

# SAMMAMISH

ISSUE 94

CITY NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2010

## City takes out a contract on crime

It's not a secret that Sammamish contracts with the King County Sheriff's Office for police services, but some of the city's performance and cost figures may come as a surprise. A very pleasant surprise.

Compared to cities of similar size in western Washington that have their own police departments, Sammamish's law enforcement costs per capita amount to half, or even a third, of what other communities are estimated to pay for the same services.

### 2009 law enforcement costs per capita

Bothell	\$320
Edmonds	\$204
Kirkland	\$314
Lynnwood	\$383
Puyallup	\$346
Sammamish	\$101

"I know the cost of law enforcement depends on many factors," City Manager Ben Yazici said, "and I know we're blessed with a naturally low crime rate, but I have no doubt that the con-

*See POLICE, pg. 4*



*Residents and City Council members gather in front of the Southeast 32nd Street barricade during a 2009 bus tour of the city with Dan Burden (in white hat, right), a nationally known authority on transportation "connectivity" within communities.*

## Barricades and "connectivity"

Back in the 70's, 80's, and even the 90's, a lot of Sammamish neighborhoods didn't connect.

Stub streets, roads that ended abruptly at the foot of tall trees or next to open fields, were everywhere.

King County didn't want to see drivers careen off the pavement, so they capped some of those stub streets with

barricades.

Although it's now 2010, a number of those barricades are still in place, even though the stubs have grown into complete roads on both sides of the barrier.

Call that a headache for the city of Sammamish.

*See CONNECTIVITY, pg. 3*

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**SAMMI AWARDS**

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# Messages from Washington, D.C.

There are some 19,000 cities and towns in the United States, and the National League of Cities (NLC) held its annual Congressional City Conference in Washington, D.C., last month.



*Don Gerend  
Mayor*

At last year's meeting, President Barack Obama, newly elected, sent many of his cabinet secretaries to our conference, assuring some 2,000 delegates that his

administration wanted to renew the partnership with local government.

The theme: We needed a two-way effort to help this country and its cities to turn the corner on the worst economic times since the Great Depression.

This year's conference found many of those same cabinet members, and others, reporting back to us on how their programs are progressing. Energy Secretary Steven Chu sees a new industrial revolution happening, and wants the U.S. to lead the way. He stressed the need to decrease dependency on foreign oil, be proactive on climate change impact mitigation, and ensure American competitiveness.

He drilled in on technology with charts and graphs about photovoltaics, auto fuel efficiency, battery technology, smart electrical grids, nuclear power and high tech manufacturing.

We will be living in a carbon-constrained world and here in Sammamish we must be proactive in promoting sus-

tainable lifestyles and ramping up the conversion of the transportation fleet to electric vehicles.

Arne Duncan, Secretary of the Department of Education, spoke about turning public schools into one-stop community centers, open 12-14 hours a day, year round. He also set a goal to once again have, by 2020, the highest college graduation rate in the world here in America.

U.S. Department of Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack focused on what's necessary for young people to have the very best start in life. He spoke about the epidemic of obesity amongst our children and the importance of school breakfast programs and good nutritional choices.

Sammamish and the school districts must work together on programs of health education, recreational opportunities and incentives to encourage proper lifestyle choices for our children.

I am a member of the NLC Information Technology and Communications Steering Committee, and at our meeting we heard of the new national Broadband Plan, made public a few days later. This Federal Communications Commission report (376 pages long) is proposing a national broadband strategy with a goal to deliver 100 Megabit/sec service to 100 million Americans in 10 years.

It will impact all phases of the economy, from public safety and health to transportation and entertainment. Building out the network of broad-

band and public safety communication enhancements could mean over 40,000 more communication towers in the U.S., with Sammamish receiving a number of them.

Rather than seeing cities as part of the problem, the Obama administration officials at the conference consistently advanced the theme that cities will be a big part of the solution to our current economic struggle. The federal government, they said, will help provide cities with the tools they need to be part of the fixing process.

