



# City Views @ Sammamish

ISSUE 24

CITY OF SAMMAMISH NEWSLETTER

JUNE 2004

## Budget challenge

Preparing city budgets is tough.

Finance directors must juggle revenue projections, expenditure estimates, and shifts in community priorities. It's a long, laborious process featuring public hearings, council study sessions, a thousand conversations – and way too much quality time with a calculator.

But this year, thanks to I-864, Tim Eyman's latest tax-cutting initiative, the job is doubly tough.

"We're preparing two budgets," City Manager Ben Yazici said. "One assumes the passage of I-864, the other assumes rejection of the initiative."

It's estimated that the passage of I-864 will lop around \$3.5 million off the city's \$15.5 million in property tax revenue. The goal of the Eyman initiative is to cut property taxes by up to 25 percent.

"That means we'll be preparing two very different budgets," Yazici said. "This won't be a minor tweak."

Yazici says the city will have to make some tough choices if I-864 passes in

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*Mayor Kathleen Huckabay looks on as residents take part in the city's second community Roundtable. The May 26 gathering, held at Pine Lake Covenant Church, allowed residents to discuss important issues with members of the City Council.*

## Roundtable responds

The city received generally positive reviews from residents at a community Roundtable held May 26.

The several dozen attendees complimented City Council members for their fiscal responsibility, openness to public input, and use of the city's newsletter, website and TV channel to communicate with the public.

"The council should be commended for holding these Roundtables," City Manager Ben Yazici said. "We received feedback from an excellent cross-section."

In addition to evaluating the City Council's performance, the invitees were asked to address two other issues.

How should the city adjust if Initiative 864 passes and reduces the city's property tax revenue?

Some suggested project and service

cuts. Others preferred finding replacement revenue through voter-approved bonds, or utility and real estate excise taxes. Some suggested a voter-approved increase in the property tax levy lid. Many asked for a combination of expenditure cuts and new revenue sources.

Roundtable participants were also asked what they wanted to see in and around Sammamish Commons, the site of the new City Hall.

Some of the responses: pedestrian friendly design; restaurants; youth and senior services; small-town atmosphere; rural feel; movie theaters; no strip mall; library; history museum; meeting center; no apartment buildings.

"These Roundtables are very valuable," Yazici said. "There will be more to come."



Mayor  
Kathleen Huckabay

In previous messages, I've said that it's a council goal to reach out and invite community participation. So, I'd like to give you a mid-year report highlighting some of our efforts.

In May, the council held an informal "coffee and conversation" get-together with residents at the QFC. It gave us the opportunity to hear from people who do not ordinarily attend council meetings. We were pleased with the results, and

are scheduling more such conversations.

By the time you receive this newsletter, we will also have held our second Council Roundtable. During this session, we invited a representative cross section of residents to focus on their feelings about city services and park issues.

Last month, we invited King County staff to do a presentation on the status of the East Lake Sammamish Trail. At a well-attended public meeting, we learned that there will be four access points in the city and another just to the south at SE 43<sup>rd</sup> where the Laughing Jacobs Creek Trail meets the regional trail.

They also told us about proposed public facilities: two temporary sani-cans in or near Sammamish, a trash can at each major trail crossing, Doggy Bag Boxes, and a Trail Rules sign. They filled us in on crossing upgrades, on-going maintenance, and mitigation discussions with neighboring homeowners. County officials even brought an example of the beautiful artist's gates available to homeowners whose properties are bisected by the trail.

Although there wasn't time to answer everyone's questions about the trail, residents were invited to submit written inquiries. General questions about the trail, along with property-specific inquiries, will be answered by city and/or county staff.

For those interested in personal tours of the trail, please call King County Project Manager Mike Lozano at 206-296-4240.

Lastly, we are in the early stages of the visioning process for the "special study area." This is a 546-acre area in and around the site of our future City Hall near the intersection of 228th Avenue and SE 8th Street. Since this has the potential to become the "heart" of our young city, we'll be forming a volunteer task force to organize community meetings and arrive at a collective vision for that space. Among other things, that vision will encompass ways to integrate with and connect to the surrounding neighborhoods while protecting their current character.

The task force will be appointed by the council. The larger community forums will be made up of residents of the area, representatives of community groups and organizations and the general public. This visioning process will begin in the fall, with the vision presented to the broader community in January.

