



INSIDE Bellingham

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City partners with Lighthouse Mission to locate easy-access shelter

By Mayor Kelli Linville

Finding a solution to Bellingham's homelessness challenge has been a big priority of mine. Our most recent community survey indicated that homelessness is the number one concern of residents as well.

The City of Bellingham has taken a strategic approach to homelessness, and while we've made significant steps to address this through outreach programs and working with housing providers, it has become evident that the community is in need of an easy-access shelter that can address short-term needs.

After more than a year of searching, we have identified a potential location and a community partner for a new 24-hour easy-access shelter with services to serve those experiencing homelessness. Lighthouse Mission Ministries (LMM), which has been operating an interim easy-access shelter in Old Town since October, has stepped forward to help us identify a location for a long-term shelter that operates with services day and night.

The plan is to build a 24-hour, 7-days-per-week, year-round easy-access shelter serving up to 200 people. After an exhaustive search, the City determined that its own property located on the west side of Roeder Avenue between C and F

Streets at 801/807 Roeder Avenue is the most suitable location.

The City's goal is to locate the shelter away from residential neighborhoods and retail business districts, preferably in an industrial area. While we are open to other locations that fit our needs, this is the only location identified that is close to the LMM and meets all of our criteria.

Our preference was to find a location that was unoccupied, but unfortunately this site does have tenants. While we are deeply committed to finding solutions to address homelessness, we are also deeply committed to our working waterfront. We will work with our tenants and the Port of Bellingham to find new locations for these businesses.

The proposal is for the City to contract with LMM for \$180,000 per year to operate the shelter, pending approval from Bellingham City Council — however, LMM's costs for the entire project will be much higher than that.

Solving homelessness is a very difficult task, and it's going to take all of us working together to find solutions that work best for our community. For more information on this project, please visit our website at www.cob.org/homeless.

PUBLIC WORKS: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

The City builds streets, but what about taking care of the ones we have?

A: Each year, the City of Bellingham completes \$3-5 million in overlay projects (i.e. pouring new asphalt over a scraped down surface) to maintain and extend the useful life of City streets. This work is funded through a combination of fuel tax and sales tax, including the voter-approved Transportation Benefit District (0.2%). Streets are prioritized for resurfacing based on their pavement condition ratings, with the work done in coordination with other Public Works projects such as utility main replacements in order to minimize disruption and maximize resources and efficiency.

What about sidewalks?

A: The City spends approximately \$500,000 annually just to repair or replace our sidewalks. For new ones, Bellingham relies on the Pedestrian Master Plan, which prioritizes citywide non-motorized transportation projects based on a variety of criteria — including safety.

What're all the parking changes?

A: In addition to renovating the Commercial Street Parking Garage to improve lighting, signage and security, paying for parking downtown is now even easier. Drivers can now download a smart phone app to "PayByPhone" using their credit or debit card.

Contact PW: For emergencies call (360) 778-7700. To report pot holes, ask questions or comment, email AskPW@cob.org.

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Greenways: Continuing the legacy

Sixty-eight percent of voters approved a fourth Greenway levy in November. This levy is different from past levies — in addition to funding acquisition and development, the guidelines for this levy provide over \$1 million (25%) a year for park maintenance. This includes replacing or repairing our backlog of failing park infrastructure as well as additional staff to care for our parks. Also, for the first time, more money (42%) is recommended for developing land rather than buying it. Another 33% will be used to buy land to complete trail corridors and protect green spaces. The Greenway Strategic Plan will be updated to prioritize development and acquisition projects.



Maintenance

Examples of maintenance projects that could be funded with Greenway IV funds include:



WHARF STREET TRESTLE

This wood structure was originally constructed in 1902. Funding from the very first greenway levy was used to renovate the structure into a bike and pedestrian facility that connects the South Bay Trail to downtown. Years of weather have taken its toll on this critical link and repairs are needed.



SEHOME ARBORETUM OBSERVATION TOWER

The roof of this popular attraction is in need of replacement.

DRINKING FOUNTAIN MAINTENANCE

Broken drinking fountains at several parks will be repaired or replaced.



BRIDGE REPAIRS

Many bridges throughout our greenway trail system are in need of repair.

Temporary closures of some of the trails may occur while repairs are happening.



Development

For the first time, more money (42%) is recommended for developing land rather than buying it. One significant project that could be funded with Greenway IV levy funds is Cordata Community Park. Master planning

for this 20-acre parcel on Cordata Parkway between Stuart and Horton Roads is nearly complete. The plan includes a playground, pavilion, pickle ball courts and trails, and the park still needs a name.



