



Bulletin

City to host FEMA Flood Insurance Informational Open House

We urge property owners and residents interested in learning how the new flood insurance maps will affect flood insurance costs to join us for a public flood insurance awareness meeting on **Tuesday, June 10 at 7:00 p.m., at the City Hall Council Chambers.**

Guest speaker will be Jeff Woodward, Insurance Specialist with the local FEMA office in Bothell. He will share with you how to minimize your costs.

OF PARTICULAR IMPORTANCE TO PROPERTY OWNERS, IS THE "GRANDFATHER" PROVISION OF FEDERAL FLOOD INSURANCE STATUTES. IN MANY CASES, PROPERTY OWNERS CANNOT BE "GRANDFATHERED" IF THEY DO NOT PURCHASE A FLOOD INSURANCE POLICY PRIOR TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NEW, HIGHER BASE FLOOD ELEVATIONS.

**Tuesday, June 10 @ 7:00 p.m.
Burlington City Hall
833 S. Spruce Street**

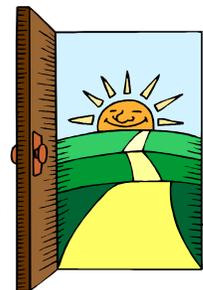
The City is working hard to ensure the new, higher elevation flood maps are as accurate as possible; however, **it is important that each individual property**

owner familiarize themselves with the FEMA flood insurance program and how the new elevations will likely affect their home or business.

If you live in Burlington or the surrounding area and **DO NOT** currently have flood insurance on your home you should be aware the soon-to-be released "revised" flood maps may seriously affect your future insurance costs and resale value of your home.

The City of Burlington strongly recommends participation in the flood insurance program, and further recommends all individual property owners seriously consider getting flood insurance prior to the official implementation of the new maps, if they do not already have it.

Preliminary maps are expected to be released some time this summer (see article on Page 11 re: FEMA Flood Mapping and Skagit River Hydrology). We do not yet know exactly what the maps will show, but in general, we believe the maps will indicate base flood elevations going up significantly throughout the City.



BECOME AN ACTIVE, INFORMED CITIZEN

City Government Directory

Mayor

Ed Brunz
Office 755-0531
Home 755-1406

City Council Members

Bill Aslett 757-4539
Garnor Bensen 757-6680
Helen Doyle 755-9800
Chris Loving 755-9245
Ted Montgomery 757-2786
Edie Edmundson 757-4575
Joanne Valentine 755-0234

City Staff

Administrator
Jon Aarstad 755-0531

Attorney
Scott Thomas 755-9473

Building Official
Jim Sherwood 755-0077

Buildings & Grounds
Paul Tingley 757-3450

Code Enforcement
Robin Blair 755-0921

Finance Director
Greg Thramer 755-0531

Fire Chief
Mark Anderson 755-0261

Library Director
Maggie Buckholz 755-0760

Municipal Court
Marilyn Dite 755-0492

Parks & Recreation Director
Loren Cavanaugh 755-9649

Planning Director
Margaret Fleek 755-9717

Police Chief
Bill VanWieringen 755-0921

Public Works Director
Chal Martin 755-9715

Senior Center Coordinator
Kim Kelly 755-0102

Sewer Department
Roger LaRue 757-4085

Street Department
Jerry Windsor 757-4214

Emergencies

9-1-1

Mayor's Message:

STOP BY FOR A VISIT

Your ideas and concerns are important to me. I have been to a lot of meetings, hearings, and events since taking office in January, and there have already been times when I am concerned that your voice is not being heard.

Yes, I know you are busy and I have been very pleased to see the turnout for some major Planning Commission public hearings on issues close to home. But very few people attend the City Council meetings on a regular basis and major decisions are made without discussion from the public. This is a cause for concern.

Take a few minutes to jot down the top five priorities you see for Burlington over the next few years, and stop by for a visit to your City Hall. Give me a call at 755-0531 and we will meet and discuss those priorities. Help us make good things happen in Burlington every day!



HELP IMPROVE COMMUNITY SAFETY

Burlington is concerned about public safety for each and every neighborhood, whether it is "Eyes on the Street" for Crime Prevention, or making sure that every citizen has plenty of time to evacuate in a dangerous Flood Event.

Today, we have three Neighborhoods who have come together and set up a very simple "Neighbor-to-Neighbor" Plan. All you need is a telephone tree and two or three Block Captains who can make sure that everyone gets a call or a knock on the door. In the future, there may also be an opportunity for your neighborhood to participate in Block Watch for Crime Prevention.

The City sees YOU as the first line of preparation for any emergency situation. If you want to get involved, either as a stand alone group, or part of a Homeowner's Association, give us a call and we will work with you! You will get early notice, along with all critical facilities such as schools, retirement homes, and assisted living facilities. Call the Planning Department at 755-9717 to get started on your plan.

If we can call you all at the beginning of a Flood Event, and keep everyone posted on the timelines for deciding if there is a need to evacuate, then everyone can determine if they want to go early, or wait until the final timeline for action.



During the last few weeks much has been said regarding the effects of prescription and non-prescription waste on a community's drinking water. Luckily here in Skagit County we have not seen an alarming problem with the contamination of our drinking water from pharmaceutical waste. However, we need to be concerned about the future of our water quality as our population continues to grow and how pollutants, such as pharmaceutical waste, can negatively impact our drinking water. Out of curiosity I contacted our Skagit County Health Department and was provided with the following information from one of their knowledgeable and helpful staff members.

Currently there are no programs in Skagit County where a person can deposit their unused prescriptions that are old or no longer needed. However, there is pilot program in King County that is co-sponsored by Group Health and Bartell Drugs that provides an option for the public to return their prescription and non-prescription drugs so they can be safely destroyed and not endanger our water or environment. Skagit County is following this program carefully to see how successful it is and to

see if it will provide a positive model for our community. It is a goal to have a similar program in Skagit County by 2010. Of course all is dependant on partnerships with key businesses such as drugstores, pharmaceutical companies and government.

