



CITY OF
BAINBRIDGE ISLAND

COBI CONNECTS

JULY 2019

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Council Message

Rasham Nassar, Central Ward



Coming out of our May 31 retreat, I'm happy to share that the City Council explored the idea of a Citizens Academy for Bainbridge Island. In continuing with efforts to broaden public

engagement, a Citizens Academy would provide an additional avenue for public input and offer educational opportunities to anyone interested in the inner workings of city government – stay tuned!

I'd also like to highlight the newly formed Race Equity Task Force created to address issues of racial inequity and to suggest ways the City can help to make Bainbridge a welcoming and inclusive community for all. Public attendance and participation are welcome - check the City website for details of future meetings and events.

As the Council continues to tackle the sign ordinance (sandwich boards) and funding options for the joint Police-Court facility, I encourage you to share your comments, questions, and ideas.

It's a privilege to serve – wishing you all a happy summer!

City Council continues sandwich board discussion

City Council is reviewing options to change the City's sign code to address the proliferation of sandwich boards and other signs across the island, while also supporting the island's local business community.

"(We've) brought together a group of businesspeople who are willing to sit down and talk about how we can make this work, how can we find a way in which it's fair to everybody," said Chamber of Commerce President Rex Oliver during the June 18 study session.

Council discussed a ban on sandwich boards in May and directed staff to revise a proposed ordinance. Since then, the Council has taken a step back to consider whether to move toward a set of sign rules that apply different requirements in different locations. For example, rules for sandwich

boards may be different in Winslow than in outlying residential areas. Once the Council has reached consensus on the structure of the new rules they would like to consider, a new proposed ordinance will be drafted for Council review and approval.



Alongside changes to the sign code, the City is also considering an expanded wayfinding system as an alternative to sandwich boards. "I think we need to look for ways to innovate and enhance our wayfinding," said Councilmember Matt

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Funding options for new Police-Court facility

The City Council is formalizing the financing plan for the new \$20 million Police Station and Municipal Court facility. On June 4, staff presented Council with options to pay for this important project using a mix of current funds and long-term financing.

The City's current budget includes a planned approach to pay for the project

with \$10 million in existing funds and \$10 million from "Councilmanic" bonds, also known as limited tax general obligation (LTGO) debt. Councilmanic bonds are debt that the City repays using existing revenue streams, so no new property tax is needed. Now that the City has agreed to purchase the Harrison Medical Center build-

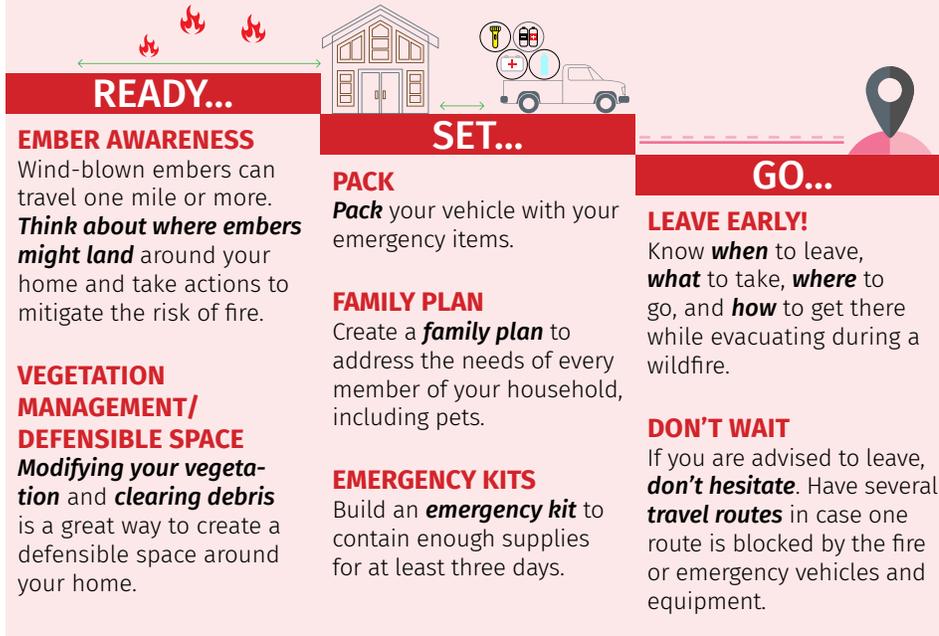
ing, located at 8804 Madison Avenue N., and project planning is moving forward to final design, formal decisions about project funding are needed.

The \$10 million in existing funds has been accumulated over several years, in anticipation of this significant expenditure.

