

SAMMAMISH

ISSUE 171

CITY NEWSLETTER

SEPT. 2016

Virtual Town Hall hears your voice!

TOPIC 1: COMMUNICATIONS
TOPIC 2: GROWTH IMPACTS

The city's online public-input portal – Virtual Town Hall – is only five weeks old, but it's already gathering feedback on its second topic.

It began on May 27 with a survey about city communications. That topic is still open, but now most of the comments floating through the portal are focused on topic number two: The ongoing wave of growth and development in Sammamish.

“Our City Councilmembers are eager to see the responses on the growth topic,” Communications Manager Tim Larson said. “That should give them a head start as they prepare to meet residents at our Sept. 8 round-table meeting on growth.”

To add your perspective to the mix, just go to the city website at www.sammamish.us, click on Virtual Town Hall, and follow the prompts.

“The whole point of Virtual Town Hall is to expand public comment,” Larson said. “But not just in terms of total numbers. We also want to

See VIRTUAL, pg. 4



You're invited to a round-table meeting on growth management

RESIDENTS, CITY OFFICIALS WILL SHARE IDEAS SEPT. 8

Although the odds of hearing stern comments from residents are quite high, City Councilmembers, Planning Commissioners and other city officials are very much looking forward to a highly publicized round-table meeting on growth this month.

The meeting, which is open to all residents, is scheduled for 7 p.m. on Thursday, Sept. 8, at City Hall.

“We know a good number of people are upset about the new wave of growth

in Sammamish,” City Manager Lyman Howard said. “But we really want to hear what remedies and investments our residents are willing to consider as we do our best to manage growth. It should be a lively discussion, to say the least.”

Over the years, the city has always pointed out that the state's Growth Management Act (GMA) obligates cities to meet residential growth targets.

But the question persists: Why
See GROWTH, pg. 4

MAYOR'S MESSAGE

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CLEAN AUDIT!

Story on page 3

GROWTH Q&A

Story on page 5

LID – Is this another LOL?

Does LOL mean “Laughing Out Loud” or “Lots Of Love.” Perhaps either is correct, depending upon the circumstances.

The same could be said for LID. Does it mean “Local Improvement District,” a way of funding neighborhood infrastructure, or does it refer to “Low Impact Development,” a phrase you’ll be hearing a lot in the next few months?



*Don Gerend
Mayor*

For the purposes of this mayor’s message, it’s the latter. Low Impact Development is a storm water management strategy that seeks to mimic natural hydrologic conditions.

The traditional approach has been to quickly move stormwater away from buildings and roads, and into man-made ponds or vaults, where it is contained and slowly released to downstream waterways.

LID, on the other hand, directs rain water into multiple rain gardens or permeable pavements and provides the space and time for surface water to infiltrate in place. This recharges groundwater and more closely replicates the natural flow into our creeks and wetlands.

Some 10,000 or so years ago, the glaciers receded from the Sammamish region, leaving a lot of gravel and copious amounts of very fine soil called glacial till.

This soil is found in compact layers throughout Sammamish. Not

to cast aspersions, but glacial till is quite impervious. That sounds bad, but all it really means is that water has a hard time soaking into the soil and infiltrating down to lower levels. For future reference, the opposite of impervious is pervious. Although that sounds even worse, it’s actually a good thing.

Moving along, another characteristic of Sammamish is its hilly terrain. Although the slopes, hills and ravines add to our community’s beauty, they pose a real challenge for LID and our efforts to keep storm water from rushing off and carrying soil and pollution to the nearest lake or stream.

That’s especially a problem when the forest, which absorbs about half the water produced by a typical rain event, is replaced by houses, roofs, driveways and other impervious surfaces.

Although the Planning Commission and the City Council will be reviewing LID-related policies carefully over the remainder of 2016, and expect to adopt changes to our code before the year is out, we already have good examples in Sammamish that point the way to better methods.

Here are just a few examples of neighborhoods and locations that are handling storm water in ways that are friendlier to the environment.

In the Lawson Park subdivision (S.E. 14th Street and 244th Place S.E.) the LID method is bioretention and the aforementioned rain-gardens. Here you can see that the landscaping strip along the road is lower than the road itself, which al-

lows storm water to flow into the planted areas and infiltrate in place. The surplus is carried away through pipes to a storm water pond.

Another LID example is at the Sammamish Children’s School (207 228th Avenue S.E.), where some of the parking spaces are on “grasscrete,” which is more pervious than normal asphalt or concrete. The surface is an 8-inch deep, plastic-honeycomb grid filled with soil and topped by a grass surface. Underneath is amended soil and a still deeper layer of crushed rock where the water is stored and infiltrated.

