

Montesano Update

January 2017

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Fixing our sidewalks and streets

The two topics that come up again and again are sidewalks and streets.

I'm happy to report that sidewalks are the city's primary focus in 2017, with city workers set to fix a lot of long-neglected spots.

Fixing our streets would be great too. I recently walked the block of Marcy before Chehalis and was frustrated on how bad a few streets looked.

Yet fixing streets costs even more than fixing sidewalks, so we have a lot of tough choices to make.

It takes about \$500,000 per block to fix a street.

Our entire general fund for the city is about \$2.7 million, which covers the Fire Department, Police Department, Public Works, City Hall and everything else not connected to water, forest, or enterprise funds.

There is good news, there's money in the new budget for a hot-patch machine, which will give the Public Works crew the ability to fix more potholes and problems without paying to contract out.

Yet there's so much more work to be done to fix our streets, and every person is right to point out streets near their home that need serious work.

The conundrum is, how do we pay to truly fix our streets?

Most of our major street projects use state money. Last year we got Transportation Improvement Board funding to fix Pioneer from the stoplight to the Fire Department, and that project starts this summer. It's great news.

But one street at a time, every few years, won't get the job done. We need better ideas to tackle this problem.

What are our options? Here are three we know about:

- 1) Go big—If we issued bonds, we could fix a lot of streets and pay back the bond over time. Bonds are debts the city takes on.
- 2) Go small—Local Improvement Districts raise money only in the neighborhood that gets improved.
- 3) Hope for the best—Continue with the status quo and hope to receive state funding occasionally.

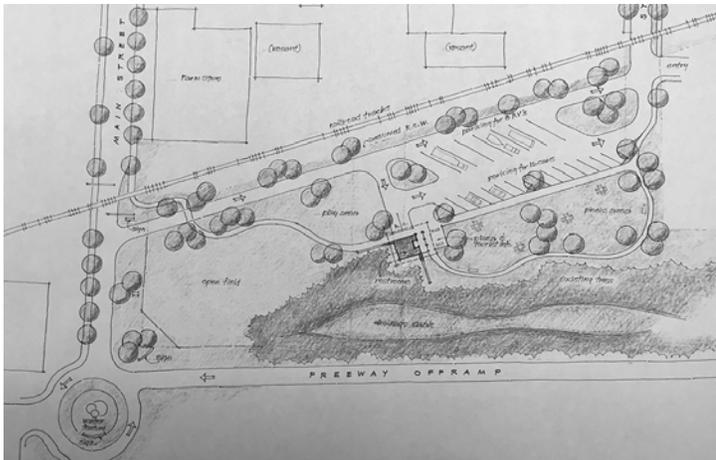
Fixing our streets is one of the challenges which helped crystallize the importance of finding new revenue for our city, such as through attracting more outdoor recreational tourism.

What do you think? How could we find ways to fix more of our city streets?

If you have ideas about how to finance street replacement or better maintain our roads and sidewalks, please call, email or flag me down. Thank you!



Bulldog Boulevard—Montesano Outdoor Recreational Rest Stop & City Entrance Park



I appreciate the supportive comments because we'll need support to get this funding, and I appreciate the constructive criticism, which has helped fix issues of concern and improve the proposal.

#1 concern: Semi-truck traffic. The plan was changed to allow for a compact roundabout with a better turning radius for semis and good traffic flow while improving pedestrian and bicycle safety. DOT also gave its approval to this option as not creating any difficulty for big rigs. A compact roundabout also costs less than a traffic signal.

#2 concern: Fix other streets instead. We're seeking state capital funds which are only for new construction.

#3 concern: Safety. I recently attended a meeting with the Montesano Police Department. Neither Chief Vance nor our officers appeared concerned this would be difficult to patrol or a crime risk. This rest stop is different from DOT stops since it's inside the city in an open location. The police did suggest cameras to boost security.

#4 concern: Maintenance costs. This is always a concern for any city. The estimate is less than 15 percent of an FTE at the maximum. We're working with the Chamber and other partners to see about reducing even these costs.

#5 concern: Traffic. This is where residential and business owners tend to differ. Businesses want more traffic and it is understandable that some homeowners don't. The reason we're exploring this project is this is a form of economic development which causes the least disruption to our lives and the footprint of our community. It's meant to be something you can use as a resident and to

increase economic activity downtown, the heart of our city.

Fire/EMS Levy Townhalls

January 25, 2017 at 6 p.m. and **February 8, 2017** at 6 p.m. both at city hall in council chambers.

Please join Fire Chief Rux for more information of the purpose and use of this request and to give your input.

\$1000 scholarship for outstanding senior

Association of WA Cities Center for Quality Communities gives out (6) \$1,000 scholarships to outstanding seniors. There can only be one applicant per city.

The mayor must forward the nomination by March 10 so the cut-off for students will be **February 17, 2017**. For application information, please check on-line at: <http://cfqc.org/HowdoIapply.aspx>

Welcome new Parks Board members!

Welcome Parks Board members newly appointed to the Parks Board: Mr. Charles Fairbairn, Mr. Roger Ashlock, Mr. Kim Oestreich. Pat Wadsworth had to resign due to employment changes.

Please thank Pat for all of his years working on behalf of the residents of the City. The Parks Board is currently working to help the city have a use agreement with all of the primary sports organizations who use our fields.

Please adopt a nearby drain—We are fully into the rainy season and if you see water pooling, leaves are probably clogging up a drain. Please adopt a drain outside your home if you can. Thank you!

Job Opening—Utility Maintenance Worker. The full job description is on our city website. Requirements: HS graduate or equivalent, valid Wash. State Driver's License with a Class B commercial endorsement, Flagging Certificate, Basic 1st Aid or better, 5 years in a full time position in the construction field, 3 years in landscaping, horticulture, parks maintenance or a combination thereof.



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Please send news tips and photos to vsamuel@montesano.us