This conference was also a time to communicate with our elected Representatives and Senators, and their staffs (in our case, 8th District Congressman Dave Reichert and Senators Patty Murray and Maria Cantwell).

It was also an opportunity to learn more about NLC programs, such as the prescription drug discount program for residents of NLC member cities. Sammamish staff is reviewing the details of this program in hopes that it might provide an approximately 20% discount on prescription drugs at local pharmacies.

Stay tuned for more information on this program, and all the other initiatives discussed at this year's National League of Cities Conference.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Don Gerend". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "D".

## CONNECTIVITY, cont. from pg. 1

On the one hand, the city's comprehensive plan calls for "internal connectivity of roadways." The Planning Advisory Board, a cross-section of Sammamish residents who put together the city plan, wanted freer circulation of traffic, shorter car trips, and faster access for emergency vehicles.

On the other hand, some residents who have grown accustomed to the reduced traffic in the vicinity of their neighborhood barricades don't want to see them come out.

"When the city first started looking at the possibility of removing some of these blockages three or four years ago, we got a lot of pushback," City Manager Ben Yazici said. "In 2007, we had a study session to address the issue and we had an overflow crowd of about 200 people holding signs and speaking out. It was quite a show."

There are dozens of spots in Sammamish where "connectivity" could be easily improved. In addition to several barricade locations, there are moveable gates in some places, and many opportunities to construct short connections that would free drivers to take more direct routes to their destinations.

"As a matter of public policy, the experts are on the side of connectivity," Yazici said. "It shortens trips, reduces emissions, and helps police and firefighters."

"But that's a tough sell in a neighborhood where a barricade is diverting cars elsewhere and creating unusual traffic tranquility."

To help relieve this inherited headache, the city set out last year to develop a set of criteria that could be used to decide which blockages should go and which ones should stay.

"Every case is a little bit different," said Deputy Public Works Director



*The barricade issue drew a big crowd to the City Council chamber on April 16, 2007.*

Laura Philpot. "Our goal is to develop an objective basis for our decision making, while providing a lot of opportunity for public involvement and input."

To that end, city staff first met with the City Council on this topic back in June of 2009. Since then, the staff has arranged a city-wide inspection tour (via bus) for residents and elected officials, held a pair of public workshops featuring small-group discussions, and met again with the City Council on March 15.

So far, the list of criteria includes items like traffic volume shifts, accident rates, safety and the need for mitigation. Staffers expect to return to the City Council with performance measures for the criteria in early May.

The city will then choose a barricade location to see how the criteria is received by a specific neighborhood.

"When that location is chosen, possibly around September, we'll have a meeting to gather input from the neighbors in the area," Yazici said.

"We'll find out more about what they think, how they would weight the various criteria, and discuss what road and safety improvements would soften the impact should that street ever open up."

Yazici says the City Council wants a transparent and thoughtful process with no preordained conclusions regarding which barricades – if any – should become candidates for removal.

"We don't know what the outcome will be, and we don't know what the timetable will be," Yazici said. "This is one of those tough policy decisions where it's wise to listen to the experts, but even wiser to listen to the residents."

"Whether they are in favor of barricade removal, or strongly against it, we're going to listen to every single resident who speaks up."

For more information on connectivity, go to [www.ci.sammamish.wa.us/projects/Connectivity.aspx](http://www.ci.sammamish.wa.us/projects/Connectivity.aspx) or contact Laura Philpot at 425-295-0570 or [lphilpot@ci.sammamish.wa.us](mailto:lphilpot@ci.sammamish.wa.us).

# CITY OF SAMMAMISH

## *POLICE, cont. from pg. 1*

tract approach has saved Sammamish a lot of money.

“The Sheriff has bomb squads, major crime units, helicopters, canine units and a lot of other specialized capabilities we have access to. If we had tried to start up our own police department back in 1999, creating those capabilities for ourselves would have been very expensive.”

