

FALL 2018 & WINTER 2019



# INSIDE Bellingham

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## Bellingham fortunate to have key services

By Mayor Kelli Linville

Public service is something I believe in. All of us working for the City of Bellingham are civil servants who contribute to the public good through providing essential services to our community. We are fortunate to have a community that values and is willing to pay for the services we provide, many of which aren't found in other communities.

- Bellingham property owners pay for our **Bellingham Home Fund**. This voter-approved fund, along with other local, state and federal dollars, provides \$4.9 million annually in housing and services for low-income and homeless residents. This levy is up for renewal on the November general election ballot.
- The **Greenways levy**, which was first passed by voters in 1990 and was renewed for the fourth time in 2016, has provided funding for a multitude of projects over the years, including the Padden Creek daylighting, Bay to Baker Trail, Interurban Trail, Whatcom Creek Trail, Squalicum Creek Park and many more.
- The Transportation Benefit District and Bellingham Street Fund provide funds for **transportation** purposes, which includes paying for projects such

as arterial pavement resurfacing, bridge replacements and repairs, railroad crossings, and bicycle and pedestrian transportation improvements and enhancements – all of which are outlined in the adopted 2019-2024 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

- Our 2018 **utility rates** provide essential services through water, sewer, and stormwater fees. These pay for protecting Lake Whatcom, ensuring the safety of our drinking water, providing storm drains and rain gardens, and maintaining hundreds of miles of water and wastewater mains throughout the city.
- Bellingham residents also contribute to and benefit from the Port of Bellingham, Bellingham Public Schools, and Whatcom County programs funded through local taxes, including Emergency Medical Services (EMS), mental health services, flood control, and quality schools.

None of this would be possible without the generous support from our community and partners. Thank you for your support in helping to provide our residents and visitors with a safe and vibrant community. We couldn't do it without you!

– Mayor Kelli Linville

## LOW-INCOME HOUSING LEVY ON NOVEMBER BALLOT

Mayor Kelli Linville proposed and the Bellingham City Council voted in June to place renewal of the Bellingham Home Fund low-income housing levy on the general election ballot in November.

This proposition would replace and enhance the levy passed in 2012 to fund housing and housing services for people with low income. The proposition would authorize a regular property tax levy total of \$0.36/\$1,000 for ten years, generating \$4 million annually.

This measure would fund production and preservation of homes, rental assistance, support services, and down payment assistance for low-income households. Two-thirds of the funding would assist very low-income households, and the remaining third would assist low-income households. A family of two earning less than \$30,450 annually is very low-income, and a family of two earning less than \$48,750 is low-income. Funding priorities would be set forth in a plan adopted by the City Council following recommendations by a citizen advisory committee to the Mayor and Council.

The 2012 levy resulted in \$3 million raised annually, and the fund is on track to meet or exceed all goals adopted in the financial plan, including supporting the addition of 405 completed housing units and another 183 units that are under contract to be built. Should renewal of the levy fail this fall, there will be one full year of collection of the existing home levy through 2019.

For more information on the Bellingham Home Fund, visit [www.cob.org/homefund](http://www.cob.org/homefund).

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# New housing complexes could improve vacancy rates

With the influx of students who come to Bellingham each year, there is a need to have housing that doesn't impact year-round residents.

New housing developments such as Gather on N. Garden Street and NXNW off Lincoln Street have the ability to improve the overall vacancy rate of traditionally single-family rental properties that are typically rented out to students. There are currently two additional student housing projects submitted for permits and one in the planning stage.

One of the projects submitted would be located at 929 N State St., and like Gather, is located in downtown. The proposed project would have 161 units and is also expected to be the home of a new HUB Community Bike Shop.

Western Washington University also has 4,100 students living on campus, which includes housing for about

90% of new freshmen and 30% of new transfer students. Over the past 10 years, Western built Buchanan Towers East, which added 100 beds, and converted existing campus residences to provide an additional 100 beds. As part of the University's strategic planning process, Western is currently at work on a Housing Master Plan to include a new facility for approximately 400 beds, which is scheduled for a fall 2021 opening.