In the mean time what can you do to help reduce the pollution of our water here in Skagit County?

First, we need to refrain from dumping our unused and unwanted prescription and non-prescription drugs down the toilet into our sewer systems. Remember, this sewage liquid ultimately ends up in the Skagit River. Our Sewage Treatment plants are configured and equipped to remove the bacteriological content of this sewage liquid before it goes into the Skagit. Unfortunately we, Burlington and other cities, simply do not have the equipment necessary to remove prescription waste from the water. This is where each citizen can make a difference. It is recommended that you dump your unwanted prescriptions into used coffee grounds or kitty litter to make them undesirable for anyone to remove from your garbage. Yes, this is a problem with individuals who dig into

private garbage cans to find unwanted drugs. Place this mixture of used kitty litter and prescription or non-prescription drugs in your waste cans and have it shipped away to the land fill. (Note: this is not the most desirable option but at this time without a drug return program it is our safest option.) **Remember for the health of your community do not dump prescription and non-prescription drugs down the toilet!**

Finally the Health Department strongly recommends not storing your unwanted drugs in your home. You want to get rid of them as soon as you can so there is not an opportunity for a small child or others to accidentally take these unwanted medications and create a family crisis.

We are attempting to change our billing program with an improved billing invoice for our utility service.

During the next few months you will be receiving updates regarding such items as prescription drug disposal, responses to questions most asked during the billing period and community activities. Our goal is to provide you with information that keeps you informed and involved with your government.



Library Happenings

Despite the late snow and winter's last gasp to hang on, there is the promise of spring in the air! Daffodils, cherry blossoms, and tulips are all in bloom. Ah, spring, a time of new beginnings and life bursting forth from the well-tended Skagit Valley fields.

This is true for the Burlington Library as well, where new beginnings, new life, and new books bursting from the shelves are the norm. I'm very happy to report that there is also a new library director in town.

My name is Maggie Buckholz and I arrived on March 10 to replace long-time director, Christine Perkins, who has moved on to the Bellingham Public Library. I have spent the last nine years working with Sno-Isle Libraries and have most recently managed the Marysville Library. I couldn't resist the lure of this fabulous new library building and the enticement of working with a library staff so well-known for outstanding public service. I just had to come to Burlington, and what a welcome I've received! I'd like to give a special thanks to all of you who have stopped by my new office to say "Hello" and introduce yourselves. I especially want to mention my heartfelt appreciation to the great library staff that has been so patient and helpful as I become more acquainted with the ins and outs of this terrific library.

There are many other new additions to the library. Thanks to the generosity of the Burlington Library Foundation and the City of Burlington, we have a wonderful new sculpture gracing the entrance to the library. Local artist Joseph Kinnebrew installed "Thinking of You" at the northeast corner of the building.



L-R: Duane Stowe, Maggie Buckholz, Joseph Kinnebrew

This colorful and dramatic addition to the library nicely compliments the architecture of the building and grounds. If you haven't driven by lately, it's definitely worth the view. The library's Art Committee continues to look at art pieces that will enhance our environment, lift our spirits, and help to identify this library as an inviting and central place for the community.

Numbers don't always tell the whole story but the most recent library statistics really reflect the impact of the new building. Daily attendance and items checked out continue to be almost double that of the old building. As we settle in to the routines of our new library, we will continue to look for new ways to serve you better, and have set some very specific goals for 2008.

Respond to Increased Demand for Materials

We want to keep the library collection fresh and inviting. We have purchased hundreds of new books since January and have added to our popular DVD and other media collections. The "New Books" shelf always has something hot and current so be sure to browse this display on your next visit. If you have a title to suggest, please let us know! This is YOUR library and we will do our best to find what you are seeking.

Increase Programming

Based on attendance, we can see that the Monthly Movie Matinees are popular. Thanks to the Friends of the Library for providing popcorn to accompany our family-friendly films! We are also planning to expand adult programming. In February, the Library Foundation funded an outstanding historical program, "The Life and Times of General George E. Pickett" and the 80+ people in attendance clearly showed that this type of program will be well received in the future. If you have ideas to share about the kinds of programs you would like to see, please let us know.

Continue Good Stewardship of Public Funds

The library enriches the lives of the people in our community in many diverse ways. Just this past month we helped numerous students with homework resources, provided computers for job seekers to prepare resumes so they can get a job, and assisted new immigrants with language materials so they could improve their English language skills. Through our story times parents learned how to incorporate reading into the lives of their babies and toddlers so they will grow into life-long readers!

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Catch the Reading Bug @ the Burlington Public Library



Library employees are hoping for a drone of city and county residents who are 1 to 101 years-old to register for our **free Summer Reading Program** starting **Monday, June 16**. Join us for fun, prizes, programs and more!

Whirr around our new, spacious 20,000 square foot building with stacks and stacks of new books, audio-books, music CDs, educational and feature film DVDs.

County residents have the option to purchase a 3 month, 6 month, or 12 month card for your entire household or to register your children, birth through 15-years-old for our free Star Reader program.

We hope you'll buzz  into the library for our free programming as well. Everyone is welcome to come free of charge.

Silly Dan the Magic Man will dazzle us with his antics on Saturday, June 21 @ 1:30 p.m.
Puppeteer Tina Bixby presents "Creepy Crawlers!" on Tuesday, July 8 @ 1:00 p.m.
Charles the Clown is coming to town on Wednesday, July 30 @ 1:30 p.m.



For a complete listing, please visit us at www.burlington.lib.wa.us

LIBRARY— continued from page 4

Taxpayers get a tremendous return on the investment in libraries. In addition, the Library Foundation works to help us enhance our library. Many people helped this foundation get off the ground with very generous donations, and there will be more opportunities to help this foundation grow! Watch for news of our upcoming fundraising events - you too can help us build a stronger library.

Spring is here! As you begin to plan your outdoor activities, remember all of the valuable resources that are right here at your local library. Books on planting a garden, building a kite, finding the best hiking trails, and so much more are here waiting for you.

So stop on by and check us out!



