

Stormwater Master Plan Update

The City of Bend is updating its Stormwater Master Plan. The updated plan will guide priorities and strategies for managing stormwater as Bend continues to develop while climate change creates more dramatic storm events. Development of this plan will help the City achieve the Council’s goal to “ensure water, wastewater and stormwater systems are aligned with the needs of a growing city” and “Protect our watershed through conservation and water stewardship”.

The last Stormwater Master Plan, from 2014, identified multiple stormwater flood control and water quality improvement projects. Some of the projects were implemented, but many were not due to limited resources, and in the ensuing 10 years the City has grown, and some infrastructure condition has worsened.

The Stormwater Master Plan update will consider increasing urban density, climate change, our unique geology and high desert geography, and create an updated framework for managing the City’s stormwater challenges.

The Stormwater Master Plan update began in spring 2024, with an anticipated adoption of the new plan by the Bend City Council in early summer 2025.

What is Stormwater?

Stormwater is precipitation such as rain, snow, or sleet that collects on and runs off the land. The City's Stormwater Utility Department works to prevent and minimize flooding and protect the quality of water resources, such as the Deschutes River and groundwater.

Community Values

The Deschutes River and surrounding natural environment are cherished resources in Central Oregon. High quality water in the Deschutes River, Tumalo Creek, and in our underlying groundwater aquifer supports a high quality of life for Bend residents, visitors, businesses and fish and wildlife. Appropriate stormwater management is essential to protecting our water resources.

Proper management of stormwater is essential to protecting our community health, infrastructure and property from risks posed by storm events.

Stormwater Challenges

- **Protecting Water Quality**

Minimizing pollutants in stormwater runoff is one important way to protect our valuable water resources. The City implements protective measures in accordance with discharge permits from the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ). Stormwater runoff can carry pollutants such as sediment, oils, herbicides, metals, pesticides, tire and brake pad particulates, and other chemicals from any property or street. The solutions are diverse and involve resources and efforts from the City, Bend citizens, and businesses.

- **Flooding Issues**

The City has made progress in addressing and actively responding to chronic flooding issues however, certain areas such as the Franklin and Greenwood underpasses require major capital improvements to fully resolve chronic flooding, and many new and smaller flooding issues are causing inconvenience, safety concerns, and occasional property damage throughout Bend.

Flooding of critical streets and in some neighborhoods continues to be a concern during significant precipitation events. Existing pipes and drainage facilities are aging and in need of repair or replacement. The City must also comply with state and federal permitting regulations that maintain a high standard for protecting water quality.

- **Impacts of Population Growth and Urban Density**

Bend's population growth and development means there is less open land to absorb precipitation and less space on development sites to install stormwater management facilities, creating more stormwater runoff and a need for new strategies to manage runoff in this increasingly urban environment.

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Accommodation Information for People with Disabilities

To obtain this information in an alternate format such as Braille, large print, electronic formats, etc. please contact Austin Somhegyi at asomhegyi@bendoregon.gov or 541-323-8555; Relay Users Dial 7-1-1.