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Wildfire Response Planning

Summer and wildfire season is upon us and City and Fire Department officials encourage all residents to be prepared. If there's an emergency, notifications, including wildfire response and evacuation orders, will be sent to the public by text or email via Nixle. To register for Nixle alerts, please text **98110** to **888777** or visit the Nixle website at www.nixle.com. For wildfire response information visit: www.bainbridgewa.gov/wildfireresponse.



Sandwich boards continued from page 1
Tirman. Additional wayfinding signage would be placed in key locations to guide visitors to businesses and other attractions. In 2017 and 2018, proposals relating to wayfinding were considered by the City's Lodging Tax Advisory Committee (LTAC). In both cases, the Committee declined to provide funding. In response to the Council's direction, City staff are planning to preview a potential wayfinding proposal for 2020 LTAC funding that would take into consideration some of the feedback on the previous two proposals.

The Council began discussion on the sandwich board topic as part of a sign code update required by the United States Supreme Court ruling *Reed v. Town of Gilbert* that states a sign code cannot regulate noncommercial signs based on the message conveyed on the sign.

The next discussion of the sign code is scheduled for the July 16 study session. At that time, staff will return with a set of proposed rules for various types of signs in different locations, to be applied in Winslow and other areas.

Changes to ADU regulations considered

Should an accessory dwelling unit (ADU) be owned by the same person as a property's main home? Should recreational vehicles (RVs) be allowed as permanent housing? These are some of the questions that City Council is considering while discussing ADU rules. An ADU, also known as a mother-in-law suite or backyard cottage, is a separate living space located on the same lot as a single-family home. ADUs are often cited as an important source of affordable housing units. In its final report, the Affordable Housing Task Force recommended the City seek ways to encourage more ADUs.

During the June 18 study session, the Council discussed several potential changes to ADU regulations and directed staff to draft an ordinance to reflect these new rules:

- Common ownership for ADUs and the primary dwelling will be required unless the ADU is dedicated to affordable housing.

- "Tiny homes" on a foundation or on wheels will be permitted as permanent housing, as either a primary dwelling or as an ADU. The City hopes to incorporate recent changes in State law to allow more flexibility for tiny homes.
- An RV that meets Health District and other utility requirements for water and septic will be allowed for use as permanent housing. Most jurisdictions prohibit this use due to safety concerns.
- In some areas, properties will be allowed to support two tiny homes or RVs, in addition to the main dwelling.
- In some areas, ADU building footprints will not contribute to a property's lot coverage limit.

Discussion of the proposed changes will continue at the July 23 business meeting. The public is welcome to attend the meeting and provide comment or please email your comments to council@bainbridgewa.gov.

Police-Court continued from page 1

Due to higher than estimated revenue in 2018, the City started 2019 with more additional funds than planned. Staff presented Council with a recommendation to apply some of the additional 2018 funds to the Police-Court project, thereby reducing the amount of debt that would be required. Specifically, City staff recommended funding the project using \$12 million in existing City funds and \$8 million in long-term debt. The overall estimate project cost remains unchanged at \$20 million.

On June 4, the Council also discussed several options for the type of debt the City could select. Council expressed a preference for using Councilmanic bonds for this project.

The next discussion regarding the project's funding is scheduled for the July 9 Council business meeting. At that time, Council will consider formal support for both the use of \$12 million in existing funds and the issuance of \$8 million in Councilmanic bonds. Public comment is welcome at this meeting.

STAFF SPOTLIGHT *CHRISTINA E. MITCHELL - ADMINISTRATIVE SPECIALIST II*

Anyone who has started a business or built or modified a home on Bainbridge Island within the last two years has surely interacted with Christina Mitchell—probably even on a regular basis. Her prominent position at the front desk makes her the first point of contact for visitors to City Hall. She serves as a welcoming presence and an informative guide, responding to everything from requests for information about current COBI projects and business licensing to offering toys for children accompanying parents to the permit counter. No matter the question, she answers with professionalism and self-confidence.

“I feel the public and customers deserve to walk into COBI and be met with competence. I want visitors to feel that their question or concern is taken seriously and that they will be answered in a timely manner. Professionalism is simply my mechanism for extending respect,” she shared. Christina’s involvement with COBI began by covering the front desk as a temporary posting. Although the position was outside the scope of her academic background (she has a bachelor’s degree in Women’s and Gender Studies from the University of Oregon, a master’s degree in Conflict Resolution from the University of Ore-

gon School of Law, and a PhD in Leadership Studies from the University of San Diego), she immediately felt a sense of comfort and ease in the role and within the Island community.