FINANCE — continued from page 15

years to come. If you would like to view the letter in its entirety, please visit our web site at www.ci.burlington.wa.us. The link is located in the Finance Department section under utility billing sewer rates or you may contact City Hall for more information.

VISA and MasterCard credit and debit cards are accepted until 3:00 p.m. Monday - Friday either by phone or in person at City Hall.

We also offer direct debit from your checking or savings account. You could stop worrying about your City of Burlington utility bill due date. With Direct Debit Autopay, you will never again receive a late fee! The application is simple. Please stop by City Hall to obtain an Autopay Agreement or contact us at (360) 755-0531 for more information.

The City of Burlington is excited to announce that we are currently working on changing your bill format from the small Postcards to a Letter format that has been requested by several customers. In the effort to minimize waste, our projected mailing date for the new Letter billing format is July of this year. Please call (360)755-0531 if you have any questions or concerns in this time of transition.

Get Ready for Roundabouts !!!

The City is installing a roundabout in front of the High School on North Burlington Boulevard this year. In 2010, our roundabout will be followed by dual roundabouts at the Chuckanut Interchange, to handle the freeway traffic. When complete, the system of roundabouts on the north end of the City will operate safely and efficiently.

We believe people will quickly get used to driving, using roundabouts. Most surveys show that people are initially very concerned about roundabouts, but after a few swings through, feel comfortable and would not want to change the roundabout for a standard traffic signal. Roundabouts are much safer than conventional signals, and can handle comparable traffic when compared to a conventional signal.

As you enter a roundabout, simply look to your left and yield to any traffic that is already in the roundabout. Then enter the roundabout and continue driving through the roundabout until your street segment departure point is evident. If you miss your turnoff, don't worry! Simply stay in the roundabout, circle again, and then get it right the 2nd time. Many people like roundabouts, because they keep all traffic moving continuously, as opposed to signals which stop and start traffic in bunches. Most people therefore perceive that they can move through a roundabout more quickly than a signalized intersection, and they are right. Roundabouts are proven to be safer intersections because they slow traffic speeds and nearly eliminate rear-end collisions.

Roundabouts can do one more thing that drivers in the U.S. are not used to doing: they provide a safe and efficient U-Turn capability. After the WSDOT roundabouts are completed at the Chuckanut Interchanges, the final street configuration between the City's roundabout and the Chuckanut interchange roundabouts will place a center median on North Burlington Boulevard, ensuring no left turns can be made in this area. But motorists will be able to quickly and safely use the roundabouts to simply circle back to the other side of the street. It takes a change of mind-set, but once drivers realize the U-turn feature of roundabouts, they feel comfortable with it.

For more information on how roundabouts operate, please visit our webpage where we have posted a short educational video; http://www.ci.burlington.wa.us/page.asp_Q_navigationid_E_479

Burlington Capital Projects Update

Most residents are well aware of the construction on North Burlington Boulevard, which began in early April and will continue to the end of the year (approximately 8-months). We ask that motorists use extreme caution when proceeding through the area and to expect delays. The construction site is very constrained for the contractor and there will be

several crews working at one time. We encourage motorists to use alternate routes and avoid the area if possible. When completed, this reconstructed section of Burlington Boulevard will have four travel lanes, and 10-ft wide bike/pedestrian path, landscaping and will include a roundabout near the mid-way point between the Chuckanut interchange and SR-20/Avon. In preparation for this project, there was also plenty of work going on during the summer/fall of 2007, when the City installed a new regional drainage facility and mainline storm sewer pipes, in order to handle the runoff from the new street segment as well as the adjacent area. This stormwater project, paid from the City's Storm Drain Utility fund, cost approximately \$2.5 million. The North Burlington Boulevard improvement project construction work will cost approximately \$5 million. In total, the project will cost approximately \$8 million. Of this amount, \$2,478,389 was obtained through the State Transportation Improvement Board, and \$400,000 was obtained through Skagit County's Distressed Counties Public Facilities grant program.

Work on Burlington Hill (Hillcrest Drive) will continue on the next several months. Although the road has been reopened to traffic, we will be completing work to enhance the slope above the roadway to improve long-term stability. Motorists can expect delays and flagged one-way traffic during the day during work hours. Once the slope work is complete, a final lift of asphalt will be placed to complete the project.

And there's more: the City, in cooperation with the State Department of Transportation, will be re-aligning Nevitt Road in conjunction with WSDOT's SR-20 improvement project. This \$4.5 million project will include significant (\$3.1 million) reconfiguration of the SR-20 interchange, which necessitated turning Nevitt Road into the new through street which will tie into Goldenrod to the south, providing the new local access from SR-20 in this area. The segment of Goldenrod replaced by Nevitt will be abandoned except for the dead-end access it will continue to provide to businesses immediately adjacent to SR-20. The cost of construction of Nevitt Road is approximately \$3.3 million. Of that expense, the City's share is \$1.1 million. Skagit County, through its Distressed Counties Public Facilities grant program, will contribute \$300,000. Construction on the SR-20 / Nevitt Road project should be underway by the time you read this letter (May 5th), and will continue for about two years.

And, there's even more: A new park and ride facility is planned near the Chuckanut interchange, with construction to begin in the Spring of 2009. This approximately \$5 million construction project is being paid for by State and Federal funding, as well as by Skagit Transit. Skagit Transit will own the facility when completed. Construction will be overseen by the State Department of Transportation.

