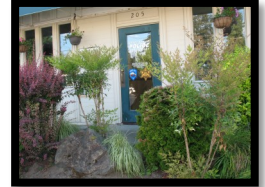




Spring 2019

GRANITE FALLS WASHINGTON

GATEWAY TO THE MOUNTAIN LOOP

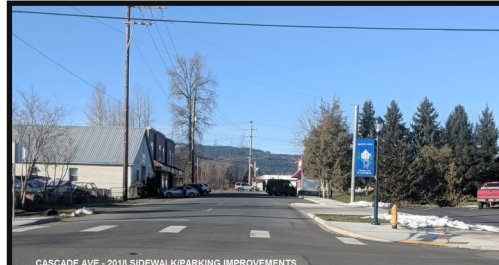


CITY UPDATES GRANITE FALLS CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Granite Falls City Manager Brent Kirk presented his third annual update to the Granite Falls Chamber of Commerce on April 18 at their monthly meeting.

Kirk explained the existing (and worsening) conditions on West Stanley Street, and the proposed solution. It involves extending Galena Street behind the Rite Aid Store from Jordan Road south of Stanley Street's traffic light to the intersection of Portage and Galena. There will be a new roundabout at that intersection, which will ultimately create a second main arterial through the city.

He reviewed the 2018—2019 finished projects, including the new street and water improvements on Kentucky Avenue, Union Street, Cascade Avenue, N. Granite Avenue, and the 100th Street (Burn Road) pavement overlay. He showed the group before and after photos of the renovation of a former cabinet shop on Portage Avenue that was purchased to become the new home for the City's Public Works Facility. He also discussed building activity, and the projected growth of our population (see story below.)



RESIDENTIAL UNITS EXPECTED TO INCREASE 33% BY 2021

Building permit activity has been steadily increasing from 2016's total of 16 new residential units, to last year's total of 177. In 2019, the city is on track to issue an estimated 140 permits by the end of the year. Projections through the year 2021 estimate a total of 1740 residential units, up 33% from the 1309 units we counted in 2016.

The Granite Falls City Council, Granite Falls Planning and Zoning Commission, and City Manager Brent Kirk have planned for the expected growth with expanded infrastructure.

According to Planning and Zoning Commission Chair Fred Cruger, "The City is limiting actual permitted building according to the number of units we can serve with the existing sewage plant capacity, while planning both mid- and long-term capacity improvements. Included in that real-time management is reserving some capacity to support commercial development projected in the near- and mid-term. The long term improvements will cost in the neighborhood of \$15M (rough estimate)." He adds, "... even now the City has garnered funds for the initial design, which will be needed to get truly accurate cost estimates, and will be needed to complete final design of the major improvements."

FINISHING TOUCHES ON CIVIC CENTER

Contractors are putting the finishing touches on the new Granite Falls Civic Center, now expected to open in June. Landscaping and interior touch-ups are in progress. City staff are hoping to be moved into the new facility by the end of June.

A Grand Opening date will be announced soon.



REMEMBERING RAY STURTZ



Ray at Playa Bonita on a recent birthday. The City Staff took him to lunch.

By Granite Falls Planning and Zoning Commissioner Chair Fred Cruger

Ray Sturtz, consultant to the City on everything involving City Planning for almost a decade, passed away in February while on vacation in Vermont. A devoted family man, Ray demonstrated a commitment to the future of Granite Falls by ensuring that the city could take advantage of every possible lever he could help to pull, based on his 40 years of experience in both private and public planning.

There are rules and laws that govern everything about "Planning" . . . and Ray's experience enabled this city to negotiate their complexity, to avoid pitfalls experienced by less fortunate communities, to engage the help (rather than the wrath) of governing authorities, and perhaps most importantly . . . to listen, learn, and laugh while still trying to color between the lines of plans, laws, statutes, guidelines, and ordinances at the City, County, and State level.

Steering the city Planning Commission (a group of well-intended volunteers with little or no prior public planning experience), Ray had to teach the alphabet: **A**nnexations, **B**uilding, **C**omprehensive, **D**ocket, **E**nvironmental, **F**easibility, **G**rowth, **H**azard, . . . **S**EPA, **T**ransportation, **U**ndeveloped, **V**ariances, **W**aterfront, **eX**aminers, **Y**ear-round, **Z**oning. Then he had to teach words, language, and finally the creation of the legal documents that chart the future of our community. Through it all, he made the planning process and Commission smarter, friendlier, more understandable, and prompt! Ray gave the Commission credit for every step, although no steps were taken without him. Ray made everyone involved in the process feel valued, although no one added more value than Ray. Ray never lost his temper, although all of us tested it on many occasions. Ray simply made everyone around him feel good about themselves and about their contributions.

You see, Ray was more than our "Planner". He was our advisor, our leader, our neighbor, our sounding board, our protector, our teacher, and our friend. He was a role model in every aspect of his life. We will continue to move forward based on the momentum he provided, but more slowly now. We will continue to cooperate with other agencies based on the relationships he established, but more awkwardly now. We will continue to strive for improvement in the future of Granite Falls, but without one of our heroes now.



SEWER RATES TO REMAIN THE SAME!

In 2017 the Granite Falls City Council had approved a series of sewer rate increases over 3 years that included a \$3 monthly rate increase in April of 2019 to \$77. However, at the March 6 regular meeting the Council voted in favor of foregoing this scheduled rate increase for 2019, so sewer rates *will remain at their same rate for another year.*



The City's Public Works Department in their expanded facility at 204 Portage.

FAMILY RESOURCE CENTER CLOSES IN GRANITE FALLS

After losing significant funding, the Granite Falls Family Resource Center closed in April.

The Granite Falls Family Resource Center was located at 200 Portage Avenue, with the property owned by the City. It opened its doors in 2012 as an extension of the Lutheran Community Services Northwest, which serves several communities in Snohomish County. It's mission is to help low-income families and individuals meet life's basic needs.

Community members can access services at the Arlington Family Resource Center, 18308 Smokey Point Blvd. It is open Monday—Thursday from 9:00am—4:00pm.

The City plans to demolish the old building as part of the Galena Street extension that has been planned for years.

COFFEE WITH THE CHIEF

On the third Wednesday of each month, residents can meet with Police Chief Chris Ferreria to discuss public safety issues. Meetings start at 5:30pm at Hanky Pies Restaurant, 106 Cascade Ave.

PLANNING COMMISSION

The Granite Falls Planning Commission meets the second Tuesday of each month at 7:00 pm upstairs at City Hall. Residents are welcome!

CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE!

www.GraniteFallsWA.gov



NEW IN TOWN?

New residents can pick up a Welcome brochure with map at City Hall, register to vote, and sign up for water (as well as pay a water bill.)

Contact Us

Granite Falls City Hall
206 S. Granite Avenue
PO Box 1440
Granite Falls, WA 98252

360-691-6441 phone
360-691-6734 fax

Open 8:30am—5:00pm
Mondays—Thursdays
8:30am—noon Fridays
Closed on legal holidays

For after hours water or sewer emergencies, call Public Works at 425-583-1781 or call 911.

**FOR POLICE OR FIRE EMERGENCIES
CALL 911**