

A NOTE FROM CITY COUNCILMEMBER LIBBY WENNSTROM



The #1 question I get asked is “Why don’t you fix the !@\$% streets?”

Over the past 20+ years, funding for street maintenance all but vanished due to state ballot measures (remember those \$30 car tab initiatives?) Years of deferred maintenance have now reached a crisis point. We hear you: fixing our streets needs to be a city priority.

Port Townsend maintains 81 miles of streets – almost twice the average for cities our size. To completely rebuild an arterial like Lawrence costs about \$2 million per mile; a narrow residential street is around half that. It’s far more cost effective to maintain and preserve existing pavement using durable patching, timely chip sealing, and effective water runoff management.

The 2023 City budget allocates \$868,000 for street repairs. That money comes from “banked capacity” - funding voters approved when our Fire Department merged with East Jefferson. We’ve also funded \$62K for new “hot patch” asphalt patching equipment, enabling our street crews to make longer-lasting repairs.

Money, Equipment, Staff Time

Fixing our streets properly takes three things: money, proper equipment, and staff time. We’ve allocated money and ordered equipment to make a significant investment in repairing our streets. But we also needed to have the staff capacity to do the work. Public Works Director Steve King took a hard look at how Public Works was spending its time, and realized that staff have been averaging 2,000 hours a year (27% of our street crew time) on street mowing and vegetation control.

Per both state law and PT Municipal code, right-of-way mowing and trimming is already legally the responsibility of adjacent property owners. Shifting staff away from mowing gives our crews the time needed to fix the streets. While property owners’ responsibility for roadside vegetation control is already covered in our code, we’re looking at some code cleanup and consolidation to make the rules simpler, easier to find and understand.

I asked Steve King to clarify what this change means for city residents:

Why was the city mowing anyway?

SK: Over the last 30 years, as we lost funding for pavement preservation, there was a gradual transition to mowing, particularly on large vacant parcels who often don’t maintain their frontage as smaller lots with houses on them.

What will I see differently this spring?

SK: You will not see the big blue tractor (city mower) as much. In April and May, residents will want to get ahead of spring plant growth. Usually by July/August, things dry out and there isn’t much to do for the rest of the year.

What will staff do instead of mowing?

SK: Staff will spend this time repairing ditches and patching roads in preparation for paving or chip seals.

How does our new hot patch machine help?

SK: We are switching from cold patch (a temporary repair intended to last 1-2 years) to hot patch (a durable repair that will outlast the road itself). The machine we’ve ordered stores and transports hot asphalt so we can make these repairs onsite. We hope to be using it by late summer.

(Continued on the next page)



APRIL CITY COUNCIL MEETINGS - 6:00 PM:

04/03/23: Business Meeting
04/10/23: Workshop Meeting
04/17/23: Business Meeting

Meetings are subject to change. Please view our website calendar for an up-to-date meeting schedule: www.cityofpt.us/calendar



~ Easter Egg Hunt ~

Sunday, April 9, 2023 8:00 AM
Chetzemoka Park

Easter Egg Hunt

for children ages 12 and under

The park will open at 8:00 a.m., using the West gate for 7-12 year olds and the East gate for Children 1-6. Parents, 1 plastic prize egg=1 basket (1 per child)
Gold & silver eggs=unlimited cash prizes!

Sponsored by
Port Townsend Elks
Lodge #317



CITY OF PORT TOWNSEND
250 MADISON STREET
(360)385-3000
WWW.CITYOFPT.US
OPEN: MONDAY - THURSDAY
9:00 AM - 4:00 PM

What happens if I can't keep my street frontage mowed?

SK: This is a community building opportunity for volunteers and neighbors to work together. There are also landscaping companies that can help out. We are using fines as a last resort if folks do not want to do their part.

Why do I have to mow at all?

SK: Mowing keeps ditches cleared and vegetation from encroaching on the pavement and sidewalks. It also addresses noxious weeds. Minor landscaping is also encouraged in our code as an alternative to mowing; see the *Landscaping in the Right of Way* brochure.

What about street trees?

SK: Trees in the right-of-way are protected; see PTMC 12.04.150. Planting street trees is encouraged – see our *Trees in the Right of Way* brochure for details.

What changes are you making to ditches and storm drains?

SK: Each site is a little different, depending on slope, driveways, parking, etc. We're looking at water management throughout the city's road network, re-establishing ditch lines, and redirecting water runoff so as to best preserve our pavement.

My ditch/storm drain isn't working right – what should I do?