After the visioning process, Phase II will look at zoning issues, design standards, trails, greenbelts and other applicable rules and regulations that will govern the future development of this area.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kathleen Huckabay".

## Roundabout job requires bypass

The city's second roundabout, at Issaquah-Pine Lake Road and SE 32nd Way, is on its way.

But to make room for the contractors, traffic is being rerouted along a short, temporary bypass road.

Both eastbound and westbound lanes will use the bypass as workers move utilities and do other major work on the permanent path of Issaquah-Pine Lake Road.

The new roundabout is expected to be in use by October. The city's first roundabout, at Inglewood Hill Road and 216th Avenue NE, opened in 2002.

The current roundabout project will also widen and improve about three-tenths of a mile along Issaquah-Pine Lake Road. The entire project, with a construction cost of \$1.5 million, is expected to wrap up in November.



The temporary bypass road along Issaquah-Pine Lake Road is shown shortly before it opened for use earlier this month. The newly paved detour will allow utilities to be relocated under the permanent road in the background.

## Ebright Creek open house

The city held two open houses on the proposed site of Ebright Creek Park last month to allow residents to view existing conditions on the 12-acre property.

Located on the west side of 212th Avenue near SE 13th Place, the site is be-



Residents discuss the proposed site of Ebright Creek Park during a city-sponsored open house on May 8.

ing considered for a broad range of development options.

The two open houses, on May 8 and May 10, were held shortly before a broad public survey on the park was due to be returned to the city.

The results of that survey, which were sent out to 2,800 homes in the proposed service area of the park, were shared with residents at a public meeting on June 7.

Parks and Recreation Director Jeff Watling says the survey results indicate people want a good mix of park activities along with consideration for the site's environmental features.

"The people in the service area have given us some excellent perspective," Watling said. "The survey will really help us develop some appropriate options."

## County plans trail walks

King County will be guiding walks along the Sammamish portion of the East Lake Sammamish Trail this month and next.

Mike Lozano, the county's new project manager on the trail, says the walks will be approximately one mile long.

If you would like to join one of the informational walks, Lozano can be reached at 206-296-4240.

### Scheduled walks:

June 24, 9 am - Begins at Mint Grove

July 15, 9 am - Begins at Inglewood Hill Road

July 29, 9 am - Begins at 187th Avenue NE

## BUDGETS - Cont. from Page 1

November.

"The feedback we get from residents indicates that they don't want cuts in services or big tax hikes," Yazici said. "That means we may have to slow down our investment in roads and parks, if I-864 passes, and if we don't replace the lost revenue."

If the community decided to push ahead with current capital investment levels, the replacement revenue could come from a number of sources:

■ **Utility tax** – This is a tax on electricity, gas, water, sewer, telephone, cable and other utility services. A 6% utility tax would collect approximately \$3.9 million per year.

■ **REET (Real Estate Excise Tax)** – This is a tax on the sale of homes in the city. Currently the city imposes a .5% REET, generating approximately \$3.6 million annually. It has the option to impose an additional .5% REET. Together, the 1% REET would generate approxi-

mately \$7.2 million annually. If the city chooses to impose the second .5% REET, however, it would be forced, by law, to forego a share of the Sales and Use tax. Although King County could continue to collect that tax, the city's projected loss of Sales and Use tax would total approximately \$900,000.

■ **General Business and Occupation (B&O) taxes** – This is a tax levied against the gross receipts of a business. The city estimates a B&O tax would raise approximately \$400,000. Any B&O tax rate above .2% must be approved by the voters via referendum.

■ **Voter-approved bonds**  
If, however, the community wanted to accept the revenue losses brought on by I-864, capital cuts would likely be on the horizon. That's a course with significant implications.

"It would slow down our efforts to relieve congestion," Yazici said. "That's a problem the plateau has been dealing with for a long time.

"It would also lead to a boost in

maintenance costs. If we don't build new roads, we'll have to spend money fixing up the old ones."

The double-budget problem will go away if I-864 doesn't make it onto the ballot. That should become clear sometime in July. Until then, Finance Director Lyman Howard is carrying his calculator down two different tracks.

"It's just more work," Howard said with a smile. "We'll make it work either way."

Sammamish budgets operate on a 2-year cycle. The current biennial budget preparations will cover 2005 and 2006.

