
THE CAMAS QUARTERLY

A City of Camas, WA Publication

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WELCOME TO OUR NEW QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

Mayor Steve Hogan



Hello Camas,

Welcome to the relaunch of the Camas Newsletter. We imagine this will serve as a quarterly newsletter to provide updates to what we're working on, and also some insight into what it means to run a municipality.

Please note, this will not replace any of our other outreach efforts.

We still need you to be involved in the process. In fact, it's the only way we will be successful. To that end, I want to remind you about some features you may find helpful.

Council Meetings are generally held the first and third Monday of the month barring a holiday, and they begin at 7 p.m.

While the regular meeting is where any official business will take place, there is also a workshop before every council meeting.

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These begin at 4:30 p.m., and provide insight as to the “why” behind our projects and decisions. The workshop is a great opportunity for you to dive in deeper to what we’re doing at the City. Please note that we publicize the council meetings the week prior, and then again, the day of.

Additionally, you can sign-up for email notifications for council documents prior to the meeting. Simply visit our website and click on “I want to,” there you will see a subscription list.

With the recent decision by Washington to remove the mask mandate, the City has decided to return to the hybrid meeting format which provides for both virtual, and in-person attendance. The first hybrid meeting will take place at the March 21 Council meetings, with the Parks Commission following March 23. Thank you for your patience as we navigate these somewhat challenging parameters.

Because we need to hear from you, we’re once again establishing a series of Town Hall meetings that will take place over the course of this year.

Our first Town Hall for 2022, will take place April 28, at 6 p.m., in City Hall and virtually.

Please mark your calendars and make a point to attend!

As you may know, we have three new council members that we have welcomed in. You can find their pictures, names and ward assignments later on in this newsletter.

As we welcome new members, it’s important for us to plot a course as a council. Where do we want to go as a City? How do we get there? What are our priorities? These are all questions that we’re currently asking ourselves as part of the City Council Annual Planning conferences.

So far, we’ve had three conferences that have produced some great information to help us determine our direction.

However, it’s extremely important that you also know this information. With that mind, we’ll provide more updates as to Council priorities and what they mean for you!

Finally, some important areas to pay attention to. We’re currently in the midst of our North Shore Subarea plan. We know this area and project have quite a bit of passion surrounding them, which is all the more reason to keep up with the process.

Make sure you visit Engage Camas periodically and look to our social media feeds and website for more information.

Another area to pay attention to, our beautiful lake. Our Public Works team is currently working with a large group of entities, residents and others, to ultimately find the issues affecting the lake, and then find ways to solve those. As we move into the warmer months, please pay special attention to advisories or warnings. And again, make sure you visit Engage Camas periodically and look to our social media feeds and website for more information.

In closing, I want to extend my thanks to those who provided support to the Ukrainian refugees through our Camas Sister Cities Program. We have long benefitted from a great relationship with our Polish Sister Cities and when they needed us to step up and help with the influx of refugees, we did! You have shown that Camas is a community that cares, and for that, I am extremely grateful!

Thank you
Mayor Steve Hogan

DEPARTMENT UPDATES

Public Works

The City, our consultant team, and all of our various partners continue work within the Lacamas Watershed to investigate causes of poor water quality and to ultimately improve overall conditions within the Watershed – including Lacamas Lake, Round Lake and Fallen Leaf Lake.

The City's Team is primarily focused on making progress on completing a "Cyanobacteria Lake Management Plan." More information on the overall effort can be found at:
www.engagecamas.com/lacamas-lake-management-plan

More specific to the project, we're finalizing a document with the Department of Ecology which will allow us to begin water quality sampling and monitoring in the Lakes throughout the next year. This sampling work is anticipated to begin in April or May.

This work will provide the scientific foundation for developing strategies to improve water quality in the years to come. If you see people out taking samples, don't hesitate to ask questions to learn more about what they're doing!

The City's team is also working on other near-term improvements on the overall topic of the Lakes, the Lakes' health, and the public's interaction with them.