SK: Reach out to Public Works – we can help. Take a photo when it's raining hard! Pictures really help us understand the situation and how to best address it. You can report a problem and upload photos at the [City's Report a Concern](#) link:

<https://cityofpt.us/publicworks/page/report-concern>

A NOTE FROM CITY MANAGER JOHN MAURO

Back Into It

I'm grateful to have enjoyed time away in February with my family – and just as grateful to be back. I love this place and I love my job. I return with a renewed sense of optimism, some new ideas, and a topped-up reserve of energy. Thanks to my team, and specifically Acting City Manager Steve King, for working so hard to keep things going.

While away, I became increasingly eager to see friends, colleagues, and members of the community again, particularly now that COVID is a waning threat. Staying in touch and being accessible is important to me. That said, since my work-day often includes 10-12 meetings, 5 a.m. starts and occasional 10pm ends, it's hard to connect as broadly, personally, and often as I'd like.

When I first arrived, I set up a regular coffee conversation to listen, learn about, and better understand the community that I am a part of and serve. When the pandemic got in the way, I took to the airwaves. Thanks to the KPTZ family, my weekly radio show, *Brewocracy Now!* was born, and continues each Thursday from 12:30 - 1 p.m. with my esteemed co-host, Taylor Clark.

Meeting over coffee was an in-person joy that was hard to give up during the pandemic. But let's get back into it. Coffee with the City Manager is back on. **The first Friday of each month, starting April 7, I'll park myself at Velocity from 9 - 10:30 a.m.** I encourage you to come by to pass along ideas, perspectives or to ask questions and simply connect. The lovely owners and staff at Velocity are willing to have me back – I started this in 2019 when I arrived – and it's right inside the amazing Northwest Maritime Center at 431 Water Street. I'll try to shift locations every 4-5 months and will make it known via this newsletter, the City's Facebook page, and our website. Come by and say hello!

As a community, we're back into it too. A ton of open houses and public meetings have sprouted up, drawing dozens if not hundreds of people to engage and work together. The first open house on the future of the golf course attracted over 300 people and there was a robust showing at the first open house focused on a new pool and health and wellness facility. We've seen broad engagement on our overarching housing strategy, with a lots of energy around our tactical infill project, a build up to our anticipated first community engagement to establish a vision and plan for the Evans Vista workforce and affordable housing initiative, and lots of longer-term work on everything from buildable lands to open space planning as we gear up for a big update to our Comprehensive Plan in the coming few years. Add to that the regular engagement around our Comprehensive Streets Program and a range of other issues that many of you care about. Taken together, these engagement events help define a holistic strategy that links up as the Financial Sustainability Initiative. Learn more on that and on housing, the pool, the golf course, parks, and streets here: www.cityofpt.us/engage.

Whether you want to share a coffee or your perspectives and ideas on one of our community's priorities, there's a place for you. It takes all of us to sustain those things we hold dear and to focus courageously on what we want our future to be. I look forward to our work together!



COFFEE WITH CITY MANAGER || FIRST FRIDAY OF EACH MONTH || 9 - 10:30 A.M. || VELOCITY, 431 WATER STREET

CITY OF PORT TOWNSEND • 250 MADISON STREET • (360) 385-3000 • WWW.CITYOFPT.US

WHERE ARE MY PROPERTY BOUNDARIES AND WHY DO THEY MATTER?

Knowing your property boundaries will save you time, money, and frustration. With the help of the Internet, you can collect information to help identify your property corners and the required setbacks from the property line boundaries.

What is a property boundary?

A boundary is the line that legally delineates where one property ends and another begins. This includes the boundaries between your property, neighboring properties, and the line where the public rights-of-way begins.

Why is it important to identify property boundaries?

Knowing your property boundaries can help you decide where to legally build a fence, shed, deck, greenhouse, carport, or a home addition or Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU). Knowing where the right-of-way line is particularly important as there are specific restrictions on what a property owner can and can't do in the right-of-way including certain property owner responsibilities to maintain the right-of-way. Property boundaries should also be considered when storing items such as RVs, boats, and woodpiles (they can't be stored in the right-of-way). If your landscaping project extends into the public right-of-way there are height limits and design requirements for plantings and raised beds.

If a property owner incorrectly guesses or assumes the property boundary, there could be negative consequences as the City's code compliance process can require the owner to remove a fence or structure located in the public right-of-way. The City can also require property owners to move or remove a structure from the property if built within the required setbacks (the distance required from a structure to the property lines). Sometimes property owners must go to court to settle a property line dispute when structures are built on the neighbor's property.

