

President's Message

As the incoming president, I had the privilege of addressing many of you during this summer's WCMA Conference at the Sun Mountain Lodge, so, as I started writing this, I reminded myself not to repeat the same themes. After staring at this blank page for a long, uncomfortable time, however, I've reconsidered.

I think the reason I was coming up empty is because the ideas and impulses that energize us as managers, engage the enthusiasm of our team members, and let us get up every morning wanting to make a difference don't change much from day to day. It's all about building community, serving our customers, and yes -- making a difference.

As it happens, my whole staff just went through some training with Jeff Kober, a very entertaining and sincere customer service advocate who used to work for Disney. After listening to him, I'd be happy to wear a Mickey Mouse outfit if it would help me build a road, please a resident, or reach a consensus. I'm feeling the magic!

As good as he was, though, all he really did was remind us, in concrete and emotional terms, of what we already know is important: Listening deeply to our customers and earning their trust. Making a difference one customer at a time. And building community together.

As for leaders, he encouraged us to rely more on the influence of our example than the threat of our authority. Vision and enthusiasm, he said, are more important than formal power. Intellectually, I think most of us know that. But thanks to Jeff, I was once again able to feel it, relish it, and re-commit to it!

During these tough economic times, it's not easy to breeze through the office with an intoxicating vapor trail of enthusiasm in your wake. With revenues falling off, it's tough to keep your game face on. And with demands for service rising, it's difficult to keep your blood pressure from doing the same.

But that's the challenge, right? That's what makes it great. As Tom Hanks said about baseball in A League of their Own: **"If it was easy, anybody could do it!"**

So good luck this year, and enjoy the challenge!

Ben Yazici
President, WCMA
Sammamish City Manager

Need Advice or Help?

What to do? Call a **Range Rider**!! Of course! Lots and lots of experience to draw from. And they're more than willing to have their brains picked or to hold your hand. They are:

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Editor's Note:

Is the information about you on the WCMA Roster correct? How about checking it? Take a look at your listing on the WCMA roster. And if it's not current and/or correct, please send what *should* say right now! We try to keep the roster current, but we do find lapses, both in members letting us know of changes, and in getting things we're given up to date.

Go to the roster at <http://wccma.org>. Click on "Membership", and then click on "Directory". Put in your last name, click, and take a look. If it's okay, please let us know. If it needs changing, let us know that, too, and how it should be changed. After all, it's your organization, and you should be able to control how you're listed. If, along the way, you stumble on something that is incorrect for you or for someone else, please send us an alert, and we'll chase it down. Send the results to Donita Knutson at dknutson@mrsc.org. And thanks!

Ron Bartels, editor
WCMA News

A Communications Note:

Are you subscribed to the electronic communications function for WCMA? Every so often we learn of a member of WCMA in good standing who isn't for some reason. The way to accomplish this is to check in with Donita at MRSC. MRSC is the secretariat for WCMA. And Donita Knutson at MRSC is the Executive Assistant, and in that position is the one who keeps various organization rosters and such things as authorizations to be on various web lists and e-mail directories for things like organizational notices and e-mailings of WCMA News. In short, she's a good person to know. And she already knows many of you. So give her a call or send her an e-mail to make sure you're up-to-date and in line to get all items that may be of interest to you. You can reach her at the general MRSC phone number, 206-625-1300, or outside the Seattle metropolitan area, she's at 1-800-933-6772. Her e-mail address is dknutson@mrsc.org.

A Holiday Message:

Greetings to all my friends in the Washington City/County Management Association:

I truly enjoy the holiday season. Having worked virtually all of my career in city management here in Washington, the year end budget process would often intrude on that enjoyment. At this time of year the confluence of stresses at home and at work occasionally made the season less than enjoyable.

One incident when the annual budget season and the beauty of the holiday season converged stands out in my memory.

The budget preparation and review process had gone fairly smoothly (which alone was a good reason to be merry). All the study sessions had been completed before Thanksgiving and the budget hearing was scheduled for the first Monday of December, which coincided with our regular city council meeting. The routine business was completed in just a few minutes and the hearing on the budget was opened. There were few, if any, comments as I recall, and the mayor closed the hearing, and council adopted the budget unanimously. Before adjourning, the council cancelled the last meeting of the year.

As I drove across town to pick up my children who were with their grandparents, I savored the satisfaction of successfully completing another annual budget. The brightly lighted houses sparkled in the crisp night air. It began to snow lightly. Just at that moment the classic version of Bing Crosby's "White Christmas" came on the car radio.

As you complete what has certainly been one of the hardest budget cycles in memory, preparing for an uncertain economic future for your communities, keep a positive spirit in the face of adversity, value the people around you and use the pleasant memories you have to give you a boost when you need it in the New Year.

Happy Holidays, Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all!

Lynn Nordby
Public Policy and Management Consultant
Municipal Research & Services Center of Washington

Of Special Note:

Information from ICMA:

Spread the News – New Early-Career Member Dues Rates

Now entry-level to mid-management local government professionals (below department head level) can take advantage of the ICMA professional network with special flat dues rate for their first three years of membership

- \$150 year one
- \$175 year two
- \$200 year three.

Students and interns membership is just \$25 a year.

This is just one more thing ICMA is doing to support the next generation of local government professionals by making it easier to join and take advantage of all the benefits ICMA membership offers. Visit icma.org/membership for more information about ICMA member [benefits](#).

David Limardi, city manager of Highland Park, Illinois, and president of ICMA, plans to attend the upcoming Northwest Management Conference. Dr. Frank Benest, former city manager of Palo Alto, California, and now the ICMA senior advisor dealing with Next Gen also intends to be there. Both will participate in the conference program.

Recent Support of the ICMA Fund for Professional Management

At the end of May, ICMA Executive Director Bob O'Neill asked each state association to commit to a 3-year pledge in support of the [ICMA Fund for Professional Management](#). Started in 1986, the Fund advocates on behalf of the council-manager form and professional local government management by supporting civic education initiatives and form of government campaigns.

Based on each association's giving history, they were asked to increase or renew their support, or make their first gift. In addition, all associations were asked to encourage their members to make a \$100 contribution in honor of the 100th anniversary of the council-manager form of

government, the celebration of which began at the recent ICMA Annual Conference in Richmond, Virginia.

ICMA would like to thank the following associations for responding to this recent request by either donating or pledging a total of almost \$45,000 to the Fund in the past several months. With their generous support, the Fund will continue as a valuable resource supporting civic education and professional local government management around the country.

- Colorado City/County Management Association
- Florida City and County Management Association
- Georgia City/County Management Association
- Illinois City/County Management Association
- Indiana Municipal Management Association
- Massachusetts Municipal Management Association
- Minnesota City/County Management Association
- National Association of County Administrators
- New Hampshire Municipal Association
- North Carolina City/County Management Association
- Ohio City/County Management Association
- City Management Association of Oklahoma
- South Carolina City and County Management Association
- Tennessee City Management Association
- Texas City Management Association
- Utah City Management Association
- Virginia Local Government Management Association
- Washington City/County Management Association
- Wisconsin City/County Management Association

ICMA also thanks the Leadership ICMA Class of 2008 for making a contribution to the Fund as they graduate from the program.

To learn more about the fund's work, visit icma.org/fund or contact Abigail Lundy, manager of fund development, at fund@icma.org or 202/962-3594.

How Can You Help Sustain the Profession?

Where do tomorrow's managers come from? How do we identify them, bring them into the profession, and prepare them to lead? A majority of today's managers cut their teeth with

management internships. Yet with today's tight budgets, many of these foundational positions have been cut – if they were even funded to begin with.

Even if ICMA and its partners keep generating interest in the profession among students and career changers, they will move on if they can't find a way to break-in to this career. While we can always try something new like reaching out through YouTube or MySpace to draw people in, they need somewhere to land. ICMA, with NASPAA, NFBPA, and IHN, invite local government managers to create one- and two-year [Local Government Management Fellowships](#), and hire candidates pre-screened by ICMA and partner members.

Why should you hire a Local Government Management Fellow?

The LGMF program was an easy way to tap into the top national MPA pool and give local government management experience to a future manager. I was very impressed with the quality of the candidates from whom we could choose and we are delighted with our Fellow.

- Bob Jean, City Manager

I think that the LGMF program is one of the best things that ICMA has ever done. Given the quality of the Fellows that the process presents and the value that they have added, I intend to participate in this program over and over again.

- Jim Ley, County Manager

We were so impressed with the quality of the applicants that we hired two Fellows. If we had the budget, we would have hired three.

- Ed Daley, City Manager

What do I do next?

To explore how mentoring a Fellow in your community can help you get important work done and build a bridge for the next generation, contact Rob Carty at rcarty@icma.org or 202/962-3560. Visit icma.org/lgmf and select "Host a Fellow" for answers to additional questions, to view work plans, to see past Fellow profiles, or to download an application.

Also, consider sharing a Fellow with a nearby local government. This can help make the program more affordable and offer a unique experience for the Fellow while building and strengthening intergovernmental relationships. Several hosts have used a share model if you have questions about how to make that work.

Finalist applications will be available for local governments in January 2009 for summer placement (upon graduation), so join now. Joining does not obligate you to hire if you cannot find a suitable match.

- Gain access to top MPA/MPP graduates, pre-screened by managers
- Complete important projects
- Sustain the profession
- Prepare your community for the future
- Help someone *make a difference!*

ICMA Appoints Senior Advisor on Next Generation Initiatives

At the ICMA's 94th annual conference in Richmond, Virginia, Executive Director Bob O'Neill announced that ICMA has engaged Dr. Frank Benest, former city manager of Palo Alto, California, as its new senior advisor on [Next Generation Initiatives](#).

According to O'Neill, "The purpose of this new role is to assist ICMA staff, state associations, and other affiliate groups in crafting next generation programs that will accelerate the development of emerging leaders and attract new talent to local government careers. Frank is ideally suited to help promote these strategic goals given his successes in championing next generation efforts over the past eight years and his service on the ICMA board."

As senior advisor, Benest will continue to serve as the co-chair of the [Cal-ICMA Coaching Program](#) and work to expand next generation programs and services across the country. Benest stated that he is excited about the opportunity to collaborate at all levels of the profession in preparing the next generation of local government managers.

Frank can be reached at frank@frankbenest.com or 650/444-6261.

Sequim, Washington City Council Resumes Search For City Manager.

Washington's [Peninsula Daily News](#) (11/11, Dickerson) reports that "it's back to the drawing board" for the Sequim City Council, after the city council "could not reach compensation agreements with any" of the three finalists. According to Mayor Laura Dubois, "the salary range that the council was prepared to offer and had advertised for was between \$95,000 and \$115,000 annually." The mayor said that the "council might reexamine the pool of candidates who had applied for the job, or it might start the search over." Since May 5, when the "council voted...to fire Bill Elliott," the "city manager position has been vacant." Currently, "Police Chief Robert Spinks has been filling in as interim manager." Meanwhile, council members have "hired a retired city manager, Lee Walton, as a consultant to help them find a permanent manager."

