



# City Views @ Sammamish

ISSUE 67

CITY OF SAMMAMISH NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 2008

## City adjusts 2008 budget

### *Housing market reduces impact fee revenue*

The nationwide housing market slow-down has come to Sammamish, reducing impact fee revenue to the city by roughly \$12 million over the city's 2007/2008 biennial budget period.

Impact fees are paid to the city by home builders to offset the infrastructure costs – for new streets, primarily – triggered by the construction of new homes.

At its Dec. 4 meeting, the City Council approved several budget adjustments, including the reduction of the ending fund balance at the end of 2008 from \$27 million to \$15.6 mil-

See BUDGET , pg. 2

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*A familiar sight to Sammamish commuters: a traffic jam on SR202 in Redmond. The flyover pictured above will allow westbound drivers to skip this traffic light and sweep directly onto westbound SR520.*

## Flyover to open in spring

If you looked at the SR202/SR520 mess as a set of clogged arteries, then this state road project would amount to a bypass operation. The idea is to sidestep all that automotive plaque and go directly – without stopping at two infamous stoplights – from SR202 westbound onto SR520 westbound.

“The city of Sammamish lobbied very hard in Olympia for this flyover ramp,” City Manager Ben Yazici said. “It’s not going to be a miracle cure, but it’s going to help Sammamish commuters.”

Right now, city residents who reach the SR202/SR520 intersection in Redmond have to get through two

traffic lights before they can take a left turn onto the SR520 on-ramp. When the flyover opens, probably around mid-April, those same drivers will veer to the right off SR202 and then “fly” to the left, floating over those two lights on their way to SR520.

“There will still be a lot of traffic on SR520 when they get there,” Yazici said, “but at least they won’t have to wait forever at those two lights.”

The flyover is part of a massive set of road improvements the state is making along SR202 and SR520 that

See FLYOVER, pg. 6



Mark Cross  
Mayor

Since Sammamish became a city eight years ago, the focus of city government has been on issues inside the Sammamish city limits.

Among other things, building roads and parks, putting contracts together, and creating land use policies have taken center stage.

But even as the hard work of establishing a community has been going on, the city staff and City Council have also been engaged with our neighboring cities, our school districts, and other entities in the region. Although our focus is primarily internal, our city interests would be vulnerable if we didn't pay close attention to the regional and cross-jurisdictional forces that affect our lives.

Many of the biggest concerns we all have as Sammamish residents are not fully under city control. Some

examples:

- Traveling on and off the plateau.
- The quality and capacity of our schools.
- The expansion of key roads such as Duthie Hill and State Route 202.

These require cooperation with other jurisdictions and districts. Achieving goals when other agencies or districts control the facility takes diplomacy, and an open approach that allows us to reach goals that are even bigger than our city.

The single biggest issue before the region is transportation. The definition of the problem and the proposed solution varies from speaker to speaker and from city to city, but the regional debate on transportation will be critical in 2008. The need to replace the 520 bridge across Lake Washington is urgent, as is a decision on how to

best replace the Seattle viaduct. Although these and other large projects may be far from our city limits, we are enmeshed in the same regional transportation system, and we need to make sure our voice is heard.

There will also be a broad discussion of transportation strategy in the years ahead. Proposed solutions will include different mixes of roads, buses and rail – and there will even be discussion of toll roads. Sammamish has a unique location within the region and must remain engaged with the region to make sure that regional actions on transportation meet our needs.

So, even as we focus on Sammamish, let's work cooperatively with our regional friends. It's in our interest. If we can help the region, the region will help us.

## BUDGET, cont. from pg. 1

lion.

Due to a \$1 billion – that's billion with a "b" – increase in the city's total assessed valuation in 2007, the tax levy rate will go down in 2008 – from \$2.47 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation to \$2.24 per \$1,000. At the end of 2006, the city's total assessed valuation was \$7.7 billion. At the end of 2007, it was roughly \$8.7 billion.

The City Council voted to raise the city's property tax revenue by 1 percent. That extra one percent translates into an additional \$190,000 in revenue to the city.

The adjustments at the mid-point of the 2007-2008 biennial budget resulted in a \$49 million budget for both capital and operations expenditures in 2007, and a \$54 million budget for the

same in 2008.

The budget bump in 2008 is primarily the result of fire service costs, which will increase by \$352,653. That's an increase of more than 7 percent for 2008, a much bigger hike than the anticipated 3 percent. Like other nearby cities, Sammamish contracts with Eastside Fire and Rescue for its fire services.

