

# South Hill/Lincoln Heights Water Tank FAQs

## Updated 11-1-22

The City of Spokane provides clean drinking water to more than 200,000 people every day. The City operates the second largest water system in the state with seven well sites, 23 pressure zones, 34 water tanks and more than 1,000 miles of water main. The system is critical to maintaining public health, providing fire protection, and delivering needed water throughout our community. Infrastructure like water tanks are needed in key locations throughout the City to ensure that proper pressure and water accessibility is maintained for all customers.

### Frequently Asked Questions (Questions from Oct Community Meeting in Red)

- Why does the City of Spokane need a new water tank?
- Who benefits from this proposed tank and how do they benefit?
- How will the proposed tank be paid for?
- What would the tank look like?
- What locations were considered and what issues does each site have?
- We have plenty of water and good pressure. Why do we need another tank?
- Can this tank be buried?
- Will there be any noise associated with this tank following construction?
- Will this tank cause traffic to increase in the area?
- Will the tank have blinking lights or cell phone antennae on top?
- What about other tank sites such as the South Sports Complex, Hamblen Elementary School, Thorton Murphy Park, Lincoln Park or other vacant properties on the south hill?
- Would this tank be necessary if the city were able to substantially reduce the rate of water use by its water system customers?
- When the water main is installed on Crestline to connect this new tank to the transmission main in 37<sup>th</sup> Ave., will Crestline be completely closed, how long will that construction take, and will Crestline be repaved full width?
- When will the City know the actual rather than the estimated cost of the tank?
- What do I do if my question isn't answered above?

### Why does the City of Spokane need a new water tank?

The need for additional storage was recognized in 2008, and the project was added to the 2009 to 2014 [Six-year Water Capital Program](#) at that time. Between 2008 and now, planning, budgeting, and funding acquisition has been occurring to allow the project to move forward.

### Who benefits from this proposed tank and how do they benefit?

The City's water system has 23 pressure zones that ensure water will reach every customer. This tank will be located in what we call the "high system pressure zone." The high system pressure zone serves all homes on the South Hill south of about 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue, either directly or via step-up booster stations. The primary benefits of this tank are provision of adequate water during the peak demand months of July and August and availability of adequate water during a fire emergency year-round.

In addition, to offset the impact the proposed tank will have to Hamblen park, parks improvements will be made within either Hamblen Park or another nearby park benefitting users of those parks. The nature of such improvements will be decided with input from the public.

### How will the proposed tank be paid for?

All Spokane water system customers ultimately pay for infrastructure repairs and improvements needed in the system through their water bills.

### What would the tank look like?

As seen elsewhere on this website, the proposed tank configuration would be in a “pedestal” configuration. That means it would be relatively narrow at the bottom (50 to 60 feet wide) and wide at the top (90 to 100 feet wide). The “pedestal” (i.e., the narrower, bottom 50’ or so) is concrete formed with an architectural (i.e., decorative) form pattern. The water containing portion of the tank (i.e., the wider portion of the tank above about 50’) is painted steel. In general, tank paint color is chosen to make it blend into the sky although sometimes ground level tank have other color palettes.



### What locations were considered and what issues does each site have?

There are very few locations on the South Hill that could accommodate a tank and meet all or most the required criteria (1-2 ac min, relatively flat, at an acceptable elevation – ideally 2380 or above, near the center of the high system pressure zone, close to the transmission main). Below is a list of the other locations considered and why they were not selected.

Location	Concerns
Ferris High School	At least 30 feet lower than Hamblen Elementary which would mean the tank would have to be 30 feet taller (130’ height tank) At least 3,500 feet farther from transmission mains Not City owned (These challenges result in added cost of at least \$2.5M)
Hazel’s Cr Natural Area (southeast of Ferris HS)	At least 50 feet lower than Hamblen Elementary which would mean the tank would have to be 50 feet taller (150’ height tank) At least 4,000 feet farther from transmission mains (These challenges result in added cost of at least \$3M)
South Sports Complex (between Regal & Cook south of 46 <sup>th</sup> )	At least 40 feet lower than Hamblen Elementary which would mean the tank would have to be 40 feet taller (140’ height tank) At least 5,000 feet further from transmission mains (These challenges result in added cost of at least at least \$3M)
Thorton Murphy Park	Approx. 100’ lower than Hamblen which would mean the tank would have to be 100’ taller (200’ height tank) – not feasible