How do I locate my property boundaries and setback requirements?

- View online maps for estimated property boundaries, zoning information, and parcel numbers: <https://cityofpt.-maps.arcgis.com/home/index.html> or <https://gisweb.jeffcowa.us/TaxParcelViewer/>
- Read through the zoning table to determine setback requirements: <https://cityofpt.us/development-services/page/applicant-assistance-information>
- Search for recorded surveys by parcel number: <https://er-web.co.jefferson.wa.us/recorder/web/>
- Go outside and look for survey stakes or pins at the corners of your property. Note: It's illegal to move or remove survey monuments.
- Talk with your neighbors. They may have a survey or know where corner pins are located.
- If required, hire a licensed surveyor. The City does not verify property boundaries for residents.

I have an older fence or structure in the public right-of-way. Can I replace it?

If located in the public right-of-way, you can repair and maintain the old fence or structure, but typically you cannot replace or rebuild it in the same location. For example, fixing a broken or fallen fence board is considered a repair and painting or staining a fence is considered maintenance. Once you begin removing and replacing fence pieces or sections, this is considered a replacement and the fence should be rebuilt on your property. Contact us for details.

Questions? Call 360-379-5094 or email klabadie@cityofpt.us.

RECENT STAFF ACHIEVEMENTS

CONGRATULATIONS

Cheers to three of our own City Department Directors: Emma Bolin, Planning and Community Development Director, Heidi Greenwood, City Attorney, and Melody Sky Weaver, Library Director.

They were among 36 graduates of the Northwest Women's Leadership Academy Cohort #4 this year, with women from various cities and other local government agencies across the State of Washington, chosen for the program based on their accomplishments and commitment to public service.



(From left: Melody Sky Weaver, Heidi Greenwood and Emma Bolin)

DM DISPOSAL - SPRING CLEAN

April 3 -7: Additional yard waste

- Up to three additional cans of yard waste on customer's regular service day

April 10 - 4: Additional garbage/bulky items

- Up to three additional bags or cans of garbage on customer's regular service day
- Bulky Items/Appliance Disposal: One appliance per household (refrigerators, stoves, microwaves, dish washers, freezers, hot water heaters). There is a freon removal fee for refrigerators and freezers, other appliances will be picked up at no cost. You will need to call (360) 385-6612 to schedule appliance pick-up and freon fees for disposal.

PT MAIN STREET COMMUNITY EVENTS



May is Art Wave!

For the month of May, Historic Districts' merchants are showcasing student artwork, created in the Port Townsend Schools, for "Art Wave!" Children's pieces of art will be installed as part of this promotion. The "Art Wave" exhibit celebrates children's creative expression through art and is a collaboration with participating Port Townsend businesses. The funds raised will help support diverse offerings by PT Artscape including the Teaching Artists Programs at Salish Coast Elementary, Blue Heron School, and Port Townsend High School, and professional development for teaching artists and classroom teachers. Stop by participating Uptown & Downtown businesses during the month of May and see all the talented student art work on display. Visit www.ptartscape.com to learn more.

Main Street Tax Incentive Program Round 2 is now Open!

The Port Townsend Main Street Program is pleased to offer the opportunity to put your state B&O tax dollars to work here in Port Townsend through the work of our program. 75% of your donation is returned to you via B&O tax credits in 2024. In addition, your entire contribution may qualify as a 501(c)(3) charitable deduction on your 2023 federal income tax return. We hope that you will consider this unique opportunity. For more information on how to make a pledge visit:

<https://ptmainstreet.org/business-resources/tax-incentive-program/>

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

Mike McCutcheon –Community Volunteer and Trash Task Force

I volunteer picking up trash, cleaning up unhoused camps, and feeding folks in need in the City of Port Townsend because I couldn't just sit back when I could see the need.

When I lived in Los Angeles, California I taught my boys to volunteer- we would go out to the parks in Los Angeles and pick up trash when they were of a very young age.

The success that I find in volunteering is getting other people involved in volunteering. It's a community effort and a lot of times people don't know what they can do to volunteer until someone suggests it to them. I've made a lot of great relationships with all kinds of folks, including helping people who do court-ordered community service give back, by helping clean up trash on city property.

For me, God gave me an opportunity to live after having a very bad drug addiction. Volunteering and giving back is a big part of my recovery. I now love people, I love my city, I love my life and I love sharing it with other people. I've decided to dedicate the rest of my life being of service to other people.