"With all of the new development taking place, we are seeing some relief in the vacancy rate," Kurt Nabbeffeld, the Development Services Manager of the Planning and Community Development department, said. "When purpose-built student housing projects have been constructed in other similar college communities, older rental houses are often put on the market for sale becoming more affordable 'starter homes.' We see that likely to happen here in Bellingham."

## PURPOSE-BUILT STUDENT HOUSING BY THE NUMBERS

### RECENTLY CONSTRUCTED

**NXNW ON LINCOLN STREET:**  
**248 UNITS - 648 BEDS**

**GATHER ON NORTH GARDEN:**  
**133 UNITS - 417 BEDS**

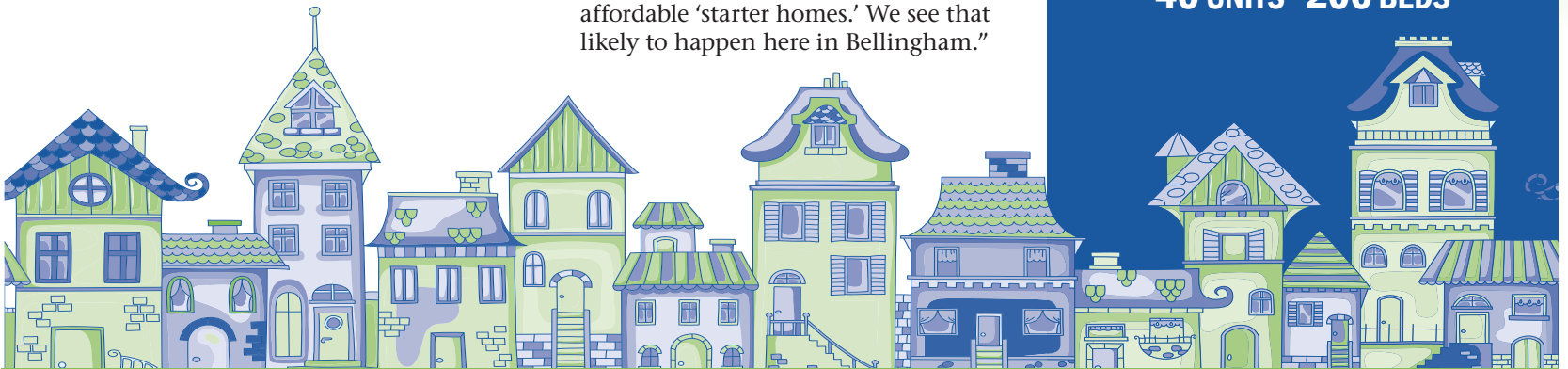
### IN FOR PERMITS

**929 NORTH STATE:**  
**161 UNITS - 492 BEDS**

**WHATCOM COMMUNITY COLLEGE:**  
**76 UNITS - 233 BEDS**

### PLANNING STAGE

**WESTERN WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY:**  
**40 UNITS - 200 BEDS**



## NEW ART TRANSFORMS BRIDGE IN BIRCHWOOD

As a neighborhood beautification project, the Coal Mine Bridge in Birchwood was painted rainbow colors this summer. The Birchwood Neighborhood Association, City Council Member April Barker, the Salvation Army, The American Legion Riders, and Jared Jones-Valentine, the owner of Barber Shack, took the idea for the project to Mayor Kelli Linville. Once it was approved, all of the work was done by more than 200 volunteers and funded by businesses and private donors.

Photo Courtesy of Birchwood  
Neighborhood Association



## Protect yourself and your family from theft and financial scams

Theft can take many forms, from stealing bicycles to telephone scams. Taking a few simple precautions can go a long way to protect your family.

Financial scams are a common way theft can occur, and these scams often happen over the phone. A potential victim will receive a call from an unrecognized number, and the person calling will claim to be from an agency and tell the call receiver they have committed a violation or crime and could face arrest. Another may state they are from a hospital and a family member needs money for the bill or they could face jail time.