Lincoln Park (Southeast Blvd)	Approx. 20' lower than Hamblen which would mean the tank would be 20' taller (120' height tank) Also in a park Approx. 4000' from nearest transmission main (These challenges result in added cost of at least \$3M)
Our Lady of Fatima	Barely 1 ac Not City owned, not for sale Immediately adjacent to nearby homes
Adjacent to existing reservoir, north side of 37 <sup>th</sup> & Stone (Garden Park)	Site quite small for a second reservoir (including construction staging area) Site not level Substantial add'l cost due to these factors Extended 37 <sup>th</sup> Ave. closure Site is immediately adjacent to existing homes
31 <sup>st</sup> and Napa (undeveloped area immediately east of Touchmark retirement home)	Steeply sloping and very little flat area for construction staging – substantial additional cost to construct reservoir at this location due to rock removal and constructability challenges. Substantial add'l cost due to these factors Site is immediately adjacent to existing homes
SE Blvd at about 32 <sup>nd</sup> (west side)	Not flat Not City owned, has since been developed
Hamblen Park	Public opposition to this site Spokane Park Board declined to make it available
Hamblen Elementary School	Property not owned by the City Site location is currently in a natural state with mature conifers

## We have plenty of water and good pressure. Why do we need another tank?

Additional storage capacity is need for the high system pressure zone to supply emergency water in the event of a power outage or fire event as well as for normal high demand summer operations. In addition, the Washington State Department of Health has confirmed the City's determination that additional tank volume is required.

## Can this tank be buried?

To function correctly, the needed reservoir must be at the same top elevation as the other two reservoirs in this pressure zone at 33<sup>rd</sup> & Lamont and Garden Park (37<sup>th</sup> & Stone). In general, buried tanks are feasible only when they can be located on the top of a hill. There are no hills within one mile of the feasible tank location.

## Will there be any noise associated with this tank following construction?

No. This tank will operate entirely on gravity.

## Will this tank cause traffic to increase in the area?

No. The proposed tank would be visited by a single water department pickup truck about once every day or two.

### Will the tank have blinking lights or cell phone antennae on top?

Yes, to provide proper warning to aircraft, there will be blinking red lights on top. Such lights will be difficult to see from ground level due to the shape of the tank. No cell phone antennae will be included as part of the tank installation project although it is possible such antennae could be installed in the future.

### What about other tank sites such as the South Sports Complex, Hamblen Elementary School, Thorton Murphy Park, Lincoln Park or other vacant properties on the south hill?

See additional information under “What other locations were considered and why weren’t they selected?” question above.

### Would this tank be necessary if the city were able to substantially reduce the rate of water use by its water system customers?

The City inventories and assesses water needs on a regular basis as part of the [Water System Plan](#). Along with planning, the City invests in the [Water Wise program](#) to educating and incentivizing water users to reduce consumption. Based on research in current and projected use, conservation goals, the data indicates the need for additional high system storage. Conservation alone will not satisfy the need.

### When the water main is installed on Crestline to connect this new tank to the transmission main in 37<sup>th</sup> Ave., will Crestline be completely closed? If so, how long will that construction take and will Crestline be repaved full width?

Yes, during the several weeks of construction required to install the connecting main on 37<sup>th</sup>, full closure of Crestline will be required. Adjacent residents will still be able to drive to their homes. It is expected that only half of Crestline’s pavement will be impacted and therefore, repaved.

### When will the City know the actual rather than the estimated cost of the tank?

Estimating construction costs over the last few years has been more challenging with supply chain and labor issues. Like any project, the City will put this project out to bid and the responses will provide the most current details of cost. If that information comes back much different than what is projected, the City works to find solutions in funding. The final step is for Council to vote to approve the project contract.

### What do I do if my question isn’t answered above?

Please email your question or comment to [rproszek@spokanecity.org](mailto:rproszek@spokanecity.org). Answers to the questions/comments received will be added to this list. Please check back periodically.