"Although Eastside Fire and Rescue provides us with excellent services, the cost of those services needs to be managed," City Manager Ben Yazici said. "These kinds of increases are not sustainable.

"Fire service is our biggest budget item. We'll be working closely with Eastside Fire and Rescue to better control these costs."

On the plus side, the city earned

\$1.2 million more than anticipated from the investment of its cash balance. That was primarily due to a larger than anticipated cash balance in 2007, the result of some capital expenditures being moved from 2007 to 2008.

The city's 2007 sales tax revenue was also up, generating \$2.7 million rather than the projected \$2.3 million.

In another change, after finding out that the city's salary and benefit package was roughly 3.4 percent lower than those in comparable cities, and the discrepancy had contributed to a personnel turnover rate of 20 percent in 2007, the council also agreed to improve employee salaries and benefits. The net impact on the budget in 2008 will be approximately \$200,000.

# Preparation is her passion

## *Jan Bromberg leads the charge on emergency prep*

Jan Bromberg was seven years old when the great Northeast Blackout of 1965 turned all the lights out in her hometown of Smithtown, Long Island. She remembers it clearly, but says she wasn't scared. Her parents always had candles.

Whether it was the good example set by her family, or some other unidentified inspiration, Bromberg says something has always made her passionate about emergency preparedness.

"I've always wanted to know that everyone is okay," Bromberg said. "Not just me, or my family, but everyone."

Harnessing that instinct, Bromberg founded the Sammamish Citizen Corps Council, the local volunteer branch of the Homeland Security department. In May of last year, Kent Kiernan was elected president of the group. Working together, Jan, Kent and the rest of the volunteers have pushed a three-part agenda.

At the most basic and perhaps most important level, the Citizen Corps preaches self-reliance so families can take care of themselves for at least three days. To create a personal emergency plan and gather all the necessary ingredients, the group advises people to go [www.govlink.org/3days3ways](http://www.govlink.org/3days3ways), a website that provides detailed instructions on how to take care of your family until emergency help arrives.

The second part is called the "Map Your Neighborhood" program, a system that allows neighbors to organize into 15-home groups that can share resources and skills in an



*Jan Bromberg poses with some of her emergency gear.*

emergency.

"The idea is to get together with your neighbors, and map out what skills, equipment and other resources you can share," Bromberg said. "After one meeting, everyone walks away with a booklet that tells them which neighbor has a chainsaw, generator, amateur radio, plumbing skills, medical training, or any number of other capabilities.

"When an emergency hits, the group members meet at a pre-assigned location and launch all necessary efforts."

How do you figure out which 15 neighbors to work with? Bromberg suggests going on Google Earth and knocking on the doors of the 15 closest homes. More "Map Your Neighborhood" information is available by sending an email to [SammamishCitizenCorps@hotmail.com](mailto:SammamishCitizenCorps@hotmail.com).

The Community Emergency

Response Team (CERT) training Bromberg arranges is part three of the agenda. This program, which trains volunteers four times a year (January, April, July, September), emphasizes light search and rescue, fire suppression, first aid, psychology and other emergency skills. Interested students should contact the email above.

"Jan and Kent and all the Citizen Corps volunteers are providing a great service to our community," City Manager Ben Yazici said. "We owe them a lot."

But for her part, Bromberg says getting prepared is just a way of life she learned on Long Island.

"My mother used to say, 'If you spit on the sidewalk, the power goes out in Smithtown.' Maybe it was just our crummy power grid back in Long Island that got me ready for all this."

# Shoreline restoration measure wins award



*Representing the Planning Association of Washington, Scott Greenberg (second from left) presents the award to Wetland Biologist Kathy Curry, Mayor Mark Cross and Director of Community Development Kamuron Gurol.*

When the city updated its Critical Areas Ordinance (CAO), it included “shoreline restoration incentives” that encouraged builders to use an array of shoreline enhancement techniques.

Upon further review, those incentives were deemed worthy of a joint award from the Planning Association of Washington and the American Planning Association, an honor the city accepted during the Nov. 20 City Council meeting.

Put simply, after setting a 45-foot shoreline buffer requirement for new development on Lake Sammamish, the city allowed builders to reduce the buffer to as little as 15 feet if they agreed to, among other things, remove bulkheads, protect water quality, and revegetate the shoreline.

