

INSIDE Bellingham

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Local governments need state and federal resources to create safe spaces

By Mayor Kelli Linville

The City of Bellingham is a beautiful place to live, work and play. I am proud of the accomplishments of our City through tough economic times. Consequently, there has been a rise in homelessness across Washington State in recent years and our city has experienced that rise as well. We need safe spaces for all of the people in Bellingham.

I believe that this state-wide problem requires state-wide solutions, and to that end I have asked Governor Inslee to declare a state of emergency around this issue. I have also supported Senator Sharon Nelson's proposed bill allocating significant state funds to address homelessness and ensure that all communities have the tools and resources needed to provide shelter.

Locally, I convened a Community Solutions Workgroup that brought together social service agencies, business owners, residents, the Whatcom County Health Department, the Bellingham Police Department, City staff and the Liquor Control

Board. As a group, we prioritized a list of recommendations in 2014 and since then the vast majority of those recommendations have been implemented or are funded and underway.

The City has partnered with social service agencies to deliver services such as the Homeless Outreach Team, the Homeless Service Center and supportive housing. Bellingham has also enacted a Housing Levy with the goal of providing, producing and preserving affordable housing across our city. We are meeting or exceeding many of our Housing Levy goals and I am encouraged by the success of these programs.

These are just a few examples of the great work our City employees and community partners are doing to help address this pressing issue. If you have ideas or would like more information, please contact my office at www.cob.org/gov/mayor/.



▲ Neighborhood Police Officers
Dante Alexander and Eric Osterkamp

NEXTDOOR.COM

In addition to face-to-face interactions and social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter, the City of Bellingham Neighborhood Police Officers (NPO) are utilizing a new online tool to communicate with Bellingham residents. Nextdoor.com is a free social media network that allows verified individuals to connect with their neighborhoods, in order to better communicate about community issues.

The Bellingham Police Department first began posting to Nextdoor.com in January 2015, when only 2,258 Bellingham households were utilizing its services. That number has since increased to over 6,000.

The NPOs currently uploads two to three posts a week providing information and education that will help keep neighborhoods safe. This includes crime updates, available safety trainings, home and personal protection tips and more.

The NPOs hope that this service will not only provide helpful information, but will allow neighbors to build better relationships with officers, and each other.

To learn more information about the goings-on in your neighborhood, sign up at www.nextdoor.com.



INSIDE

2 WATERFRONT DISTRICT DEVELOPMENTS

3 BY THE NUMBERS

3 NEW PARK AND TRAIL IN CORDATA

4 STAFF SPOTLIGHT

WATERFRONT DISTRICT DEVELOPMENTS

CHANGES YOU CAN SEE IN 2016:



1 Whatcom Waterway Cleanup

The Whatcom Waterway site is made up of more than 200 acres along the downtown Bellingham waterfront. The Phase 1 cleanup of aquatic lands will be complete in June 2016. On the south side of the waterway, the hardened edge has been removed and the shoreline has been naturalized to support the transition of frontage into a public trail and park. On the north side, new pilings and docks have been installed to support ongoing marine trade activities.

2

2 Digester Tanks Retained

The Digester Building was removed this past fall with over 95% of the building materials recycled or reused on site. The Digester Building was used by Georgia Pacific to cook woodchips into pulp with the help of steam and acid on the old pulp mill site. Six digester tanks have been kept, along with a spherical acid-collector tank, to potentially be featured in public art displays as the waterfront is redeveloped.



3 GP West Cleanup

The past home to the Georgia-Pacific pulp mill site, this project focuses on the cleanup of uplands associated with past timber, pulping and paper operations. The design and permitting process has been completed and an environmental cap will be installed this summer to prevent direct-contact exposure and soil erosion pathways.

CHANGES YOU CAN EXPERIENCE IN 2017:

4 Access to the District

For the first time, this part of our waterfront will be open to all. Granary Avenue and Laurel Street are new streets in the works that will function as the primary points of access to the waterfront district, serve all modes of transportation and create a great environment to do business. Design and permitting are underway and construction will begin in 2017.



5 Granary Building Activated

The Granary Building will be transformed into a bustling marketplace with retail and restaurants on the ground floor and offices on the second floor. Built in 1928, the Granary was originally used by small farmers as a cooperative to meet the demand for chicken and eggs. Construction will begin in 2016, and will open in 2017.

6 Park Amenities

The first phase of Whatcom Waterway Park will be built around the Granary building to provide the community with trails for bikes and pedestrians, seating and spaces for recreation opportunities. Park design and permitting are underway, and construction is set to begin in 2017.



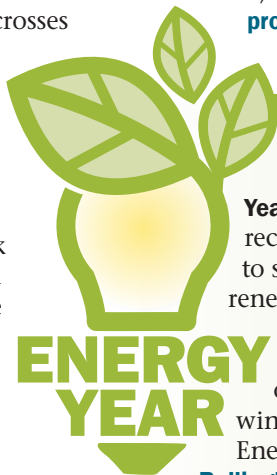
Park Spotlight: **NEW PARK AND TRAIL IN CORDATA**

The Bellingham Parks & Recreation Department is hard at work expanding park and trail amenities in the Cordata Neighborhood. A new trail opened this past December that meanders through a forested greenway connecting Cordata Park at West Horton Road to Cordata Elementary School. The trail is a third of a mile long and crosses a tributary of Bear Creek with a new steel bridge.

In the coming months, the Parks Department will work with the public to develop a master plan for the new 20-acre community park on Cordata Parkway between Stuart and Horton roads. The property was acquired in March 2015.

"Cordata has been waiting for more than a decade for a park with recreation facilities, and we are excited to work with the citizens on developing a master plan," said Parks and Recreation Director Leslie Bryson.

