



**CITY OF SELAH**

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## Mayor's Monthly Newsletter

December 2025

Hello Selah Community! Here are the highlights from December for the City of Selah.

We only have one Council Meeting in December, and it was really packed with resolutions that prepare for the things happening in early 2026. Here is the list of resolutions: inter local agreements to house prisoners with City of Yakima, City of Sunnyside and Kittitas County (we utilize all during the year based on availability); one to complete the Home Avenue sidewalk project; one to move the 1<sup>st</sup> Street signalization project forward with improved intersection control; another to move forward on the 1<sup>st</sup> Street grind and overlay from Fremont to Yakima Avenue; two that authorized the purchase of a new street sweeper with a federal grant; two with HLA Engineering for continued service at the Civic Center and Wastewater Treatment Plant projects; one authorizing the purchase of a new backhoe and trading in the 30-year old one; another to purchase a pontoon boat for safely working at the pretreatment lagoon; one for a grant to continue the "Dial A Ride" program from the DOT; another one authorized the disposition of misc. surplus equipment; the Finance Dept. was given the ok to pay some routine bills prior to Council approval if it saved paying late fees if they waited until the next meeting; two more continued contracts with our Prosecuting Attorney and Defense Attorney; the final one was voted down for lack of information on architect fees for a new Municipal Center/Public Safety building. At the same meeting we passed an ordinance to establish the salary and wage schedule for nonunion workers.

**AGAIN THIS YEAR** the City provided Christmas light tours by bus around the Selah Community. These were by reservation on a first come, first serve basis. I have heard from several that they really enjoyed the narrative provided by our own Ron Anderson. Plan to get in on this event next year to see the results of so many neighbors' hard work in setting out such creative displays.

It is hard to believe that we have made it to the end of another year; and that means it is appropriate to look back at some highlights that have impacted life in Selah. Here is a list of 25 done in 2025.

1. First off, my favorite job is awarding Selah Community Pride Awards to deserving students and community members and I gave out over 100 of them during 2025.
2. Our Legislative Committee made two trips to Olympia to meet with our legislators and state department heads. This year we secured \$11 million for the Wastewater Treatment Plant and \$1 million for the Civic Center. A huge thank you to our 15<sup>th</sup> District Team and for the support of the 14<sup>th</sup> District Team.
3. I made the trip to Washington DC to again meet with our federal legislators and several key agencies to ask for support for Selah's needs.

4. Our Fire Fighters voted to unionize in early 2025 and we are in the process of negotiating the first collective bargaining agreement now.
5. The Council held a workshop again this year to receive reports from all our departments and to reaffirm our priorities and goals as a group. They also asked to have a follow-up meeting to delve into methods for improving as Councilmembers and this was done in June.
6. The Council approved the annexation of the Hill Top Development area off Southern and 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue. This will move forward for development over the next couple of years.
7. The City was awarded a \$226,000.00 grant with a \$54,000.00 match for completing the studies needed to move the "Fruity Pebbles Project" forward to extend Naches Avenue across to the exit 29 interchange, thus helping our heavy traffic issues.
8. Kevin Wickenhagen resigned from Council and Melissa Maxwell was selected to fill that position. Joshua Redtfeldt was then elected in November to the position.
9. The Police Department purchased 6 each 40 MM less lethal launchers which we hope they never have to use; but if they did, they are a safer weapon for use.
10. The Hillcrest water main replacement project and paving received grants and low interest loans that will move that forward in early 2026.
11. The Orchard Avenue main replacement and street improvements was completed last fall.
12. The Council passed updated ordinances on parking and vendors & peddlers.
13. I issued three proclamations during the year. The first was to challenge residents to engage with youth of the community; then one honoring the Yakima Training Center's long relationship with Selah on the occasion of the US Army's 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary; the last one was calling for all residents to become more informed of the impact mental health issues have on the community.
14. The City contracted with an architect, Studio Meng Strazzara to design a Public Safety/ Municipal Complex with modular construction to replace our aged and deficient Police Department and Court/City Hall facilities.
15. We completed about 5 miles of crack sealing prolonging the life of our streets.
16. Through the efforts of our City Clerk, Courtney McGarity and her daughter, Emilia, we installed Selah's first "Wind Phone" at Playland Park. This provides an effective method of dealing with loss and addressing positive mental health.
17. The Third Street grind and overlay was completed with 90% paid by State grant.
18. The Fremont & Speyers intersection was also completed on a State grant.
19. We received a grant to modernize the traffic signals on 1<sup>st</sup> street and make them pedestrian safety upgraded. This will be completed in early 2026.
20. We were awarded a 100% grant from Commerce to grind and overlay 1<sup>st</sup> Street from Fremont to Yakima Avenue with work to be completed later in 2026

21. The City awarded a grant to The Selah Downtown Association for \$20,000.00 to put on the 2026 version of the 4<sup>th</sup> of July event. We will receive a credit back from the State on our tax bill under the Main Street support program.
22. The City was honored to welcome the 22<sup>nd</sup> Rapid Deployment Regiment from Japan for their training at the Yakima Training Center. In conjunction with Mattson Fruit, we presented all the troops with premium apples during their visit.
23. We completed the Well #6 Generator Project to ensure uninterrupted water service when power goes down.
24. After experiencing a serious wildfire this last summer, our first responders put on a community event to assist residents in how to better prepare for any future like events with instructions on how to better fireproof your property. This was organized by several neighbors in the affected area.
25. And last, everyone should realize that the City Council and City Staff passed our 2026 Budget without cutting any services.

Several people have asked me “What does the City pay for annual insurance?” The answer is just over \$1 million. We are working hard to reduce that cost and will keep you informed as we work on it.

HEY IT IS NOW 2026! HAPPY NEW YEAR!

**Get engaged with what’s going on in Selah by being an active participant.**

**That’s all folks for this month and another year closed out.**

**If you wish to be added or removed from the Mayor’s Monthly email please send a message to [michelle.damron@selahwa.gov](mailto:michelle.damron@selahwa.gov).**

Roger Bell, Selah Mayor