City staff will be meeting with Clark County Public Health to review the monitoring and notification process as it relates to potential Harmful Algal Blooms this summer with the goal of improving and shortening the process to notify the public of any potential hazards.

Additionally, the Team will be holding open house events, planting events, and we'll be looking for citizen feedback on a new motto to generate awareness about the Lakes and our efforts to improve water quality.



Steve
Wall
Public
Works
Director

DEPARTMENT UPDATES

Parks and Recreation

Camas Parks & Recreation wants to make sure the community knows about our scholarship program for Senior Citizens living in Camas and Washougal.

The City's Parks and Recreation department has offered scholarships to youths for many years; however, the program has recently been expanded to include senior citizens.

The additional scholarships were made possible thanks to generous donations from the Parks Foundation of Clark County and the Partners with Camas Parks & Recreation.

In addition to the Partners with Camas Parks & Recreation and the Parks Foundation of Clark County, the TODAY Foundation has also been a long-time supporter of the Camas Parks & Recreation scholarship program.

Forms and more information can be found at:
www.cityofcamas.us/parksrec/page/youth-senior-program-scholarship-application

A current list of classes can be found at:
register.cityofcamas.us/wbws/webtrac.wsc/splash.html



Trang
Lam
Parks and
Recreation
Director

Finance

The United States Congress approved the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), March 11, 2021, to provide a \$1.9 trillion package to provide direct relief to states, counties, cities and towns as well as public utilities, libraries and transit agencies.

As a community of 50,000 or less, the City of Camas will receive a distribution of these funds over four years from the Washington State Department of Commerce.

Council approved Resolution 21-005 to accept the City of Camas \$6,816,235 allocation of Coronavirus State and Local Relief Funds (CLFRF).

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DEPARTMENT UPDATES

Finance - continued

The City received the first tranche of \$3,408,118, June 30, 2021.

These funds can be used for:

- To respond to public health emergency caused by COVID-19
- To provide assistance to households, small businesses, and nonprofits related to the negative economic impacts of COVID-19
- For premium pay (hazard pay) up to \$13/hour, not to exceed \$25,000 to any individual employee, to eligible government essential workers
- To provide government services to the extent of the reduction in revenue of such cities/counties due to COVID-19 relative to revenues collected in the most recent full fiscal year prior to the emergency (for cities in Washington, the baseline would be the calendar year 2019 budget)
- To make necessary investments in water, sewer or broadband infrastructure.

On January 6, 2022, the U.S. Treasury issued Final Guidance for the use of ARPA funds. The most significant changes is the expansion and simplification of the Revenue Lost category.

For jurisdictions less than 50,000 in population, the U.S. Treasury allows for the option to opt for the “standard allowance,” not to exceed \$10 million.

This option allows Camas to opt for the whole \$6.8 million as a standard allowance, or a portion. The funds would be used for any traditional government service with simplified reporting requirements and federal audit considerations.

Staff will review how this option may change the use of allocation of CLFRF.



Cathy
Huber
Nickerson
Finance Director

DEPARTMENT UPDATES

Library

Bookmark Contest

Calling all creative kids and teens! You are invited to celebrate books, reading, and art by participating in our annual Bookmark Contest. Visit the Library throughout the month of April to pick up an entry form, or download it at camaslibrary.org.

Deadline for submission is Saturday, April 30. The winning bookmark in each age category will be printed and distributed at the Library.

Storytime in the Park

Join us in one of Camas's lovely parks for family Storytime each Monday from May 2 - August 15, at 10:30 a.m.(excluding holidays). This will be the fifth year for the Library's popular summer program.

Veterans know to look for the blue umbrella! Dozens of families of young children will enjoy cool shade in various Camas parks, while being read books, engaging in fun songs, exploring literacy activities, and of course, having a lot of fun. Locations change weekly; see camaslibrary.org for details.

What's the Buzz?

Did you know that the Library has a blog?

Each entry takes one topic and goes more in-depth than we'd be able to in a newsletter blurb or social media post.