At Lake Vista (East Lake Sammamish Parkway and Southeast Eighth Street), much of the storm water is run through perforated pipes that allow for infiltration and then dispersal into a wetland.

The City also has examples of LID techniques in the Lower Commons (just off of 222nd Place S.E.), where pervious asphalt, dispersion trenches and rain gardens are featured.

Various methods of Low Impact Development will be considered as the Council reviews updates to our Storm and Surface Water Management Comprehensive Plan, Surface Water Design Manual, and the Low Impact Development Code this fall.

We encourage you to join us in this discussion, beginning with our upcoming Planning Commission meetings (Sept. 15 and Oct. 6, 20) and City Council meetings (Nov. 1, 8, 15 and Dec. 6).

Because, as I’m sure you know, our LID program is going to need plenty of LOL – Lots of love!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Don Gerend".

City receives “clean” audit

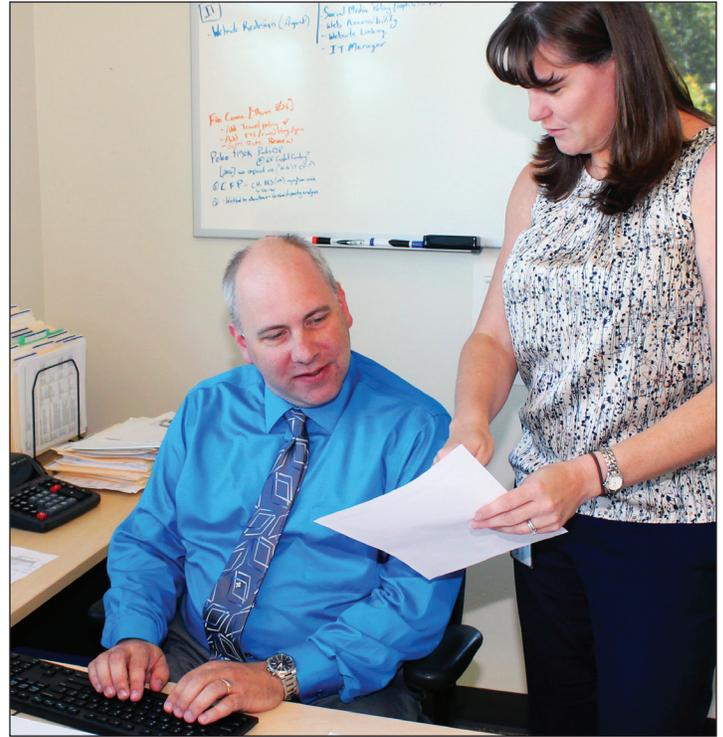
At a meeting with the State Auditor’s Office (SAO) last month, Mayor Don Gerend, Councilmembers Kathy Huckabay and Tom Odell, and city staff received some good news: The city received a “clean” audit for the 2015 fiscal year.

“We should give a special thanks to Jennifer Dilley, our accounting manager, for continuing to serve as the city’s liaison to the SAO and coordinating everything with their auditors,” City Manager Lyman Howard said. “She did a great job, along with Financial Specialist Jodee Bass and the rest of the team.”

The good news came just as Aaron Antin was settling in as the new director of the finance department. Antin, who served as deputy finance director in Sammamish until five years ago, was most recently serving as finance director for the city of SeaTac.

“We were very pleased to be able to bring Aaron back to Sammamish,” Howard said. “He knows our history, our approach, and already has the personal connections with staff. We’re looking forward to many more clean audits to come.”

The search for a new department head became necessary after Joe Guinasso, the former finance director, passed away in April.



Aaron Antin, the city’s new finance director, confers with Accounting Manager Jennifer Dilley.

Town Center will absorb growth

THE “HEART OF THE CITY” WILL FEATURE UP TO 2,000 RESIDENCES ON JUST 240 ACRES

Between 2012 and 2035, Sammamish is supposed to issue permits for 4,439 new residential units. That’s the growth target mandated by the state’s Growth Management Act. As of June 30, 2016, 1,075 of those units had been permitted. That leaves a balance of 3,364 additional units.

When it’s all said and done, the city Town Center, 240 acres of what is now lightly populated land in the geographical center of the community, will absorb about 2,000 of those units.

“Our community worked really hard on the Town Center plan before it was finally adopted in 2008,” City Manager Lyman Howard said. “The goal was to create a community focal point with lots of density, while at the same time protecting existing neighborhoods from the impact of 2,000 new homes.”