ICMA Awards

At the recent ICMA Annual Conference, there were two awards that recognized Washington accomplishments:

Program Excellence Award

Community Health and Safety Program Excellence Award (populations less than 10,000)

Rape Aggression Defense (RAD) Course -- Normandy Park, Washington, and Douglas J. Schulze, city manager.

In addition, under "other nominees" for the [Community Partnership Program Excellence Award \(populations 50,000 and greater\)](#) was a Coalition of Small Police Agencies (CSPA) -- Algona,

Washington; Black Diamond, Washington, and Gwendolyn M. Voelpel, city administrator; Clyde Hill, Washington, and Mitchell Wasserman, city administrator; Duvall, Washington; Enumclaw, Washington; Issaquah, Washington and Leon Kos, city administrator; Lake Forest Park, Washington, and David M. Cline, city administrator; Medina, Washington; Mercer Island, Washington, and Richard M. Conrad, city manager; Normandy Park, Washington, and Douglas J. Schulze, city manager; Pacific, Washington, and Snoqualmie, Washington, and Robert J. Larson, city administrator.

Credentialing

The number from Washington is growing. The current roster of those who have received the credential recognition are:

Washington

Neal J. Beets, City Manager, City of Federal Way
Ron S. Bergman
David M Campbell, Assistant City Manager, City of Longview
Duane R Cole, City Manager, City of Walla Walla
William B. Elliott
Lewis G. Griffin, City Administrator, City of Connell
Mark E. Hoppen, Deputy Development Services Administrator, City of Puyallup (Retired)
Leon Kos, City Administrator, City of Issaquah
Derek M. Matheson, City Manager, City of Covington
William R McDonald, City Administrator, City of Dupont
Patrick J. McDonnell, City Manager, City of Vancouver
David R. Mercier, City Manager, City of Spokane Valley
Kent A. Myers, City Manager, City of Port Angeles
Andrew E. Neiditz, City Manager, City of Lakewood
Lynn K. Nordby (Retired)
Douglas J. Schulze, City Manager, City of Normandy Park
John F. Sherman, City Supervisor, City of Pullman
Patrick F. Sorensen, Deputy General Manager, Mukilteo Water & Wastewater District
Craig R. Ward, City Manager, City of SeaTac
Ronald K. Wilde, City Manager, City of Edgewood

It isn't all that difficult to do. So how about going to the ICMA website and finding out the process and taking that big step?

Pass It On - Recruit a Member

Pass It On – Share the Secrets of Success with Young Professionals and Students

Your advice and encouragement can make all the difference to young professionals and students. At a time when so many local government managers are retiring, your help is essential to ensure the next generation is getting the opportunities and support it needs.

Here's how you can help

Share your own story about what ICMA membership and the profession have meant to you. For example:

- How has ICMA benefited your career and your community?
- What has the professional network that ICMA offers meant to you personally and professionally?
- What and who have been the greatest influences in your career?
- What is the best career advice you've ever received?

Engage in such activities as:

- Enroll a promising young professional in your organization in an ICMA [emerging leaders](#) professional development program.
- Cover your staff's ICMA dues, giving them the nationwide network and resources that will foster their growth and enhance the skills they bring to your organization.
- Become a [Legacy Leader](#), a program that recognizes credentialed managers who coach and recruit emerging leaders.
- Encourage the successor to a city or county manager or assistant manager in your area who has left a community to join ICMA.
- Speak at universities, high schools, and career fairs about how local government professionals make a difference every day. Visit icma.org/civicsed for civics education tips.
- Sponsor an intern through such programs as the [Local Government Management Fellowship](#).

Spread the News - New Early Career Membership Dues Rates

For entry-level to mid-management local government professionals – flat dues rate for first three years of affiliate membership:

- \$150 year one
- \$175 year two
- \$200 year three.

Student and intern membership is just \$25 a year.

Quick and easy tools you can use to explain membership

- Highlights of [member benefits and services](#).
- [Next gen](#) career tips and information (icma.org/nextgen).
- If you're not sure if someone is an ICMA member, check Who's Who online (icma.org/whoswho).
- Questions? Email membership@icma.org or call 202-962-3680.

Toll-Free ICMA Phone Number Available

As an added member benefit, ICMA's toll-free telephone line—800/745-8780—is now available for direct access to ICMA's customer service staff, who are ready to answer your questions about membership, publications, and other services. The toll-free line is available in the United States, Canada, and the Caribbean. Members in the D.C area and those from other countries should call 202/962-3680 with membership questions or 202/289-4262 for calls not related to membership.

And now, the news:

Region 1, Clallam, Jefferson, Kitsap & Mason Counties

Lynn Nordby, Consultant

lnordby@msn.com

Mark Dombroski, city administrator, **Bainbridge Island**, reports that the city council has voted to place a measure on the ballot in May of 2009 to change the form of government from mayor/council to council/manager. The only glitch is that an amendment to RCW 35A.06.050 in 2004 intended to reduce the cost of elections deleted the language previously in the statute that allowed the vote to be at a special election, requiring instead that it be held at the next general election. This would place the issue on the same ballot as the election of a potential new mayor. Curiously this amendment only dealt with code cities. The statute affecting a change in the form of government for all other cities still permits a special election "as soon as possible". A proposed amendment to insert language permitting the option of holding a special election is being discussed with AWC and the city's legislative delegation.

From **Port Angeles**, interim city manager Jerry Osterman reports that they are in the recruitment process for a new city manager. Waldron & Company were contracted for the search with finalist interviews scheduled for December 5th. It is anticipated that the new city manager will

start on or shortly after January 1st to enter into a goal setting process with the city council. With a number of changes on the city council this past January, it was unfortunate that a "bonding" retreat did not happen at that time. Jerry reports that in the cities that he has worked with throughout his career, it is evident how important it is to take this time with the newly elected officials to meet with them individually and collectively with the full council to form trust and understandings early on. This is even more important with a new city manager coming on board. With the downturn of the economy, the city, like others, has revisited basic services and non-mandated programs as part of the budget process. Jerry reports that **Port Angeles** is a beautiful panoramic city with a deep-water harbor and the Olympic Mountains in the background. They are actively involved with the Port of **Port Angeles** in developing a proposal for a new location for National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) office, warehouse, and marine related facilities including piers and upland facilities. The harbor presents an incredible economic development opportunity.

From **Sequim**, Linda Herzog, interim city manager reports that she took over in early December from the previous interim city manager, police chief Robert Spinks, who underwent surgery to remove a noncancerous tumor from his auditory nerve.

Working with Lee Walton, the council had previously selected three finalists for interviews but was unable to reach agreement with any of them. With Lee severely injured in a recent fall, for the next round of recruitment the council met with and considered the Prothman Company and Waldron & Co. On Nov. 24 the council voted to hire Waldron & Co. to initially facilitate a half-day team-building session for the members, and then begin a search next year for a permanent city manager.

From **Port Townsend** city manager David Timmons reports that he and his wife Maria are enjoying the challenge of keeping up with their granddaughter and looking forward to the arrival of another grandchild in February. With the upcoming temporary closure of the Hood Canal bridge and the limited **Port Townsend** -- Keystone ferry service, the community is going to be pretty isolated for a while.

Meanwhile, **Port Townsend** has just been named #24 on the List of Historic Places rated in the Nov/Dec issue of National Geographic Traveler ahead of such places as Boston's historic areas, Canterbury, England, Philadelphia's historic area and the historic area of New Orleans. Seems like a good reason to take trip to **Port Townsend** for a fresh look around and boost the local economy.

Region 2, Grays Harbor, Lewis, Pacific & Thurston Counties
Mike McCarty, Assistant Director, Operations and Services, AWC
mikem@awcnet.org

No report.

Region 3, Clark, Cowlitz, Skamania & Wahkiakum Counties
Lloyd Halverson, City Administrator, City of Camas
lhalverson@ci.cammas.wa.us

Lloyd Halverson, city administrator, **Camas**, submits the following thoughts:

Undaunted Notes from the Southwest

As I compose these notes, snow is falling on our quiet streets in **Camas**. We also know that it is winter since our budgets are done. As a welcome relief, some thought and attention turn to the season and the holidays.

In SW Washington, like virtually everywhere, budgets have been very difficult. The economic and budget circumstances are described by many as “unprecedented”. A veteran administrator in our area remarked with the perspective of four decades: “This is the worst budget in my thirty-six years of budgets”. From your correspondents’ perspective, the long term effects of the “one-percent cap”, combined with the effects of the economic/building downturn, make this cycle especially rough.

Sample 2009 general fund budgets in our area are three to six percent lower than the adopted 2008 general fund budgets. In some localities, the staff effects are being handled through attrition; in the case of a large employer and community development department, major layoffs have already been implemented.

And yet, in the face of it all this and more, I remain optimistic. A reaction to the scandals of greed and betrayals will, I believe, grow into a renewal of a culture of personal responsibility and common purpose. This will -- hopefully -- gain strength from the spontaneous yearnings and drive of Americans, and will find encouragement and support from the new national leadership. This is offered not as a calculation, but as a hopeful faith.

It seems fitting to provide readers with an extended quotation from a great essay by Vaclav Havel, the Czech Playwright and first President of the Czech Republic after “the transformation” of 1990. In his essay entitled “Never Hope Against Hope” (which appeared in Esquire Magazine, October 1993), Havel wrote:

Hope in this deep and powerful sense is not the same as joy when things are going well, or willingness to invest in enterprises what are obviously headed for early success, but rather an ability to work for something to succeed . . . Hope is not the conviction that something will turn out well, but the certainty that something makes sense, regardless of how it turns out. It is this Hope, above all, that gives us strength”

For a uniquely American illustration of this theme, with a strong Pacific Northwest element, the epic saga of the Lewis and Clark Corps of Discovery immediately comes to mind. Undaunted Courage by Stephen Ambrose is a great read, about real heroes. For a visual, imagine the Members of the Corps, hungry and cold, crossing the Great Divide. Their view to the uncharted west was of a series of further snow covered ridges that stretched to the

horizon. They renewed their strength, walked and were not weary, headed to the Pacific. They had the “right stuff”: hope, vision, leadership, teamwork; and undaunted courage. Perhaps there are parallels to the “path that lies ahead” for us.

Lloyd also submits the following:

Note on the Polish partnership: Representatives of the Polish counterpart and affiliate organizations have been officially invited to participate in the March 2009 NW Management Conference in **Vancouver**. We are expecting representatives of the counterpart groups, the Forum of Sekretarze, and of the Foundation for the Support of Local Democracy. They will have a role in the program; please take the chance to get acquainted with these professionals.

Lloyd also submits this additional note:

Denny Richards has been appointed as city manager in **Kelso**. This follows interim "stints" at other locations, most recently **Jefferson County**. Welcome to SW Washington, or should we say to the former **Vancouver resident**: “Welcome back.”

