Customers First!

Modern Communications Strategies Reap Rewards

Presented by:

Jane Heisler, AICP, Communications Director,
Lake Oswego-Tigard Water Partnership

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Lake Oswego · Tigard Water Partnership
sharing water · connecting communities

Lake Oswego and Tigard, Oregon

Located just SSW of Portland.

Population served:

Lake Oswego: 34,000

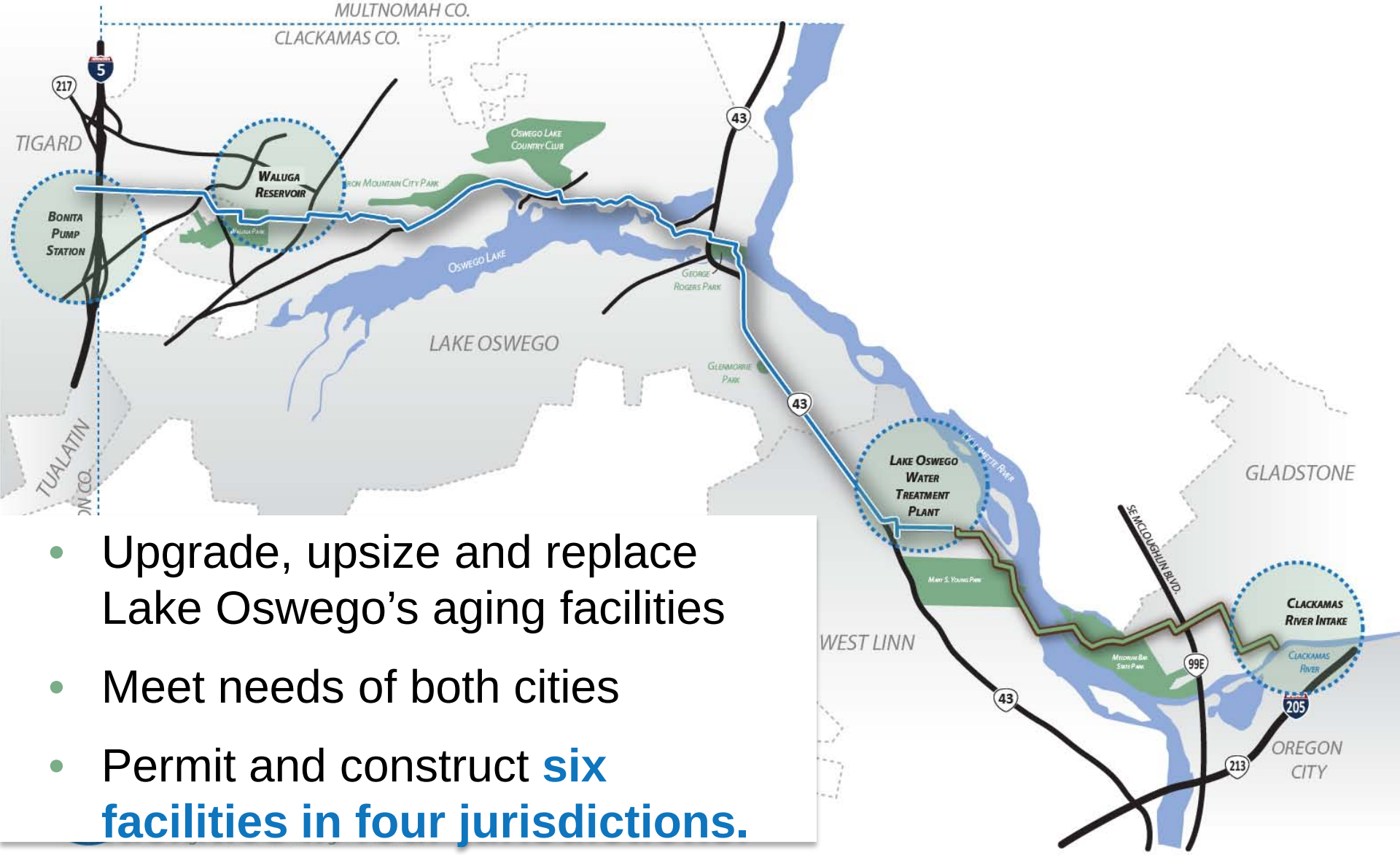
Tigard: 56,000

Why a Partnership?

