop in Lexington was a total loss after catching fire. -Contributed**



On September 8 at 11:45 p.m. Eric Imes, Assistant Roadmaster, received a call about an explosion and flames at the Morrow County Public Works shop in Lexington. When he arrived, he discovered one of the road department dump trucks fully engulfed in flames. It was determined the explosion that was heard was the left front tire exploding. Pieces of

smoldering tire were found as far as 100 feet away.

Lexington, Tappan and Ione Fire Departments responded and extinguished the fire, which was most likely caused by a short in the electrical system. Imes reported the truck had been parked for at least six hours before the fire was reported. Fortunately no other trucks or equipment were parked near the burning

truck. The closest truck only suffered some discoloring of the door emblem. The window of that truck was so hot Imes decided not to move it, thinking the hot window might shatter.

Imes told the Gazette, "The fire was so hot it twisted the truck frame, bent the front axle and bent the front leaf springs downward." The truck was a total loss.

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# School supplies donated



Heppner Elementary students and staff recently received donations of school supplies from the Bank of Eastern Oregon's school supply drive. This year's drive was a special challenge to be able to provide supplies to students at home and in the classroom. Pictured: Dieter Waite, HES Principal, and Deb Campbell, Library Tech.

# Ballots to go out soon

Morrow County Clerk Bobbi Childers reported ballots for the November 3 general election will begin to go out Wednesday, October 14 for Morrow County residents. Military and overseas ballots have already been sent.

The last day to register to vote or change party affiliation in the upcoming election will be Tuesday, October 13. Remember, ballots are not forwarded. Voter registrations must be updated in the case of a name change, signature change, political party affiliation change, residence or mailing address change or moving into Morrow County. Check or update voter registrations on the Oregon Secretary of State website (My Vote) at <https://secure.sos.state.or.us/orestar/vr/showVoterSearch.do?lang=eng&source=SOS>.

Those who do not re-  
ve ballots, but believe

p.m. on Election Day, Tuesday, November 3. Ballots must be received, not simply postmarked, on that day. Ballot return envelopes will include prepaid postage for business reply mail, which is not the same as first class. Mailed ballots should be mailed no later than October 29 to allow enough time to arrive by November 3. After that date, ballots should be dropped in a drop box.

For voter convenience, 24-hour drop boxes are located throughout the county. All drop boxes close at 8 p.m. on election day. Drop boxes can be found in Heppner: Behind the Bartholomew Building, in the parking lot. Ballots may also be dropped at the Morrow County Clerk's office inside the courthouse from 8 a.m. to noon and 1-5 p.m., M-F and election day (Nov. 3) from 7 a.m. until 8 p.m.; Lexington: 365 West Hwy 74 (Morrow County Public Works parking lot); Lone Spring St. (in front of the turn to 3rd Street); Boardman: NW Boardman Ave.; Irrigon: 205 NE 3rd St. (Irrigon Annex). All drop boxes are open 24 hours, except on election day.

## Morrow County not moving to phase two

Morrow County did not move into Phase Two, it was announced recently. Although the commissioners feel the county has seen great improvement it was not enough to satisfy the partners at the State Health

Morrow County Commissioner Melissa Lindsay told the Gazette, “We spoke with Director Allen and discussed our numbers and the Phase Two improvement Umatilla County was granted. The Governor’s

office is very unclear as to what monitoring tool they will hold Morrow County accountable to, with several metrics currently on the state website and each county being granted differing phases based on

100,000 a week, at which we would need to be at 12 cases over a one-week time frame for improvement. We currently are not meeting

"It is very frustrating as the data for a small population is skewed very easily by small changes when based on a per 100,000 calculation. I requested a follow up conversation to look at the data that will drop through Saturday and continue to request a comprehensive look at the

numbers with regards to population and demographics of our specific county,”

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