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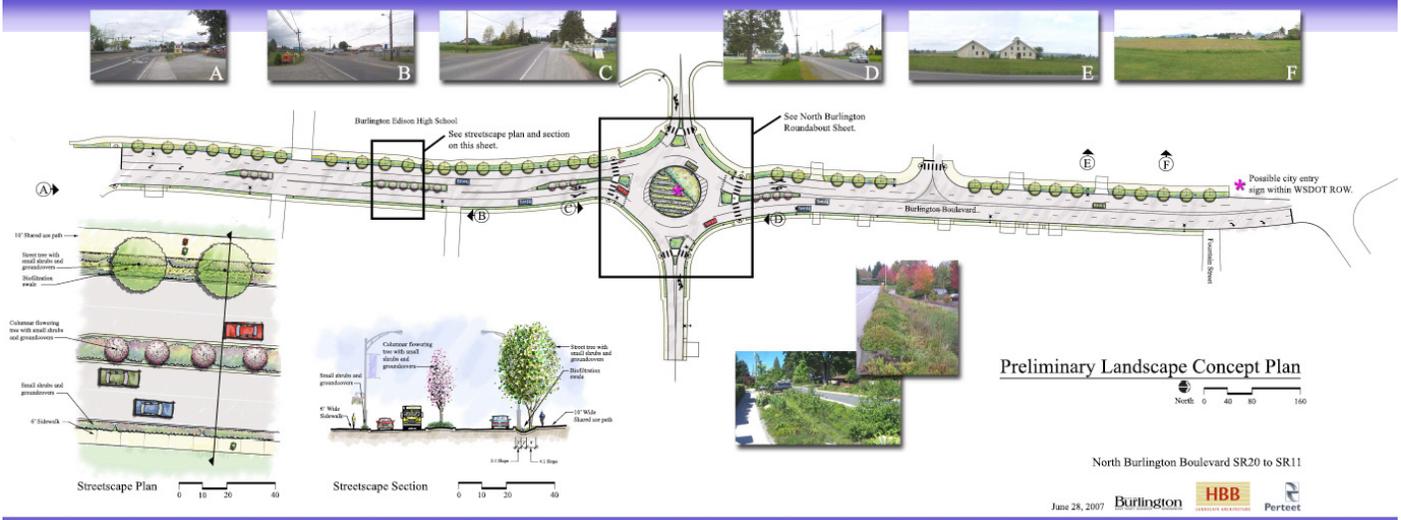
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The following year, WSDOT will reconstruct the Chuckanut interchange, installing a roundabout on either side of the freeway. When completed, this reconstructed interchange will handle traffic safely and efficiently, working in tandem with the City's improvement on North Burlington Boulevard. This approximately \$8 million construction project is funded through the State's transportation capital budget.

We feel very fortunate to be working in partnership with these agencies that are completing infrastructure projects which will benefit Burlington for decades to come. This kind of investment is appreciated and important to the quality of life and economic vitality of the City. We encourage you to visit our website for more information and updates as things progress; http://www.ci.burlington.wa.us/page.asp?navigationid=E_257

NORTH BURLINGTON BOULEVARD

North Burlington Streetscape and Roundabout



Proposed Interchange Improvements at SR11 and I-5



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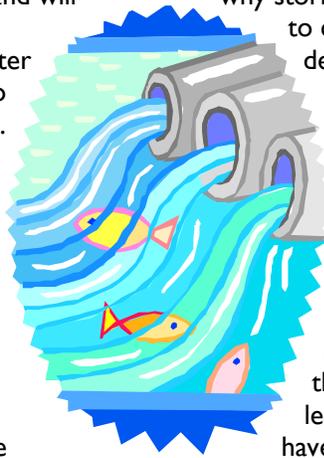
Proposed Interchange Improvements at SR 20 & I-5



National Pollution Discharge Elimination System: More Expense but Also New Opportunity for Burlington

Beginning in February 2007, the City of Burlington began operating under a new permit from the State Department of Ecology. This Permit, called the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System, Phase II, was triggered by growth in the most populated region of the county. Within the new federally-designated urban area of Mount Vernon, Sedro-Woolley, Burlington and the adjacent County jurisdiction, all of which together include more than 50,000 people, the new, tougher environmental regulations are now mandated. The regulations are extensive and will require all development projects and redevelopment projects provide storm water quality treatment facilities, or processes, to ensure stormwater leaving the site is clean.

This mandatory program brings with it increased administrative, capital improvement, and operating expenses for the City. Recognizing this, the Burlington City Council recently approved an increase in the City's Drainage Utility fee. But in addition to the downside of higher costs and administrative time, the new program also brings opportunity. We have heard from citizens for years that Gages Slough needs to be cleaned up, and this new program will help to accomplish that. Over a period of years and decades, we hope that we can gradually restore this natural feature that runs through the City, improve wildlife habitat, restore natural vegetation, acquire property and easements along the slough, and enhance opportunity for walking and natural areas within the City.



Gages Slough is critically important to the City's drainage infrastructure and it provides our City with a natural advantage over other jurisdictions because it functions as the City's "detention" pond. Under the requirements of the new Ecology permit, stormwater in most jurisdictions must be collected and stored temporarily on site because impervious surfaces (parking lots, roof tops, sidewalks, etc.) change the characteristics of the stormwater runoff. If you think about how a hard rain can quickly run off of your roof or driveway, as compared to your lawn, where the water may gradually percolate into the ground, you can visualize why stormwater detention on-site is needed in order to capture the high peak runoff flows. The detention ponds on-site store those flows temporarily, and then gradually release the water to mimic a more natural, undeveloped condition without the impervious surfaces. But in Burlington, our property owners generally do not have to dedicate a significant footprint of their property to "detain" water in ponds. That's because Gages Slough does this for us. Our responsibility is to ensure all water going into the Slough is clean. So long as the water leaving any particular site is clean, it does not have to spend time in an on-site detention facility if the City drainage system otherwise has capacity to get the water to the Slough. There will be much more to come on this as we enter a new era of increased emphasis on stormwater quality in the City of Burlington.

There will be much more to come on this as we enter a new era of increased emphasis on stormwater quality. For more information, go to the timeline fact sheet at: <http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/stormwater/municipal/workshopPPTs/>

Buildings & Grounds

There is a new guy on our team! Don Boston joined the crew in the Buildings and Grounds Department. His primary duties will be building maintenance in the City Hall, the Public Safety Building, and the Fire Department.

Don has a great deal of experience for this position. He previously worked for the Mount Vernon School District and before that he worked for the Weyerhaeuser Company in Sedro-Woolley.