In 2009, the city’s contract with the Sheriff’s Office cost \$4,025,070. For that sum, the city received the services of 22 dedicated officers, all the equipment needed, plus many of the specialized services mentioned earlier.

Shared services that the city accessed through its contract in 2009 accounted for an additional 9 officers and civilian staff that served the city in the areas of patrol supervision, 911 dispatch, domestic violence investigation, and marine patrol. Having access to a broad spectrum of shared specialized services adds economies of scale and is one of the reasons Sammamish thrives with a relatively low number of dedicated officers.

The city has added an additional officer to its police department in 2010 to focus on detective investigations, training and patrol work.

“Our officers and detectives patrol the streets, solve crimes and serve as school resource officers,” Yazici said. “When we need reinforcements or specialized help, the Sheriff’s Office sends in the cavalry.”

At only 0.61 officers per thousand in population, Sammamish maintains a safe and orderly environment with a lower ratio of officers than most cities that have their own police department.

### **Sworn officers per thousand of population – 2009**

Bothell	1.74
Edmonds	1.37
Kirkland	1.41
Lynnwood	2.27
Puyallup	1.50
Sammamish	0.61

The lower ratio has not created an excessive workload for Sammamish police officers. The most recent available figures show that the city’s sworn officers averaged 150 “dispatched calls for service” in 2008. That’s significantly lower than the figures for comparable cities.

### **Dispatched calls for service per sworn officer – 2008**

Bothell	442
Edmonds	411
Kirkland	571
Lynnwood	486
Puyallup	482
Sammamish	150

“Obviously, all of these figures show that you can’t calculate how many police officers you need by simply looking at your total population,” Yazici said. “Many other factors have to be entered into the equation to come up with an appropriate and effective force level.”



*Police Chief Nate Elledge and City Manager Ben Yazici.*

Sammamish Police Chief Nathan Elledge is about to start his third decade with the King County Sheriff’s Department, but his dark blue uniform carries the City of Sammamish logo. So do the police cars cruising through the neighborhoods. For all intents and purposes, Sammamish has its own police department.

“That’s one of the nice touches our contract provides,” Elledge said. “Especially in a relatively new city, I think residents like to see those Sammamish uniforms. It helps create a sense of identity and also helps strengthen the bond between residents and officers.”

Elledge points out that the men and women under his command are top-notch officers who bring a variety of law en-

forcement experience to the city.

“Sammamish is a very desirable place to work,” Elledge said. “When a position comes open in Sammamish, we fill the opening with officers who we feel will fit in well with the community. Our officers are really excellent individuals.”

The connection between the city staff and the police officers is also excellent. Working out of the same City Hall building, officers and city staffers walk the same hallways, share coffee and attend the same meetings.

“It’s a pretty seamless relationship,” Elledge said. “The City Manager and I consult whenever we want, and I feel like we’re all on the same team.”

Yazici selected Elledge as the city’s police chief after interviewing several Sheriff’s Office candidates. Although he doesn’t pay the chief directly, Yazici says the contract approach used by King County gives him and other city managers an appropriate level of involvement and control over a very important city service.

“Public safety is obviously a top priority, and we wouldn’t feel comfortable contracting for that service unless we felt very confident in our connection with the Chief and all the officers,” Yazici said. “I can honestly say that over the past 10 years there has been very little friction in this relationship.”

During these difficult economic times, the reasonable and fairly predictable costs of law enforcement have provided the city with some budgetary stability in the midst of volatility. Given those benefits, Yazici says the contract model may be something other jurisdictions should look

at. And they might start by looking at the accompanying chart, which shows that Sammamish spends a smaller proportion of its general expenditures on law enforcement than nearby non-contract cities.

## Police costs as a percentage of general expenditures – 2009

Bothell	29.93%
Edmonds	24.18%
Kirkland	25.09%
Lynnwood	30.28%
Puyallup	22.92%
Sammamish	13.10%

Fortunately, contentment with the contract model reaches beyond the finance director’s office. In the most recent community survey, more than 90 percent of Sammamish residents said they felt safe walking alone in their neighborhood after dark.