Recent examples include Invasive Plants and How to Stop Them, Super Bowl Reads, and Local Authors.

There's a new post every week and they can be accessed at www.cityofcamas.us/library/page/whats-buzz-all-posts.



**Connie
Urquhart**
Library Director

DEPARTMENT UPDATES

Human Resources

The search for a new City Administrator is underway!

Recruiting began a couple of weeks ago, and will run through April 3. Once the recruitment has closed, the applicants will be screened and then narrowed down through a semi-finalist round.

We expect to have the top candidates in Camas for a couple of days in May, and this will include a Community "Meet and Greet" in the activities. This way, Camas' citizens have a chance to get to know the finalists.

Their time here will also include city tours, as well as formal and informal meetings with the City's leadership team and Council members.

City Job Vacancies can always be found on the City website on the Jobs page.

We are currently recruiting for the following positions:

- City Administrator
- Utilities Manager
- Water/Sewer Operations Supervisor

- GIS Coordinator
- Engineering Technician
- Seasonal Engineering Technicians
- Financial Assistant
- Lead Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator

Upcoming postings will include the following:

- Community Development Director
- Seasonal Maintenance Workers
- Seasonal Recreation Leaders
- Grounds Workers



Jennifer
Gorsuch
Administrative
Services
Director

DEPARTMENT UPDATES

Fire

Fire Chief Nick Swinhart recently announced his resignation from the Camas-Washougal Fire Department to pursue other opportunities.

We deeply appreciate the service he has provided the City over his many years with the organization. We wish him well in his future endeavors.

During the interim as the City assesses the needs of the department, Division Chief Cliff Free will serve as Acting Fire Chief.

Fire Marshal/Division Chief Ron Schumacher will be assisting Cliff with his additional responsibilities.

- The fire department has made formal offers to 8 candidates. Their start date is March 21, and they will begin academy at Station 42 March 28.
- Our upcoming regional academy will have participants from Longview Fire, Clark Cowlitz Fire and Rescue and Cowlitz 2 Fire and Rescue
- Both the McKenzie Group (Capital Improvement Plan) and FCS (fire impact fee study) groups will be presenting to council April 4.



Cliff
Free

Acting Fire Chief

Camas 101 - Did you know?

Did you know that when City's in Washington hire consultants for Engineering or Architectural related services, they are required to use a "Qualifications Based Selection" (QBS) process?

This means we typically go through a process to advertise a "Request for Qualifications" (RFQ) that consultants can respond to if they wish to be considered to do the work.

An RFQ is a business document that announces a project, describes it, and solicits responses from qualified consultants to complete the work. Consultants will send us their qualifications and the City evaluates them based on criteria that is published with the RFQ.

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Did you know? - continued

It is important to note that COST CANNOT BE CONSIDERED WHEN SELECTING A CONSULTANT.

The City must make the selection based on qualifications only. Once that is complete, then a cost to complete the work is negotiated with the most qualified consultant.

You may also see a "Request for Proposal" (RFP) advertised by the City. This is very similar to an RFQ; however, it will be for professional services that are not related to any architectural or engineering work.

The difference between an RFQ and an RFP, is that cost can be one consideration (typically not the only consideration) in an RFP.

Though there are some other methods available, most cities will launch their projects using RFQs or RFPs, depending on the type and scale of project.

When using either process, the city requesting the services is responsible for evaluating the feasibility of the information submitted and the company's ability to undertake the project.

As mentioned above, the RFQ and RFP processes are used by cities for getting help with professional services.

Getting Bids for a Construction Project is a different process that we'll cover in a future newsletter!

What is land use? Community Development

Often when discussing land or plans, a city will use terminology like zoning or land use.

To the average person who does not spend their careers in the municipal world, these terms can be confusing.

Generally speaking, we understand industrial versus residential or commercial. But what about a long-range plan for an area, or for that matter a subarea plan?

In order to provide a better understanding of land use, we have devised a multi-faceted approach to discussing land use and all its glorious nuisances!

