

SAMMAMISH

ISSUE 158

CITY NEWSLETTER

AUG. 2015

Building roads and financial strength at the same time

PAY AS YOU GO, WITH LITTLE OR NO DEBT, IS PAYING DIVIDENDS FOR TAXPAYERS

The Klahanie-area annexation, and the associated road improvements often mentioned in the same breath, have made transportation investments a popular subject of late.

And no wonder. Issaquah-Fall City Road and Issaquah-Pine Lake Road both need work. And when you add in the rest of the items on the city's six-year Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) – including potential improvements to Sahalee Way – the interest is understandable.

“Fortunately, our City Councils have always demanded fiscal prudence and careful, long-term planning,” Deputy City Manager Lyman Howard said. “That’s not going to change going forward. Our residents want us to invest in transportation and congestion relief, but we’re going to do it responsibly.”

Amazingly, the city currently has no bonded debt. Despite 15-plus

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Mayor Tom Vance (left) joins Metropolitan Market President Todd Korman (center) and TRF Pacific's Bob Parks at the groundbreaking for "The Village at Sammamish Town Center."

Major development kick starts Sammamish Town Center Plan

In what must have been a gratifying moment for the many Sammamish residents who helped devise the Town Center Plan over several years, a major mixed-use project broke ground in the very heart of the planning area on July 20.

Located on the northwest corner

of 228th Avenue and Southeast Fourth Street, “The Village at Sammamish Town Center” will feature a high-end grocery store, office space, living units, a restaurant and the mixed-use vision the community called for.

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We're debt free because we really work at it!

One of our state legislators likes to kid me whenever I see him by asking how Sammamish, “the happiest place on earth,” is doing.

I have to remind him, of course, that we're not really the municipal equivalent of Disneyland, but it is good to know that we project a sunny and positive image. We've been tagged as the “friendliest city in America” (Forbes Magazine), one of the “best places to live” (Money Magazine), and one of the “safest cities” from coast to coast (many sources).



*Tom Vance
Mayor*

And it's not just an image. Sammamish has earned its positive reputation through hard work, and great community spirit.

It's especially impressive when you think about where we started from in 1999. At incorporation, we lacked the roads, sidewalks, playfields and infrastructure to handle the population we already had, and there seemed to be more people coming, wave on wave.

The easy impulse was to run to the ramparts and yell, “Stop!” But that ran afoul of the state's Growth Management Act and was never a real option. So we did the really hard thing instead, the less emotionally satisfying but absolutely vital thing – we started planning! And we've never stopped!

Whether it was residents helping to plan the Town Center, or the Planning Commission finding a path forward on shoreline regulations, or the City Council spending long hours peering at a proposed budget, we've never lost

sight of the fact that a healthy, well-run city depends on relentless planning.

And nothing matters more than a financial plan.

From the beginning, we opted for a lean city staff, an aversion to debt, and a policy of paying as we go for important infrastructure. Our current budget shows a healthy ending balance, and a long future of healthy ending balances going forward. If there's a city with a better financial track record than Sammamish, I haven't heard of it. And it's all because we stuck to our long-term financial plan.

That financial health allows us to build roads, and amenities like our new community and aquatic center, by drawing from our reserves and from capital funds that continue to replenish themselves. And I think this next fact is pretty impressive: At the end of 2016, we will have made all these investments in the community without raising property taxes for seven straight years!

Our Comprehensive Plan is vital as well. All cities and counties are required to have one, and our current revision is nearing completion. Once again, it emphasizes strong environmental regulations. It continues our policy of preserving open space and protecting sensitive areas, such as wetlands, streams and lakes. And it sets the stage for more comprehensive tree regulations that will help preserve and even enhance our tree canopy over future decades.

If there is one theme running throughout the Comprehensive Plan, it is our commitment to minimizing and mitigating the impacts of growth on our natural environment, on the

evolving character of our city, and on our desire for a transportation system that is safe and capable of providing more options. Look for the final version of the Comprehensive Plan in September. You just might find it a great read!

Finally, I want to mention the recent annual update of our state-mandated, six-year Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP). Every year we add and subtract projects from the list as the calendar turns over. Projects are laid out in annual increments, beginning with initial plans and permitting, and then moving on to construction. Currently, our plan features 14 projects and programs, totaling a little more than \$90 million, spread out over six years. Thanks to careful phasing, and our “pay-as-you-go” approach, the plan does not include borrowing of any kind.

The six-year TIP is not rigid, of course. If revenues, priorities or jurisdictional issues change, the TIP can adapt. Currently, for example, improvements to Sahalee Way are in the plan. But it's not yet clear what grants might be available, what portion of the project King County might take care of, or even what form the final improvements might take. That's going to require – you guessed it – more planning!