Acquisition

Thirty-three percent of Greenway funding is available for acquisition projects that complete priority greenway trail corridor projects throughout the community. Examples of these include the Bay-to-Baker/Squalicum Creek corridor and areas near King Mountain.

For more information visit www.cob.org/greenways.

GREENWAYS BY THE NUMBERS:

GREENWAY LEVIES HAVE INVESTED:

55% – \$39.1 MILLION
IN LAND ACQUISITION

36.5% – \$26 MILLION
IN DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

8.7% – \$62 MILLION
IN ENDOWMENT

MAJOR LAND CATEGORIES:

290 ACRES OF
ACTIVE USE PARK SITES

380 ACRES OF
UPLAND FORESTS

252 ACRES OF
RIPARIAN, WETLAND,
FORESTS AND TIDELANDS

40 ACRES OF TRAIL
CORRIDORS AND BUFFERS



ONE PERCENT

for arts projects 2017

In 2015, the City of Bellingham adopted an ordinance that dedicates one percent of large capital project budgets (those over \$2 million) for the incorporation of artwork into the building of the project. The inclusion of artwork in public places reinforces the City's status as a regional destination for art, increases quality of life, and attracts tourism and visitors to the area. The first three projects that will benefit from this ordinance are underway in 2017.



Water treatment plant "Water Fence"

WHATCOM FALLS PARK

A 300-foot art fence that will enclose the newly constructed portion of the water treatment plant located in Whatcom Falls Park will be constructed by Ries Niemi, an artist from Edison, Wash.

The fence will run parallel to the newly extended Waterline Trail adjacent to the plant and is formed by a series of designs cut through metal plates that represent water in the

Northwest. Each panel will represent water at varying stages of its hydrologic cycle, such as the evaporation of our ocean's surface into our sky, its precipitation on to Mount Baker and ultimately becoming the water that comes out of our faucets. This unobtrusive artwork will be a pleasant discovery to all trail users.

Acid Ball "Waypoint"

WHATCOM WATERWAY PARK

The acid ball, a piece of former waterfront industrial equipment, will be relocated to the newest waterfront park, embellished with glass beads, and transformed into a beacon of light for the city. The glass coating is durable and self-cleaning and reflects back to sources of light, allowing for a constantly evolving visual experience. This luminosity will be enhanced by the installation of LED lighting to activate the piece both day and night. Mutuus Studio from Seattle, Wash. was selected for this commission after a competitive review of proposals submitted from all over the world.

Maplewood Avenue sidewalk

The City received a federal Safe Routes to School grant to improve pedestrian, bicycle and vehicle safety along 3,000 linear feet of W. Maplewood Avenue in the Birchwood Neighborhood. A Request for Qualifications was issued in January to solicit an artist to incorporate artwork into the new sidewalk that celebrates and promotes neighborhood identity and pride.

▼ Acid Ball "Waypoint"



Making spaces into lively places on State Street in June

The wait is over! Experience three KAPOW II projects as they come to life on North State Street in June 2017. The Bellinghopscoth Course, State of the Solar System, Piper Bike Park, and Uuntzbrella will be launched as part of a Pop-Up Plaza event organized by Sustainable Connections. Planned for the Herald Building parking lot, the event will spill on to the sidewalks. Expect to see "kids" of all ages dancing, hopping, and traveling the solar system as they explore N. State Street.

KAPOW!, a city-wide contest initiated in 2015, is a lighthearted and entertaining way of encouraging community members to share their artistic, interactive and inexpensive ideas to make downtown Bellingham more entertaining and attractive. KAPOW! 2016 challenged community creators to craft ideas to enliven N. State Street. A proponent of the KAPOW! approach, Mayor Kelli Linville stated, "It's fun, it's socially conscientious, and it promotes our businesses."

The winners have been working over the past year to bring their projects to life. The 3.8-mile, record-breaking Bellinghopscoth concept has been transformed into a permanent, abbreviated course with a focus on fun for all ages. The State of the Solar System is a distance-scaled model solar system "scavenger hunt" that runs along both sides of State Street. Models of the planets are accompanied by informational plaques for maximum learning potential. Uuntzbrella is a dance floor beneath an oversized umbrella for dancing in all kinds of weather. The Piper Bike Park, a bioluminescent bike-parking structure architecturally inspired by the Herald Building and a competition finalist, will also be unveiled.

