



Lynnwood Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrades Project

Frequently Asked Questions

GENERAL PROJECT INFORMATION

What is the purpose of this project?

The Lynnwood Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrades Project is intended to modernize an aging facility so it can continue to reliably protect public health and the environment. Originally built in the early 1960s, many of the plant's systems are approaching the end of their life cycles and were not designed to meet today's stricter environmental standards. The upgrades will replace outdated infrastructure, improve treatment performance and ensure compliance with evolving regulatory requirements, particularly for discharges to Puget Sound.

Where is the Lynnwood Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP)?

The Lynnwood WWTP is located in a pocket of Lynnwood, surrounded by Edmonds, just east of the BNSF Railway corridor on the west side of 76th Avenue West. This location was selected in the 1960s for its favorable topography, allowing wastewater to flow efficiently by gravity. It also supported the development of surrounding neighborhoods in northwest Edmonds while providing essential wastewater treatment service to the City of Lynnwood.

Who does the Lynnwood WWTP serve?

The Lynnwood WWTP serves residents of the City of Lynnwood as well as portions of the City of Edmonds. Most of the wastewater treated at the plant originates from Lynnwood, including residential, commercial and industrial areas, while a smaller share comes from north Edmonds through connections to Lynnwood's sewer system.

The Edmonds service area represents approximately 20% of the Edmonds's geographic area and about 16% of its population.

What year did the City use to plan the Wastewater Treatment Plant improvements?

The City's Wastewater Treatment Plant Facility Plan looks at future needs over several planning milestones, including 2026, 2030, 2040, and 2050, to understand both short-term and long-term system demands.

The overall project is planned around the year 2050. This long-term planning horizon is used to evaluate alternatives and determine the size of major infrastructure improvements, such as treatment tanks, buildings, and overall plant capacity. Planning to 2050 helps ensure the facility can support future population growth and long-term service needs.

At the same time, some equipment inside the plant has a shorter lifespan and will likely be replaced before 2050. Because of that, certain mechanical and treatment equipment is designed using projected 2040 flows instead of full 2050 demand. This allows the City to avoid oversizing equipment too early, while still planning the overall facility for long-term growth in a practical and cost-effective way.

What alternatives did the City of Lynnwood consider in the Facility Plan?

The 2024 Facility Plan included an Alternatives Analysis discussion that formed the basis of its recommendations. The alternatives evaluated were:

- Upgrade the existing facility
- Build a new plant in a different location
- Connect to another service provider in the region

At the time, the Facility Plan identified upgrading the existing facility as the most feasible and cost-effective approach. Key challenges with the other alternatives included the need to reconstruct significant portions of the existing sewer collection system, availability of usable land in Lynnwood, as well as uncertainties around the capacity within other regional systems to accommodate flows from Lynnwood and Edmonds.

The City is currently reassessing key planning assumptions to confirm this path continues to align with community goals and the City's long-term objectives, while ensuring reliable wastewater service for both Lynnwood and Edmonds for decades to come.

Will the City use eminent domain to acquire properties?

We understand the community's concern for surrounding projects and the use of eminent domain. At this time, the City does not anticipate the need to acquire additional properties for the wastewater treatment plant upgrades. The project team is currently completing the Basis of Design phase, which will further refine facility layout and confirm space requirements. For projects of this type, the City's approach is to work collaboratively and transparently with property owners whenever property needs arise.

The City has issued a statement regarding the situation with one acquired property that addresses the situation. The statement can be read [here](#). In the case of the WWTP property acquisitions, eminent domain has not been used. However, in response to this event, we have developed stricter review processes to ensure language referencing eminent domain is not used unless it is necessary and accurate.

SCHEDULE

What is currently happening on the project?

Currently, the team is establishing the Basis of Design. During the Basis of Design, the team will look at all the work that needs to be done to upgrade the treatment plant and create a plan to design and build the upgrades. As part of the Basis of Design, the City considers it important to revisit the alternatives analysis conducted as part of the Facility Plan initiated in 2020. This important step will ensure the recommended approach continues to align with the project's goals and objectives. All the findings will be published in the Basis of Design Report (BODR), which will establish the technical foundation for the project.

What happens after the Basis of Design?

Following the Basis of Design, the project advances into detailed design, where concepts are developed into engineering drawings and specifications through progressive milestones (30%, 60%, 90% and final). This phase refines equipment sizing, layouts, hydraulics, permitting coordination and construction sequencing, while updating costs and schedules. The process ultimately results in a complete set of construction documents ready for implementation. The project expects to begin design in mid-2027.

What is the general timeline of the project?

The Lynnwood WWTP upgrades are planned as a multi-year effort extending through approximately 2034 and are currently in the planning phase.

- Early planning 2020 – 2025
- Basis of Design: 2025 -2027
- Design: 2027 – 2030
- Construction: 2028 – 2034

What is the expected duration for construction?

Construction will be carried out in phases to keep the existing plant operational throughout the upgrades. Initial construction is expected to begin after early design phases, with major work occurring over approximately four to six years. This staged approach minimizes service disruptions while allowing the City to modernize the facility and meet future regulatory requirements.

COST

How much will the project cost?

