

City serves more than 26,000 meals to children

This summer, the City served 26,254 healthy, nutritious meals to children at 18 sites.

Each summer, the City of Walla Walla applies for a federal reimbursement grant through Washington State Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction to ensure that all children have access to healthy, nutritious meals when school is out.

Recreation Supervisor Angela Potts has run the program since 2004. She contracts with Walla Walla Public Schools to prepare the meals, which provide a meat or other protein component, vegetables, fruit and milk. The meals are then driven by a city delivery van to each site and served by more than 50 volunteers and City employees.

“There is an army of people that come together to make this happen,” Potts said. Sites are located at or near a school where 50 percent or more of the children attending qualify for free or reduced-price lunches. “All the sites are open to any children under 18,” Potts said. “We don’t discriminate – any and all children are welcome to eat.”



These efforts saved taxpayers about \$1.4 million

We know that savings for the City are savings for taxpayers, so we continually look for ways to cut costs while still providing exceptional municipal services. In this issue, read about a few ways the City has saved money. ►



Bond refinancing **\$839,549 saved**

In 2009, the City of Walla Walla sold \$11,600,000 in bonds to pay for the construction of a new Police Station and the improvement of existing Police facilities. Taxpayers back these bonds. A favorable bond market allowed the City's Finance Department to partially refund the bonds, reducing the interest and creating savings for property taxpayers. Those savings are estimated at \$839,549 over the life of the bonds.



Credit card rebate **\$66,000 saved**

City employee credit cards, like many other cards, accumulate an annual rebate when their bills are paid on time. The City's Finance Department keeps track of that rebate, which last year brought in \$66,000.



Brush engine **\$110,000 saved**

The Blue Creek Fire burned nearly 6,000 acres in 2015 and threatened the Mill Creek Watershed, which provides water to Walla Walla. Since fire engines that are built for streets and highways aren't built for fighting fires in remote, rugged areas, the Fire Department looked into getting a brush engine to protect the watershed and urban grassy areas, save wear and tear on fire engines, and provide mutual aid to neighboring communities. Such vehicles are well suited for fighting fires in forests and grassy areas – but they cost up to \$150,000. The Walla Walla Fire Department converted an existing truck into a brush engine, saving taxpayers an estimated \$110,000. No sooner had the brush engine been finished than firefighters put it to work at a fire at the Walla Walla Municipal Golf Course and at the Dry Creek Fire, which burned 15,000 acres.



WellCity Award **\$288,000 saved**

For the third year in a row, the City of Walla Walla met all the standards to receive the Association of Washington Cities WellCity Award. By earning a WellCity Award, the City gets a 2-percent discount on health care premiums, resulting in a total savings of about \$96,000 on health insurance premiums for the City and its employees. The Wellness Committee and employee participation in health-related activities make these cost savings, possible.



Foot bridge **\$83,522 saved**

The Marcus Street foot bridge received a much-needed makeover by the Streets Division. The bridge is a frequent thoroughfare for pedestrians. The cost to the City to repair the bridge was \$16,478. If the City were to have used outside sources to replace the bridge, it would have cost taxpayers an estimated \$100,000. This project saved taxpayers between \$58,522 and \$83,522.



Recycled turnouts **\$2,500 saved**

The Walla Walla Fire Department teamed up with the Washington State Penitentiary's Sustainable Practice Lab (SPL) to give new life to turnouts – the fire resistant coats and pants that firefighters wear. The turnouts, made of heavy, canvas-like Nomex, are required to be replaced after so many hours of use. Inmates used the turnouts to make mask bags and rope bags for the firefighters, along with Teddy bears that paramedics and EMTs can give to young children during ambulance rides. The effort not only resulted in less waste, but it also resulted in cost savings. Rope bags cost \$75 to \$150 apiece, and mask bags cost \$50 apiece. An initial order with the SPL for 50 mask bags saved the City \$2,500 alone.