Parks Department staff and a design consultant will work with community residents to develop the overall park plan, which will likely include amenities such as a playground, picnic area and trails, as well as preserved and enhanced wetland features. To learn more, visit <https://www.cob.org/gov/projects/Pages/Parks/cordata-community-park.aspx>.



Mayor Kelli Linville declared 2016 as "**Energy Year**" in Bellingham in recognition of major initiatives to save energy, encourage renewable energy and respond to climate change. Right now, the City of Bellingham is one of 50 semi-finalists to win the Georgetown University Energy Prize. Visit www.BellinghamEnergyPrize.org to learn more about the competition and how you can save energy to help make Bellingham the winner.



▲ April Barker

NEW COUNCILMEMBER: APRIL BARKER

Newest Councilmember April Barker started her term in January 2016. A Bellingham resident since 1999, her first contact with local government was the closing of Birchwood Elementary, the school her daughter was set to attend.

Barker's sense of place in Bellingham was greatly impacted, prompting her involvement in future neighborhood conversations.

From there she became active in the Birchwood Neighborhood Association, eventually serving as its president. When Jack Weiss stepped down from City Council, he encouraged her to run.

Barker hopes being on the Council will keep Bellingham on the path toward becoming a more integrated community. She strives to serve a community that looks at policies through a race-equity lens and makes considerable effort to include marginalized populations.

Barker is readily accessible to the people of Bellingham. She often goes beyond her northern Bellingham location to connect with constituents. She can be reached via phone or email.

Reach April Barker via her phone, **360-325-5128**, or email, abarker@cob.org.

CITY COUNCIL IS NOW ON FACEBOOK!



Make sure to like them here

www.facebook.com/bellinghamcitycouncil

WATERFRONT DISTRICT BY THE NUMBERS:

95%

PERCENTAGE OF
THE DIGESTER
BUILDING'S
MATERIALS
REUSED OR
RECYCLED

8,780

NUMBER OF
TOTAL JOBS
PRODUCED BY
THE PORT OF
BELLINGHAM

159,000

NUMBER OF
CUBIC YARDS OF
CONTAMINATED
SEDIMENT TO
BE REMOVED BY
CLEANUP CREWS

46,950

NUMBER OF SQUARE
FEET OF CONCRETE
AND ASPHALT
RUBBLE REMOVED
FROM SHORELINE BY
CLEANUP CREWS



Q AND A

STAFF SPOTLIGHT

Paul Gazdik, Emergency Management Coordinator

Paul Gazdik is the emergency management coordinator for the City of Bellingham. He runs the City's Office of Emergency Management and helps plan for disasters by making sure City emergency policies and plans are up to date. He sat down to answer some questions about the upcoming Cascadia Rising exercise.

What is emergency management?

A: Emergency management is essentially planning for how communities cope with emergencies and disasters. Emergency management does not avert or eliminate the threats. Instead, it focuses on creating plans to decrease the effect of disasters.

What can you tell us about "Cascadia Rising"?

A: Cascadia Rising is a multi-state and international exercise spanning four days. The scenario is a 9.0 magnitude

earthquake off the coast of Oregon and Washington, with a subsequent tsunami. The City of Bellingham Office of Emergency Management, along with our partners at Whatcom Sheriff's Office Division of Emergency Management, will be participating from June 7-8. This exercise is a strong test for our community and region on emergency reaction.

How will the City of Bellingham be involved in the exercise?

A: The City of Bellingham will be looking specifically to test communication abilities between its different departments. For example, if the Public Works Department has a broken pipe, we want to know how that information will be communicated to the rest of the city. The entire exercise will be based at the Whatcom Unified Emergency Coordination Center (WUECC).

What are some of your personal objectives with Cascadia Rising?

A: The main objective for me, and the rest of those involved, is to gain experience with opening and running the WUECC. It's been in our

community since 2010, but we've never used it at full capacity. Cascadia Rising will allow us to grow comfortable conducting emergency management from the coordination center and better prepare us for potential disasters.

How can the community get involved?

A: The best way to get involved is through individual preparedness and by creating family emergency plans and disaster kits. To become more involved in organizing emergency plans for the community, you can sign up to be a part of the Volunteer Mobilization Center team. More information can be found at www.whatcomvolunteer.org/content/programs/disaster.asp.

Where can I find more information on emergency preparation?

A: The best information can be found at www.whatcomready.org, or Whatcom Unified Emergency Management's Facebook or Twitter. Over the next several months we will be posting about items to add to your preparedness kit.

Still have questions for Paul? Contact him at prgazdik@cob.org or (360) 778-8440. Learn more at www.whatcomready.org



AJ BARSE

ESSENCE OF BELLINGHAM

Congratulations to AJ Barse for winning Best of Show for the 2015 Essence of Bellingham Competition! The deadline for 2016 submissions is May 1, but it is never too early to start capturing your photos for the 2017 competition. Our newest category is *People of Bellingham*, so grab your friends and family to enjoy and photograph Bellingham together. For more information or to submit a photo, visit www.cob.org/eob.

ENVIRONMENTAL: Regional Stormwater Facility

The City of Bellingham is committed to keeping our streams and stormwaters clean, effectively fulfilling our legacy to clean and safe water. Because of this, we are thrilled to announce the implementation of a cost-effective, long-term environmental solution for stormwater in the region north of West Bakerview Road. The North End Regional Stormwater Facility Project (NERP) provides environmental benefits and promotes development opportunity in the area, as the pond can detain and treat roughly 2.8 million gallons of stormwater.

Upcoming projects in the region include the new Bellingham Costco and a residential development planned in the area west of Interstate 5 and north of West Bakerview. Future projects in the region will also be served by the NERP.

For more information, visit www.cob.org/gov/projects/Pages/Public%20Works/north-end-regional-pond-ev-0111.aspx