Although Don is new to the City of Burlington staff, he is not new to our area. Don was born in Mount Vernon and raised in Clear Lake. Don and his wife, Gail, have lived in Day Creek and Sedro-Woolley for 30 years and raised four children, Tyson, Damon, Carley, and Angie. Gail works for the Burlington School District in the payroll department.



UPDATE: FEMA Flood Mapping and Skagit River

The latest development in the ongoing Skagit River Revised Flood Insurance Study is that FEMA has directed its technical consultant, the Seattle District, US Army Corps of Engineers, to revise its technical analysis to incorporate updated hydrologic inputs and a newer version of software. In October 2007, Skagit County's technical consultant, Northwest Hydraulic Consultants, determined that the modeling software used by the Corps of Engineers to show new base flood elevations did not replicate results provided by the City's consultant, Edmonds-based Pacific International Engineering, for the same hydrologic input. Our local partnership group consisting of Burlington, Mount Vernon, Dike District 12, Dike District 1, and Skagit County pursued resolution of this inconsistency. After investigation by FEMA, the Corps of Engineers, Northwest Hydraulic Consultants, Pacific International Engineering, and the software developer, it was determined by the software developer that the earlier version of the software, used by the Corps of Engineers, did not function properly given the complexity of the lower Skagit River Basin surface features (levees, freeway, streets, bridges, etc.). Therefore, FEMA directed the Corps to revise its flood insurance study effort, this time using the newest version of the software. The Corps is also taking advantage of this re-working to update other hydrologic information that has been changed or expanded since its initial work. The City does not agree with the analysis the Corps is using; however, we believe we

understand the basis of the Corps' analysis and further, we are developing our own complete hydrologic study and hydraulic model, which we expect to use to appeal the FEMA flood maps when they are finally issued. There is no official timeline for the new release of preliminary maps, or Corps of Engineers work product. We expect the earliest the preliminary maps will be released to the Community will be some time this summer.

The delay has given the Partnership of Burlington, Mount Vernon, Dike District 12 and Dike District 1 more time to further investigate the nature of the historic flood events – those that occurred prior to the gage installation in 1923. It continues to be our contention, which we believe is supported by compelling and quantifiable evidence, that the historic floods were much smaller than officially estimated. These overestimated historic flood events, in turn, when included in the flood frequency analysis, increase the size of the theoretical discharge of a 100-year flood event. The effect of this is to make an already-serious flood risk, even worse on paper. We recognize the Skagit River presents a serious and ongoing flood risk; however, overestimating this risk places a financial and economic burden on Burlington and the entire region which will negatively affect our quality of life for decades.

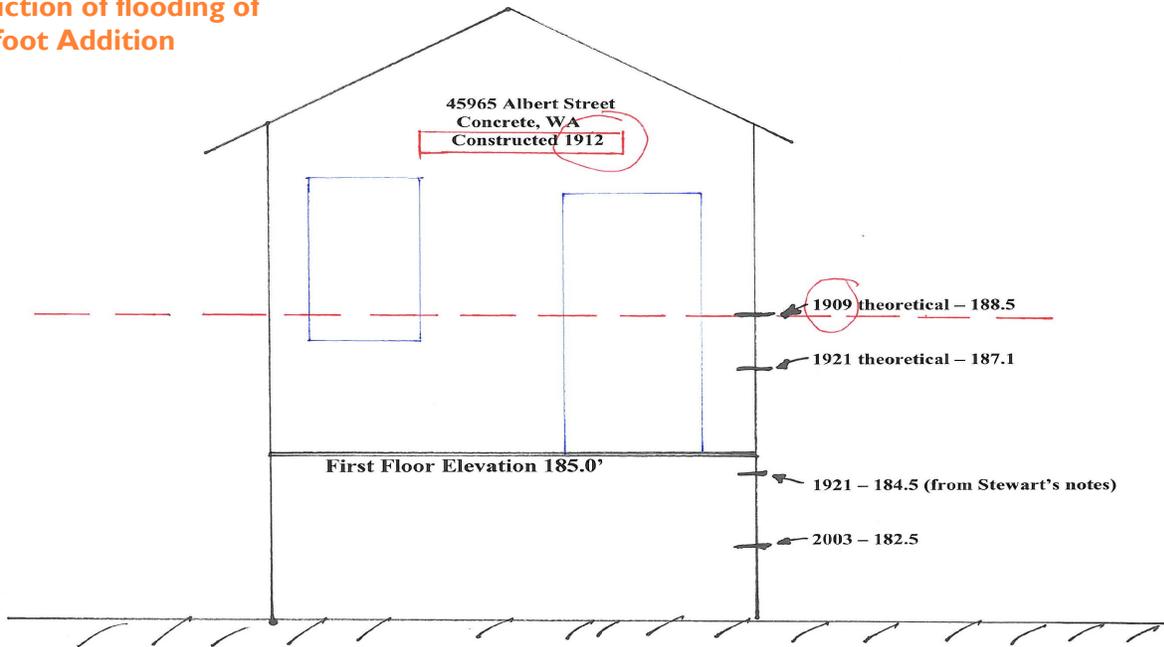
In an ongoing effort to better characterize the nature of the historic flood events, the City has been conducting additional

investigational work in the Crofoot's Addition to Concrete, where many of the older houses survived the 1909, 1917 and 1921 flood events. This research will supplement the research previously conducted in the Hamilton vicinity, in which the City's consultant concluded the peak discharge of either the 1909, 1917 and 1921 flood event was 188,000 cubic feet per second, not 245,000 cfs (USGS estimate – 1909), 210,000 cfs (USGS – 1917), or 228,000 cfs (USGS – 1921). In theory, these houses in the Crofoot's Addition to Concrete would have been flooded 2-4 feet above their first floor levels, if the discharge of these floods had been at the level USGS indicates for these historic flood events. We are fairly certain this did not happen, as we believe the houses would not have structurally survived such a flood event; and in addition, our common sense tells us that the people of the time would not have built a new house, say, in 1912, just a few years after the flood of 1909, if that area had recently been hit with a devastating flood (see 1909 water level, conservatively drawn on the schematic). So, we are looking for evidence of flooding (or no flooding) in these houses. Survey notes annotated by James Stewart in 1922, indicate the high water level in the Crofoot's Addition for the 1921 flood was 184.55 feet. The depiction on Page 11 gives a conservative indication of how this level relates to the 2003 flood level in the Crofoot's Addition, and the theoretical levels of the historic floods:

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Depiction of flooding of Crofoot Addition



The following picture shows the inside of the exterior wall cavity of one house in the Crofoot's Addition that was built in 1900. We saw no indication of flood marks or flood silt, and currently we are analyzing the samples taken, to look for flood silt.