For more information, email kfranks@cob.org or call 360-778-8388.



At night it becomes a beacon.



Q AND A

STAFF SPOTLIGHT

Bellingham Neighbors Together

Scott Hendrickson, Volunteer Coordinator
Dante Alexander, Neighborhood Police Officer
Eric Osterkamp, Neighborhood Police Officer

Bellingham Neighbors Together (BNT) is a voluntary citizen organization that works in partnership with the Bellingham Police Department. We are committed to a visible public presence to reduce crime, educate residents, and promote safe neighborhoods.

Why did the police department feel it was important to form BNT?

A: We have a long history of citizen volunteerism that started with the Retired Senior Volunteer Patrol (RSVP) and continues with BNT. Chief Cliff Cook has a strong belief in citizen volunteerism as an outlet to connect with the community, and BNT gives citizens the opportunity to work together to solve problems in their neighborhoods.

How does BNT benefit the community?

A: BNT will expand community relations and allow citizens to have a direct impact on the safety and well-being of their neighborhoods. At the police department, we are concerned with issues that directly affect life and safety. Community members may also be interested in a variety of other issues happening in their neighborhoods. BNT is a proactive effort that will observe and inform the police as events are happening, rather than a reactive force after events occur. This effort builds trust and identifies neighborhood

leaders who community members can rely on and utilize as a resource for safety in their neighborhoods.

Will it be a citywide program?

A: Once fully trained and equipped, BNT volunteers will become a visible public presence within each of Bellingham's 25 neighborhoods.

What's the process for volunteers to get involved and who can get involved?

A: Interested volunteers must first care about their neighborhood and want to be involved in the well-being of the community. They can visit www.cob.org/BNT to find the BNT application and instructions for applying. Volunteers must be at least 21 years of age, a resident of the City of Bellingham, and have a valid driver's license.

What kind of training will BNT volunteers get and what kind of time commitment is involved?

A: The training period is 5-7 weeks for one night a week, totaling to 30 hours. Volunteers will learn personal safety, CPR, how to recognize and respond to danger, walk safely, report on incidents, and identify specific behavior and activity that endangers the community. Volunteers will receive free training and a free uniform including a hat, jacket, and t-shirt. Once training is completed, volunteers are asked to commit four hours a month to BNT.

How can I learn more?

A: BNT volunteer coordinator Scott Hendrickson can be reached via email at sbhendrickson@cob.org. You can also visit www.cob.org/BNT to learn more about the program.



**PUBLIC ALERT
SIGN UP HERE**

ALERTSENSE: A sensible tool to stay safe

AlertSense is a notification tool you can sign up for to receive emergency notifications.

Decreasing use of landline phones means it is now more important than ever to sign up for mobile notifications about emergencies, disasters, and weather alerts in Whatcom County.

Members can sign up to receive notifications in their chosen area(s) and select specific hazards they are interested in.

To receive AlertSense notifications, visit www.whatcomready.org and click on the radial button twice to sign up. Whatcomready.org is another step in the direction of preparedness to ensure you and your loved ones are ready for emergencies and up to date on weather alerts.

SEAFEAST 2017: A waterfront celebration for all

We expect all hands on deck as we celebrate Bellingham SeaFeast 2017 on Sept. 22-23, 2017. Community members and travelers from afar will come together to experience our legacy of maritime heritage, bustling working waterfront, internationally renowned fishing and seafood industries, and unsurpassed culinary bounty.

Bellingham is defined by our waterfront, and Bellingham SeaFeast represents everything positive about our corner of the Pacific Northwest – to eat, to play, and to explore the abundance of our Salish Sea.

Bellingham SeaFeast was a massive success its first year with about 6,000 attendees in 2016, featuring participation from commercial fishers, education and outreach, a Family Field of Fun, food vendors, FisherPoets, live music, art, sponsors, the International Salmon BBQ Grilling Championship and other competitions.

Bellingham SeaFeast 2017 will include even more waterfront activities and will provide attendees with forever memories of the historical, community-building, and economic impact of the

maritime and fishing commerce that sets us apart from anywhere else.

Anchor down and join us for free in Downtown Bellingham on Friday night, Sept. 22, and at Squalicum Harbor on Bellingham Bay all day Saturday, Sept. 23, to experience what it means to catch a wave that will carry you to little known realms of engagement with the waters that have given us so much. Come to the bay, eat and play.

Visit www.bellinghamseafeast.com for more information.