The **Vancouver** city council approved the budget for the 2009-2010 biennium. The city used a multi-pronged strategy to deal with the \$6 million structural deficit that included a combination of budget cuts, rate increases and reductions in expenses, particularly those related to personnel costs. The budget continues the city's commitment to public safety and core services while allowing for economic opportunity. A total of 30.5 positions will be eliminated citywide during the biennium.

The city also increased the utility tax on water, sewer and stormwater utilities by four percent, which will be used to offset budget cuts in public safety. In addition the city also converted a portion of the solid waste franchise fee to a tax at a rate which is consistent with the other city utilities. The council also agreed to increase the property tax levy in 2009 by 1 percent.

City council approved funding of the **Vancouver** waterfront access project that will provide access to the future waterfront development on the former Boise Cascade mill site. The original funding proposal for this project was changed and the neighborhood traffic calming program has been reduced for five years to allow this project to move forward. Council also provided support for the parks and recreation capital program.

All managers and non-union employees will receive no cost of living increases for 2009. The city expects a \$1.3 million savings in the general fund over the 2009-2010 biennium.

Vancouver, Clark College, the Parks Foundation and an anonymous donor are partnering to design and construct a Japanese garden on the main campus of Clark College. The donor has committed up to \$1 million, through the Parks Foundation, for the design, construction and ongoing maintenance of the proposed garden. Landscape architects, Murase Associates, have been hired to work with college and city staff on conceptual designs.

Vancouver is one of seven cities in the nation selected to participate in phase two of a National League of Cities project to improve and expand after school learning opportunities for children and youth. **Vancouver** will receive further technical assistance from NLC's Institute for Youth, Education, and Families (YEF) through the City Leaders Supporting Afterschool and A New Day for Learning project, which is supported by the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation. The cities selected for phase two will receive more intensive assistance to focus on program quality, transportation systems, opportunities for middle school youth, availability of summer programs and sustainable financial support. **Vancouver** will formalize an entity to coordinate after school programs, assess existing programs, identify gaps in services, establish common standards for program activities and develop an outreach campaign that will increase community support for after school programs.

Region 4, Kittitas, Klickitat & Yakima Counties
David Zabell, Assistant City Manager, City of Yakima
dzabell@ci.yakima.wa.us

Grandview reports:

The city council adopted a balanced budget early in December, concluding a process that began in May 2008 when the voters declined to approve a 2 year increase in the private utility taxes. During the summer, the city council voted to close the museum, close the swimming pool two weeks early, eliminate seasonal parks maintenance employees, eliminate employee training for the balance of 2008, and eliminate the animal control officer position. Those service cuts were carried over into 2009.

City administrator Scott Staples reports that he is most pleased that each of the council members, prior to this process, actually prioritized the twenty (20) programs and services in the general fund. These priorities were used to develop a list for the council as a whole, and the management team used this to develop specific recommendations for service changes. He reports that this is the first time in his 35 years in city management that he has had a council willing to quantify their priorities when it comes to city services. It proved to be an extremely helpful and rational way to make tough budget decisions.

The mayor, city council, and department heads will be conducting a one day retreat in early 2009 to begin work on the 2010 budget.

The city is making steady progress on two (2) capital projects, including downtown revitalization and a joint library on the **Grandview** campus of the **Yakima** Valley Community College. Efforts are being made to secure funding from the state capital budget to assist with the downtown project. The library is estimated to cost about \$ 4 million and \$3.1 million has been raised so far.

Like many cities in the **Yakima** Valley and beyond, our sustained growth in general fund revenues can not keep pace with expenditure growth, hence the need for service changes,

particularly in an environment where the voters are not inclined at all to approve any increase in taxes.

Yakima sends the following report:

The city of **Yakima's** bond ratings were upgraded earlier this year.

We are happy to report that on May 2nd, 2008 Standard and Poor's upgraded their credit rating on all the city's outstanding water/wastewater revenue system bonds two notches from A to AA-, with a stable outlook affirmed. The rating upgrade was based on three factors: economic base and the city's status as a market and processing center for the surrounding agricultural area; a history of strong financial performance and high debt coverage; and a practice of setting multiple year rate increases sufficient to support the system's operational and capital needs.

We are also pleased to report that on August 19th, Standard and Poor's also upgraded their credit rating on all of the city's outstanding general obligation bonds one notch from A to A+, also with a stable outlook. This rating upgrade was based on three factors: Longstanding economic role as a service and manufacturing center for a surrounding agricultural region; a track record of strong general fund balances; and good financial policies and practices, including a minimum general fund balance threshold and the use of a forecasting model.

These rating increases are especially noteworthy in light of the nation's current economic recession, lower than average median incomes and high unemployment in **Yakima** and state restrictions on major sources of revenue growth. They reflect strong and prudent management of the city's financial resources and the self-imposition of budgetary constraints wherever they can be achieved.

Continued implementation of the DYFI improvements (this years \$1.4 million) in the downtown.

The city invested \$1.4 million of state and local funds to complete the third phase of the **Yakima** Downtown Futures Initiative. The city has invested nearly \$12 million through the DFI to provide streetscape improvements throughout the central business district. The project features replicas of the original street lamps that adorned downtown **Yakima** in the late 1880's, along with new sidewalks, brick pavers, landscaping, decorative bollards and benches, as well as improved electrical and irrigation systems. The project has attracted over \$75 million of commercial construction for hotels, wineries, boutique shops and restaurants that have created over 200 jobs. In 2008, **Yakima** received the Municipal Excellence in Economic Development Award from the Association of Washington Cities for the project.

Conversion of City refuse service from manual to automated (7 year process)

In October 2007, the refuse division completed the project to change from manual refuse collection to automated collection. The project began with a pilot program in 2000. The goals of the program were to determine the feasibility of automated refuse collection, reduce employee injuries, reduce garbage related problems and assist in future solid waste management planning. After a successful pilot program, city council approved a seven-year implementation plan for

automating residential routes. The project was completed within the seven-year period. By automating residential service, the refuse division has been able to increase service areas from new annexations and new construction without increasing personnel. Automation has been successful in reducing job related injuries; it has decreased litter problems caused by garbage being set out in plastic bags and has assisted in standardizing collection containers. Automated refuse collection is here to stay.

Extensive use of state bid/procurement lists for materials and vehicles

Yakima is an avid user of several types of interlocal agreements...from state contracts to piggybacking on other entities contracts directly and utilizing the ever growing list of purchasing alliances and consortiums such as WSCA (Western States Contracting Alliance), US Communities, NJPA (National Joint Powers Association), KCDA (King County Director's Association) and National IPA (National Intergovernmental Purchasing Alliance). Last year, the city averted 62 bid processes by using contracts that had already been competitively bid by others. In fact, it's become commonplace to compare others' awarded contracts to get the best price and use that contract, instead of performing the bid process ourselves. Most vehicles, with few exceptions) are purchased off state of Washington contracts, which carry such large volume discounts, the price cannot be touched by other dealers. **Yakima** pays an administrative fee of \$4,000 each year to the state of Washington to utilize any of its 400+ contracts. Cooperative members as a whole save millions of dollars annually by "pooling" their purchases through state contracts. As a volume purchaser, they can usually negotiate better rates for goods and services than a smaller entity can.

Yakima also has several entities piggy-backing our contracts that we have put out to bid, saving them hard and soft costs.

Consolidation of purchasing efforts between the city and county

Yakima and **Yakima County's** intergovernmental committee has been actively engaged for the past 15 months in the prospect of merging their respective purchasing divisions. The first phase of this effort included a feasibility analysis conducted by the National Institute of Governmental Purchasing (NIGP), which evaluated current operations, identified areas for improvement, and more importantly identified the concept of a merged purchasing operation as a viable alternative. Subsequent to the completion of the NIGP analysis, city and county staff have been working collaboratively to evaluate the alternatives and have concluded that a merged operation holds promise for the greatest collective gains in efficiency and cost savings. Both entities have executed a memorandum of understanding and an interlocal Agreement that will facilitate the next phases of the merge, which are strategic planning and developing a business plan. If the city and county purchasing functions are ultimately merged, it would be the first city/county purchasing merger in over three decades in the nation and could serve as a model for other local governments. We are excited at the potential to have a part in leading the way in what could be a breakthrough in municipal government practices.

Region 5, Benton, Franklin & Walla Walla Counties
Gary Crutchfield, City Manager, City of Pasco
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From **Kennewick**, city manager Bob Hammond reports that quite a bit has changed over the past several months there and, at least at this period of time, not very much of that has been driven by national issues like a new president or the events involving financial markets. Their mayor of the past twelve years ran and won a seat as **Benton County** commissioner. Even though they're not a strong mayor form of government, they've been operating much like that for many years so we'll see where the dust all settles as city council brings on a new member and appoints a new mayor. Bob sees a lot of opportunity to get clarity regarding the vision for the city with the council changes. City council passed their 2009/2010 biennial budget that included some new revenues in the form of storm water fees and utility taxes and also had seven more staff cuts, including their planning director and a police captain. That makes about eighteen FTE's they've reduced over the past five years while growing around 12% in population. They've certified to go to arbitration with both police and fire unions on contracts that expired the end of 2007, although now it looks like they might settle with police after we committed to changing away from a consumer driven medical insurance plan that we've been struggling with over the past three years. The good news is that they continue to see steady growth, although they do project that slowing over the next year or so. Their tourism industry is booming and, since Bob is an avid hockey fan, he's proud to note that their WHL team is picking up where they left off last year and looks to once again be the team to beat in the entire US division if not the whole league.

As they guessed in February, new housing starts in **Pasco** have declined to 400 this year; still a strong rate of population growth (thought there was a housing crisis!) reports Gary Crutchfield, city manager. The city's focus is on fostering more industrial investment, to help pay for all the services needed by the thousands (yes, over five thousand) of new households added over the past decade. A city bond issue on the August ballot to build a second public pool fell victim to the "super majority" (60%) requirement. It failed with 54% approval ("minority rules"). The three cities here, though, continue to discuss ways to jointly finance (with voter approval) some regional projects that would not otherwise occur if reliant on only one of the cities. They collectively expect to seek legislative help to make it easier for two or more cities to create a "regional PFD," overlaying existing individual PFDs. They believe their solution will be useful to others in the state and will share their proposal with you soon. **Pasco** has a balanced budget for 2009, but recently learned they will be tagged for utility tax reimbursements due to the use of brokered natural gas by some of their major industrial users. And, they also just learned that they will receive SST mitigation. Gary observes that it looks like they lost on that deal as well!

Things are going well in **Prosser** reports city administrator Charlie Bush. Here are some highlights:

- In September, **Prosser** become the first city, to the staff's knowledge, in Eastern Washington to adopt plan review fees that involve the tracking of actual staff time, moving away from a flat fee model.