- Lake Oswego's system is near capacity; aging infrastructure lacks reliability.
- Tigard needs secure, dependable water; and desires ownership share.
- Keep water affordable for ratepayers.

Lake Oswego's water treatment plant was built in 1968.

This is a Big Project!



- Upgrade, upsize and replace Lake Oswego's aging facilities
- Meet needs of both cities
- Permit and construct **six facilities in four jurisdictions.**

Many Interested Stakeholders

- Policymakers (from four cities)
- Facility neighbors
- Ratepayers
- Regulators
- Environmental advocates
- Fishers
- Park users
- Many others

Public Involvement Philosophy

- ✓ **Be transparent.**
- ✓ Be strategic: target those most interested/affected.
- ✓ Be clear about the genuine opportunity for input.
- ✓ Be ready to adapt to project changes.
- ✓ Keep policymakers informed and on-board.

Citizens from Tigard , Lake Oswego and West Linn attend a Partnership Open House.

Benefits

- Project moves ahead, on-time
- Achieves cost savings
- Long-term community trust and support
- Lasting partnerships
- An informed customer base
- Confident policymakers

Oversight Committee

Tigard City Council

Gretchen Buehner

Mayor
Craig Dirksen

Lake Oswego City Council

Bill Tierney

Mary Olson

Building Communications Infrastructure

1. Use your existing communications channels.
2. Create new targeted materials.

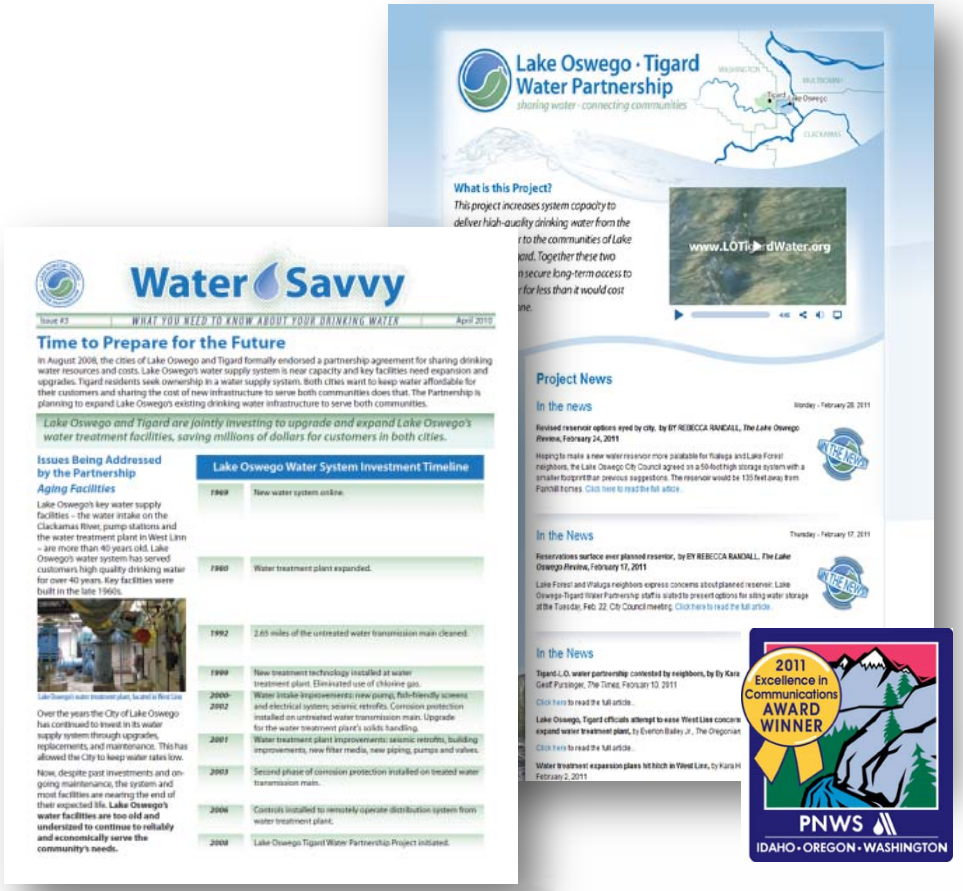
Existing Communications Channels

- Newsletters: HelloLO, KnowH2O
- Water conservation outreach materials

- Consumer Confidence Reports
- Weekly / monthly Council updates
- Cities' websites

Targeted Materials

- Project website
- Facebook / Twitter
- Water Savvy
- Videos
- Presentations
- Fact Sheet