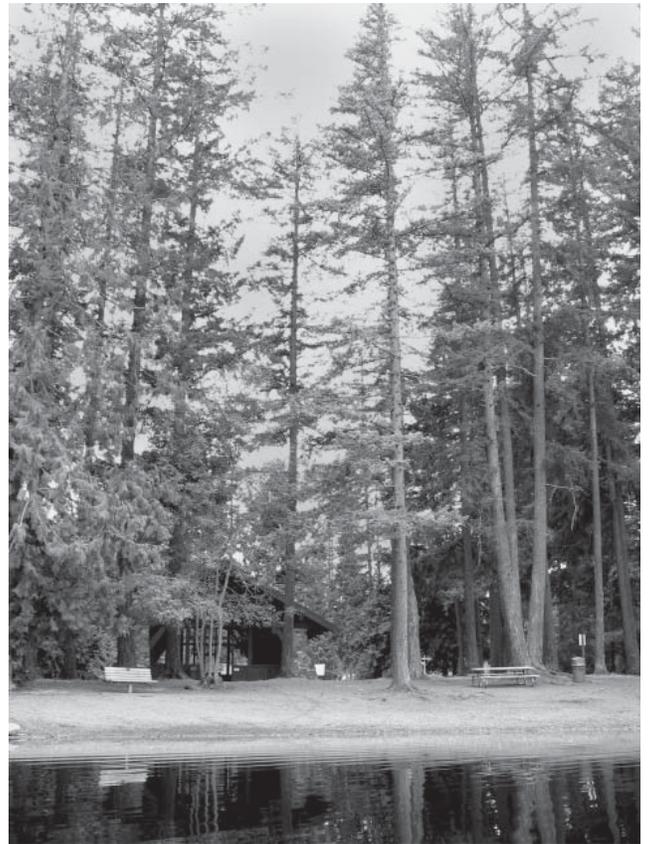
“The plans we’ve been receiving have been very encouraging,” said Wetland Biologist Kathy Curry. “Our shoreline is going to get healthier as new homes are built, or additions to existing homes are made.”

## Jan. 24 Open House focuses on shorelines

As the city continues to work on its Shoreline Master Program Update, which will serve both as a comprehensive plan and regulatory document for shorelines, the public is invited to attend an information-sharing and public input event later this month. The Open House is scheduled for Thursday, Jan. 24, 5-7 p.m., at City Hall, 801 228th Ave. S.E.

Staff members from the city, King County, Department of Ecology and ESA Adolphson Associates will be present to answer questions and explain an array of displays and documents. These will include the June 2007 Draft Shoreline Master Program Update (SMP), the Restoration Plan, and the Inventory and Characterization Report. The public input gathered at this Open House will be utilized at the Feb. 7 Planning Commission meeting and subsequent meetings of the commission.

In addition to sharing important information with the public, the Open House will also provide guidance to those people who want to become involved in the SMP process. Comments and questions should be directed to Maren Van Nostrand at [mvannostrand@ci.sammamish.wa.us](mailto:mvannostrand@ci.sammamish.wa.us) or 425-295-0538.



*The shoreline along Beaver Lake.*

# Call the permit center “before” you build

*It can save time, money and lots of aggravation*

Building Official Andy Higgins, into whose hands the complications of construction – from treehouses to mansions – typically fall, has one tip for Sammamish residents.

“Call City Hall before you build something,” Higgins said. “You may not need a permit, but it’s better to be sure.”

Even the aforementioned treehouses can get complicated.

“On flat property, a permit usually isn’t required,” Higgins said. “but in critical areas or near shorelines, that treehouse may require you to jump through a couple of hoops.”

Although the city website has permit information (just go to [www.ci.sammamish.wa.us/BuildingPermits.aspx](http://www.ci.sammamish.wa.us/BuildingPermits.aspx)), many questions may be answered most efficiently by calling City Hall at 425-295-0500 and asking for the permit center.

Once people learn the rules, Higgins recommends that they be followed. The cost of building something without a permit can amount to quite a bit of money.

If, for example, Code Enforcement Officer Joan Burlingame receives a complaint that someone removed trees without a permit, the investigation fee is \$169 if the complaint turns out to be valid. And, on top of that, the \$56 tree-removal permit fee is then doubled.

In more serious cases, when people without permits won’t bring their projects to a halt, the minimum fine for triggering a stop-work order is \$2,500.



*Code Enforcement Officer Joan Burlingame and Building Official Andy Higgins enjoy a light moment at Sammamish City Hall.*

“It rarely gets to that, of course,” Burlingame said. “We always try to give people the opportunity to work things out.”

In many cases, residents are led astray by contractors who tell them they don’t need a permit for their project.