The caller will insist one of the following things of the call receiver: to wire money, give credit card information, or go buy specific types of gift cards and then call that agency back with the numbers in order to avoid “legal consequences.” If a gift card purchase or sending money in the mail is involved, it is a scam call. These type of financial scam callers typically target elderly citizens and use high pressure tactics and fear to confuse and scare victims.

“Legal agencies, banks and hospitals will never ask for your personal information on a call you did not

instigate,” Bellingham Police Lt. Danette Beckley said. “Our advice is to hang up and call someone you trust.”

Bike theft is also an issue in Bellingham. Each year hundreds of bikes are stolen in our community, and only a handful are recovered and returned to their owners because few bikes have their serial numbers registered.

Bicycle registry services allow you to register your bike and its serial number. Bellingham Police can use these sites to assist in recovering stolen bikes and to stop future thefts from happening.

To report a stolen bike, file a report with Bellingham Police online. Just go to [cob.org](http://cob.org) and search for “reporting.” Call 9-1-1 if you have suspect information, know the location of your stolen bike or would prefer to speak with an officer to file your report. Report your bike as stolen on [bikeindex.org](http://bikeindex.org) and [project529.com](http://project529.com). Finally, file a claim with your insurance company if your bike is insured through a renter’s, homeowner’s or vehicle insurance policy.

## WHAT’S NEXT FOR THE WATERFRONT?

The opening of Waypoint Park this summer provided both the first public access to the central waterfront and insights into Bellingham’s industrial past. As work on the park and the two new streets, Granary Avenue and Laurel Street, comes to a close at the end of 2018, it is time to look onward to what is next.

With the waterfront development, residents and visitors alike will begin to see revitalization of vacant space into a place where the community can live, work and play. When the waterfront district is fully implemented, which is expected to take a number of decades, the community will have another 33 acres of upland parks and six acres of public beach in the waterfront district, which will provide visitors and residents with a variety of waterfront access opportunities.

Currently, the Waterfront District has no residential properties and the majority of the space is vacant – but over time, this will change. The redevelopment of this area allows the City of Bellingham to provide public access to this shoreline for the first time and convert the area closest to downtown Bellingham into a vibrant mixed-use location, where commercial, residential, retail and other uses can all coincide together. The City has also retained a large portion of the Waterfront District for commercial and industrial uses. For example, Western Washington University plans to develop six acres to help accommodate increasing student populations and allow for the expansion of teaching and research programs.

For more information, visit [www.cob.org/waterfront](http://www.cob.org/waterfront).



▲ Waypoint Park



# ON A STREET NEAR YOU

## Bike and Pedestrian Projects

Each year, more Bellingham streets are being repaired and resurfaced while access for bicyclists and pedestrians is improved. That's no accident. Thanks to the 10-year Transportation Benefit District (TBD) approved by voters in 2010, there is a focused funding source for essential repairs and improvement.

The improvements include an integrated network of bicycle lanes and safe pedestrian passage throughout Bellingham, guided by priorities of the community-developed Bicycle Master Plan (2014) and the Pedestrian Master Plan (2012) which propose over \$275 million of projects.

Road users likely noticed resurfacing or "overlay" work over the past few years if they traveled on routes such as Kellogg, Alabama or Holly streets, or Bill MacDonald Parkway. As part of the resurfacing, we add bike lanes, sidewalks and crosswalks consistent with the Bike and Ped Plans. And, in some cases adjacent curb ramps at intersections are rebuilt to current standards for the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), to ensure people of all abilities can use the roadways safely.