Following the principles of what’s called “smart growth,” the Town Center will also feature 600,000 square feet of retail and office space in a pedestrian-friendly, mixed-use environment.

For more information on the town center and “smart growth,” residents are invited to attend a round-table meeting at 7 p.m. on Thursday, Sept. 8, at City Hall.

Mayors Month of Concern!

SAMMAMISH MAYOR DON GEREND AND ISSAQUAH MAYOR FRED BUTLER TEAM UP

Every year, under the auspices of the Emergency Feeding Program of Seattle and King County, generous residents in Sammamish and Issaquah make vital contributions to local food banks during the “Mayors Month of Concern.”

This year’s food drive will start on Saturday, Sept. 10, and run every Saturday through Oct. 8, except for Oct. 1, which is Salmon Days. Here are three ways you can help:

- Collect food from donors at participating stores
- Transport the food to the local food banks.
- Donate cash!

For more information, go to www.sammamish.us.

Here are the participating stores:

- QFC – 2902 228th Ave. S.E., Sammamish
- QFC – 4570 Klahanie Dr. S.E., Sammamish
- PCC Market – 1810 12th Ave. N.W., Issaquah
- Fred Meyer – 6100 E. Lake Samm. P’way S.E., Issaquah
- Front Street Market – 80 Front Street, Issaquah
- QFC – 1540 Gilman Boulevard, Issaquah

VIRTUAL, cont. from pg. 1

expand the kinds of people who contribute to the dialogue. We want to add folks who are too busy to come to a Council meeting, or too uncomfortable to speak in front of a crowd.

“There’s no reason the public input the Council receives should be limited to people who are free enough and bold enough to step up to the podium.”

At a typical Council meeting, the city’s elected officials hear from just six or seven residents. At press time, the Virtual Town Hall communications topic had already received the equivalent of over 12 hours of public comment. (That figure is based on an assumption that each person providing a comment to Virtual Town Hall would have spoken for three minutes had they addressed the Council directly at City Hall.)

Virtual Town Hall’s first two topics – communications and growth – will each have two-month runs. The communications topic is scheduled to close in late September. The growth topic will remain open until late October.

To see the results (at press time) for the communications topic, they are summarized in the yellow panel to the right.

Virtual Town Hall on Communications

(This topic will remain open until late Sept.)

At press time, the topic had attracted 608 visitors

- 246 visitors left a response
- 131 of those 246 respondents registered by including their name, address, email
- 115 responded without registering

Their top sources of information on the city, in descending order:

- 1 - City newsletter (hardcopy mailed out monthly)
- 2 - Sammamish Review
- 3 - Issaquah-Sammamish Reporter
- 4 - City email alerts
- 5 - City website

Their preferred method for city communications:

- 1 - City email alerts
- 2 - Emailed city newsletter
- 3 - Social media

Do respondents feel they are getting timely information about important topics related to city government and services?

- Sometimes – 51.9 percent
Yes – 31.3 percent
No – 13.7 percent

GROWTH, cont. from pg. 1

won’t the city put the brakes on growth? The answer, featured in a front-page, city newsletter headline last year, is pretty straightforward: “The courts won’t allow it.”

But that doesn’t mean thoughtful, innovative ideas for managing and mitigating the impacts of growth won’t pass legal muster.

“Tough problems sometimes produce very creative solutions,” Howard said. “As we come to grips with both the opportunities and the obstacles at our Sept. 8 round-table meeting, maybe we’ll surprise ourselves.”

To give the City Council an early

Round-table meeting on growth management

7 p.m., Thursday, Sept. 8
City Hall, 801 228th Ave. S.E.



reading on how you feel about this new wave of development, go to the city website (www.sammamish.us) before the meeting and speak your piece on **Virtual Town Hall**. Growth is one of two topics currently open on this new public-input portal. If you want to brush up on the subject before participating, take a look at the website’s informational links on growth.

You may also want to read the Q&A feature with City Manager Lyman Howard on the next page. As a 17-year resident of Sammamish, he’s very familiar with both the emotions and the competing perspectives that come to the surface during periods of growth.

Growth management Q & A

WITH SAMMAMISH CITY MANAGER LYMAN HOWARD

Q: How do the feelings about growth today compare to those in the 90s?

A: They're very similar. People aren't comfortable with trees coming down, the clearing and grading that reshapes a big patch of land, and the prospect of more congestion. So, it's tough to deal with. On the plus side, people no longer have to go to Seattle to lodge their complaints with King County. Now that we've been a city for 16 years or so, they can just pop into City Hall.