For this article, we sat down with our Community Development department, and more specifically, Interim Community Development Director, Robert Maul; Senior Planner, Lauren Hollenbeck; and Assistant Planner, Madeline Sutherland.

Q. What is land use?

A. Land use is the utilization of land for different uses. So, this could mean breaking the land into zones like residential use for things like houses, commercial use for perhaps a business, industrial use, of which a prime example could be our very own GP Mill, and then open spaces, which are exactly as they sound.

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What is land use? - continued



Q. What is zoning?

A. Zoning is the process of classifying land for a specific use, similar to as mentioned above. Zoning can generally be categorized into four designations: residential, commercial, industrial, and park/open space. Each of these zones allows for certain types of uses.

The zoning code consists of many regulations such as setbacks, landscaping, parking, lot size, etc., that development proposals need to meet. So, this would also determine how much density the area can have. For example, density would refer to the number of dwelling units a residential zone could support.

Q. Why do we provide zone designations, such as industrial or commercial?

A. As mentioned, we provide zones to set the land use that can occur in that zoning district. Such as Regional Commercial is for most commercial type uses including retail, services, office space, etc.

Normally cities will work on a comprehensive plan that they will use as a guiding document for the city. A comprehensive plan sets forth a vision and goals for a city's future and provides the overall foundation for all land use regulation in the city.

Generally speaking, state law encourages all cities to prepare and implement a comprehensive municipal plan.

The comprehensive plan will then provide recommendations (i.e. policies) on how land should be utilized in order to meet the needs and desires of the community. The zoning regulations then allow for the implementation of the recommendations in the comprehensive plan.

Q. Once an area has a designated zoning, can they be changed, and how?

A. Yes, they can, and in fact this is a common occurrence in municipalities. Zones can be changed if it is consistent with the underlying comprehensive plan designation.

For example, a property cannot be rezoned from a commercial zone to a residential zone, if the Comprehensive Plan designation is commercial. CMC Chapter 18.51 outlines the comprehensive plan and zoning amendment process.

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What is land use? - continued

Q. What does planning mean in context with land use?

A. Planning is a process that uses zoning to establish allowed uses in appropriate zones (commercial, industrial) and creates development regulations for the natural, and built environment, with the goal of creating livable communities.

Q. Often, during Council meetings, we'll hear a reference to a long-range plan. What is the difference between current planning and long-range planning?

A. Current planning involves projects like new commercial or land subdivision. Whereas long-range planning involves the development of comprehensive and master plans based off community visioning and policy development from the City Council.

Q. As you just mentioned, there are different types of specific plans. In Camas, we have discussed subarea plans and comprehensive plans, how do they differ?

A. A sub-area plan focuses on a specific geographic area of the City, this allows for the creation of a more detailed plan. The subarea plan takes that particular area, and provides direction on how it should be developed, including goals, policies, development regulations, design standards and maps, to name a few.

As mentioned briefly before, a comprehensive plan is the more supreme plan that a subarea plan would then fall under, as the comprehensive plan determines if there should be a subarea plan.

Since the comprehensive plan is the City's guiding document, it describes the City's plan for the future as it relates to the Growth Management Act goals (i.e. growth, infrastructure, environment, etc.). There are also many other plans, such as master plans, transportation plans, parks/rec plans, regional plans and the list goes on.

That is a very high-level description of land use. As we move forward, Keep an eye out for more information related to land use from the City of Camas, and what it means to you as a resident.



COUNCIL NOTES



**Greg
Anderson
Ward 3**



**Marilyn
Boerke
Ward 1**



**Bonnie
Carter
Ward 2**



**Don
Chaney
At Large**



**Tim
Hein
Ward 2**



**Leslie
Lewallen
Ward 3**



**Shannon
Roberts
Ward 1**

The City Council is an elected group of individuals tasked with creating policy for a City. They represent certain wards. The City of Camas has three wards. Of the seven elected Council members, there is one elected at-large and six elected within wards. The wards are established based on population estimates within the City's boundaries and are reviewed and modified periodically by Council.