- **Prosser** approved its 2009 budget on December 9. The budget maintained city services at their existing levels, while making some across the board general fund cuts that will not visibly impact service levels.
- After a comprehensive analysis of recreation programming, the city recently reduced its recreation budget by \$60,000 per year while expanding recreation programming for next year.
- **Prosser** is slated for \$500,000 in recreation and conservation office funding to help complete its \$1 million pool renovation project. Currently, the city is second on the list for funding out of over 75 projects.
- In January, the **Prosser** city council will be holding a hearing to form a transportation benefit district at the maximum level without a vote of \$20 per vehicle.
- During the summer, the city completed a \$300,000 street resurfacing project in its historic downtown.
- **Prosser** had a record year for hotel/motel tax receipts, building on steady growth over the past several years. The additional funding will pay for new tourism marketing through the chamber of commerce and is also likely to be used to help fund the new executive director position for the historic downtown **Prosser** association.
- 2009 is expected to bring additional wineries and other food-related industries to **Prosser**. Vintner's Village, the Port of **Benton's** winery business park on Interstate 82, will be doubling in size to the south. **Prosser** currently has 25 wineries in the city or within 2 miles of the city limits.
- The city is fully engaged in a mission, vision, and core values development exercise. All three are anticipated to be adopted by the city council in February, ahead of the council's first annual strategic planning retreat, which is scheduled for April.
- The city is currently conducting its first annual citizen survey. The survey will be paired with data from the city's new performance management program to provide background information for the upcoming council retreat.
- **Prosser** is actively engaged in developing its emergency operations plan (EOP). The EOP will be tested in a full scale field exercise to be conducted with FEMA and other partners in **Prosser** in April.
- The city's current planning efforts include work towards the formation of its capital facilities plan and additional work on a pedestrian/bicycle plan.

In **Richland**, city manager Cindy Johnson has reshaped her department directors into an executive leadership team and has charged them with taking a holistic, citywide approach to their efforts, rather than a departmental approach. The team devotes one meeting a month to discussing "undiscussable" issues. New assistant city manager Jon Amundson joined the executive leadership team in early December. He came to **Richland** from a similar position in Allen, Texas. Also in early December, **Richland's** city council adopted a results-based budget, with the state-allowed 1% increase in property taxes, for 2009. **Richland's** budget focuses on key elements the city council approved last year as a part of its strategic leadership plan, titled "Seven Keys To Unlock Our Future." Each "Key" element includes five-year goals and two-year objectives that reflect leadership direction and provide the basis for defining specific performance objectives that the city aims to achieve. Cindy says this fledgling process of results-based budgeting helps the city create clarity for the community in the budget process, allocate revenues to highest priorities and outcomes citizens want and need, understand the trade-

offs between services funded and unfunded, and emphasize accountability, efficiency, innovation and partnerships. She adds that as **Richland** moves forward, council and staff will continue to be accountable to **Richland** citizens and will maintain a customer-service focus.

Region 6, Asotin, Columbia, Garfield & Whitman Counties
John Sherman, City Supervisor, City of Pullman
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Carl Thompson, **Colfax** city administrator, stated that the community enjoyed a very successful Christmas Parade and fireworks. The budget was adopted smoothly with salary increases for all. It appears the Christmas sock is full in **Colfax**.

Santa must have by-passed **Pullman** again on his way to **Colfax**. John Sherman, **Pullman** city supervisor, claims that putting a positive spin on 2008 would test the skills of the best spin doctor. Let's see. At the state level, the Sonics moved to Oklahoma after a nearly winless season; the Mariners and Seahawks both qualified for "Most Overrated" awards in their respective fields of endeavor; and the projected state biennial budget deficit rose to \$6 billion with no end in sight. About the only good things that happened in **Pullman** in 2008 were a trip to the "Sweet 16" for the basketball team and an overtime win for the Cougs in the "Battle of the Bads" (previously known as the Apple Cup). At the last city council meeting of 2008 the city council adopted a 2009 budget sporting an overall 8.6% decrease and a general fund increase of only 1.2%. Coal rather than cash was provided for all city employees for 2009 except for the beloved "Blue Crew" (uniformed police employees). Hopefully, 2009 will bring brighter news. The remaining five labor contracts within the city are being negotiated so maybe there will be a few crumbs left over for us non-union employees as well. Finally, although both the federal and state governments face hopeless deficits, they promise to spend billions on local government projects in an effort to convince us all that there really is a Santa Claus!

Region 7, Adams, Grant, & Lincoln Counties
Ehman Sheldon, City Administrator, City of Othello
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From **Othello**, Ehman Sheldon, city administrator sends the following comment:

Being in rural agriculture land, **Othello** does not seem to be realizing revenue shortfalls as different economic-based cities might be. In fact, our revenues are exceeding projections -- I'd tell you the percent, but I don't want to scare you. **Othello** will also benefit in 2009 relative to the SST.

A mild winter, so far, has been a gift to the snow and ice removal fund, as earlier this year (January-February), they were nearly depleted. Our budget process has become very streamlined, using council committees with department heads. All items are "worked out" at the committee level, and have at least three council committee members to support the budget funds

when presented to full council. Council and departments like the freedom of committee meetings.

The new year will see many changes in **Othello**. The city parks will receive \$225,000 in improvements. The neighborhood street improvement program continues with 60% of the streets having been improved over the past five years. We have achieved our goal of \$1 million in sewer reserves in anticipation of our new sewer treatment plant in 2012. The city will drill a new well in 2009, at a cost of \$1 million.

On a personal note, you may recall I conducted elections in Iraq in 2004-2005. My interpreter from Iraq has obtained political refugee status and will be here on Thursday, December 11. He is an educated engineer. My family is looking forward to his living with us for a while. I may ask AWC if they would like him to speak at the convention in June.

Region 8, Ferry, Pend Oreille, Spokane, & Stevens Counties
Arlene Fisher, City Administrator, City of Cheney
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No report.

Region 9, Chelan, Douglas, & Okanogan Counties
Mike Cecka, Honorary Life Member, Leavenworth
ceckanewhorizon@yahoo.com

No report.

Region 10, Island, San Juan, Skagit & Whatcom Counties
Gary Tomsic, City Manager, City of Blaine
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In **Blaine**, Gary reports that they continue the construction of our new \$34 million water reclamation facility. The project is a little behind schedule but no serious delays. They are out of the ground, so things should speed up.

Blaine got a late start on their street project this year. Three projects were scheduled and two are completed.

The airport closure is on schedule for December 31, 2008. On that date, the **Blaine** Municipal Airport will permanently close. **Blaine** has had a municipal airport since 1947.

The 40 acre site is located along the truck border route and will be converted to commercial and industrial uses. They have a potential buyer for the property but the current economic conditions are not helping.

Blaine's last big project is a joint venture to construct a new electric substation with Puget Sound Energy. They have been planning a new substation for several years and only recently decided that partnering with PSE was the best alternative.

The big news comes from **Burlington** where we learn that city administrator Jon Aarstad is hanging up the whip after forty years of public service. Jon has been the city administrator in **Burlington** since April 1999 and will leave on March 31, 2009. Prior to his work in **Burlington**, Jon was Skagit County Parks Director for twenty-two years.

The last ten years in **Burlington** has seen significant change. Though the community has grown some in population, the biggest growth has been in the commercial and industrial development pushing the assessed value of **Burlington** to over \$1 billion. During this period, Jon has been a leader in building a new police station, library and city hall. He has worked with WSDOT on a number of transportation improvements including the SR 20 interchange which is finishing up soon.

Jon Aarstad is credit to our profession. In this neck of woods, we will miss him and wish a great future for him.

Speaking of credits to our profession, Bill Veerwolf in **Lynden** reports that winter has slowed construction projects down, but they have decks on both the bridges under construction. Paving will wait now until spring. Their new City Hall building is on schedule and will be ready for occupancy in April. They just finished our tightest budget in many years. They know all cities are watching to see how their revenues are impacted this next year.

The large building in the **Lynden** historic downtown that burned last spring, the Delft Square Building, has been purchased by a local developer, so they are anticipating a reconstruction of that site. There is some hope that the exterior can be saved.

Lynden is in the beginning stages of designing a replacement and expansion water treatment plant. Bill guesses this needs to be done every 80 years or so. Fortunately, they were able to acquire a property next to their existing site to allow the expansion.

Region 11, Snohomish County

Larry Bauman, City Manager, City of Snohomish

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From **Arlington**, city administrator Allen Johnson reports:

Arlington has finally succeeded in annexing the Island Crossing area after a 17-year protracted legal and political battle. The city and county went to the state Supreme Court in June to defend an appeal of the action by Futurewise. The court ruled in the city's favor in October and the city annexed the property in mid-November. Apparently 17 years of partnership was not enough notice for the **Snohomish County** Council, who claimed they were caught off-guard by the city's action. The county Council then directed the Prosecutor's Office to sue the city for

“illegally annexing” the area, saying that the northern portion of the annexation was not in the city’s UGA. On December 18th, **Snohomish County** Superior Court ruled that the county had indeed included the entire annexation area in the city’s UGA in 2005. As of right now, the city’s annexation of the 210 acres is indeed legal and valid. Some members of the county council are making noises of appeal to the Court of Appeals, so the battle may not be over just yet.

The city has also extended an offer to fill the vacant police chief position. We are currently completing the in-depth background and other associated tests. If all goes according to plan, our new chief will be joining us in late February.

Finally, we are preparing to open and award bids on our \$30 million wastewater treatment plant project. Bids are set to be opened on December 19th with award by the council in January. We are keeping our fingers crossed for hungry contractors and low bids.

From **Snohomish**, city manager Larry Bauman reports:

Budget issues predominate at **Snohomish** as they do for most cities in the state and the nation. The city council adopted the 2009 budget December 2, and on December 16 staff brought forward the first amendment to the budget that essentially reduces those approved expenditures by more than \$600,000. Due to the uncertainty of sales tax trends, we are becoming hypersensitive to sales tax reports and expect to be modifying the budget as we go during 2009 to adjust to further downturns in revenues. So far, we have managed to adjust the budget through the freezing of vacant positions, by eliminating part-time and non-permanent employees (seasonal maintenance and police cadet positions). We have also cut travel, training, professional services and other miscellaneous expenses as far as we can without undermining operational effectiveness for essential services. However, as we have now eliminated practically all of the low-hanging fruit of these expenses, we now face the fact that layoffs of existing employees are probably inevitable if revenues slide further below our new revenue projections.

As we brace for what could be a continued pattern of higher government levels pushing costs down to cities, we realize that some further negative budget impacts may be coming regardless of our efforts to contain costs. The first of these in **Snohomish County** was the decision of the county prosecutor to revise the felony threshold for prosecution of property crimes from \$250 to \$1,000. While this change alone may not be a significant impact, we expect it will not be the last of these impacts on our budget. We are analyzing the governor’s proposed biennial budget, just released, to determine what may be in store from state budget cuts.

We look ahead to 2009 as an appropriate time to focus more staff resources on long-range projects and planning. As capital improvement budgets have been cut to the bone, we are also focusing on grant opportunities to replace the funding sources that have been reduced to a trickle as a result of the recession. As most cities are doing, we are preparing to apply for grants that would result from the proposed economic stimulus/infrastructure package that is now anticipated to grow to as much as \$850 billion. Of special interest to our city is funding for our wastewater treatment plant improvements that are now estimated (planning level) at \$38 million. We have begun planning to get this project “ready to go” by October 2009 in the event that the funding

allocations extend for more than one cycle of projects. Other projects already designed or nearly designed are also being examined as possibilities for applications under this program. We see 2009 as a year of crisis in the classic sense of the Chinese meaning of the word: both *danger* and *opportunity*. Our managers are preparing for the worst events and looking at every opportunity that this difficult time may bring us in the next year.