“I like the personal sense of responsibility and service that comes from contributing to local City government,” she said. “Having grown up in a small town, an obligation to actively belong in the community in which I live was instilled in me.” True to her words, she has taken on a volunteer leadership role on COBI’s “Green Team,” which focuses on encouraging environmentally sustainable practices within internal COBI operations and environmental awareness among COBI employees.

Outside of work, Christina is also engaged with the broader community in a number of ways—she is an enthusiastic volunteer at the Bainbridge Island Historical Museum, a

member of an Eagle Harbor Book Co. book club, and avid attendee at the library’s Pub Trivia Night.

Although she still has family in Raton,



New Mexico—the small coal mining town she grew up in—she is most grateful for being close enough to her daughter, son-in-law, and two grandchildren who live in Bremerton, and that she “gets to be a soccer grandma.”

She is proud to call Bainbridge Island her “chosen home,” for the same reason she loves working at COBI—the people and sense of community.

City begins periodic review of Shoreline Master Program



The City is seeking input to support the periodic review of its Shoreline Master Program (SMP).

The SMP guides development within Bainbridge Island’s 53 miles of shoreline and is

designed to balance appropriate private uses, preservation of natural resources, and public access.

The Washington State Shoreline Management Act requires communities to review their SMP every eight years. This review includes evaluation of the City’s current SMP and development of recommended amendments.

This review is not a major update of the SMP like the City adopted in 2014. It is a more limited update that is intended to ensure the SMP is consistent with changes in State law and addresses errors, omissions,

and opportunities for improved clarity and readability.

There’s opportunity for public comment at the Planning Commission meeting Thursday, July 11 (please check the Planning Commission agenda for time).

The Planning Commission will hold a public hearing on the draft amendments in fall 2019. The proposal will be refined based on those public comments, then provided to the City Council in early 2020 for review, amendment, and adoption by the end of June 2020.

Updated information about the periodic review, including schedules and opportunities for involvement, will be posted on the City’s SMP webpage: www.bainbridgewa.gov/184/Shoreline-Master-Program

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JULY

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14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

- **July 4: City Hall closed for holiday**
- **City Council Study Sessions**
 - July 2: 6 p.m.
 - July 16: 6 p.m.
- **City Council Business Meetings**
 - July 9: 6 p.m.
 - July 23: 6 p.m.
- **Planning Commission Meetings**
 - July 11: 7-9 p.m.
 - July 25: 7-9 p.m. *Public Participation Meeting, Police-Court Facility*
- **Ward Meetings** 10 a.m.-12 p.m.
 - July 13: *Central Ward - City Hall*
 - July 20: *North Ward - Seabold Hall*
 - July 27: *South Ward - Island Center Hall*

Meetings, times and agenda topics are subject to change. Please see the calendar on the City's website for the latest information.

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Council considers extension of landmark tree regulations

At the time of this writing, the City Council was expected to consider approval of a six-month extension of the landmark tree ordinance during the June 25 business meeting. If approved, the ordinance would only apply to the Winslow Master Plan area,



which includes the downtown core and nearby residential areas. If the extension is not approved, the landmark tree ordinance will expire June 26. Other tree regulations would remain in effect.

The six-month extension would allow staff and the Council more time to con-

sider and potentially adopt revisions to the municipal code that addresses the protection of landmark trees. The Council adopted the ordinance last year to protect landmark trees after numerous concerned public comments regarding the loss of landmark trees on Bainbridge Island due to land clearing and development activities. The ordinance designates landmark trees based on size and species, requires a permit to remove any landmark tree, and imposes fines if a landmark tree is removed without a permit.

The June 25 Council vote follows a June 11 public hearing and Council discussion. Please see the June 25 Council meeting video for the latest update. If the extension is approved, the City will use the next six months to complete the review of tree removal regulations. To assist with that effort, the City is now hiring for a full-time arborist to review permits for tree removal and assist with the development of tree management policies.

Preparing for a drought emergency

On Bainbridge, water use typically increases during hot, dry weather. Yet, drier weather can make it difficult to ensure safe and reliable drinking water service. To help avoid potential water shortages and keep water flowing in our streams, we encourage simple actions you can take to conserve water - whether you're a City water utility customer or using a private well.

For more information, visit: www.bainbridgewa.gov/173/Water-Resources

● Shower less, and for less than 5 minutes.

● Flush the toilet less often.

● Find and fix leaks.

● Wash clothes less and only in full loads - same for your dishwasher.

● Irrigate the lawn and garden sparingly - and only in the morning. Consider letting your lawn go brown and dormant for the summer.

