

Ashland Canal Piping Project Frequently Asked Questions

What is the Ashland Canal Piping Project?

The project entails piping approximately two miles of the Ashland Canal to improve the water quality of Ashland Creek, (the outlet of the Ashland Canal) and minimize losses through seepage and evaporation. The open-channel irrigation canal will be replaced with a below-ground pipe to meet the city's goal for overall water conservation and improved water quality.

Where is the project located?

The piping will take place along approximately two miles of the Ashland Canal from Starlite Place to Terrace Street. [View](#)

Why is the project being proposed?

The City of Ashland places priority on improving water quality, water conservation and water system efficiencies.

Raw water in an open canal, like Ashland Canal, is vulnerable to contamination from a variety of sources. These contaminants require additional treatment at our Water Treatment Plant and reduce the water quality of Ashland Creek. Additionally, open canals are susceptible to water losses through seepage and evaporation. Ashland Creek routinely exceeds the State's maximums for E. coli bacteria in the summer months.

In addition to improving water quality, conservation efforts will help Ashland to manage its water resources for the future. The city loses approximately 30 percent of the canal water due to evaporation and seepage. Piped canals mitigate these losses and conserve a significant portion of this water.

What is the purpose of the Ashland Canal?

The Ashland Canal is a regular source of seasonal irrigation water around the city. The Canal has also been infrequently used as a raw water source for the Water Treatment Plant (WTP). It was most recently used in 2015 due to dropping water levels in Reeder Reservoir.

The city has a contract with the Talent Irrigation District (TID) for approximately 1,369-acre feet of water annually. The front section of the Canal terminates in the wet well of the Terrace Street Pump Station. From there the city can: 1) Choose to pump to the Water Treatment Plant for potable water treatment, 2) Gravity feed into a Siphon that conveys the water across the Ashland Creek drainage to the back section of the Canal, or 3) Gravity overflow through a pipe into Ashland Creek at Lithia Park.



What is the history of the Ashland Canal?

The Canal was constructed in the early 1920's and is in operation seasonally from April through October (approximate). The Canal consists of an open ditch among most of its length, though some portions have been piped due to past maintenance issues. Water is conveyed to individual users via a combination of piping and ditch systems that run through the city; these networks are owned by either the City of Ashland, Talent Irrigation District, or private land owners. Use of TID water is through individual agreements based on the property size and are generally unmetered.

Where does the city get its water?

The city's primary source of raw water comes from the Ashland Creek watershed. In 1928, the city constructed Hosler Dam at the confluence of the West and East Forks of Ashland Creek. The resulting impoundment of Reeder Reservoir provides 280 million gallons (MG) of storage for the city's water supply. Water from the reservoir is conveyed to the city's Water Treatment Plant (WTP) located along Ashland Creek, approximately one mile below Reeder Reservoir.

The city has an agreement with the Talent Irrigation District (TID) to provide additional raw water supply in drought years. When needed, TID water is pumped from the Ashland Canal by the city's Terrace Street Pump Station up to the WTP, where it is treated with the Ashland Creek raw water supply.

What is the project timeline?

The preliminary engineering phase (survey and field work) began in February 2018 and is expected to take eleven months. Construction is not anticipated until 2020.

- Phase 1A, February 2018 – December 2018: Preliminary engineering phase (survey and fieldwork)
- Phase 1B, December 2018-June 2019: Public outreach, obtaining permits, easements and construction work agreements
- Phase 2, June 2019-December 2019: Final engineering
- Phase 3, 2020: Construction of piping project

Who are the city's piping partners?

On January 16, 2018, city council approved a contract with Adkins Consulting Engineering, LLP to perform preliminary engineering work associated with piping a portion of the Ashland Canal.

How is the project funded?

The project is funded by the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality Clean Water State Revolving Fund. The loan was authorized August 1, 2017, by city council.



How will this project benefit Ashland citizens?