So, Sammamish is definitely not Disneyland. Our community still has a lot of work to do. But I'll always be happy when that state legislator comes by to say hello. As cities go, this probably is the “happiest place” he's ever seen!

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Tom Vance". The signature is fluid and cursive, written in the bottom right corner of the page.

Klahanie annexation area update:

TRANSITION COMMITTEE

After asking home owners' associations in the Klahanie area to nominate representatives to a Transition Committee, the City Council on July 7 passed a resolution formally establishing the committee.

The committee will hold its first meeting on Wednesday, Aug. 12, at 6:30 p.m. in City Hall. The tentative plan is to meet on the second Wednesday of each month until the annexation becomes official on Jan. 1, 2016.

"The city formed the committee to stay in tune with what our new residents would like the city to emphasize," Communications Manager Tim Larson said. "We will also use the HOA representatives to send information back to their neighbors. The meetings will be open to the public and we encourage interested parties to participate."

SEPT. 12 WELCOME EVENT

The details are still being arranged, but the city is planning to stage a "Klahanie Welcome Event" at Klahanie Park on Saturday, Sept. 12, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Residents from all the neighborhoods in the annexation area are welcome!

Here are the tentative plans:

- Information booths from all city departments
- Bouncy toys for our new young residents
- Live entertainment for the whole family
- Plenty of food, some of it healthy!
- A festival atmosphere!

"The annexation won't become official until Jan. 1, but it's never too soon to say 'Welcome to Sammamish,'" City Manager Ben Yazici said. "The city staff and our Councilmembers are really looking forward to it. I'm sure we'll have a good turnout."

BUILDING, cont. from pg. 1

years of infrastructure investment, Sammamish is in excellent financial position to continue its methodical, steady transformation of the city's road network.

"Sometimes people get the wrong impression when they look at a city's six-year Transportation Improvement Plan because it shows a small ending fund balance," Howard said. "But the TIP is largely a planning document that allows cities to apply for grants and lets other agencies look at a community's wish list. A number of those projects listed won't be built in that time frame.

"We've had a healthy ending fund balance in our transportation fund every year and that will continue going forward."

Speaking of grants, the city heard last month that the state will be contributing \$5 million to the improvement of Issaquah-Fall City Road. Additional grants for this and other transportation projects will be sought over the next several years.

"Our six-year TIP assumes around \$20 million in grants over the next six years," Howard said.



The morning commute on Issaquah-Fall City Road.

"It also makes some conservative assumptions about TIP revenue. As we update the plan year by year, we'll see how the assumptions are playing out and make whatever adjustments are necessary to make sure our finances stay rock solid."

In recent years, when Sammamish still had a small amount of bonded indebtedness, the city had an AAA bond rating from Standard and Poor's. If the city decides that it would make financial sense to float a bond sometime in the future, an AAA bond rating would reduce the cost to Sammamish tax payers.

"Our residents have made it clear they want the city to operate from a position of financial strength," Howard said. "And it's apparent our City Councils have heard that message loud and clear."

Council approves initiative and referendum powers

RESIDENTS CAN NOW ENACT AND REPEAL CERTAIN LAWS ON THEIR OWN

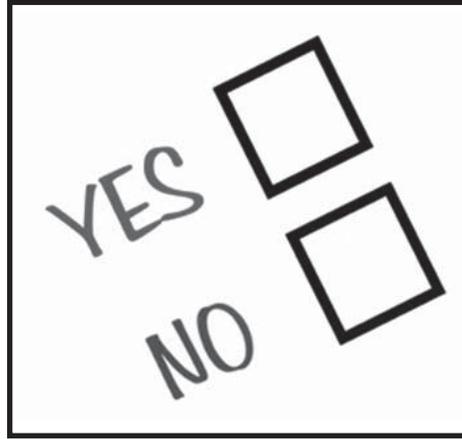
The city placed an advisory measure on the April 28 ballot asking Sammamish voters if they would like the option of enacting and repealing laws on their own. By a 55.46 percent majority, participating voters said yes!

So, on July 21, the City Council adopted an ordinance giving city residents “initiative and referendum” powers. The ordinance takes effect on Oct. 11, 2015.

The initiative power gives voters the ability to pass an ordinance. The referendum power allows them to repeal an existing ordinance. But there are significant limits on the kinds of

ordinances subject to that power.

For example, the new rights don’t apply to ordinances providing for local improvement districts, the modification of zoning codes, collective bar-



gaining, compensation of city employees, appropriation of money, or the levying of taxes.

To be placed on the ballot, an initiative or referendum must be supported by a petition containing the signatures of at least 15 percent of the “number of persons registered to vote at the the last preceding general city election.”

Of the 191 code cities in Washington state, around 50 provide their residents with initiative and referendum powers. It’s estimated that the placement of a voter-initiated measure on the ballot would cost the city between \$30,000 and \$40,000.