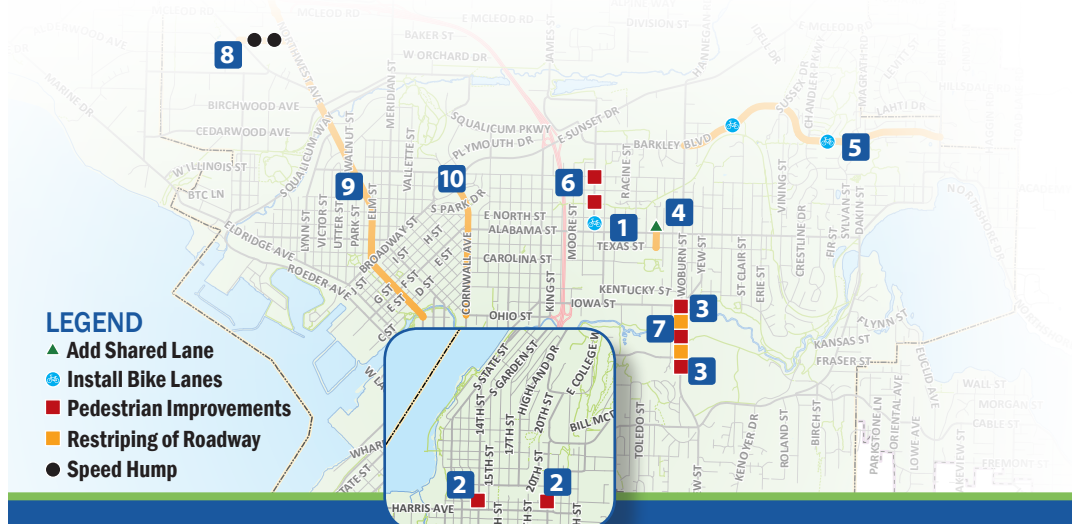
This year TBD-funded non-motorized projects include new street markings to delineate bike lanes or

bike boulevards, curb extensions, ADA ramps, and new sidewalk connections. Over the summer of 2018 various projects were done in every corner of Bellingham – from Mill Street in Fairhaven to Alderwood Avenue in the north, and east to Barkley.

Notice something about those locations? As they have been since the TBD began, improvement projects are literally all over town.

**Another benefit of TBD funding? It provides leverage to compete for state and federal grants that make our dollars go further.**

- 1 Texas Street, from Valencia to Pacific**
- 2 Mill Street, at 14th and 21st**
- 3 Woburn, Fraser and Kentucky**
- 4 Undine, south of Alabama Street**
- 5 Barkley Boulevard, east of Newmarket**
- 6 Orleans Street at the railroad trail and Illinois**
- 7 The Woburn trail access area south of Iowa Street**
- 8 Alderwood Avenue, between Maplewood and Northwest**
- 9 Dupont-Elm-Northwest from Lottie to Home Lane**
- 10 Cornwall from New Street to Sunset Drive**



## City Center Awards honor preservation of Downtown

Noticing the outstanding work put forth to protect and preserve downtown Bellingham through revitalization and renovation of existing historic buildings, Mayor Kelli Linville began the Mayor's City Center Awards in 2017 to honor local property owners, businesses and organizations.

After witnessing the positive changes accomplished over the years, Mayor Linville knew it was time to formally recognize those who go above and beyond to keep downtown Bellingham's true architectural nature intact while incorporating innovative ideas and modern modifications. The City Center Awards highlights some of the many remarkable achievements and exceptional projects that have led to the revitalization of Bellingham's City Center Neighborhood.

"It's exciting to see such a commitment to Bellingham's historic buildings and our incredible downtown," Mayor Linville said. "I'm grateful future generations will have the opportunity to enjoy these community assets."



▲ Mayor Kelli Linville and the 2018 Awardees

Awardees are selected based on a set of criteria that includes outstanding restoration, rehabilitation, or renovation of an existing building; creating unique residential and commercial spaces within existing buildings; activating adjacent public spaces; and other actions that improve the quality of life in Bellingham's City Center. Seven businesses and organizations recognized for the Mayor's City Center Awards over the past two years include **The Co-Op Bakery Café, The Hamlet Hotel, Camber, Faithlife, Aslan Brewing Company, Daylight Properties and Parberry's Inc.**