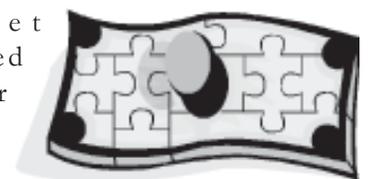
### Key dates:

■ Aug. 15 – Budget presentation to City Manager

■ Oct. 15 – Budget presentation to City Council

■ Dec. 7 – New biennial

b u d g e t  
a d o p t e d  
f o r  
2005/  
2006



## Opening day of fishing season on Pine Lake

Trout season came five weeks late to Pine Lake, but the delay didn't dampen the spirits of fishing enthusiasts when opening day arrived on Saturday, May 29.

People carrying poles shared the dock, the shore, and more than a few boats. The Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife stocked Pine Lake with approximately 14,000 hatchery rainbow trout shortly before opening day.

Other lakes in the area opened for trout fishing on April 24. The opening at Pine Lake was delayed by a major renovation and construction project at Pine Lake Park.

Some new rules were in place when anglers arrived to cast their lines. Internal combustion engines are no longer allowed at Pine Lake. There is also a new prohibition on trailer parking, allowing only car-top boats.



*Fishing enthusiasts share the Pine Lake dock on opening day*



*A young fisherman chooses an isolated spot to try his luck*

## Living next to a wetland

In Sammamish, if you want to be a good neighbor, you'd better be nice to wetlands. With its rolling topography and bountiful rainfall, the city features wetlands in almost every neighborhood.

But behaving appropriately with wetlands isn't just a social obligation; it's the law.

Sammamish Municipal Code, Chapter 21A.50, establishes buffers to protect the wetlands. Depending on the wetland classification, the buffer can range from 25 to 150 feet from the edge of the wetland. There is also a 15-foot "no build" setback at the edge of a wetland buffer.

"The buffers are a crucial part of the wetland system and must be protected along with the wetland because they provide the initial filtering of sediments and other pollutants from runoff water," Senior Planner Emily Arteche said. "The also serve as a habitat connector for wildlife moving from a wetland to higher ground."

Dredging, diking and draining wetland systems, along with many other activities, are illegal. Alterations to a wetland buffer are not allowed without an explicit permit from the city.

Other things associated with people – cats, dogs, dirt bikes, all terrain vehicles, etc. – can also cause great damage.

"The pets can wreak havoc with wildlife," Arteche said. "Bikes and

other vehicles operating 'off-road' can damage soils and vegetation"

If you would like to find out more about being a good neighbor to your wetland, call the city's Community Development Department at 425-836-7920. Information about specific wetlands is available on the King County website at [www.metrokc.gov/gis/mappointal/iMAP](http://www.metrokc.gov/gis/mappointal/iMAP). Specific information can be obtained by typing in a parcel number or address and selecting the "Sensitive Areas (Wet themes)" map set.



## Maintaining good customer service

Returning home from college one summer, Glenn Akramoff decided to take a temporary job as a city maintenance worker. He had no idea what a huge decision it would turn out to be.

Today, Glenn is the Sammamish Infrastructure Operations and Maintenance Manager.

“I never went back to college,” Akramoff said. “I found my calling that summer – helping people and making a difference in the community.”

After getting his first taste of city maintenance work in Otego, a small town in central New York state, Akramoff moved to Washington and worked in Olympia and Lake Forest Park. In 2002, he took the Sammamish job.

“This job has been great,” Akramoff said. “Our operations and maintenance people here are extremely productive and fun to work with.

“And the residents are always polite. Even when they’re upset about something, they’re polite.”

The old image of a maintenance worker –

“a guy with a shovel and a sneer” —



*Glenn Akramoff, the city's infrastructure operations and maintenance manager, along 228th Avenue.*

is out of date, Akramoff said.

“Our people have a lot of education, many certifications, and we place a huge emphasis on customer service,” Akramoff said. “Their passion and dedication to this community and their work is second to none. It is a honor to be associated with such a special group of maintenance professionals.”

Akramoff’s duties are quite broad: street repair, installation of road signs, vegetation control, parks maintenance, drainage problems, flooding, and debris pickup are just a few of his responsibilities.

“When people call, we try to help as quickly as we can,” Akramoff said. “We put everything into our Citizen Action Request (CAR) system and create a list of priorities.”

Response time can range from 48 hours to 120 days, Akramoff said.

Last December’s 80 mph winds knocked down over 100 trees and created a very long to-do list for the Maintenance Team.