“You should check for yourself when a contractor says that,” Burlingame said. “Some contractors don’t want to deal with a permit because they’re planning to do sub-standard work.”

Higgins says all those problems can be avoided with a simple phone call.

“Some people may hesitate to dial, thinking they’re going to lock themselves into a permit fee, but they don’t need to give us their names and addresses,” Higgins said. “We’ll give you good information even if we don’t know who you are.”

## Examples of items that require a permit:

Water heater replacement

Furnace replacement

Converting garage into living area

Some treehouses

Residential decks

Altering home for business

Tree removal

Grading

Fireplace inserts

Fences over six feet tall

Re-roofing with different material

## Project updates:

More information available online at:

[www.ci.sammamish.wa.us](http://www.ci.sammamish.wa.us) and

[www.sammplat.wa.org](http://www.sammplat.wa.org)



**244th Avenue:** This project will improve 244th Avenue between Southeast Eighth Street and Northeast Eighth Street by creating a two-lane, tree-lined street with a median and/or center turn lane, as needed. The street will include a 630-foot-long bridge structure, closing an existing gap in the corridor. Construction will begin as early as spring 2008, with the contract estimated at just over \$13 million. Project manager Jed Ireland can be reached at [jireland@ci.sammamish.wa.us](mailto:jireland@ci.sammamish.wa.us) or 425-295-0563.

**East Lake Sammamish Parkway Northeast:** The design team has completed the Design Report and 30% plans for the proposed improvements from Inglewood Hill Road to the 187th Avenue Northeast. The Design Report (available at the project website) was presented to the City Council at the November 13th study session and again at the November 20th meeting (copies of the presentation are avail-

able at the project website). Council may consider a resolution to adopt the Design Report during a regular meeting in January. Check the city website for further details. If directed to move forward by Council, final design of the first phase, from Inglewood Hill Road to Northeast 26th Street would begin in early 2008. Construction of this \$13.7 million initial segment is scheduled for 2009 after the State Route 202 widening improvements are completed. Key features of this project include widening the roadway to three lanes to add either a center turn lane or landscaped median, bike lanes, and a sidewalk on only the east side. The remaining two segments will be designed and constructed in future years. Project manager Jeff Brauns can be reached at [jbrauns@ci.sammamish.wa.us](mailto:jbrauns@ci.sammamish.wa.us) or 425-295-0561.

**212th Avenue Southeast Sidewalk:** This project will construct sidewalk along the west side of 212th Avenue

Southeast in the vicinity of Ebright Creek Park, and close the existing gaps between the park and The Crossings at Pine Lake subdivision to the south and the future Chestnut Lane subdivision to the north. Construction is scheduled for 2008. Project manager Jeff Brauns can be reached at [jbrauns@ci.sammamish.wa.us](mailto:jbrauns@ci.sammamish.wa.us) or 425-295-0561.

### **South Pine Lake Route Project:**

Necessary utility work continues, in advance of the city project, which will make improvements between 212th Avenue Southeast and 224th Avenue Southeast, along Southeast 32nd Street, 216th Avenue Southeast, Southeast 28th Street, 222nd Place Southeast, and Southeast 30th Street. Design is nearly complete, and the Wetland Mitigation Plan has been tentatively approved by the Army Corps of Engineers and the Department of Ecology. The plan calls for the purchase of mitigation bank credits from an existing wetland project, in order to offset the small amount of impacted wetland caused by road widening. Construction is expected to begin in spring 2008. Project manager Jed Ireland can be reached at [jireland@ci.sammamish.wa.us](mailto:jireland@ci.sammamish.wa.us) or 425-295-0563.

### FLYOVER, cont. from pg. 1

will widen the traffic bottleneck just north of Sammamish.

“The widening of SR202 and SR520 is going to give all Sammamish residents a bigger escape route in the years ahead,” Yazici said, “and when we finish up our 244th Avenue project (substantial completion is expected by late 2008) we’ll have three solid connections to that escape route – 244th, Sahalee Way, and the East Lake Sammamish Parkway.”



*The nearly complete widening of SR202 just west of the grey barn.*

# Toys for Tots flood Sammamish Police Department

Two years ago, Det. Amy Jarboe volunteered to help the U.S. Marine Corps with their “Toys for Tots” program in Sammamish. After arranging all the 2007 donations in a massive pile inside the city police station, Jarboe was thrilled.

“This really shows how generous the residents of Sammamish are,” Jarboe said just before Christmas. “It’s nice to know there are going to be a lot of happy kids on December 25.”