Our best wishes for 2009 go to all of the cities in the WCMA community of managers: May you have more opportunities than dangers in the year to come.

And from **Sultan** comes this report from Deborah Knight, city administrator:

Sultan year in review

Just a quick recap of the success **Sultan** had in 2008 and some the challenges the city will face in 2009.

At the top of the list, after five years and nine-petitions with the growth management hearings board, **Sultan** finally achieved compliance with the state growth management act. The news was delivered to the city in October which allowed the city council to lift a moratorium on land use applications that had been in place since February 2008. **Sultan** also finally made the move after several attempts over a number of years to contract with **Snohomish County** for police services. The county improved the proposal by agreeing to move the east precinct from **Monroe** to **Sultan** which will increase the police presence in the city but lower levels of service from 6 officers to 4 officers while maintaining 24/7 coverage. The 2009 budget was adopted without cuts in staffing or services. The city had a significant fiscal crisis in 2007 and developed a conservative five-year forecast. The city will actually be able to pay its interfund loan for the first time in 4 years and set aside money in its contingency fund. **Sultan** has been working for the past 3 years to upgrade its wastewater treatment plant to accommodate expected development. The city was successfully in acquiring \$500,000 towards replacing its outdated biosolids handling equipment. The low bidder was awarded in December. Construction is ready to start.

In 2009 we will be working with FEMA to address the city's concerns on its restudy of the **Sultan** and Skykomish Rivers. The preliminary information indicates the base flood elevations will increase significantly. There is a real concern the restudy will impact the future development of the city's historic business district. Please give me a call if you have been through a FEMA restudy and can provide some insight on how to best work with FEMA to mitigate the impacts.

Region 12, North King County

Mitch Wasserman, City Administrator/Clerk/Treasurer, City of Clyde Hill

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Cal Hoggard, deputy facilities manager for **King County**, sends the following report:

King County has recently completed its third and is nearing completion of its fourth major building construction project using a lease-lease-back-to-own mechanism known as „63-20%. All four projects were completed early and under budget. On December 15, 2008, the **King County** Executive, Ron Sims, moved his offices from the temporary leased spaces in Seattle, Bank of America Tower and joined other county agencies that have also moved in from leased spaces around downtown **Seattle** into the county,s newly completed 340,000 square foot Chinook Office Building. The Chinook Building was built on the site formerly occupied by the old county parking garage. The county leased out and then leased back the site and in the process the county,s contracted lessor acquired the services of Wright Rudstad Construction who completed the building per **King County**,s requirements for a fixed not-to-exceed price. County funds formerly paid in rent financed the building,s lease payments at a savings to the county. The county will own the building at the end of the lease term. cThe new 440,000 square foot 9th and Jefferson Building at Harborview Hospital which is owned by the county and operated by the University of Washington under a contract with the county, will begin occupancy in January 2009. It also was completed under a similar arrangement. The 63-20 arrangement was utilized on the 9th & Jefferson Building to complete it on time and on budget. This approach enabled the county to salvage and expand the project when bond funds were earlier found insufficient to complete it. Two earlier **King County** projects have also been completed on time and on budget using the 63-20 approach. These are the 327,000 square foot King Street Center Building and the 158,000 square foot Pat Steel Building. The city of **Redmond** built their city hall and the city of **Shoreline** is building their city hall using 63-20.

Kirkland submits the following:

Jail Update

There's lots going on with jail issues right now. Here's a few tidbits to bring you up to speed on things you need to know:

- Negotiations with **Yakima County** continue, although they have been a little slow in responding with a proposal. We now expect a new proposal from **Yakima** in late January or early February including rates.
- We are also continuing to negotiate a contract extension with **King County**. At this point, we have agreed in principle to a one year extension for 220 beds for 2013 and up to 100 beds in 2014. In exchange, cities agree to pay under a new tiered rate structure beginning in 2010 where special needs beds have daily premiums attached. Not every city has to sign the agreement. If you don't sign, you'll be under the existing contract and rate structure, but you will not have access to beds in 2013. If you don't sign it and want to sign on as a latecomer, **King County** is proposing a latecomer penalty of a 400% surcharge on the difference between what you would have paid under the new rate structure and the existing rate.
- If you are one of the cities represented by the Northeast Cities jail planning group (NEC), we are estimating that new jail capacity will be constructed by 2014. The five principal cities (**Seattle, Shoreline, Redmond, Kirkland** and **Bellevue**) identified six sites throughout the northeast area including one in downtown **Seattle** adjacent to the **King County** jail which would be operated by **King County**. We are beginning the EIS

process on all six sites including some lively public forums. Each of the northeast cities received a letter inviting them to be a party to the EIS joint agreement. If you have questions about the joint agreement, contact anyone on the NEC group. If you want to know more about the public process and timeline for a new jail, go the NEC's website at www.necmunicipaljail.org.

News from **Kirkland**:

We are pleased to announce that the city council approved a 2009-2010 budget on December 16th. It would be an understatement to say that this was one tough budget. Faced with a \$19 million shortfall for the biennium, the council approved expenditure cuts, use of reserves and increases in the city utility tax, the business head tax and property taxes. We will also be seeking a voted utility tax increase in 2009. In the midst of this very glum process, a ray of hope was found. The city council also approved a private amendment request to allow redevelopment of Park Place (retail/office complex in downtown **Kirkland**) that will add 1.8 million square feet of office and retail. This controversial comp plan amendment was the subject of nearly two years of study and jam-packed public hearings. Needless to say, a collective sigh of relief was issued at approximately 11:30 pm on December 16th in **Kirkland**. We are very much looking forward to the new year.

Donna Hanson, city manager of **Medina**, reports that she took over for interim city manager Mike Caldwell there the first of November. She reports that Mike did a great job, and fixed all the problems before she arrived. She says she does call him once in awhile to ask about the difference between what he told me before I accepted the position and what I am finding out now. The honeymoon is great, the staff is great, and she likes being a city manager again. Mike put together a balanced budget for her without even using the 1% property tax limit. He also settled one labor contract for 6.5% cola with a shift in medical premium costs. If the 6.5% makes your life worse, you will have to take that up with Mike. Next year they will be working on some strategic planning as well as their long term financial plan. Donna says that's about all she has for now, except to say that she is very happy to be in **Medina** and may have more to offer in the future when she knows more.

John Starbard, city manager of **Newcastle**, reports that **Newcastle** continues to trip the light fantastic.

They have this (for us) mammoth road project under construction, Coal Creek Parkway, and are doing all they can to make the complicated orchestration look easy. Their \$44 million mile is on schedule and under budget and should be completed in the middle of 2009. Not only will it operate better as an important corridor, it will look awesome! You can find out more about it by visiting www.coalcreekparkway.com.

In the spring, **Newcastle** will have a unique mixed-use library project under construction in the downtown core. At ground level will be a 10,000 square foot **King County** Library System library, an adjacent retail use of about 1,500 feet, and a small plaza with integrated bus shelter. The project also features two levels of hidden structured parking, and 90 units of multifamily housing on three stories above the library level. They used a variation on the recently modified

tax abatement statute so that the housing aspects of the project will not pay property tax for 8 years. Ten-percent of the 90 units will be permanently affordable to moderate-income households.

Just in front of the library project, on **Newcastle** Way, they will begin construction of a transit center that will stretch for two blocks through the middle of the downtown. The project will add new bus shelters, improved pedestrian safety, a new signal at the intersection of Coal Creek Parkway and **Newcastle** Way, slightly revised bus routes, and improved bicycle and ADA facilities. And like our road project, the transit center will look awesome, too! Though the project hasn't started yet, we have a website set up for it at www.newcastletransitcenter.com.

A developer has acquired an option on another downtown site and is talking with them about a second mixed-use project -- this one potentially including a new city hall. Like the library project, it would be a blend of a city hall, perhaps educational and/or incubator space, structured parking, and either office or housing above.

Down south, they're completing their master plan for a sports park on 35 acres the city owns. Not all of the site would be developed, but of the portion that would be developed, there would be several tournament-quality fields, play areas, service buildings and picnic shelters, parking (of course, but nice parking), walking trails, and other recreation dohickies. And the views toward Cougar Mountain from the site are exquisite!

Of course, it's not all beer and skittles. The operating budget has been built entirely upon property tax, sales tax, and development related revenue. No utility tax, admission tax, B&O (not that that would generate too much...), or others. These three sources account for 90% of the operating budget. Guess that happened to the third source this year? And, in turn, to the preceding two? They had to cut about 12% of the operating budget for 2009. They'll have to pick up the operating revenue discussion in the coming year.

But do you know that **Newcastle** now has a blog? They hired a communications manager this last September, and almost immediately he launched a blog called newcastle411.com, which may be the first city-sponsored blog in Washington. It's been a hit. Within the first three weeks they had 1,000 independent visitors. Now that they're nearing the three month point, they're approaching 3,000 independent visitors. On some days, the unique daily hits exceed 250. Remember, our population is only 10,000 (including newborns and centenarians). The blog is updated with several articles each day (often including weekends), and we have found it has been enormously helpful for getting timely and accurate information out to our community, which until now has been served only by a monthly newspaper. They have found it to be a greatly appreciated source for evolving news such as storms and road conditions.

From **North Bend**, city administrator Duncan Wilson reports that after nine long years **North Bend** has finally lifted the moratorium on the application for land use permits. The voluntary moratorium, necessitated when development depleted available water rights, had all but frozen **North Bend** in time. Imagine all of the housing and commercial development that occurred in your communities since 1999.

The city reopened the application process when the final phases of construction of the new water wells neared completion to come online in early 2009. The city is required to mitigate the potential impact of this new well on the South Fork of the Snoqualmie River by purchasing mitigation water from **Seattle** Public Utilities in the Cedar River Watershed and piping it down to a stream that feeds the South Fork during times of low flow. Whew! What a process.

2009 marks the centennial year for **North Bend** and there are plenty of events planned. Our legacy project will be construction of an outdoor climbing wall in Torguson Park in the shadow of Mt. Si -- so much in the shadow that it is being designed to match the big mountain's shape. The wall should be complete in early summer to coincide with the 2009 Festival at Mt. Si in August. Look for some torchlight parades and participation in a re-creation of the 1909 Model T car race from New York to the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition grounds (now the University of Washington).

In December the city received the final paperwork on the transfer of the Tollgate Farm property from **King County**. This 204.5 acre park parcel is the sister property to the Meadowbrook Farm, a 347 acre property owned jointly by the cities of **North Bend** and **Snoqualmie**. Like Meadowbrook, this gorgeous and historic land is dedicated to permanent open space with the exception of a 13.7 acre portion on the eastern boundary on which future active recreation facilities will be constructed. This acquisition was an important part of the comprehensive land use plan for the city and will be a symbol of the community's dedication to environmental preservation.