The 2024 WWTP Facility Plan included a planning-level estimate of approximately \$208 million in 2021 dollars, based on 2021 cost data. Since then, construction inflation and market conditions have significantly increased costs. In July 2024, Hazen and Sawyer

reassessed the project and estimated a total cost of about \$328.8 million, which escalates the original estimate to account for market conditions.

As design progresses and more detailed engineering information becomes available, these planning-level estimates will continue to be refined and shared with City Council and the community.

How will the city pay for the project?

The project will be funded through multiple sources including state and federal loans, grants, and bonds, the city's utility budget, and the City of Edmonds. In addition to applying for outside funding, the project team will seek efficiencies as design progresses and pursue construction methods that reduce costs, which will be helpful to overall customer sewer rates.

How is this project going to impact my water and sewer bills?

To support major infrastructure investments such as the WWTP upgrades, rates are periodically reviewed and adjusted with City Council approval, guided by rate studies conducted every three years. The City is planning to undertake a rate study to develop a plan that phases rate increases over time, ensuring infrastructure investments and customer charges are implemented in a fair and balanced manner. If you are interested in the City's reduced rate program, please fill out the application and email or mail it to us. Go online and search for "City of Lynnwood reduced rate program" or find the application here:<https://www.lynnwoodwa.gov/files/sharedassets/public/v/1/finance/utility-billing/2026-utility-assistance-application-reduced-rate-fillable.pdf>.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

What public engagement has been conducted to date, and what is expected moving forward?

Public engagement for the Lynnwood WWTP Upgrades Project has included early and ongoing outreach focused on transparency and building relationships with the surrounding

community. Efforts to date include more than 30 tours, hosting 250 visitors, in 2025, three public meetings and plant tours held in December 2025 and January 2026, participation in the Meadowdale Community Club meeting in February 2026, presentations to the City of Edmonds and Lynnwood Councils in March 2026, and an open house at the Lynnwood Senior Center in April 2026.

While initial efforts have focused on nearby neighbors, the City plans to expand outreach to the broader customer base across both Lynnwood and Edmonds, including residential and commercial customers. As the project progresses, a higher and more sustained level of engagement is expected. This will likely include additional open houses, targeted outreach to adjacent neighborhoods, regular project updates and formal engagement associated with environmental review processes.

How can I stay informed and learn more about the project?

The City is committed to being out in the community at local events or meeting with groups every few months to share updates. If you would like to receive project updates and stay informed about project events, please sign up to receive our project emails by visiting our project website or following this link: https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/WALYNNWOOD/subscriber/new?topic_id=WALYNNWOOD_69.

If you or your group would like a tour of the treatment plant, please contact the WWTP Manager Ehsan Shirkhani at eshirkhani@lynnwoodwa.gov or WWTP Supervisor Tanner Boyle at tboyle@lynnwoodwa.gov.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROCESS (SEPA) AND PERMITTING

Will the project go through an environmental review process, such as the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA)?

Yes. The project is required to undergo an environmental review process under the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) as part of permitting. This review will likely occur around the 30% design stage, when the project has been sufficiently defined to assess potential

environmental impacts, alternatives and mitigation measures, while still allowing flexibility to incorporate feedback and make meaningful adjustments.

The project team will continue to engage the community through meetings and regular updates on key milestones throughout the design process. Design is anticipated to begin in 2027.

What agencies will the team work with on this project?

There are several environmental agencies that oversee the activities around the planning, design, construction and operation of the WWTP. Washington State Department of Ecology is the main agency that regulates the City's discharge through the City's National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES). The Puget Sound Clean Air Agency (PSCAA) has jurisdiction over air emissions from the City's WWTP. This project will likely require coordination with other agencies such as US Army Corps of Engineers, National Marine Fisheries Service and US Fish and Wildlife Service, tribes and Washington State Department of Natural Resources.

Any potential adverse environmental impacts identified will be thoroughly evaluated and mitigated in accordance with all applicable environmental regulations, which the City is fully committed and obligated to follow.

Who is the permitting agency for this project?

The primary permitting agency for the project is the Washington State Department of Ecology, which regulates wastewater treatment plants through the NPDES discharge permit program.

What does a WWTP permit violation mean, and how is the public notified?

The Lynnwood WWTP operates under a discharge permit issued by the Washington State Department of Ecology through the NPDES program. This permit sets limits on treated wastewater discharged to Puget Sound and requires ongoing monitoring and reporting. The City must promptly report certain events such as disinfection failures, sewer overflows,

bypasses or major system failures to regulatory and health agencies. Some noncompliance events must be reported within 24 hours, followed by a detailed written report within five days outlining the cause and corrective actions.

Most permit violations are operational or technical exceedances that do not pose a direct risk to the public. However, if an event could impact public health or the environment, the City works with regulatory agencies to notify the public through its website, advisories, or coordination with local health authorities and media. These processes ensure transparency and timely communication when needed.

PROJECT IMPACTS

What are the expected construction impacts?

The extent of construction impacts will not be confirmed until later design phases, some level of disruption should be expected when construction begins as early as 2028. Typical impacts may include increased construction traffic, noise during working hours and periodic odors or dust, particularly for nearby residents. There may also be localized effects such as staging areas, equipment movement and temporary changes to access or parking near the site. To ensure the plant remains operational, construction will likely be phased, which can extend the duration of activities but helps to avoid service interruptions.

The City will work to minimize these impacts through proactive construction management and clear communication with the community.