“That’s a very gratifying number,” Yazici said. “I know it’s a product of many factors, and not just the result of law enforcement expenditures, but it shows that the contract approach is certainly working for us.

“All cities are different, so I wouldn’t suggest that this model would be appropriate everywhere. But the cost and the results have been excellent here. If anyone wants to consider the contract approach in their city, they could certainly do worse than taking a long look at Sammamish.”

## Spring recycling comes to Sammamish on April 24

The city of Sammamish and King County are co-sponsoring a “Spring Recycling Collection Event” at Eastlake High School, 400 228th Ave. N.E., on Saturday, April 24, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Among the items you can drop off, some of them for a fee: tires, motor oil, lead acid batteries, alkaline batteries, household goods and clothing, cardboard, bulky wood, propane tanks, porcelain toilets and sinks, television sets, DVD players, VCRs, stereo equipment, printers, copiers, cell phones, computers and computer monitors.

Among the items NOT allowed: paint, scrap metal, appliances, construction debris, garbage, mattresses, furniture, plastic toys, window glass, pesticides, solvents, cleaning products and fluorescent lights.

For more information, contact Sara Ninteman at 425-295-0515 or [sninteman@ci.sammamish.wa.us](mailto:sninteman@ci.sammamish.wa.us).



*Is it time to recycle your old computer?*

## Arbor Day park cleanup

Celebrate Arbor Day and Earth Day with your family and friends by attending an organized clean-up at Pine Lake Park on Saturday, April 24, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Bring your gloves and wear sturdy work shoes so you can plant, weed, and remove fallen branches. For more information visit [www.ci.sammamish.wa.us/Volunteers.aspx](http://www.ci.sammamish.wa.us/Volunteers.aspx) or contact Volunteer Coordinator Dawn Sanders (425-295-0556, [dsanders@ci.sammamish.wa.us](mailto:dsanders@ci.sammamish.wa.us)).

## Please leash your pooch

With great dog-walking weather approaching, don't forget that you must keep your canine companion on a leash when you're in a Sammamish city park.



In recent years, a number of residents have complained about dogs on the loose and owners who don't pick up after their pets.

For those who want to set their dogs free, the city's Off-leash Park is located just east of the Beaver Lake ball fields off 244th Avenue Southeast.

## Spring gardening tips

With spring at hand, many residents are preparing to take care of their lawns and gardens. But before you start spraying and fertilizing, the city would like to offer you a few gardening tips that will keep local streams and lakes

clean and Sammamish families safe:

- Plant native species. They're naturally more resistant to pests and disease.
- Build healthy soil with compost and mulch. For information on compost, go to [www.cedar-grove.com](http://www.cedar-grove.com).
- If you feel you must fertilize, use a slow release organic product and fertilize in the fall. Avoid phosphorus!
- Water deeply, but infrequently. This will help your plants grow deeper root systems.
- Use pesticides only as a last resort.

These tips, and others, will save you time, money, water and waste disposal while helping the environment. For more information, contact Stormwater team member Lisa Werre at [lwerre@ci.sammamish.wa.us](mailto:lwerre@ci.sammamish.wa.us) or 425-295-0573.

## Attention artists!!!

The Sammamish Arts Fair, coming up in October, will be featuring pieces from some of the very best artists in our local area. If you would like to be part of this juried event, be on the lookout for a "call to artists," which is scheduled to go out on May 1 with a deadline of May 27.

The Arts Fair, which will be staged at Sammamish City Hall, 801 228th Ave. S.E., is scheduled for Saturday, Oct. 9, and Sunday, Oct. 10.

## Backyard seminars

If you want to live harmoniously with wildlife and make other smart decisions regarding your "backyard," there are going to be three seminars in April and May to help you do just that.

All of the seminars, which will be presented by the Sammamish Community Wildlife Habitat Project, with support from the Boeing Foundation and the National Wildlife Federation, will be at Beaver Lake Lodge, 25101 S.E. 24th St. Here are the dates and subjects:

### Living with Wildlife

Wednesday, April 21, 7-8 p.m.