North Bend is moving forward with the construction of ULID #6 that will take sewer service from the existing city limits all the way out to Truck Town to the east. The city is also entertaining the annexation of 820 acres covering a substantially identical boundary to that of the ULID service area. This sewer extension and annexation will drive the economic development of the city over the next 30 years.

Shoreline submits the following report:

Construction of City of Shoreline City Hall Facility Moving Forward

Construction is moving forward on schedule on **Shoreline's** new 67,000 square foot city hall building on the corner of Midvale Avenue N and N 175th Street. At its final meeting of 2007, the **Shoreline** city council unanimously approved a development agreement with Opus Northwest for the construction of a new city hall facility, with a total project cost of \$30.5 million. This total includes design, construction, contingency, furniture, equipment and finance charges. Construction of the facility began in the summer of 2008 and is expected to be complete in the fall of 2009.

"This is an exciting time for all of us with benefits for both staff and residents. The design will not only help us provide services more efficiently but will provide better access and multiple uses to the community," says **Shoreline** city manager Bob Olander. "We hope it will be a focal point that brings the community together."

In the broadest terms, it is the intent of the **Shoreline** city council that the city hall facility be one that is smart in design with a focus on customer service, transparency and accessibility to the entire community. In addition, the city will be pursuing a proposal that reaches the highest level of LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certification feasible. Many features such as onsite rainwater reclamation, solar and alternative energy source power solutions, energy efficient lighting and climate control tools are being considered in this project.

City of Shoreline Engages in Visioning Process

It's no accident that of over 100 **Seattle**-area cities and neighborhoods evaluated in the July issue of **Seattle Magazine**, **Shoreline** was ranked the best neighborhood. Since incorporation in 1995, **Shoreline** has enjoyed excellent public safety, strong community involvement and major public works improvements such as the north city project, the interurban pedestrian/bike trail and the first mile of the Aurora corridor project. In 2006, voters overwhelmingly supported the city's first-ever bond issue for parks and open spaces, and, after saving funds for a decade, construction of a new city hall began this year.

To maintain **Shoreline's** quality of life in the coming decades, the **Shoreline** city council is developing a vision for the future of the city. Since the vision will be adopted into the city's comprehensive plan and will guide **Shoreline's** growth and development for years to come, it was vitally important to hear from as many residents as possible in this process.

In October and November of 2008, a wide spectrum of **Shoreline's** neighborhood groups and community organizations hosted a total of 20 community conversations where residents watched an introductory video and discussed what their vision of **Shoreline** was in 20 years. Those unable to attend were able to watch the video and submit comments online. Nearly 2,000 comments were received. Over the next four months, the **Shoreline** city council and planning commission will continue to hold a series of community meetings, workshops and public hearings, to further discuss the vision for the city.

City of Shoreline Planning for Phase Two Construction of the Aurora Corridor Improvement Project

The second phase of the Aurora corridor project, from N 165th Street to N 185th Street, is now underway, with the environmental process complete and right-of-way acquisition moving forward. Concurrent with right-of-way acquisition, the city's design consultant, HDR Engineering, Inc., has reached 60% design for the second mile of the corridor. Design and right-of-way acquisition will continue through 2008, with construction expected to begin in mid-2009.

The Aurora corridor project is **Shoreline's** plan to redesign and redevelop the three miles of Aurora Avenue North (State Route 99) that run through **Shoreline**. **Shoreline's** section of Highway 99 carries about 45,000 vehicles per day and is a major transit route. Construction of the first phase of Aurora corridor project, from N 145th to N 165th Streets, was completed in 2007, and has won numerous awards for being an excellent model of a multi-modal transportation corridor.

And there's more from **Shoreline**:

WCMA Newsletter

City of Shoreline

Visioning

Brrrr! I think Mother Nature forgot this was the Northwest and not the Northeast. In any event, Shoreline has had a good year. The new City Hall is quickly taking shape. With each new week, the anticipation of moving into our new home builds. Completion is set for early fall.

Another big event that has been taking place throughout the fall and will continue into 2009 has been the development of a new Vision for Shoreline. With input from hundreds of residents, the City Council is developing a Vision for the future that will be adopted into the Comprehensive Plan and guide Shoreline's growth and development for years to come.

In October and November, with the goal of getting as much resident input as possible, a wide spectrum of Shoreline's neighborhood groups and community organizations hosted a total of 20 Community Conversations. Over 450 residents attended these conversations and provided nearly 2,000 comments. In November, the City Council hosted a Town Hall Meeting where they invited the public to review and comment on the feedback and preliminary "themes" developed by the Planning Commission from the Community Conversations. Over 100 people attended that meeting, which included a presentation by the Planning Commission, roundtable discussion groups with members of the City Council and Planning Commission, and an opportunity to address the entire audience. The roundtable discussion groups produced nearly 300 comments.

One more Town Hall Meetings is planned for January and then the Council will hold several workshops to review the major themes that developed through the visioning process and develop guidelines that can then be incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan. It has been a very time consuming process for our planning department, but one we believe has been fruitful and informative.

The second phase of the Aurora Avenue North (SR 99) corridor project is proceeding on schedule. Right-of-way acquisition is under way for the second mile (N 165th Street to N 185th Street) the City's design consultant has reached 60% design for this segment of the project. With funding from federal, state, and local sources currently in place to complete construction on this mile, the design consultant will focus on completing final plans and specifications at this time. Construction is expected to begin in mid-2009 for the second mile. The design consultant will also be working on completing 30% design for the third mile (N 185th Street to N 205th Street) delivering for review during the first quarter of 2009. The first mile of the project received numerous national, state, and local awards and we hope to continue that trend by incorporating many low-impact development (LID) elements into the project.

From **Sound Transit**, executive director Joni Earl contributes the following:

Great news for the region when the voters in the urban areas of **King, Snohomish and Pierce Counties** approved **Sound Transit's** ST2 plan by 57% November 4th, a year after losing the

roads and transit combined ballot measure. This is a high capacity expansion plan close to \$18 billion in year of expenditure dollars over a 15 year horizon. It includes additional regional bus service, more commuter rail service and improved facilities and capacity, plus 36 new miles of light rail to **Lynnwood**, Overlake area of **Redmond**, and north **Federal Way**, building on the current projects and services open or under construction by **Sound Transit**. To have this level of support during a bad economy is incredible, and the board and employees of **ST** are excited and humbled by this level of support for mass transit. Since the first 7 years of the 15 year program includes major work still underway, we are in a top to bottom review of the agency and are developing a staffing plan, strengthening the agency infrastructure for this ramp up of work, and working with our board for continuing policy guidance and direction. We will be executing a new grant for \$813 million with the Federal Transit Administration in mid-January for our extension to the University of Washington via Capitol Hill, then starting our University Link light rail construction by the end of the month. I just announced the appointment of a deputy CEO, Ron Tober, a retired transit CEO from Charlotte, NC, system to assist me over the next year with all of the ramp up of the agency. He has extensive transit experience. We are gearing up to open the first 14 miles of light rail in early July 2009. Bottom line: these are exciting and challenging times for **ST** and we will continue to work with our partners around the region in building our projects and services. We will need everybody's help. We are excited!

Region 13, South King County

Doug Schulze, City Manager, City of Normandy Park

dougs@ci.normandy-park.wa.us

Bothell city manager Bob Stowe sends the following:

One hundred years and counting...it's 2009 and **Bothell** celebrates its centennial on April 14. In looking back at the past 100 years, we have accomplished much for our citizens. In our next century, though, we're looking forward to continuing the **Bothell** pioneering spirit with the many projects and plans that will shape **Bothell's** future.

In 1909, I'm not sure that the **Bothell** founders would have foreseen the annexation of thousands of citizens. If the proposed annexations are successful, we will be among the 10 largest cities in the state. With both the unincorporated **King** and **Snohomish Counties** portions as potential annexations for **Bothell**, our council and staff are closely examining and analyzing the impacts to city services should either annexation move forward.

Additionally, while much of **Bothell's** history and charm is still evident on Main Street today, the city has made substantial progress in completing the downtown revitalization vision, regulations and city actions that will guide and activate the community's desired vision for its downtown. This includes our success in obtaining more than \$6 million in grants and other funding assistance for vital capital investments as the **Bothell** Crossroads Project SR 522 Realignment project and advancement of the city's development services initiative designed in part to create land use and building permit applications and services that are predictable and efficient.

Lastly, the city council approved my recommended 2009-2010 budget that included four new positions in the general fund and six new positions in funds with dedicated revenue sources. The additional staff will assist the council in achieving their vision for the community. The adopted budget has positioned the city to ride out the tough economic times we are facing, and doing so with no increase in the city's property tax levy. The council's courage it took to pass an increased budget in this economy is to be commended.

I continue to be enthusiastic about the city and its promising future. This year, there will be critical decisions and actions taken that will shape **Bothell's** future for the next 100 years as we celebrate our first 100 years of existence as a city this year. **Bothell** has an extremely talented staff along with the political leadership of our City Council to make this community one of the most economically desirable and livable places in our state.

Happy New Year!

Burien city manager Mike Martin reports that

Burien's greatest challenge, as residents see it, are reducing crime, improving economic/commercial growth and reducing traffic and congestion. This is according to a recent survey of **Burien** residents, conducted to measure satisfaction with the city government and the perceived quality of life in Burien.

Most frequently mentioned challenges to the survey question, "What are the three most important issues (challenges) facing the City of **Burien**?" were:

Reducing crime	25%
Lack of economic/commercial growth	14%
Reducing traffic/congestion	14%
Improving education/schools	11%
City construction/redevelopment	11%
Maintaining roads	10%
Lack of police presence	9%
Annexation decisions	9%
Managing population growth	8%
More parks/activities for children	6%
Taxes	6%

The survey was conducted in August by Market Decisions Corporation, a Portland market research firm. Some 404 **Burien** residents were randomly selected and contacted by phone between August 12 and 18.

Some of the survey's key findings were:

- Over three-quarters of residents saw their neighborhood as a "good" or "excellent" place to live.
- Three-quarters of residents believe the city is headed in the right direction.

- Transportation-related issues are the most frequently suggested neighborhood improvements, including building/improving walkways and paths, improving streets, adding street lights, and improving traffic flow.
- The geographic location and lifestyle are most frequently mentioned reasons for choosing to live in **Burien**.
- Two-thirds of residents are satisfied with the value they receive from taxes.
- Three quarters of residents are satisfied with the job the city is doing for the community.
- The majority of residents feel safe in **Burien**; 95% feel safe walking alone in their neighborhood; 84% feel safe in downtown **Burien**.

Survey respondents have lived in **Burien** an average of 19 years and have a median annual income of \$50,000. Hispanics and other non-Caucasians made up 28% of respondents, which reflects the actual population proportions in **Burien**. A similar survey of residents was conducted in December 2007. City council and city staff use the surveys to prioritize projects and municipal services to best serve citizens. Complete survey results can be viewed online at www.burienwa.gov.