COUNCIL NOTES

The Council is currently in the process of holding Annual Planning conferences. These help determine where we want to go as a City? How do we get there? What are our priorities?

Three conferences have occurred to this point and have produced some great information that will help the council determine their direction.

We'll provide you more updates as to Council priorities and what they mean for you in future newsletters and other informational opportunities.

Below you will find brief updates from a few of our Council members.

Remember, you can contact your elected officials anytime at <https://www.cityofcamas.us/citycouncil/page/city-council-members>

Don Chaney - At Large

Hello Camas! One of my committee assignments is to serve on the board for the Clark Regional Emergencies Agency, also known as CRESA <http://cresa911.org/>.

I represent all of the Clark County Cities, other than Vancouver, on the agency's Administrative Board. I want to encourage you to consider using a free service available to our citizens.

CRESA utilizes the SMART 911 system which allows all citizens of Clark County access a system that encourages residents to create a free "safety profile" for their household that includes any information they want 911 and first responders to have in the event of an emergency.

Registering with SMART 911 could be a real lifesaver. The following links provide information about SMART 911 system.

You can find more information at <http://cresa911.org/9-1-1-services/smart911/>

Marilyn Boerke - Ward 1

I am in my third month of a steep learning curve, to which I'm dedicated!

I'm appointed as the City Council Liaison to the Downtown Camas Association (DCA), City/School Committee (City & Camas School District), the Camas Youth Advisory Council (CYAC), and the Law Enforcement Officers and Firefighters (LEOFF) Disability Board. I serve as Alternate on the Library Board and the Sister Cities Committee.

These assignments reflect areas about which I'm passionate.

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COUNCIL NOTES

The DCA has worked tirelessly to bring activities and merchant support to make our downtown vibrant, joyful and successful.

My position as Talent Development Director with the Camas School District provides a powerful conduit through which to share information and initiatives in both directions. Working with Sister Cities and CYAC helps students become engaged citizens, who learn to be advocates for themselves and others.

I look forward to learning more about the LEOFF Board, designed to adopt rules and regulations related to benefits provided to law enforcement officers and firefighters, who do critical work for our collective safety and well-being.

Please don't hesitate to reach out to me at mboerke@cityofcamas.us with questions or concerns.

Tim Hein- Ward 2

My priorities as a new Council Member have been to attend all regularly scheduled workshops, meetings and the committee meetings I am part of, which include:

CW Chamber of Commerce, Camas Youth Advisory Committee, Economic Strategy Committee, GP Mill Advisory Group, North Shore Subarea, Parks and Recreation, Public Works Committee, and the Sisters City Committee.

Another top priority has been the City Council Planning sessions. Going through the process of understanding and prioritizing our initiatives as a City Council is very valuable, and will provide important alignment for City Government and City Staff, on behalf of the City of Camas.

Leslie Lewallen - Ward 3

As one of your representatives for Ward 3, I have been busy working on all my committee assignments, including a new Homeless Committee, which also includes Council members Roberts and Carter.

Recently, I was able to tour various homeless camps and shelters in Vancouver to get a real world and firsthand experience related to the intricacies of this multi-faceted issue.

In addition, I have also met with members of the homeless committee for Clark County to learn how we can work together with our neighbors.

UPCOMING DATES

Upcoming Dates:

- **March 21** - City Council Workshop and Meeting - 4:30 p.m. & 7 p.m., virtual and in-person.
- **March 23** - Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting - 5 p.m., virtual and in-person.
- **April 4** - City Council Workshop and Meeting - 4:30 p.m. & 7 p.m., virtual and in-person.
- **April 28** - City of Camas Town Hall - 6 p.m., virtual and in-person.

City of Camas Contact Information:

City Hall
616 NE 4th Avenue
Camas, WA 98607

Phone: 360-834-6864
Email: administration@cityofcamas.us

Office Hours:
Monday through Friday
8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
Excluding Holidays

www.cityofcamas.us/meetings