As part of the nationwide effort, Jarboe put a donation barrel in front of the police station inside Sammamish City Hall. After emptying the barrel over the course of December, the gift pile kept getting bigger and bigger. In addition to the toys, dolls and other gifts, some contributors left cash donations. It all added up to a happy holiday season for deserving kids in King County, and a sense of satisfaction for Jarboe.

“Seeing the community’s generosity felt great,” Jarboe said. “It made my holidays.”



*Det. Amy Jarboe stands next to gifts donated by city residents.*

## CITY HALL CALENDAR

### January

#### **Tuesday, Jan. 1**

New Year's Day

*City offices closed*

#### **Thursday, Jan. 3**

Planning Comm. Mtg, 6:30 p.m.

#### **Tuesday, Jan. 8**

City Council Special Mtg, 6:30 p.m.

#### **Wednesday, Jan. 9**

Parks and Rec Comm. Mtg, 6:30 p.m.

#### **Jan. 10-12**

City Council Retreat, 8 a.m.-5 p.m.

*Inn at Gig Harbor*

#### **Thursday, Jan. 10**

Planning Comm. Mtg, 6:30 p.m.

#### **Tuesday, Jan. 15**

City Council Study Session, 6:30 p.m.

#### **Wednesday, Jan. 16**

Samm. Youth Board Mtg, 6 p.m.

#### **Thursday, Jan. 17**

Planning Comm. Mtg, 5 p.m.

#### **Monday, Jan. 21**

Martin Luther King Day

*City offices closed*

#### **Tuesday, Jan. 22**

City Council Meeting, 6:30 p.m.

#### **Thursday, Jan. 24**

Shoreline Master Program Open House, 5 p.m.

Planning Commission Mtg, 7 p.m.

### February

#### **Tuesday, Feb. 5**

City Council meeting, 6:30 p.m.

#### **Thursday, Feb. 7**

Planning Commission Meeting, 6:30 p.m.

#### **Tuesday, Feb. 12**

City Council Study Session, 6:30 p.m.

#### **Wednesday, Feb. 13**

Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting, 6:30 p.m.

#### **Monday, Feb. 18**

Presidents' Day

*City offices closed*

#### **Tuesday, Feb. 19**

City Council Meeting, 6:30 p.m.

#### **Thursday, Feb. 21**

Planning Comm. Mtg, 6:30 p.m.

#### **Wednesday, Feb. 27**

Sammamish Youth Board Mtg, 6 p.m.

*NOTE: Unless otherwise noted, all meetings are at City Hall. Times, dates and locations are subject to change. Please consult the city website for the most current information.*



Mark Cross  
Mayor



Lee Felling  
Deputy Mayor



Jack Barry  
Councilmember



Don Gerend  
Councilmember



Kathleen Huckabay  
Councilmember



Michele Petitti  
Councilmember



Nancy Whitten  
Councilmember

# Town Center Public Hearing

## Planning Commission will continue Town Center hearing on January 10

Residents and other stakeholders will have another opportunity to provide public input as the Planning Commission continues its review of the city's new Town Center Plan this month.

A public hearing that opened on Jan. 3 will continue at the Planning Commission's Jan. 10 meeting (6:30 p.m. at City Hall, 801 228th Ave. S.E.).

The Town Center Plan is based on a Preferred Alternative adopted by the City Council on April 17, 2007. After its review is complete, the Planning Commission will send its recommendations to the City Council during the first quarter of 2008.

The Town Center Planning Area covers about 240 acres, most of it just north of City Hall in the geographical center of the city. The City Council's adopted vision for the Town Center calls for a central gathering place with public and private open spaces; a range of commercial, recreational, cultural, educational and personal services; a variety of housing types; bikeways and pedestrian trails; the preservation of the natural setting and the use of low-impact development techniques.

More information on the plan is available on the city website at [www.ci.sammamish.wa.us/TownCenter.aspx](http://www.ci.sammamish.wa.us/TownCenter.aspx).

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[www.ci.sammamish.wa.us](http://www.ci.sammamish.wa.us)

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Pete Butkus	Deputy City Manager
Lyman Howard	Finance Dir/Ass't City Mgr
John Cunningham	Public Works Director
Kamuron Gurol	Community Dev Director
Jessi Richardson	Parks & Rec Director
Mike Sauerwein	Admin Services Director
Melonie Anderson	City Clerk
Steve Hartwig	City Engineer
Brad Thompson	Police Chief
Bruce Disend	City Attorney
Tim Larson	Communications Manager



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