Covington city manager Derek Matheson reports that **Covington's** new Costco store opened in October and did almost a million dollars of business its first day. Costco joins Home Depot, which opened a **Covington** store in June. Sales tax revenue from the two stores, along with higher-than-forecasted revenue from the city's new utility tax, made **Covington's** 2009 budget process easier than it could have been. The council took a conservative approach, i.e. avoiding new ongoing programs in favor of investing in capital and saving for rainier days ahead.

This summer, the **Covington**, **Maple Valley**, and **Black Diamond** councils held their first ever joint meeting to discuss transportation and transit in rapidly-growing southeast **King County**. The councils agreed to coordinate legislative advocacy efforts for two state highway projects and a study of possible commuter rail service.

They hired a few key management positions this year -- public works director, parks and recreation director, and a first-ever economic development manager. They also finished two multi-million dollar downtown street projects and created a preliminary master plan for their first-ever community park. They will embark on a major update of the city's downtown zoning next year. The council has decided it's time to make downtown zoning more prescriptive so the last large parcels of undeveloped downtown land will develop according to their vision.

Des Moines city manager Tony Piasecki reports that they are planning a year long celebration in 2009 to celebrate the 50th anniversary of incorporation. A variety of events and festivities are being planned by the city, local businesses and citizens. The celebration will kick off on Saturday, March 21st, with a black-tie dinner and feature entertainment. Rumor is that Tony 'Bennett' Piasecki will be performing the hit songs "Who Can I Turn To (When Nobody Needs Me)" and "As Time Goes By".....now that is something to see!

On June 17, a large birthday cake will commemorate the actual date of incorporation in 1959 against a backdrop of historical displays.

Federal Way city manager Neal Beets reports that life hums along in that city. He says "I'm hoping that when a federal economic stimulus bill is enacted, **Federal Way** will receive much more than the rest of you combined simply because we are named "**Federal Way**." Might as well try to get some mileage out of the name. How can the feds not grant lots of money to **Federal Way**?

Onto more serious matters, the **Federal Way** budget is balanced without too much damage to operations. No layoffs. Good COLA.

Neal reports that he did learn a lesson recently. Two of their smaller projects have created a positive impact much larger than the dollar investment. They granted \$5,000 to their Historical Society to write a book about **Federal Way** -- one of those Arcadia Publishing books featuring a city that you see in the "Regional Interest" section of Barnes and Noble and Borders. Well, the book was actually written, and it is well-written, and it includes lots of pictures. And "the book" has become a kind of point of pride for the Historical Society. Among other things, they are using book sales to raise money which may mean less contributions from the city for future projects. But even if not, just seeing their enthusiasm and sense of accomplishment and pride in the completed book was great.

Similarly, **Federal Way** created a dog park a couple of years ago. Not a big deal. Yet, amazingly, it has brought people from outside the city to use their fine dog park, people who may stop while they are there to get a bite to eat or buy some biscuits for precious Fido. The dog park has also galvanized a citizen group who are devoted to the park and spend lots of time worrying and laughing and talking about it. This citizen group has even printed t-shirts and sweat-shirts identifying themselves and recognizing the park and those who care about it.

It is fascinating what some small projects can do for the morale and spirit of groups of citizens. It is not always the mega-projects that count most. Neal ventures to say that many of their Historical Society members and dog park members could care less whether they spend tens of millions of dollars on the next street project, but it has made a positive difference in their lives to have the city spend a little to help them write a book and create a dog park.

Good things can come in small packages.

In **Issaquah**, city administrator Leon Kos says, "What you see is what you get. Joe Meneghini is still working hard to keep me out of trouble and do all of my work for me!"

Kent city administrator John Hodgson reports that they will be opening the new ShoWare Center on January 2, 2009. This 6100 seat multi-use facility will be home to the Seattle Thunderbirds Junior Hockey team. In addition the center will host concerts, family shows, trade shows, high school graduations and more, totaling over 130 events annually. The \$84 million facility is located in downtown **Kent** and is seen as another economic development complement to the mixed used retail center, **Kent** Station, directly across the street. ShoWare is an on-line ticketing product that provides ticketing services to over 250 venues around the world including performing arts centers, stadiums, horse racing tracks and presidential libraries.

Maple Valley's acting city manager, Christy Todd, reports that the 2009 budget was adopted by the city council on December 8, 2008. A key theme for 2009 will be to continue the planning and legal efforts relating to the Donut Hole property. Modest program enhancements were funded for 2009, and will provide increased staffing to the parks and recreation department, new equipment for the lodge and community events program; funding for police rifles, and funding for technology improvements. In addition, the council provided some funding for a feasibility study for a joint maintenance facility. Program cuts, new taxes, or staff layoffs were not needed to balance the 2009 budget. Finally, the city received news late in the budget process that the city's bond rating had been increased three levels by Standard & Poor's from an A+ to AA+. This bond rating increase is extremely good news for the city, especially at a time when bond ratings are, for the most part, being downgraded. In 2009, the city will be hiring a new city manager. In addition, the city is recruiting for a new public works director, senior planner, and capital projects manager.

Normandy Park city manager Doug Schulze reports that the past three months have been exceptionally busy. The 2009-2010 biennial budget was adopted by the city council on December 9th after two public hearings with very little citizen interest. With the exception of a group of Mt. Rainier High School students, swim coaches and other users of the Mt. Rainier Pool, who attended to urge the city council to continue pool funding, it was pretty lonely in the council chambers. Mt. Rainier Swimming Pool is one of the Forward Thrust pools **King County** so generously allowed **Des Moines** and **Normandy Park** to jointly share ownership of as an alternative to closure. With financial support from the **SeaTac** and Highline School District the swimming pool has continued to serve the Highline area under this co-ownership agreement since 2004. In 2009, the agreement intended ownership to be transferred from the cities to Highline School District. However, costs associated with renovation of the 40-year old facility as well as ongoing operations may result in a decision by Highline School District to close the pool. Doug indicates that his good neighbor to the south and he will be busy early next year trying to avoid being thrown in the deep end! Anyone interested in buying a used swimming pool?

Craig Ward, city manager, **SeaTac**, reports that on November 25, 2008, the **SeaTac** city council wrapped up a five-month budget preparation process by adopting the 2009 annual city budget. The 2009 budget maintains current service levels, incurs no layoffs, imposes no new taxes, provides no tax increases other than a 1% property tax increase, and continues the city's commitment to addressing human service needs by allocating 1½% of general fund expenditures for human service programs. Five strategically placed new positions will be added next year, and the 2009 budget also preserves the city council's general fund target fund balance of four months of operating expenditures. Years of fiscal restraint have built significant reserves that position **SeaTac** well to better weather the storm if revenue conditions worsen. While the city's finances appear relatively strong for the immediate future, current national and regional conditions underscore the need to closely watch our local economy and make adjustments as necessary to ensure that **SeaTac** maintains its economic health and continues to provide a supportive environment for both its residents and businesses.

SeaTac and **Tukwila** completed a joint study of opportunities to share fire and medical emergency response services, including potentially consolidating services. Unilateral master

plans were compared against consolidation options with the understanding that response capabilities and standards could not be degraded. The study concluded that some operational and administrative functions might be cost-effective to share, including purchasing, training, and administrative support. Sharing one fire station offered some possible savings, but imposes significant siting and operational tradeoffs. Full consolidation offered substantial financial benefits to **Tukwila**, but not to **SeaTac**, and was therefore not recommended.

In 2008, **SeaTac** developed a citywide capital improvement program that integrates projects in the two new light rail transit stations with existing projects. Projects funded were based on evaluation criteria that included maximizing direct benefits to residents and positioning the city for redevelopment opportunities. Supported by existing reserves and revenue sources, projects totaling \$59.7 million are included in the 2009-2014 CIP, of which \$10.8 million is included in the 2009 budget. 2009 capital expenditures include completion of station 46 construction, a recreation water spray park at Valley Ridge Park, transportation and pedestrian improvements, surface water management projects, property acquisitions, and equipment and vehicle replacements.

The new Fire Station 46 Headquarters is now about 60% complete. The building is framed with windows installed. The roofing and masonry are in progress with drywall to commence sometime late December. The building is scheduled for occupancy late in April 2009. At that time the existing station will be demolished and the apparatus bays completed. Final occupancy is slated for sometime late summer 2009.

SeaTac has begun to process simple electrical, mechanical, plumbing, and re-roofing permits online as a service to its residents, property and business owners. It's called MyBuildingPermit.com. MyBuildingPermit.com is a regional permitting website that is provided by the eCityGov Alliance. The organization was formed in 2001 by nine cities in the Puget Sound region and now has 39 participating municipalities and agencies representing a population of 1.3 million citizens and businesses over a four county region.

MyBuildingPermit.com offers users the chance to apply for, purchase, and have permits issued on-line via e-mail and printed on their own printer. Electrical, mechanical, plumbing, and re-roofing permits are all issued separately but can be applied for during the same visit to the website. Both property owners and licensed contractors can use the site. The website also allows online inspection scheduling, permit status information, and has a library of construction tip sheets, inspection check-lists, and other construction-related resources.

They have been evaluating internet services, particularly on-line permits, and now with MyBuildingPermit.com they will be able to offer them as an efficient, streamlined service to their residents and businesses. Now, thanks to eCityGov Alliance, not only are these services affordable, it provides a huge benefit to our constituents.

Despite the economic downturn, new development continues in **SeaTac**. The most visible projects include the new YMCA development on S. 188th Street, the Polygon/Scoccolo Multifamily development on Orillia Road; and the Soundview Multifamily development at about

S. 214th St. on International Boulevard. A complete listing of existing and proposed projects can be found on the city's website at www.ci.seatac.wa.us/departments/planninghome.htm.

Karen Goroski, executive director, **Suburban Cities Association**, sends the following:

The election results are in and the lineup for the SCA Board of Directors is:

Katrina Asay, Milton
David Baker, Kenmore
Jay Covington, Renton
Ava Frisinger, Issaquah
Jean Garber, Newcastle
Jim Haggerton, Tukwila
Margaret Harto, Covington
Ken Hearing, North Bend
Dave Hutchinson, Lake Forest Park
Lucy Krakowiak, Burien
Linda Kochmar, Federal Way
Pete Lewis, Auburn
Bob Sternoff, Kirkland

Officers will be selected at the January 16, 2009, retreat.

From **Tukwila**, city administrator Rhonda Berry reports that they will venture into the land of biennial budgeting when the city council approves the 2009-2010 budget at its final meeting of the year on Monday, December 15.

They are looking forward to the ever-promised sales tax mitigation this quarter. Sales figures are up for retail and restaurants in that fair city, while every other sector continues to experience a downward trend.