We are still gathering as much information as we can, and the City's consultant will finalize its hydrology report within the next few months. We will then be equipped to work through the FEMA appeal process, if necessary, to make our best case in order to achieve the most accurate revised base flood elevations possible.

The ramifications of incorrect hydrology will be serious and persistent for the entire Skagit Valley, and negatively affect the long term economic vitality and future quality of life for our area citizens. Growth in the property tax base is essential to provide important services our community needs, including schools. Most people do not realize that the base flood elevations will go up, no matter which analysis is used. So there will be a financial handicap – it is already going to happen. At issue is whether our community will be handicapped for decades by overly conservative base flood estimates which follow from an incorrect analysis, or whether we will have a chance to, over years and perhaps decades, certify our levies and take other appropriate actions to protect ourselves from the externally-generated, administrative handicap that is being thrust upon us. Ultimately, it may not be the flood itself, but rather the negative economic consequences of the overestimated 100-year flood that turns out to be the greatest risk for the City. We recognize the difficulty of, on the one hand, ensuring our citizens have a healthy respect for the Skagit flood risk, while on the other hand, protesting that the risk is overstated by FEMA. But it is a critical distinction that must be made. In the first case, we have a tangible flood risk that we can deal with directly; in the second case, we have an administrative program that, over time, could cause the economic foundation of the community to slowly wither. In the end, the greatest threat could be the latter.



We welcome your thoughts on this issue. If you would like additional information about this article, or would like to view more in-depth information, please call the Burlington Public Works Department at 755-9715, email our Public Works Director at cmartin@ci.burlington.wa.us, or stop by the Public Works office in our new City Hall, 833 South Spruce Street.

Students Help Restore Gages Slough Habitat Corridor

students of Lucille Umbarger School as they paraded to **Jack Doyle Memorial Park** and planted many beautiful trees and other lower growing plants to build the habitat along Gages Slough. Students from **grades K-4** partnered to dig the holes, prepare the plants and pat down the soil on a beautiful day. This was followed by several days of heavy rainfall, so each plant is off to a great start!



This is the city's first year in the new effort to develop a long term maintenance and monitoring plan for the Gages Slough habitat corridor. There are 15 potential sites for wetland restoration projects, and two sites that have projects in place, Jack Doyle Memorial Park and the Goldenrod Bridge over Gages Slough just west of Interstate 5.

Urban Forestry is Back in Burlington

Burlington adopted a Tree Ordinance in 1995 and established an Urban Forestry Board. While tree planting continued along the SR 20 Bloomin' Tree Trail, efforts to continue the urban forestry program were stalled.



Today, the Washington State Legislature has passed a new bill that has the goal of preventing air and water pollution through urban forestry

partnerships with cities and towns around the state. Burlington is looking for citizens who are interested in serving on the city's Urban Forestry Board to help coordinate the city's tree planting and restoration efforts, to help bring Burlington's tree inventory up to date, and help focus citywide attention on becoming an evergreen community. In addition to reforesting the Gages Slough corridor, other important issues include setting new low impact design standards for new development and helping set updated standards for street improvements that include lots of trees. Give the Planning Department a call at 755-9717 if you are interested in serving on the Urban Forestry Board!



BURLINGTON GREENHILLS CEMETERY

Spring is here and we have begun mowing at the cemetery. With the Memorial Day celebration, this is always a busy time of the year. In addition to the everyday duties at the cemetery, we will be pruning trees, edging and weed-eating around all of the headstones. Fresh beauty bark will also be put down. Flags were placed for the Veteran's with the help of the American Legion Post for the ceremony held on Monday, May 26.



Municipal Court

Passports are continuing to be a great service and a good source of revenue for the city. The Municipal Court remitted \$26,590.00 in passport fees last year and \$5,700 so far this year. The average time to receive your passport after application has been sent in, is now two - four weeks.

Gross revenue for the first quarter of 2008 is \$84,561.40 with \$51,325.49 staying local. This is 9% higher than at this time last year. We have had 688 tickets filed in the first quarter; this is 7% higher than the same time last year.

During this same time, the court has collected an additional \$6,400.00 in other fees. We also recovered and returned to local vendors, \$1781.88 in restitution. Restitution is a priority of this court, and we will pay restitution owed before we collect fine money for the city. This figure does not include restitution that was paid

directly to the merchants, as court ordered, for bad checks or merchandise and/or services.

For the first quarter of the year, the City Work Program (CWP) has logged in 147 days of work in lieu of jail. If served in jail, the police department would be billed approximately \$9,722 +/- for these 147 days. This also is a great resource for the City, and has cut down on paid summer part-time help, and is getting projects accomplished that the city staff do not have the time to complete.

One of the new responsibilities of the CWP Coordinator is to act as a court monitor on the Wednesdays we hold court. This new position is still being tweaked. We have a sign posted in the lobby on court days that has an abbreviated version of the no weapons in the building. The court monitor will be standing at the entrance to the courtroom, behind

a small table with a prominent sign that notifies everyone coming in that all bags, back packs, purses, or other containers are subject to search before entering into the courtroom. If someone does not allow the monitor to check their bag, an officer will be called. This new position has already confiscated two large knives and a hatchet that was being brought into the courtroom. This is not a law enforcement position, if law enforcement is needed, the police will be dispatched to handle those problems.

As always I invite all you to call or stop by if you have any questions.