- Minimized water pollution and health risks: reduced E. coli contributing bacteria as well as other contaminants in Ashland Creek.
- Conserves water lost to seepage and evaporation: approximately 30%
- Protects drinking water resources: in drought years, canal water is pumped to the Ashland Water Treatment Plant and treated to drinking water standards.
- Safety improvements: piping the canal eliminates some falling and drowning hazards and will drastically reduce the chances of overtopping and bank blow-outs.
- Trail and Surface Improvements: will create a wider smoother gravel path with reduced maintenance.
- Improved irrigation water quality: less debris and sediment buildup

How much water will the Ashland Canal Project save?

During the irrigation season, Ashland Canal loses approximately 30 percent of water to evaporation and seepage. Piping the canal will mitigate these losses and conserve a significant portion of this water, providing more efficient delivery to customers.

How will this project affect the trail along the Canal?

Temporary trail closures will be required during construction as well as some trail restoration after construction. This project is not intended to create additional trails or to secure additional trail segments. However, by burying a pipe this project will un-intentionally remove previous seasonal trail obstacles (the open Canal with water). The City will work closely with adjoining property owners to mitigate any concerns regarding the trail and the removal of previous obstacles. The Ashland Parks and Recreation Division is interested in securing additional trail easements if property owners are interested. If you are interested in these opportunities, please contact Parks Superintendent Jeff McFarland at 541-552-2252.

How will the canal along the Cottle property open space be accessed?

Access will likely be the same as the existing access.

What will happen to the trees along the Ashland Canal?

We are currently in the preliminary engineering design phase and are evaluating and surveying the landscaping and the trees along the Ashland Canal to determine the impact. Efforts will be made during construction to reduce negative impacts to the trees and landscaping.

What is an Easement?

An easement is a right to cross or otherwise use someone else's land for a specified purpose.

- The City of Ashland has a maintenance easement along either side of the Ashland Canal from Starlite Place to Terrace Street?
- A trail easement is an agreement with the homeowner and City of Ashland Parks Department to allow trail access along the Ashland Canal. All current trail easements will remain after the project is complete.



Do I have a trail easement on my property?

To find out if you currently have a trail easement through the Parks Department, please contact Parks Superintendent Jeff McFarland at 541-552-2252.

What is the Talent Irrigation District's involvement in the project?

The Talent Irrigation District (TID) currently serves water, mainly used for irrigation, within the Talent and Ashland areas via several storage reservoirs and canals. Waters are conveyed to users within the City of Ashland via the Ashland Canal, which extends from the Green Springs Power Plant, along the south side of the city, to its terminus at Wright's Creek. The TID supplies water to the Ashland Canal. The City of Ashland owns and operates the Canal for municipal purposes.

The city has an agreement with the TID to provide additional raw water supply in drought years. When needed, TID water is pumped from the Ashland Canal by the city's Terrace Street Pump Station up to the WTP, where it is treated with the Ashland Creek raw water supply.

What is happening upstream from the 2 miles that is being piped?

The Talent Irrigation District (TID) owns and maintains the canal upstream of the City's monitoring station at Starlite Place. TID does not plan to pipe their section of the canal at this time.

Will TID chemical water treatment in the ditch change with the piping of the canal?

TID does not use any aquatic chemical in its canals.

How will this project benefit irrigation customers?

During the irrigation season, Ashland Canal loses approximately 30 percent of water to evaporation and seepage. Piping the canal will mitigate these losses and conserve a significant portion of this water, providing more efficient delivery to customers. We anticipate the addition of better filtration at the head of the piped section, this will reduce the amount of debris in the canal and ultimately reduce the debris in the Canal lateral lines.

How will irrigation access be established to the pipe for current Ashland Canal irrigation water holders?

We have a few different ways of connecting to the pipe, it will be somewhat dependent on the existing connection/conditions. We will plan for these specific connections with a standard detail or custom detail (depending on the connection). For future connections, an Inserta Tee will likely be the easiest connection for public works. There are no "TID" water right holders attached to this section of canal.