The **Tukwila** United Way Campaign for 2008 was a rousing success. Employees' pledges outpaced last year's by 33%

Region 14, Pierce County
Rob Karlinsey, City Administrator, City of Gig Harbor
karlinseyr@cityofgigharbor.net

Bonney Lake city administrator Don Morrison sends the following report:

The city council agreed to use a considerable amount of the reserves (ending fund balance) to balance the 2009-2010 biennial budget. If the economy doesn't pickup over the next two years, we will have simply deferred our pain. We are neither hiring nor laying-off. The area in which we had difficulty justifying a no-layoff policy was in the building division where revenues and permit activity are down 50%. We are cross-training building inspectors as construction

inspectors to take up the slack and reduce dependence on contracted infrastructure inspection. We also are assigning building inspectors code enforcement officer duties, as council has an interest in enhanced code enforcement. The city completed an annexation study of the CUGA on our Southern border consisting of an area of 7,400 residents. If the **Bonney Lake** annexes the area over the biennium, at least we won't have to worry about layoffs, just hiring fewer new employees to staff the increased in city population. The city is preparing plans and specifications for our new interim government center. This will likely go to bid in March, and will be built as an office/retail building to service as interim offices for court, council, executive, community services, and the public works administration and engineering group. The balance of the building will be leased for retail and office uses (need to generate some income to help offset \$680,000 in new councilmanic bond debt service). There will be a special vote-by-mail election February 3rd to determine if the city should become a charter code city and elect 15 freeholders to develop a proposed city charter. This is the result of a petition by a councilmember. Stay tuned.

Rob Karlinsey, city administrator, **Gig Harbor**, reports:

When sales tax makes up more than 60% of your general fund operating revenues, you quickly learn to pay close attention to retail sales. While we are blessed to have an above-average abundance of sales tax, we also have to guard against being dependent on such an elastic source of revenue. For the first half of 2008, sales tax was at an all-time high -- 20% higher than YTD 2007, which was also a record year. Then sales tax started dropping off a cliff, and we had to respond quickly. Both construction sales tax and retail sales tax are to blame; large-scale commercial and residential development projects have shut down, declared bankruptcy, or both. On a positive note, some projects continue to move forward, and the Franciscans' \$100+ million hospital and medical office building are still on track to open in early 2009. All in all, while **Gig Harbor** continues to be an economic bright spot in **Pierce County**, the term "Not In **Gig Harbor**" no longer applies to economic downturns (if it ever did). As for staffing, we will be reducing several positions from full-time to part-time, and several other positions are being eliminated. It looks like only two out of almost 100 employees will be laid off.

Earlier this year we conducted a citizen survey via the National Citizen Survey. It was very enlightening. Out of approximately 300 other benchmark cities across the country, **Gig Harbor** ranked in the top 5 for customer satisfaction -- in other words, they love our employees. However, on such questions as "**Gig Harbor** listens to our citizens," less than a majority of citizens agreed, and we ranked below average compared to other benchmark cities. It gives us something to work on! Any suggestions are much appreciated. Happy New Year! Rob Karlinsey.

From **Lakewood**, city manager Andrew Neiditz reports that the city experienced its first citizens' initiative on the November ballot. It was a proposed prohibition of gambling "card-rooms" mini-casinos, of which we have four, all located along Interstate 5. Had the ballot measure been approved, the city would have lost \$2.8 million in revenue. Accordingly, we had prepared a "Plan B" budget with a reduction of services and 25 FTE positions. The proposition was defeated by 62-38%. Our priority goal in the upcoming legislative session is get local zoning

authority over gambling for cities, so that hopefully we can forestall another such initiative in the future.

The state of the economy is also causing significant revenue reductions, and **Lakewood's** now-approved 2009 general fund budget has a reduction of 13 positions. Fortunately, due to hiring freeze over the last 5-6 months, most but not all of the positions are vacant.

As the new year starts, our highest priorities continue to be economic development, including Pacific Highway South and the Tillicum and American Lake Gardens areas. We will soon start sewer line construction in these two areas, and we have already completed two phases of Pac Highway improvement.

From **Sumner**, city administrator John Doan reports that when he I took this job as administrator after Andrew Neiditz, he said it would be fun. I just want to be clear, it isn't fun any more! Seriously, like most of you, the complexion of municipal finances changed dramatically over the past four months. Exciting redevelopment, employment-generating, and retail-sales projects are at best postponed and at worst, dead. This was our first biennial budget and we are using one-time savings and some excess reserves in order to fill about ½ the \$2.3 million gap. The other half is being filled by leaving positions vacant, a layoff of one manager, spending reductions, some fee increases, and reductions in hours and programs. Fortunately, we joined the ranks of those annexing to fire districts and that made a significant positive impact on our budget. We will be closely monitoring retails sales, construction, and permit activity.

On the less gloomy side, we have adopted new design guidelines to continue to improve the face of new development in the community. The original guidelines have been in place for about 12 years, and made a significant impact on new development. The community's most often-cited improvement was a large Fred Meyer store which was ultimately designed to fit into the main street. We have also had a community garden which started this year -- with more than 80 gardeners participating. We expect to have twice that many next year. Maybe this is the modern equivalent of the victory garden. We continue to work with the YMCA, the library, Pierce College, and the school district to explore a community center/joint-use complex that would provide a variety of needed services and revitalize a part of Main Street. It has proven to be a good time to be doing planning work.

The mechanics of WCMA News

We have been advised at MRSC to try not to send large attachments by web. Apparently it has to do with overloading the equipment here, and also perhaps something to do with the new spam filters in use, both on the MRSC end, and on your end. We've had a number of complaints in the past about people not being able to open a large attachment, specifically WCMA News. For that reason, this issue is NOT being sent as an attachment to the folks signed up for the mass e-mail broadcast. Instead, the WCMA website is being utilized by having the new issue posted there. And then the mass e-mail facility is being used to let you know that the new issue has been posted to the website. If for some reason you have trouble opening it or obtaining it through the web, please let me know. Send an e-mail to Ron Bartels at rbartels@mrsc.org. And I'm hoping

that you'll talk up the fact that it's out there among those WCMA folk in your area. If you hear of someone who isn't aware of it, please call this to their attention. And perhaps tell them how to gain access. The way is:

- A. Go to the WCMA website at <http://wccma.org>.
- B. In the stripe at the top of the page, you'll see "Newsletter". Click on it.
- C. The page that comes up contains links to all the past issues of WCMA News that were put out in electronic format, as well as the new and current one. That's Volume 19, No. 3, December 2007, the "hot off the press" issue.
- D. If you stumble onto somebody who does not have computer access, please also let us know at dknutson@mrsc.org. We can mail them a paper copy. They should be a member of WCMA, so perhaps some arm twisting is in order.

Ron Bartels, editor
WCMA News

In Memoriam

Two prominent members, both of whom were very active in WCMA, have passed away.

Joe Miller, who at one time was the long-time city manager of Bellevue, left us on Thanksgiving Day, 2008. The ICMA Who's Who history listed for Joe is as follows:

Mr. L. Joe Miller (Joe)

Range Rider

Life Member

Date of Birth July 1924

BA, 1949, University of Washington, WA

Work History:

6/92 President, Mun Res & Serv Ctr, WA

3/81 - 5/84 Manager, Dwntwn Seattle Trans Proj, WA

2/80 - 3/81 Acting Superintendent, Seattle Cty Light, WA

2/79 - 2/80 City Manager, Rochester, NY

1/61 - 10/77 City Manager, Bellevue, WA

5/51 - 12/60 Assistant City Manager & Public Works Director, Richland, WA

Activity History

9/04 - 11/08

ICMA Range Riders

9/75 - 9/76 President

ICMA Executive Board

9/70 - 9/72 Regional Vice President

ICMA Executive Board

Ken Nyberg, who was the second city manager of Federal Way, has passed away. [The Tacoma News Tribune](#) carried the following story on November 20, 2008:

FEDERAL WAY: City' s second city manager, Ken Nyberg, dies of illness

Ken Nyberg, Federal Way's second city manager, who served from 1994-99, died Tuesday night in Bremerton.

He was 74.

A retired Army colonel, Nyberg started working for Federal Way four months after it became a city in 1990.

He worked for more than three years as Federal Way's assistant city manager and community development director before being tapped for city manager. He oversaw the start of the city's Police Department and the completion of Celebration Park.

Nyberg retired in 1999.

He died after an extended illness, a city spokeswoman said. Nyberg's wife, Shirley, was at his side when he passed away. Funeral arrangements are pending.

Transitions

Jon Aarstad has announced that he will retire as city administrator of Burlington at the end of March 2009.

Jon Amundson has been named assistant city manager of Richland. He was formerly assistant to the city manager of Allen, Texas.

Steve Anderson, who was city manager of Kenmore, is not the assistant city manager of Bothell.

J. D. Fouts, city manager of Centralia, has announced his resignation. He will retire at the end of 2008.

Donna Hanson is the new city manager of Medina, following Mike Caldwell, former city administrator of Lynnwood, who served as interim city manager.

Tansy Hayward, who has been assistant to the city manager of Tacoma, has been appointed assistant city manager there.

Linda Herzog is serving as interim city manager of Sequim.

Pat McDonnell, city manager of Vancouver, is now an ICMA credentialed manager.

Kent Myers has been appointed city manager of Port Angeles. He was formerly City Manager of Hot Springs, Arkansas.

Jerry Osterman has been serving as interim city manager of Port Angeles.

Jim Reinbold, who has been serving as assistant city manager of Fife, has been named the city administrator of Chelan.

Denny Richards, former interim county administrator of Jefferson County, has been appointed city manager of Kelso.

Fred Stouder, former city administrator of Prosser, is now the interim city manager Kenmore.

Ronald K. Wilde, who has been village administrator of Waunakee, Wisconsin, is the new city manager of Edgewood. We'd known him as Kim when he was last among us as city administrator of Snoqualmie.

David Zabell, assistant city manager of Yakima, has graciously consented to become the WCMA regional representative for that area, which is comprised of Kittitas, Klickitat and Yakima Counties.

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2009 Calendar

- **City Legislative Action Conference (CLAC)**, sponsored by AWC, February 18 -- 19, Red Lion Olympia Hotel, Olympia, Washington.
- **Northwest Management Conference**, March 24 -- 27, 2009, Hilton, Vancouver, Washington.
- **Association of Washington Cities (AWC) Annual Conference**, June 23 -- 26, 2009, Spokane, Washington
- **Washington City/County Management Association (WCMA) Summer Conference**, August 18 -- 21, 2009, Enzian Inn, Leavenworth, Washington
- **International City/County Management Association (ICMA) Annual Conference**, September 11 -- 16, 2009, Montréal, Québec, Canada

2010 Calendar

- **Northwest Management Conference**, to be announced, Oregon
- **Association of Washington Cities (AWC) Annual Conference**, June 22 -- 25, 2010, Vancouver, Washington
- **Washington City/County Management Association (WCMA) Summer Conference**, to be announced
- **International City/County Management Association (ICMA) Annual Conference**, October 17 -- 20, 2010, San Jose/Santa Clara County, California

WCMA News is a publication of the Washington City/County Management Association. President, Ben Yazici
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