Changes & Challenges at Police Department

On March 31, Chief Bud Bowers retired from the department after nearly 13 years in the position.

With his retirement, the City promoted me to the position. I accepted, knowing the large shoes I would have to fill. I have been with the department for almost 30 years, 22 of which I had been in the position of Lieutenant.

Prior to Chief Bowers' departure, the City Council added the position of Assistant Police Chief in a restructuring move. This brings the number of Administrative staff within the Department to three.

This new position will alleviate the increased administrative workload and allow for more time and energy to be put into the needs and programs of the department such as Community/School Resource Officer.

An immediate challenge is the shortage of officers. This is a challenge that is facing a majority of

departments throughout the state. With the departure of Chief Bowers, along with having an officer serving in the military reserve and the departure of others for various reasons, we have been working without a Community Resource Officer, Drug Task Force Officer, as well as one less Detective.

We currently have two officers in the final stages of their training along with one that is currently in the Academy and will graduate in July. We recently put in an application for another officer to start attending the Academy this June.

In addition to these officers, the City Council authorized the hiring of three additional positions.

Our current officers are seasoned, dedicated veterans with an average of over 14 years of service. They have been handling the shortage situation in their normal professional manner. The Citizens of Burlington continue to be served by Officers of high quality who are committed to their profession.

Bill VanWieringen, Police Chief



PARKS & RECREATION HAPPENINGS

▶ Spring is here and summer is just around the corner...but, evidently winter didn't get the news! April's snow brought the first Burlington hosted tournament of the season to an abrupt halt. Disc Northwest kicked off Skagit River Park's tournament season on the weekend of April 19 & 20 with their annual "Spring Reign" games. Unfortunately, the snowfall and soggy conditions wrapped up the games a little sooner than expected on that

Sunday morning. Northwest United FC's first annual Skagit Tulip Tournament is the newest of the youth soccer tournaments hosted at the park and is next on the calendar. Visit the Parks Department's "Tournament Calendar" web-page for a complete listing of Skagit River Park's 2008 tournaments: www.ci.burlington.wa.us

▶ Christi Kinney, Burlington's Recreation Coordinator, has been hard at work getting the summer's program schedule lined up. Program registration will be available in early May. Would you like to be on our mailing list? Phone us at **360-755-9649** or send us an Email to recreation@ci.burlington.wa.us

▶ Capital projects that are either underway or on the pike are:

- Lighting at N.O.R.A.'s "off-road" race track (Whitmarsh Road)
- Lighting at the Tournament Horseshoe Pit complex (Whitmarsh Road)
- Re-surfacing of the Highway 20 Trail
- Parking improvements along the gravel road bordering Skagit River Park's West Playfields.

▶ Burlington's Parks and Recreation offices have relocated! You can find us in the "old" City Hall building at **900 East Fairhaven Avenue**. The business entrance is located at the east end of the building off S. Regent Street. Come check out our new digs!

FIRE DEPARTMENT

The Burlington Fire Department provides fire and emergency medical response not only to the citizens of Burlington, but also provides these services to Fire District #6 that surrounds the city and extends from District Line Road to the Skagit Regional Airport and north to the Skagit Speedway.

We responded to a total of 1,776 emergency calls in 2007. The calls for service that occurred within the city limits including Interstate 5 totaled 1,340, and 369 calls occurred in Fire District #6. We also responded to Mutual Aid response calls with neighboring departments 67 times.

The majority of our calls in 2007 were for medical aid with a total of 1,257 of our calls for this service. The majority of our 29 volunteer members and all of our paid staff are trained as Emergency Medical Technicians to better serve the needs of the community with their emergency medical needs.

We currently staff the City of Burlington fire station with a total of 5 full-time firefighters and 29 volunteer firefighters. The Bayridge Station on Peterson Road is staffed with 6 resident firefighters. Our full-time firefighters currently staff the city station Monday thru Friday from 6:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. Our volunteer program currently provides a staff of 2 on duty on Saturdays, Sundays and holidays and provides the same coverage from 10:00 p.m. until 6:00 a.m. every night.

We are currently looking for additional volunteer personnel in order to maintain an adequate number of trained personnel to handle the volume of calls that we have. We provide all of the training necessary to become a skilled firefighter and also offer the training to become certified for medical calls.

We encourage citizens to stop by the fire station during the day or call us at 755-0261 for information on becoming a volunteer for the Burlington Fire Department.



Notes from the Finance Department

This year marks the beginning of a three-year utility rate adjustment as passed by the Burlington City Council on November 8, 2007, Ordinances 1640 and 1641. The City has increased the rates for Sanitary Sewer Service by 4% and Drainage Utility by 36%, effective January 1, 2008. The increase in the Sanitary Sewer Service rate marks the first increase since January 1, 2000 and is the first rate increase for the Drainage Utility since it was implemented on April 1, 1997. These increases are much needed in order to help pay for the increases in operations and maintenance costs of the overall wastewater system and will be instrumental in accomplishing our long term goals, including the restoration work on Gages Slough. In addition, the fee increase for the Drainage Utility will allow the City to meet federal Clean Water Act requirements, and the requirements of the Western Washington Phase II Municipal Stormwater Permit, which implements the federal National Pollution Discharge Elimination System; additional information on this permit and federal requirements may be found at your local public library, or on the state department of ecology's website at:

www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/stormwater/municipal/index.html.

For example the Single Family Inside City Limits Residential base rate was \$27.70/month and increased to \$28.81/month while the base rate for the Drainage Utility increased from \$3.10/month to \$4.22/month. The City of Burlington breaks it down by month; however, each billing is sent out as a bi-monthly bill.

The Sanitary Sewer rates are based upon water consumption as supplied to us by Skagit County PUD #1. The Summer Averaging period begins May 1, 2008 where the residential sewer bills will be an average of your previous sewer billings for the periods of November 2007 through April 2008. If you have any significant changes in usage, i.e. occupancy, water leak, vacancy etc., please notify the City Utility Department @ (360)755-0531 as these changes may affect your bi-monthly bill.