Mayors’ Day of Concern

EASTSIDE MAYORS PITCH IN TO HELP COLLECT FOOD ON SEPT. 19

It’s a pretty simple process: Volunteers hand out lists of appropriate food items as residents go into the grocery store, and then they collect the items as the customers come out.

And on Sept. 19, the volunteer efforts will be led by a number of eastside mayors, including Tom Vance of Sammamish.

It’s all part of the 23rd Annual Mayors’ Day of Concern Food Drive being staged by the Emergency Feeding Program. The three participating grocery stores in the Sammamish area are Safeway, the QFC next to Issaquah-Pine Lake Road, and the QFC in Klahanie.

The food items collected at those three stores will once again go to the Issaquah Food Bank and the local branch of Hopelink. Only non-perishable items will be accepted.

If you are interested in volunteering, please go to the city website (www.sammamish.us) and click on Sept 19 in the home page calendar (lower left). Volunteers are needed for three Saturdays: Sept. 12, Sept. 19, and Sept. 26.

When will the neighborhood stormwater pond get mowed?

The city policy is to inspect and clear the vegetation in stormwater ponds once a year. Typically, the mowing is done as late in the growing season as possible.

To give residents a rough idea when their neighborhood stormwater pond might get mowed, the city has created a zone map. It can be seen on the city website (www.sammamish.wa.us) by clicking through **Departments, Public Works, Sweeping and Mowing Schedules**, and then scrolling down to **City of Sammamish Maintenance Zones**.

Neighborhoods located in Zone 1 have been completed. Zone 2 and Zone 3 are currently being worked on. And Zone 4 mowing will likely start in August. All mowing is expected to be completed by the end of September.

Some neighborhoods interested in a higher level of maintenance have taken on the duty themselves. If a group of residents would like to pursue that option, they should contact the city’s Stormwater Management Team at stormwatermanagementteam@sammamish.us.

CITY OF SAMMAMISH

TOWN CENTER, *cont. from pg. 1*

“We owe this moment to the community volunteers who were part of the Special Study Area Task Force in 2004, to the residents who subsequently attended design workshops, and to the Planning Commissioners who did a lot of the heavy lifting and made sure the Town Center plan was a broad-based community vision,” City Manager Ben Yazici said. “The downturn in the economy kept that vision from turning into a reality right away, but it looks like we’re on our way.”

Mayor Tom Vance echoed those sentiments in his public remarks at the ceremony, and then grabbed a golden shovel and joined his fellow Councilmembers and the developers in the ground breaking.

The new development will feature a Metropolitan Market grocery store right on 228th Avenue. The Seattle-based grocery chain says the Sammamish site will be its seventh location and the first it has built from the ground up.

The overall six-acre development, which will be in the hands of TRF Pacific, will also offer 159 apartment units, additional commercial space, and parking for 343 vehicles. Medical offices and restaurant space are expected to be part of the mix.

“The community’s vision calls for a pedestrian-friendly town center that lets people live, work, shop, and socialize in a central location,” Yazici said. “As the Town Center continues to fill out with more and more developments, we look forward to seeing it come together just that way.”

Another development, Southeast Village, has already broken ground just north of the Lutheran Church on



An artist's rendering of "The Village at Sammamish Town Center," a TRF Pacific mixed-use project featuring a brand-new Metropolitan Market along 228th Avenue Southeast.

the east side of 228th Avenue. That 4.5-acre site will feature 75 townhomes (including 13 live-work units) and 6,500 square feet of commercial space.

A third project by the name of Plateau 120, built by American Classic Homes, will start going up on 2.84 acres just west of Eastside Catholic

High School later this summer.

“We already have other inquiries beyond these three,” Yazici said. “So it’s clear the economy has picked up and the private sector is finding excellent opportunities within the planning framework our community took so much time to create. It’s exciting.”



A crowd gathered for the groundbreaking at the intersection of 228th Ave. and S.E. Fourth St.



Sat, August 22 10a-2p

**8 Cultural Performances
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SAMMAMISH
Nights
Sammamish Chamber of Commerce

SATURDAY
AUGUST 22 2015
6:30-10:00 PM

TICKETS AT SAMMAMISHCHAMBER.ORG

Classical Music!

The Ladies Musical Club of Seattle

will present a selection of classical music at

Pine Lake Covenant Church
1715 228th Ave. S.E.

Tuesday, Sept. 15
7 p.m.

It's not too late to enjoy summer entertainment!

Kids First! Performance Series

Aug. 11 – The Not-its!
Children's rock band
Beaver Lake

Aug. 18 – Rick Huddle
Songs, skits
City Hall Plaza

Aug. 25 – Tim Noah
Award-winning music
East Sammamish Park

Concerts in the Park

Aug. 13 – Hall Pass
Classic and contemporary rock
Aug. 20 – Sammamish Symphony
The Sounds of Cinema
Aug. 27 – The Mark Dufreshne Band
Blues

Pine Lake Park – 6:30-8 p.m.