I have an irrigation water right through TID? Will my property be affected?

TID irrigation water right holders will not be affected by this Ashland Canal piping project.



How do I find out if I have Ashland Canal water for irrigation or if I get my water from TID?

Call us at 541-552-2062

Why is the canal being piped rather than lined?

There are three reasons the city chose to pipe over lining:

- 1) **IMPROVED WATER QUALITY:** Piping Ashland Canal will reduce contaminants in Ashland Creek, lining the Canal still leaves it open to contaminants.
- 2) **CONSERVATION:** Potential to conserve 30 percent of the canal water due to evaporation and seepage. Piped canals mitigate these losses and conserve a significant portion of this water. Lining the Canal will reduce seepage, but requires frequent and costly repairs to maintain this benefit.
- 3) **COST:** While lining may be less expensive to implement in its first installment cycle than piping, it requires significant maintenance and replacement cycles. In the long run maintenance and replacement costs exceed the cost of piping over time.

Why can't the current concrete stay in the ditch? Why does it have to be removed at all?

The concrete canal lining is beyond its service life and has deteriorated to a point where it needs replacement. Long term, it is more cost effective, less maintenance and less water loss to replace the concrete lining with a buried pipe.

What will the area look like after the canal is piped?

The pipe will be buried at grade level and, when the project is completed, the city will restore the trail. The city is exploring partnerships with Ashland Parks and Recreation District and the Southern Oregon Trail Alliance. (can we link to our rendering here?) Add more

What kind of pipe will be used in the Ashland Canal project?

The pipe diameter is yet to be determined, but will likely be between 24 inches and 48 inches.

We are very early in the design process, and have not determined the pipe material to be used. However, it is common to use ADS N-12 Low Head pipe in these applications. <https://www.ads-pipe.com>

How large of a grade drop will be needed to accommodate the larger pipe?

It depends on multiple factors; of which we are currently working through.

Can the new piping, after it is backfilled be driven over? What is the weight limit for the pipe being used?

Yes, the pipe can be driven over with the proper backfill and trench requirements. The weight limit is dependent on these factors.

How will piping the canal impact natural resources?

Phase 1B of this project, estimated to begin late in 2018 will include wetland surveys and approaches. Currently, the City is working with natural resources professionals to determine



and/or mitigate impacts to vegetation. We estimate this analysis to be complete by the end of 2018.

How will this project affect the wildlife?

In its current state, water is in the canal April through October. Wildlife is used to not having access to water six months out of the year and will continue to seek other water sources like ponds and natural water bodies.

How is this project going to affect my property?

The city is committed to working with homeowners to address all concerns.

To learn how your property might be impacted by this water quality and conservation project, please contact the Public Works Department at 541-488-5587.

Is the City going to be working on my property?

City staff and our partners have thoughtfully considered the impact this project may have on residents and properties that border this section of canal. The city will do its best to minimize impacts to adjoining properties and irrigation customers from project design through construction. The City has easements that allow the placement, operation and access of the canal on private property. If the Canal crosses your property and you not aware of an easement, please contact us as we may be able to help.

What kind of safety precautions are going to take place during construction?

The contractor will ultimately be responsible for complying with OSHA and state rules for construction access and safety; this will more than likely include temporary fencing, flagging, etc. Additionally, we will have a project representative onsite to ensure the contractor complies with these rules.

What are going to be the working hours of the construction crews?

8:00 a.m. -5:00 p.m. Monday- Friday

Where is the stormwater that is currently being dumped into the canal going to go?

More than likely the stormwater that is currently entering the canal, will continue to enter the canal. Although, we will be considering other alternatives, such as low-impact-development solutions like rain gardens or bio swales.

How can I learn more about the project?

We invite you to contact the city to learn more about the project at 541-488-5587 or visit www.ashland.or.us/ashlandcanal. If you wish to be included on our email notification list, please send an email to ashlandcanal@ashland.or.us.