The City mailed out a letter with the January/February billings of 2008 detailing the increase for this year and the

Continued on page 5

YARD WASTE RECYCLING CENTER

2008
GRASS & BRUSH DISPOSAL
951 S. Section Street
OPEN:
Wednesday: 2:00 to 6:00 p.m.
Saturday: 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

- ▶ **Limited service** for *residents* within the Burlington city limits only. *March 5 thru November 15, 2008.*
- ▶ **Punch card is required** for disposal of yard maintenance material.
- ▶ **FREE punch cards** are issued at *City Hall, 833 S. Spruce Street. (Picture ID w/ address required)*
- ▶ Limit of **FREE 2008 punch cards up to a \$40 limit per household: Punch cards are valid for 2008.**
 - \$0.50 punch for sack of yard waste.
 - \$1.00 punch for one garbage can of yard waste.
 - Up to \$5.00 for pickup load of yard waste, truck bed height.
 - Up to \$10.00 for pickup load of yard waste, piled above truck bed height.
- ▶ Limb/grass disposal intended for yard clean up and maintenance only.
- ▶ **City WILL accept:**
 - Grass & Leaves
 - Flowers & Roses
 - Fruits & Vegetables
 - Blackberry & Ivy Vines
 - Limbs (Max. 4" diameter)
 - Corn & Sunflower Stalks
 - Sod
- ▶ Limit of two pick up or single-axle trailer loads of brush per day.
- ▶ Additional punch cards **can be purchased for \$10** at **City Hall**. Call 755-0531 for details.
- ▶ Disposal of limbs from large trees and shrubs is the responsibility of the resident/property owner.
- ▶ City will not pay for large tree removal or landscape changes.
- ▶ **The City WILL NOT accept:**
 - 2007 punch cards or others
 - Commercial yard maintenance materials
 - Contractor debris
 - Yard waste without a punch card
 - Lumber debris
 - Root balls or stumps
 - Rocks and dirt
 - Large tree and shrub removal



NOTE: Call *Skagit Soils* at 424-0199 to see if they will accept any of the above materials the City does not. There is a charge for materials, and they are located at **13260 Ball Road** (off *W. Ovenell Road* between *Higgins Airport Way* and *Farm to Market Road*).

- ▶ For more **information** or **questions**, call the Buildings & Grounds Department at **757-3450**.

Senior Center



The Burlington Senior Center is located in Maiben Park in the Community Building, just south of the Burlington Library and the city Park & Recreation offices, at the corner of Regent Street and Greenleaf Avenue. We are open **Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.** Lunch is served at noon. Reservations are no longer required. Contact us at **755-0102**.

The Burlington Senior Center encourages seniors to become acquainted with our center. There are many opportunities to expand one's social, educational and health needs. Classes of many different kinds are offered. Information on senior issues and outreach services is available and prospects for volunteering and making a difference in other senior's lives are encouraged. Some of our regular ongoing classes include: computer

classes, beginning watercolor, intermediate watercolor, advanced watercolor, basic drawing, Spanish, AARP Driving Class, fly tying, and

care giving support, world religion.

The Burlington Senior Center often hosts talks and presentations on many topics including health and finances. Senior Information and Assistance provides information monthly by a scheduled visit and with updated informational sheets on many topics that include senior housing, legal questions, prescription drugs, and Medicare part D. For those interested in health, we offer a large variety of support. A Monday morning weight loss group meets and discusses the importance of a healthy diet. On the first Tuesday of the month, the Low Vision Support Group meets. Tai Chi is offered Wednesday mornings and free blood pressure screenings are held monthly. An Adaptive Yoga class for people with Multiple Sclerosis and chronic pain is available

Thursdays. An occasional CPR and first aid class are offered.

The senior nutrition program is a very important aspect of the Senior Center. We serve excellent, homemade lunches Monday through Friday at noon. The suggested donation for a senior (age 60 and over) is \$3.00. Non-seniors are welcome at \$5.00. The Meals on Wheels program is available to homebound seniors in the Burlington area. Ensure is available by the case at a reduced donation to help seniors who need additional nutritional support. Prescriptions are required.

The Burlington Senior Center is the focal point for seniors in the Burlington community. The activities, classes and nutrition program are designed to help Burlington seniors cope with everyday stresses and improve their quality of life. **Please feel welcome to stop by the Center and explore the offering here.**





Get Rid of Junk Vehicles.... **FOR FREE!**

Junk vehicles. I call them the would of....could of....should of projects. Old cars and car parts that sit in your back yard for years waiting for the day that they will be fixed and running. Sadly, most of these projects never get done, and your neighbors end up looking at a mini junk yard every time they look out their windows, and you end up with a much smaller yard.

In the past disposing of inoperable & junk vehicles would cost anywhere from \$50 on up. This resulted in a lot of illegally dumped vehicles. However, things have changed. A recent increase in scrap metal overseas has enabled our local hulk processors and towing companies to take your inoperable and junk vehicles for FREE.

If you have the title for the vehicle you can contact any of the businesses listed below and ask if they can pick up the vehicle. If you don't have the title, a hulk vehicle inspection must be done. This is where I come

in. If you live within the City limits of Burlington, call me (*Robin Blair*) at 755-0921 and schedule an appointment and I will do a junk vehicle inspection and fill out a junk vehicle affidavit. This will take the place of the title so the hulk processor or tow company has the proper paperwork to dispose of the vehicle. If the vehicle does not meet the criteria to be deemed a hulk vehicle all is not lost. Our local towing companies will assist you in obtaining a title by tracking down the last registered owner.

So, take advantage of this great opportunity to get rid of inoperable vehicles and cars parts that clutter your yard and garage **FOR FREE**. Call any of the businesses below to make arrangements to pick up the vehicle(s).

- ▶ **APEX Towing**
(360) 757-2739
- ▶ **Burlington Towing**
(360) 757-8697
- ▶ **Larry's Auto Wrecking**
(360) 757-7444
- ▶ **Skagit River Steel**
(360) 757-6096



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