CITY CALENDAR

AUGUST

Saturday, Aug. 1

-Trail Work at Big Rock Park,
8:30 a.m.-3 p.m.

Tuesday, Aug. 4

-KidsFirst!, 1-2 p.m.
Plaza at City Hall

Wednesday, Aug. 5

-Farmer's Market, 4-8 p.m.
-Parks and Rec Comm Mtg, 6:30p.m.

Thursday, Aug. 6

-Family Volunteering:
Native Plant Garden, 10 a.m.-noon
Lower Commons
-Concerts in the Park, 6:30-8 p.m.
Pine Lake Park

Tuesday, Aug. 11

-KidsFirst!, 1-2 p.m.
Beaver Lake Park

Wednesday, Aug. 12

-Farmer's Market, 4-8 p.m.

Thursday, Aug. 13

-Concerts in the Park, 6:30-8 p.m.
Pine Lake Park

Friday, Aug. 14 - Sunday, Aug. 16

-Household Hazardous Wastemobile,
10 a.m.-5 p.m., Eastlake High School

Saturday, Aug. 15

-Sammamish Walks
Evans Creek Preserve, 10 a.m.-noon

Tuesday, Aug. 18

-KidsFirst!, 1-2 p.m.
Plaza at City Hall

Wednesday, Aug. 19

-Farmer's Market, 4-8 p.m.

Thursday, Aug. 20

-Family Volunteering:
Native Plant Garden, 10 a.m.-noon
Lower Commons
-Concerts in the Park, 6:30-8 p.m.
Pine Lake Park

Saturday, Aug. 22

-Sammamish Rotary Soap Box Derby,
7 a.m.-2 p.m., S.E. 24th St.
-Sammamish Day's Celebration,
10 a.m.-2 p.m., Plaza at City Hall
-Sammamish Nights, 6-10 p.m.,
Plaza at City Hall

Tuesday, Aug. 25

-KidsFirst!, 1-2 p.m.
East Sammamish Park

Wednesday, Aug. 26

-Farmer's Market, 4-8 p.m.

Thursday, Aug. 27

-Concerts in the Park, 6:30-8 p.m.
Pine Lake Park

SEPTEMBER

Tuesday, Sept. 1

-City Council Office Hour, 5-6 p.m.
-City Council Meeting, 6:30-10 p.m.

Wednesday, Sept. 2

-Farmer's Market, 4-8 p.m.
-Parks and Recreation Commission
Meeting, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Thursday, Sept. 3

-Planning Commission Mtg, 6:30 p.m.

Monday, Sept. 7

-Labor Day, City offices closed

Tuesday, Sept. 8

-City Council Study Session,
6:30 p.m.

Wednesday, Sept. 9

-Farmer's Market, 4-8 p.m.

Saturday, Sept. 12

-Klahanie Welcome Event
Klahanie Park, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Monday, Sept. 14

-Committee of the Whole, 6:30 p.m.

Tuesday, Sept. 15

-City Council Meeting, 6:30 p.m.

Wednesday, Sept. 16

-Farmer's Market, 4-8 p.m.

Thursday, Sept. 17

-Fall Senior Art Classes, 9 a.m.-2 p.m.
Boys and Girls Club
-Planning Comm Mtg, 6:30 p.m.

Saturday, Sept. 19

-Sammamish Walks - Soaring Eagle,
10 a.m.-noon

Wednesday, Sept. 23

-Farmer's Market, 4-8 p.m.

Thursday, Sept. 24

-Artists Reception - The Trees of the
Wood by Joy Hagen, 6-8 p.m.
City Hall

Monday, Sept. 28

-Arts Commission Meeting, 6:30 p.m.

Wednesday, Sept. 30

-Farmer's Market, 4-8 p.m.

PLEASE NOTE:

All meetings and events at City Hall, unless otherwise noted. Times, dates and locations are subject to change. Please consult the city website for the most current information.



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*Tom Odell
Councilmember*



*Ramiro Valderrama
Councilmember*



*Nancy Whitten
Councilmember*

Habitat for Humanity groundbreaking



Officials associated with Habitat for Humanity and the city of Sammamish gathered for a groundbreaking on July 15 at the site of a 10-unit cottage housing development. The new affordable housing units will be built along the east side of 228th Avenue, just south of Southeast 20th Street.

CITY OF SAMMAMISH OFFICES

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- Jessi Bon Parks & Rec Director
- Beth Goldberg Admin Services Director
- Joe Guinasso Finance Director
- Jeff Thomas Community Dev Director
- Melonie Anderson City Clerk
- Nathan Elledge Police Chief
- Greg Tryon Fire Chief
- Michael Kenyon City Attorney

Newsletter suggestions or concerns?
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