Q: What do you think residents will say when they come to the round-table meeting on growth management scheduled for Sept. 8?

A: I think there's a common sentiment that Sammamish should be run for the benefit of existing residents rather than the newcomers and the developers who build their homes. But we're not in a position, nor is any city, to favor the interests of one group over another. We need to follow the law, and that means letting property owners develop their land within the constraints of our code.

Q: The city tries to manage and mitigate the impacts of growth by charging road impact fees, park impact fees, and imposing tree retention standards on developers, among other things. What other options are there?

A: That depends on our residents and what they have to say at our round-table meeting and on the Virtual Town Hall survey we're running right now. One thing we could do is build and expand roads sooner. Issaquah-Pine Lake Road, for example, is already congested at times, and a lot of new homes are being built that will further impact

that road. Some people are asking why those road improvements haven't already been made.

Q: And what's your answer?

A: There's an axiom around here that growth should pay for growth. In other words, existing residents shouldn't have to pay for road improvements that become necessary when a developer de-



Lyman Howard
Sammamish City Manager

cides to build 500 new homes for 1500 new residents, all of whom will need road space. So, cities put the burden on the developers. The Conner-Jarvis development along Issaquah-Pine Lake Road, for example, is going to build and pay for a lot of the necessary improvements along that road.

Q: What if the city wanted to improve a corridor before it had the developer's road impact fees and infrastructure contributions in hand?

A: As a city, we're famous for not having any bonded debt, but that's one

option that may come up at our Sept. 8 meeting. Some of our residents may suggest that we have to build more roads, and build them faster and sooner. That could require some debt.

Q: Why don't we just raise impact fees?

A: We already have the highest road impact fees in the state – over \$14,000 per new residence – so we don't have much head room there. Plus, new impact fees can't be used to correct past deficiencies. They're supposed to pay for the expanded infrastructure capacity needs triggered by the new homes.

Q: What about trees? What new steps can we take to preserve our tree canopy?

A: We already require developers to plant replacements, either on the same property or elsewhere in the city, when they cut down trees. The Council will also begin consideration of improvements to our urban forestry plan later this year. Another idea – and this would cost money – is for the city to buy up forested land and preserve it. That has already been brought up by residents and I'm sure it'll get discussed at the round-table.

Q: At a Council meeting recently, a resident suggested letting property owners develop their land but placing a lower limit on the number of homes they could build. Is that feasible?

A: Well, how would you feel if the city downzoned your land and reduced the financial value you could extract from it by 50 or 75 percent? And what if that was your nest egg? That would be a very tough policy to pursue.

Q: So, no easy answers?

A: Not really, but if we do some good creative thinking on Sept. 8, and in the years to come, I'm confident we'll come up with some ideas that are worth exploring. It will be a challenge, of course, but what is it they say: Necessity is the mother of invention?

Low-impact development (LID) CODE CHANGES REQUIRED BY END OF 2016

The Planning Commission and City Council will be spending a lot of time thinking about storm water over the next few months as they work to meet a federal deadline for the development of low-impact development (LID) policies.

Those policies, which are required to be in place by the end of this year, will reduce impervious surfaces, increase the retention of native vegetation, and reduce the amount of surface water runoff that leaves a development site. The goal is to make LID the preferred and commonly used approach to site development.

In practice, the adjustments to city code will promote the infiltration of stormwater into the ground at or near the site of the development, and encourage the preservation or re-creation of natural landscape features. The issue will be discussed at the following Planning Commission and City Council meetings:

Planning Commission – Sept. 15, Oct. 6, Oct. 20

City Council – Nov. 1, Nov. 8, Nov. 15, Dec. 6

To learn more about LID, go to www.sammamish.us/departments/publicworks/projects/LowImpactDev-CodeReview.aspx.

The 2017 comprehensive plan docket is now open

The City of Sammamish's 20-year comprehensive plan, last fully updated in 2015, provides a vision for the future, identifies goals and policies to achieve that vision, creates a basis for the city's regulations, and guides future decision-making.

Once per year, residents are allowed to submit updates, amendments, or other revisions to the comprehensive plan and associated zoning regulations. Review of these "docket" materials by the Planning Commission and City Council will take place during the fall, and those proposals selected for full consideration will be subject to a full legislative process the following year.

The deadline for submitting application materials for the 2017 docket is September 30, 2016, at 5 p.m. Applications are accepted in person at Sammamish City Hall or via e-mail at permittech@sammamish.us. Please contact David Goodman at dgoodman@sammamish.us or 425-295-0534 with any questions.