Partnership Video – Short Clip

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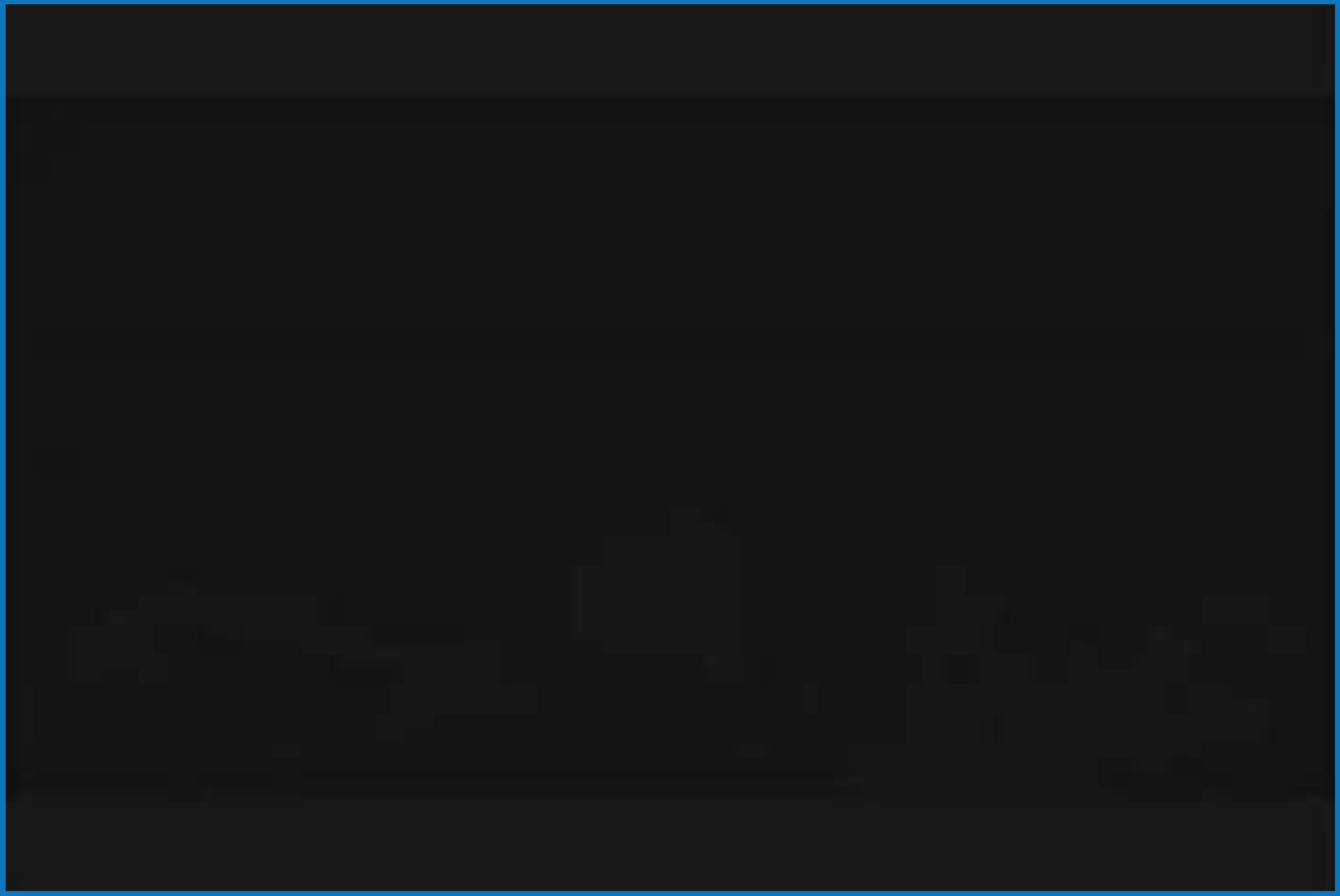
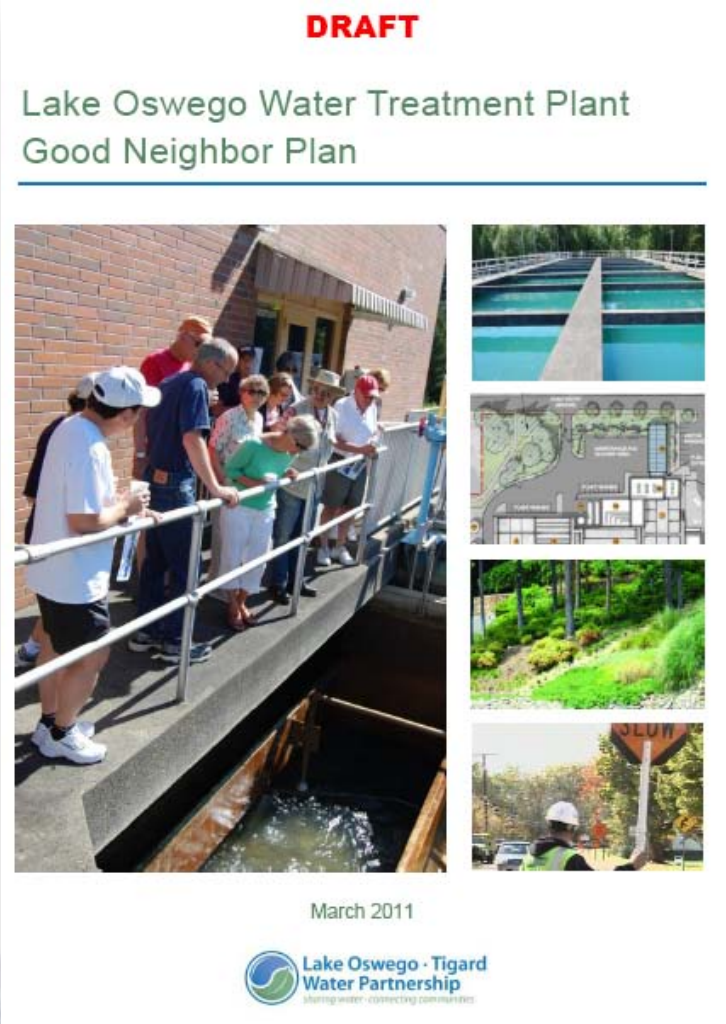


Good Neighbor Plans

- Develop Good Neighbor Plans for key facilities
- Ensure neighbors' concerns are considered
- Adopt guidelines for:
  - Design
  - Construction
  - Ongoing operations
  - Communications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Lake Oswego Water Treatment Plant
Good Neighbor Plan