### Bio Box:

**Name:** Glenn Akramoff

**High School:** Unatego High School; Otego, New York

**College:** Chowan College, North Carolina

**Work:** City of Otego, City of Olympia, City of Lake Forest Park, City of Sammamish

**Personal:** Married

Wife: Shari

Children: Josh, 16; Ashley, 13

Cat: Lenny

“We cleaned up our last piece of debris in March,” Akramoff said.

With only eight full-time employees, Akramoff’s department hires up to 12 seasonal workers to handle busy periods.

“From mid-May to mid-September, we have 20 employees out there helping the community,” he said.

Akramoff is proud to say his crew members are often thanked in person by residents.

“That was especially true after we cleared the snow and ice off the streets last winter,” he said. “Lots of people told us things have gotten a lot better since Sammamish became a city.

“That was great, because for me, that’s what it’s all about – good customer service.”

### **Contact numbers:**

City Hall 425-898-0660

Glenn Akramoff 425-837-4633

## Neighborhood Traffic Safety

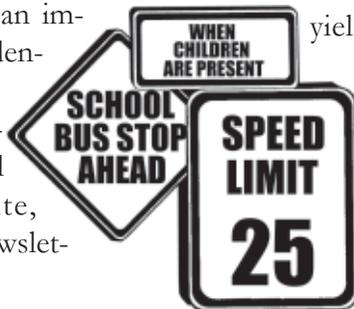
City staff annually hear many concerns from residents about traffic safety in neighborhoods, especially regarding the safety of children out on the streets during the long summer vacation. Another common complaint is that of cars being driven at high speeds, music blaring, in quiet neighborhoods.

Your Public Works and Engineering department relies on extensive engineering knowledge and experience when evaluating neighborhood traffic situations. The city offers an informative brochure entitled “Traffic Safety in Our Neighborhood”, which answers some of the most commonly asked questions:

- What are the official guidelines?
- Why not post lower speed limits?
- What is uniformity of speed and the basic speed law?
- How are specific speed limits established?
- Why not install speed bumps?
- What can parents do to protect their children?

Working together with the police department and city public works department, residents can improve the safety and livability of our residential neighborhoods.

To obtain a brochure with more details about traffic safety in our residential neighborhoods, visit the city website, [www.sammamish.wa.us](http://www.sammamish.wa.us), and click the Newsletter tab, or visit city hall in person.



## U-Turn Etiquette

U-turns are allowed at many signalized intersections along Sammamish’s new signature boulevard, 228<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

U-turns have been incorporated into the design in order to improve safety by limiting left turns across traffic, while still allowing easy access to homes and businesses along 228<sup>th</sup>. Though convenient, u-turns introduce driving situations which may be unfamiliar to some people.

Drivers who try to make the turn from the end of the left turn pocket may run into the curb where it is not widened. U-turn areas along 228<sup>th</sup> Avenue are constructed such that vehicles in the left turn pocket have plenty of room to make the turn if they continue to the middle of the intersection as if they are making a left turn, then execute the u-turn.

Oncoming traffic should be cautious in approaching any signalized intersection. Watch closely for unexpected movements from traffic in the left turn pocket which may be making a u-turn.

Motorists making a u-turn need to yield to oncoming traffic, just as when turning left. In addition, they should take care in case vehicles turning right on red fail to yield.

Vehicles turning right on red must stop behind the stop bar, yield to pedestrians in the crosswalk, then slowly move forward until traffic approaching from the left is visible. A right on red may be completed after yielding to oncoming through traffic, as well as vehicles possibly making a u-turn.

## Building Permits Required for Construction

With summer just around the corner, prime time for construction has arrived. Building projects may be within or detached from an existing home. Some projects add living space, while others are solely site improvements. The vast majority require a city building permit before construction can begin.

There are currently seven permit categories: building, clearing, commercial II (tenant improvement), demolition, grading, mechanical and plumbing. Depending on the nature of the project, one or more permit may be called for. Installing a landscape water feature along with a deck,

for example, would require building, grading, and plumbing permits to cover various portions of the work. Permits are also necessary for removal of large trees.

The city permit center welcomes residents to call or come in for information related to their proposed project. Call (425) 898-0660 and ask for permit center.