### Backyard Bullies: Invasive Noxious Weeds

Wednesday, April 28, 7-8 p.m.

### Naturescaping in Sammamish

Wednesday, May 5, 7-8 p.m.

## Sammi Awards for 2010

*The eighth annual Sammi Awards were bestowed March 13 at Mary Queen of Peace Church. And the winners are:*

**Arts:** Adam Gross

**Business:** Gail Stacy Michelman

**Courage:** Kirstin and Brendon Lynch

**Teen Spirit:** Jamie Eide

**Learning Promotion:** Leslie Spero

**Trevor Price Award:** Sonya Ahuja

**Unsung Hero:** Secret scholarship fund

**Youth Advocate:** Karen Skoog

**Spirit of Sammamish:** Caroline Brown, Angela Kennedy

**Founder's Award:** Marty Budzius



*Caroline Brown and Angela Kennedy, joint winners of the Spirit of Sammamish award.*

## CITY CALENDAR

### APRIL

#### Monday, April 5

City Council Office Hours, 5:30-6:30 p.m.

#### Tuesday, April 6

Finance Committee Mtg, 5-6:15 p.m.

City Council Meeting, 6:30 p.m.

#### Wednesday, April 7

Parks and Rec Comm. Mtg, 5:30 p.m.

Art Exhibit Reception

CODEX SEVERIN, 6-8 p.m.

#### Thursday, April 8

Planning Commission Mtg, 6:30 p.m.

#### Tuesday, April 13

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

#### Monday, April 19

City Council Office Hours, 5:30-6:30 p.m.

Joint Meeting: City Council/Parks and Rec Comm. 6:30 p.m.

Arts Commission Meeting, 6:30 p.m.

#### Tuesday, Apr. 20

City Council Meeting, 6:30 p.m.

#### Wednesday, Apr. 21

Sammamish Youth Board Mtg, 6 p.m.

### MAY

#### Tuesday, May 4

Finance Committee Mtg, 5-6:15 p.m.

City Council Meeting, 6:30 p.m.

#### Thursday, May 6

Planning Commission Mtg, 6:30 p.m.

#### Tuesday, May 11

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

#### Wednesday, May 12

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

#### Saturday, May 15

Bikes for Africa, 9 a.m.-1 p.m.

#### Monday, May 17

Arts Commission Meeting, 6:30 p.m.

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

#### Tuesday, May 18

City Council Meeting, 6:30 p.m.

#### Wednesday, May 19

Sammamish Youth Board Mtg, 6 p.m.

#### Thursday, May 20

Planning Commission Mtg, 6:30 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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# SAMMAMISH CITY COUNCIL



*Don Gerend*  
Mayor



*Nancy Whitten*  
Deputy Mayor



*Mark Cross*  
Councilmember



*John Curley*  
Councilmember



*John James*  
Councilmember



*Tom Odell*  
Councilmember



*Michele Petitti*  
Councilmember

*City looking for food vendors, craft specialists  
and entertainers for summer events*



**Fourth on the Plateau**  
July 4th, 6-10 p.m. at Sammamish Commons

**Sammamish Days**  
Aug. 21, 9-4 p.m., City Hall Plaza

*Contact Dawn Sanders:*  
425-295-0556 or [dsanders@ci.sammamish.wa.us](mailto:dsanders@ci.sammamish.wa.us).

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Ben Yazici	City Manager
Pete Butkus	Deputy City Manager
Kamuron Gurol	ComDevDir/AsstCityMgr
Lyman Howard	FinanceDir/AsstCityMgr
John Cunningham	Public Works Director
Jessi Richardson	Parks & Rec Director
Mike Sauerwein	AdminServices Director
Melonie Anderson	City Clerk
Nathan Elledge	Police Chief
Lee Soptich	Fire Chief
Bruce Disend	City Attorney
Tim Larson	Communications Mgr