



Volume 15, No. 2, April 2003

Editor's Message

Your editor confesses to committing a major error. This morning, April 10, 2003, Volume 15, No. 1, April 2003, of WCMA News was transmitted by e-mail to the WCMA membership at wcma@yahoo.com. Mitch Wasserman, intrepid Region 12 representative, actually read it, and was quick to point out that four articles from that region had been left out.

My sincere apologies to those who contributed, and to Mitch, along with thanks to Mitch for pointing out the omissions.

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Omitted Articles:

Medina city staff will spend much of the coming year developing methods for improving communication with the community. Due to the fact that the community does not have commercial or industrial uses, there are limited opportunities for city staff to interact with civic organizations. As a result, it is always necessary to look for efficient methods of sharing and receiving information.

The **Medina** police department has developed a fantastic communications tool called *Community E-Lert*, which was recently the topic of a proactive policing article in the International Association of Chiefs of Police monthly magazine. The success of the E-Lert program has led to the development of a *Community E-Notice*, which is used to communicate issues of general government/community interest.

The Community E-Lert program was initiated during the summer of 2002 to provide residents with up-to-date information by e-mail concerning criminal activity in their neighborhoods. The suggestion for the program was made by a resident and news director at a local TV station, who was concerned about home burglaries and car break-ins in his neighborhood that he learned of days or weeks after the crimes occurred.

Residents who provide their email addresses are added to the Community E-Lert distribution list, which is maintained in confidence and not disseminated to third parties, and receive the E-Lerts within 24 hours of events affecting public safety. Residents without access to the Internet are provided the E-Lerts via FAX, if requested. The program has received enthusiastic support from the community and continues to grow. Approximately 1/3 of the households in the community have signed up to receive the notices since the program was initiated.

Kenmore news:

CARD ROOM ISSUE DECISION REACHED: For four years the city council and the community have debated the presence of a card room at the 11th Frame Bowling Alley. This card room began operations in the mid-1970's, over 20 years prior to Kenmore's incorporation. It generates \$500,000 into our general fund. When another operator indicated interest in opening a second card room, the council imposed a moratorium that has since been extended eight times. After public hearings and community meetings on the subject, council adopted an ordinance that grandfathered the existing card room, prohibited new card rooms from coming in and prohibited the "expansion, enlargement or intensification" of the existing card room. The compromise has carried favor with most of our residents; however, some of the members of the community that wanted an outright ban on card rooms are disappointed. We'll see what the future brings.

DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN: The planning commission forwarded the draft plan to council February 3rd. The council has conducted study sessions every Monday since receipt and has heard from the business community during citizen comment and at a public hearing held March 10th. Other than planning commission members, no one has spoken in support of the proposed plan. Council is encouraging people that tell them privately they support the plan to say so during citizen comment. The business community has presented council with its concerns on the proposed plan and will be meeting with council on March 24th to further discuss their concerns. We remain optimistic that the differences will be resolved wherever possible and that the plan will be adopted by the end of April.

PARK MASTER PLAN: Council has been reviewing the proposed plan and seems to be satisfied with the planning commission's draft. There will be some minor changes in the language and we believe the council will be comfortable enough with the plan that it will be adopted in April.

SR 522 PHASE I AND II PROJECTS: We have reached 30% design on the phase I project for improvements to the SR 522 corridor from 59th to 73rd Avenue NE. The value engineering exercise has been completed and several good suggestions were presented for consideration. The 30% design level indicated the issues we'll have with installing medians, adding turn lanes at certain intersections, taking parking and additional rights-of-way along the route, so now we can adjust the design to minimize these negative impacts wherever feasible. Phase II pre-design is proceeding and should be completed in June. Sound Transit is sharing in the cost of pre-design. Once this is completed, we'll have a better understanding of the improvements related to transit in the corridor and Sound Transit could then identify their level of funding participation, if any, in the construction stage.

Dateline **Shoreline**

Aurora Avenue Project Seeks FONSI

Shoreline's Aurora Avenue (SR 99) project is moving forward. Like many cities developed in the late 1940s and 1950s, **Shoreline** has a main street that evolved based on the availability of highway frontage and lower land prices. In 1964, the advent of the Interstate Highway System transformed the landscape, leaving the highway 99 corridor as a secondary road. Since then, the roadway has slowly evolved to its present state -- a strip of commercial real estate one parcel deep and running north and south through the middle of **Shoreline**. The roadway operates with two lanes in each direction separated by a center turn lane.

The stretch of roadway is one of the busiest stretches of highway in the state, with 35-45,000 average daily trips, each lane carries almost 40% of the traffic lanes on Interstate 5 less than one mile to the east carry. Sadly, the stretch of highway is a dangerous place for both motorists and pedestrians. In 2000, the rate for accidents reached 9.8 per million vehicle miles, more than three times the state average. Since 1997, we have seen 42 traffic accidents involving pedestrians, with fatalities more than twice the state average. The State Department of Transportation estimates personal injury and property damage to cost more than \$10 million a year. Simply stated, this is a dangerous section of road that needs to be improved.

Not surprisingly, **Shoreline** residents are eager to see improvements. A recent citizen survey indicated the perception of this roadway was "seedy" and "unsafe". Vocal business owners, many of whom are lessees, suggest that the roadway is just fine as it is, and the center turn lane needs to be retained as a vital business access lane. Others claim the stormwater runoff from the new road surface will damage the fragile urban streams, despite the fact that the roadway currently has no stormwater control or treatment and everything either goes into the ground or nearby streams with no treatment.

The city is currently seeking a finding of no significant impact (FONSI) from the Federal Highway Administration, while project opponents work to change public opinion of the project, reduce funding for the project, and subject the city council to endless hours to public comment on the issue. If all goes according to plan, the first mile will be under construction in mid-2005. Two subsequent phases will proceed shortly thereafter, as long as there is some funding for such projects in the future.

City Hall Considers Alternative Delivery Methods

The city is proceeding on a city hall project, slated for construction in 2005. Work has been completed to determine the appropriate space allocations and layout of the building, which will be approximately 57,000 square feet in gross space. The city is currently considering three sites for the new building, and will be completing due diligence on each as you read this.

While no decision has been made regarding how the building will be constructed, we have examined a number of alternative project delivery methods. Alternative project delivery methods are construction industry shorthand for processes other than the traditional design-bid-build sequence used to construct a building. Despite limitations in state law that mandates use of the traditional method for most cities, some interesting loopholes have been found that can allow a city to indirectly get the benefits of many of the alternative methods.

Alternative methods are attractive, as they often result in a lower cost per square feet, less likelihood of cost increases, a shorter construction timeline, and fewer delays.

From **Woodinville**, Pete Rose reports that he has limited keyboarding capability due to a cast on his right arm, so he'll be brief. In a county beset by regional issues with the devolution of King County services, our biggest issue remains a county expansion of services -- the Brightwater wastewater plant. The preferred location is a few blocks from the city limit. They are working daily to maintain their voice. It is very disruptive to local politics and they anticipate some "litmus test" politics in this year's election season.

Two major projects are noteworthy. **Woodinville** has landed a \$4.6 million grant toward a \$7 million project to eliminate the biggest traffic choke point in town. When completed in 2-3 years, your trips to Molbak's or Red Hook will be much easier. Design gets underway shortly. Woodinville has also been awarded a \$475,000 grant toward construction of a 17-acre resource park with an adjacent skate/BMX park. The \$1 million first phase begins construction in April.