In addition, permits may be applied for online at [www.mybuildingpermit.com](http://www.mybuildingpermit.com). Plumbing and mechanical permits have been available via the internet since October 2002. For the first time this summer, it is possible to apply for re-roofing permits.

## Natural Yard Care

In January 2004 a Federal District Judge prohibited the use of dozens of pesticides near salmon bearing streams. In some cases, the order created a buffer up to 100 yards deep.

Many Sammamish residents are directly impacted by the federal court order. A number of salmon bearing streams run through Sammamish, including Ebright, Evans, Pine Lake, Kanim, Laughing Jacobs, George Davis, Many Springs, and Zaccuse Creeks. These creeks support a variety of fish including steelhead, sockeye salmon, and coho. All feed into Lake Sammamish, home to a unique endangered species of Kokanee salmon.

You don't need pesticides to have a healthy yard and garden. Here are a few quick guidelines to help protect the environment:

- Build healthy soil by using compost, mulch, worm bins.
- Select pest and disease-resistant plants.
- Pull weeds by hand before they spread.
- Leave grass clippings on the lawn as natural fertilizer.
- Identify the problem before you spray, splash or stomp.

Most bugs are beneficial.

- Accept a few weeds and a little insect damage—give natural predators time to control pests.
- Select less toxic pesticides when available.

King County has published an informative brochure on this topic. For more information, visit [www.ci.sammamish.wa.us](http://www.ci.sammamish.wa.us) and click the newsletter tab, or call City Hall at 425-898-0660.

## Garbage Pickups

The territory served by waste management companies in Sammamish--and throughout King County--is based on a franchise agreement established approximately 35 years ago. Under this agreement, two companies serve Sammamish: SnoKing Waste Management of Redmond, and Rabanco Eastside of Bellevue. Their territories are divided by NE 8th Avenue/Inglewood Hill Road.

Residents north of that line are served by SnoKing Waste Management, their green and yellow trucks instantly recognizable with a "WM" emblem. Waste Management has an informative website at [www.wmnorthwest.com](http://www.wmnorthwest.com). They may also be contacted at (425) 814-9240.

South of the line is Rabanco territory. Rabanco provides service to over 200,000 households, and thousands of businesses in the King County area. For further information about Rabanco call (425) 392-6651, or visit their website [www.rabanco.com](http://www.rabanco.com).

## TV Lineup on Web

Sammamish's local television channel schedule is now posted at the city website, [www.ci.sammamish.wa.us](http://www.ci.sammamish.wa.us). Just go to the home page, and click the Television link in the left bar. The city channel currently features a number of programs relevant to the community including the Sammi Awards show, Transportation Issues in the Region, Sound Transit meetings, and emergency services information. The program lineup has been updated about once per month.

# CITY HALL CALENDAR

## JUNE

### Tuesday, June 1

- Community Development Committee, 6:00 pm  
*Sammamish Plateau Water & Sewer Dist.*
- City Council Meeting, 6:30 pm  
*Sammamish Plateau Water & Sewer Dist.*

### Wednesday, June 2

- Public Meeting for Eastside Catholic H.S., 7 pm  
*Discovery Elementary, 2300 228th Ave SE*

### Monday, June 7

- Parks, Open Space & Natural Resources Committee, 10 am  
*Sammamish City Hall*
- Ebright Creek Park: Hopes, Dreams & Fears, 7 pm  
*Discovery Elementary School*

### Tuesday, June 15

- Public Works Committee, 5 pm  
*Sammamish Plateau Water & Sewer Dist.*
- City Council Regular Meeting, 6:30 pm  
*Sammamish Plateau Water & Sewer Dist.*

### Wednesday, June 16

- Arts Commission Meeting, 7 pm  
*Bellewood Retirement Center*

### Thursday, June 17

- Planning Commission Open House, 7 pm  
*Sammamish Hills Lutheran Church*

### Tuesday, June 22

- Finance Committee Meeting, 11:30 am  
*Sammamish City Hall*
- City Council Study Session, 6:30 pm  
*Sammamish Plateau Water & Sewer Dist.*

### Wednesday, June 23

- Public Safety Committee Meeting, 6 pm  
*Sammamish City Hall*

### Thursday, June 24

- City Council Study Session, 6:30 pm  
*Sammamish Water & Sewer Dist.*

### Saturday, June 26

- Public Workshop (Street standards), 9 am - 4 pm  
*Sammamish Water & Sewer Dist.*

