

What is the history of this project?

Work on the project began in 2019 with a space needs assessment followed by a conceptual planning report. Detailed design was completed and construction began in 2025 and is anticipated to wrap up by the end of 2026.

Why can't you renovate your current facility?

Medford Water has outgrown its existing facilities, which were not constructed to modern resiliency requirements and would require extensive and expensive renovations to meet standards. As a drinking water provider, our offices are considered critical facilities according to government and emergency management frameworks (such as FEMA). Critical facility building codes require robust designs and continuous operational readiness, especially during emergencies, as disruption or destruction would severely impact public health, safety, or the economy. This building will help us to continue to provide reliable, high-quality drinking water to the growing population of the Rogue Valley long into the future.

Also, our Administrative and Operations functions are currently housed separately (one next to City Hall and the other at the City of Medford Service Center on Columbus Avenue); this building will combine these functions into one facility to unify culture and increase efficiencies.

Is this project why my water bill went up recently?

Medford Water does not receive any support from local taxes; our organization is primarily rate funded. Rates help pay for inflationary increases in operating costs (such as electricity, water meters, and treatment chemicals), replacement of aging infrastructure (parts of our system are over 100 years old), maintenance and expansion of existing facilities, and construction of new resilient facilities that store, treat, and transport water to our approximately 150,000 customers in Medford and other cities we serve. Find out more in the next question and answer.

How much will this project cost, and how is it being paid for?

To reduce impacts to customers, we have sought out and received federal funding sources, such as a Water Infrastructure Finance Innovation Act (WIFIA) low interest loan from the Environmental Protection Agency. We were awarded a \$97 million WIFIA low interest loan in 2022 to help fund several projects over the next ten years, including this project. This program will save ratepayers millions of dollars in financing costs. The budget for construction is 35 million (use material from talking points.)

What is the address of the new building, and what will the hours be?

The street address of the building will be 4677 Industry Drive, Central Point, Oregon 97501. Our business hours will remain from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. There will be ample parking available for visitors.

More information:
medfordwater.org/opcenter

Ask questions:
541-774-2430

Why was this specific site chosen over others?

After an extensive search, the site at 4677 Industry Drive was chosen for the best combination of size (to accommodate our operations long into the future with room for expansion), location, and price.

How will this location better serve the community in the long run?

The Operation Center will be built to critical facility requirements, providing for continuous operational readiness, helping us to continue to provide reliable, high-quality drinking water following an earthquake or other emergency, long into the future.

It will also include facilities for education, demonstration, and outreach to improve our ability to provide water services and related educational opportunities to our community by allowing us to connect with more people of all ages and provide opportunities for public engagement such as public participation in Board of Water Commissioners meetings and space for training opportunities.

Will the Operation Center be open to the public for walk-in services or water bill payments?

Just as with our current administrative office, the building will be open to the public for water bill payments or other account issues, land development processes, board meetings, and educational opportunities.

Where else can I pay my bill besides the new facility?

Besides in person, customers will still be able to pay their bill over the phone at 541-774-2430, online at services.medfordwater.org, or using one of our convenient drop boxes around Medford. Drop your payment (checks only, no cash) and payment stub in an envelope into one of these boxes. Your payment will be forwarded to us by USPS mail on the same day; however, please be aware that processing by USPS may cause a delay of more than seven to ten days. Locations:

City Hall Lausmann Annex, 200 S. Ivy Street (parking lot entrance), Medford
Albertsons – 910 N. Phoenix Rd., Medford
Albertsons – 113 N. Ross Ln., Medford
Avista Utilities – 580 Business Park Dr., Medford

If you have not already, we encourage you to sign up for automatic payments for your water account; call us at 541-774-2430 and we can walk you through it!

How big is the new building?

The new facility will combine our Administrative and Operations functions—which are currently housed separately in facilities that we have outgrown—to help to unify culture and increase efficiencies. This includes a warehouse (approx. 7,300 ft²), office space (approx. 29,000 ft²), conditioned vehicle storage (approx. 14,000 ft²), covered storage (approx. 12,000 ft²), and decant facility (approx. 6,600 ft²). It is intended to be sized to meet the needs 20 years into the future and be easily expandable to meet the needs for 50 or more years on the site.

Are you installing backup generators?

Similar to our Robert A. Duff Water Treatment Plant and Big Butte Springs facilities, backup generators will be placed on site that are sized to power the entire facility. They will be able to eventually work with battery or solar to run a Net Zero Energy Building that functions free of the electrical grid. Fuel storage for the generators will be large enough for two weeks of operation.

What eco-friendly building standards will this facility meet?

This new Operation Center is designed to be highly efficient and very low maintenance to reduce future operational costs. The backup generators on site will eventually be able to work with battery or solar to run a Net Zero Energy Building that functions free of the electrical grid.

Can the public tour the new facility?

We anticipate holding a tour of the facility for the public in the future; stay tuned for details. We are excited for the improved educational, demonstration, and outreach opportunities we will have that will allow us to connect with people of all ages about the protection and efficient use of our water resources.

Will my water service be interrupted during the move to the new facility?

The water service to your home or business will not be impacted by this move. Medford Water will strategically stage the transition of staff to the new facility to ensure that other services remain consistent as well, such as account assistance by phone.

Want to know more?

Stay tuned at our project webpage at medfordwater.org/opcenter; we'll post updates and more information there as it becomes available. You may also call us at 541-774-2430.