March 2011

Lake Oswego · Tigard Water Partnership

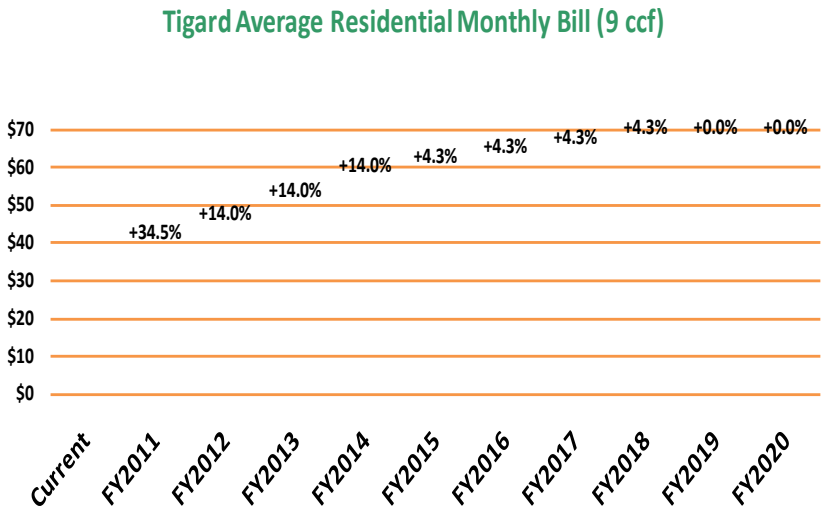
Lessons Learned

Don't forget policymakers!

Council Acts to Hold Down Future Rate Hikes

In August, the Tigard City Council learned that customers could face annual rate hikes above 30 percent for several years. Council members urged financial planners to find ways to reduce the impacts. Using a financing method known as Bond Anticipation Notes, along with other tools, the projected rate increases were cut in half. Although customer rates will continue to rise in the future as Tigard pays for its share for the water partnership, the rates are expected to increase only another 14 percent annually in 2012 and 2013 instead of 32 percent as orginally predicted.

Even with the rate increase, drinking water will cost Tigard customers only a penny per gallon.



Tigard increased water rates 34.5% and doubled SDCs – with no public opposition.

Lessons Learned

Consistent messaging is key to success.

1. The partnership with Tigard is a good business decision. It offers significant cost savings–one-time and ongoing – for Lake Oswego water customers. With the Partnership, Tigard customers will pay more than half of total project costs, and contribute to ongoing operations and maintenance.

2. Lake Oswego's water system is worn out, undersized and in need of reinvestment. Lake Oswego's system is at capacity and the City must move immediately to ensure that replacement, upgrading and upsizing of key facilities occurs over the next five years regardless of whether or not Lake Oswego partners with Tigard.

3. Conservation is the first, most important water source – but Lake Oswego can't conserve enough water to delay or resize the project. An enhanced conservation program is being counted on to help Lake Oswego's water system keep up with demand until new facilities come on-line in 2016. But conservation alone won't meet Lake Oswego's future water needs or help with system deficiencies.

4. Experts recommend Lake Oswego's current water treatment method be converted to conventional filtration plus ozone. This proven treatment technology will ensure high quality drinking water year-round, and meet current and anticipated regulations – all at a small increase in price. A Citizen Sound Board of Lake Oswego and Tigard residents appointed to review the treatment decision concurs with the expert panel's recommendation.

Continued on back...

Lessons Learned

Take steps to reach the whole community.

Policy makers
Project Team

Council briefings/emails, Joint Councils meetings, One-on-one briefings, tours, *Water Savvy*

Highly Interested

Citizen Sounding Board, Facility neighbors, Host communities, Opponents

Interested

NH assoc’s w/facilities, Clackamas River groups, Media, Regulators, some ratepayers

Not Yet Interested

Most ratepayers

It’s Your Turn…

Questions?

For more information

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lotigardwater.org · 503-697-6502