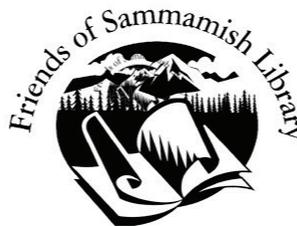
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SAMMAMISH
REVIEW



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CITY CALENDAR

SEPTEMBER

Tuesday, Sept. 6

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

Wednesday, Sept. 7

-Health/Human Services Committee Meeting, 10:30 a.m.-noon

-Sammamish Farmer's Market, 4-8 p.m., City Hall Plaza

-Parks and Rec Comm Mtg, 6:30 p.m.

Thursday, Sept. 8

-Round-table meeting on growth, 7-9 p.m.

Tuesday, Sept. 13

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

Wednesday, Sept. 14

-Sammamish Farmer's Market, 4-8 p.m. City Hall Plaza

-Ladies Musical Club Concert, 7-9 p.m., Pine Lake Covenant Church

Thursday, Sept. 15

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

Saturday, Sept. 17

-Sammamish Walks, 10 a.m.-noon Big Rock Park

Tuesday, Sept. 20

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

Wednesday, Sept. 21

-Transportation Cmte Mtg, 9:30 a.m.

-Sammamish Farmer's Market, 4-8 p.m. City Hall Plaza

Monday, Sept. 26

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

OCTOBER

Saturday, Oct. 1

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

Tuesday, Oct. 4

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

Wednesday, Oct. 5

-Parks and Rec Comm Mtg, 6:30 p.m.

Thursday, Oct. 6

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

Friday, Oct. 7

-Transportation Committee Mtg, 9:30 a.m.

Saturday, Oct. 8

-10th Annual Sammamish Arts Fair, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

Sunday, Oct. 9

-10th Annual Sammamish Arts Fair, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

Tuesday, Oct. 11

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

Tuesday, Oct. 18

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

Wednesday, Oct. 19

-Transportation Cmte Mtg, 9:30 a.m.

Thursday, Oct. 20

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

Monday, Oct. 24

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

Monday, Oct. 31

-Halloween Happening, 3-4:30 p.m. City Hall

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.

King County Metro working group needs your help!

CAN YOU COMMIT TO 4-6 EVENINGS THIS FALL TO EXPLORE ALTERNATIVE SERVICES?

Metro is working with communities across King County to develop innovative, customized mobility services to meet local transportation needs.

They're exploring both tried-and-true approaches and cutting-edge ideas, such as flexible, on-demand ride-sharing that uses an app to connect drivers with people who want a ride right away.

The city of Sammamish and Metro will be forming a working group to explore how alternative services might fit some of the city's transportation needs. The group needs your thoughts and opinions.

If you would like to participate in the working group and can commit to four to six evening meetings this fall, or if you would just like to stay informed about the process moving forward, please contact Metro at haveasay@king-county.gov or 206-263-9768.

Metro will also provide other opportunities for the public to provide feedback on transportation needs and potential alternative service solutions. These opportunities will include open houses, City Council meetings and online surveys.

Please stay tuned!

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SAMMAMISH CITY COUNCIL



*Don Gerend
Mayor*



*Ramiro Valderrama
Deputy Mayor*



*Tom Hornish
Councilmember*



*Kathy Huckabay
Councilmember*



*Bob Keller
Councilmember*



*Christie Malchow
Councilmember*



*Tom Odell
Councilmember*

**Come see a performance by the
2016 winners of the Francis Walton
musical competition:**

Ladies Musical Club of Seattle

**Anne Suda – Bass
Dana Jackson – Bassoon
Nicholas Dold – Piano**

**7-8:30 p.m., Wednesday, Sept. 14
Pine Lake Covenant Church
1715 228th Ave. S.E., Sammamish**

It's free and open to the public!
(Sponsored by the Sammamish Arts Commission and 4Culture)

CITY OF SAMMAMISH OFFICES

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Jessi Bon	Deputy City Manager
Aaron Antin	Finance Director
Angela Feser	Parks Director
Beth Goldberg	Admin Services Director
Steve Leniszewski	Public Works Director
Jeff Thomas	Community Dev Director
Melonie Anderson	City Clerk
Nathan Elledge	Police Chief
Jeff Clark	Fire Chief
Michael Kenyon	City Attorney

Newsletter suggestions or concerns?
Contact Communications Mgr Tim Larson
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