### Monday, June 28

- Parks & Recreation Commission Meeting, 7 pm  
*Sammamish Plateau Water & Sewer Dist.*

### Tuesday, June 29

- City Council Special Study Session, 6:30 pm  
*Sammamish Plateau Water & Sewer Dist.*

## JULY

### Thursday, July 1

- Planning Commission Meeting, 7 pm  
*Sammamish Plateau Water & Sewer Dist.*

### Monday, July 5

- Holiday - City offices closed

### Tuesday, July 6

- City Council Special Meeting / Study Session, 6:30 pm  
*Sammamish Plateau Water & Sewer Dist.*

### Monday, July 19

- Parks, Open Space & Nat. Resources Cmte, 10 am  
*Sammamish City Hall*

### Tuesday, July 20

- Public Works Committee, 5 pm  
*Sammamish City Hall*
- City Council Meeting, 6:30 pm  
*Sammamish Plateau Water & Sewer Dist.*

### Wednesday, July 21

- Arts Commission Meeting, 7 pm  
*Bellewood Retirement Center*

### Thursday, July 22

- Planning Commission Meeting, 7 pm  
*Sammamish Plateau Water & Sewer Dist.*

### Monday, July 26

- Parks & Recreation Commission Meeting, 6:30 pm  
*Sammamish Plateau Water & Sewer Dist.*

### Tuesday, July 27

- Finance Committee Meeting, 11:30 am  
*Sammamish City Hall*
- City Council Study Session, 6:30 pm  
*Sammamish Plateau Water & Sewer Dist.*

### Wednesday, July 28

- Public Safety Committee Meeting, 6 pm  
*Sammamish City Hall*

### Thursday, July 29

- City Council Study Session, 6:30 pm  
*Sammamish Plateau Water & Sewer Dist.*

## NO COUNCIL MEETINGS IN AUGUST

*NOTE: Times, dates and locations are subject to change. Please consult the city website for the most current information. The Sammamish Plateau Water & Sewer District is located at 1510 228th Avenue NE.*

# CITY OF SAMMAMISH



*Kathleen Huckabay  
Mayor*



*Don Gerend  
Deputy Mayor*



*Jack Barry  
Councilmember*



*Mark Cross  
Councilmember*



*Lee Felling  
Councilmember*



*Michele Petitti  
Councilmember*



*Nancy Whitten  
Councilmember*

## City seeks Task Force volunteers

Sammmamish residents are invited to submit letters of interest and resumes for the city's Special Study Area Task Force. This volunteer group of 15 to 17 people will drive the public input process on potential land use in a 546-acre sub-area near the geographical center of the city. Thirty acres within the sub-area will contain Sammmamish Commons, a civic campus and park complex now in the planning stages.

Task Force participants will include members of the general public, landowners in the sub-area, local business people, and members of city boards and commissions. The first of six Task Force meetings is scheduled for September. The group's land use recommendations to the City Council are expected in January 2005. Among other things, the Task Force will help organize three community forums between September and December 2004.

If you would like to be a member of the Task Force, please submit your letter of interest and resume to City Clerk Melonie Anderson, City Hall, 486 228<sup>th</sup> Ave. NE, Sammmamish, WA 98074. The deadline for submissions is June 24.

### City of Sammmamish Offices

486 228<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE, Sammmamish, WA 98074  
Phone: 425-898-0660 • Fax: 425-898-0669

[www.ci.sammamish.wa.us](http://www.ci.sammamish.wa.us)

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**Don Gerend, Deputy Mayor**

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**Jack Barry, Councilmember**

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**Lee Felling, Councilmember**

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**Michele Petitti, Councilmember**

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**Nancy Whitten, Councilmember**

[nwhitten@ci.sammamish.wa.us](mailto:nwhitten@ci.sammamish.wa.us)

Ben Yazici ..... City Manager  
Pete Butkus ..... Assistant City Manager  
Delora Kerber ..... Public Works Director  
Ray Gilmore ..... Community Development Director  
Lyman Howard ..... Financial Services Director  
Jeff Watling ..... Parks & Recreation Director  
Mike Sauerwein.....Administrative Services Director  
Tim Larson ..... Communications Manager  
Bruce Disend ..... City Attorney  
Melonie Anderson ..... City Clerk  
Richard Baranzini ..... Police Chief  
John Murphy ..... Fire Chief



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