

City Views @ Sammamish

ISSUE 44

CITY OF SAMMAMISH NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2006

Sammamish commuters get some help

Two park-and-rides open this month

Beginning this month, Sammamish residents can cut miles off their daily commute by using one of two new park-and-ride lots on the Plateau.

On Feb. 13, King County Metro Transit was scheduled to open the Issaquah Highlands Park-and-Ride Garage at the intersection of Highlands Drive and High Street, just north of Exit 18 on Interstate 90. From most Sammamish neighborhoods, just drive south on Issaquah-Pine Lake Road to Highlands Drive. The new garage features 1,000 stalls of parking on five floors, and more than 20 trips to down-

See **PARK-AND-RIDE**, pg. 4



Providing more recreational space for youngsters is a top city goal.

Three-acre field opens

Waiting anxiously for the snip of the scissors, an eager crowd of youngsters and coaches were on hand Jan. 14 for the official ribbon cutting at the Community Sports Field at Eastlake High School.

Seconds after city and Lake Washington School District officials opened the way, a wave of soccer, lacrosse and baseball players swept over the three acres of sparkling new synthetic turf.

“It was a great day for our city,” City Manager Ben Yazici said. “One of the main reasons Sammamish residents incorporated was to create more recreational space. This is a huge step for-

ward.”

The city built the \$2.5 million field on the campus of Eastlake High School, in an open area between the school’s football and baseball stadiums. Students and residents alike will use the field, which has lights for evening use.

Working in a similar fashion with the Issaquah School District, the city plans to build another synthetic turf field on the campus of Skyline High School. That field, which will also have lights, is expected to open late this year. The combination of synthetic turf and

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Mayor
Michele Pettiti

Last month, Councilmembers Don Gerend, Lee Felling and I spent two days talking to our representatives in Olympia.

As part of the annual Association of Washington Cities Legislative Action Conference, we also had a chance to hear Governor Gregoire discuss her priorities at a luncheon attended by mayors, council members and city staff from all over the state.

The trip's exciting news was the passage of the Streamline Sales Tax (SST) bill in the Senate by unanimous vote. (Please see the story on pg. 5 for more details.) This legislation was very contentious two years ago and had winner and loser cities pitted against each other. After much work behind the

scenes, a compromise was finally worked out and all cities, small and large, sales tax rich and sales tax poor, were pushing for the bill. At press time, the House had not yet voted on the measure. We'll be watching to see if they follow the Senate's lead and vote this measure into law. It could add \$450,000 annually to our city coffers.

We also urged our senators and representatives to clarify state law so we would have the option of contracting with Issaquah for court services. Our current contract with King County expires at the end of this year, and we think we can save a boat load of money by going elsewhere.

Unfortunately, the court bill being considered includes a requirement that all judges be elected, a complication that could make the bill more difficult to pass. We applaud 5th District Representative Jay Rodne for his alternative bill, which would require judges

to be elected only in cities of over 60,000 in population.

In addition to supporting bills while we were in Olympia, we also took time to object. A bill supported by realtors, builders and Futurewise (formerly Thousand Friends of Washington) is especially worrisome.

It would take away much of our city's local control over zoning and give the responsibility back to the county. Excuse me, but how did we get in this growth mess in the first place? It was the lack of local control.

We are working hard for you at every level of government. I hope you are proud to be a Sammamish resident. We are going to keep growing into one wonderful city.

Soaring Eagle Park draws big crowds

A proposed 30-acre ball field and recreation complex in Soaring Eagle Park, a square mile of county-owned land on the city's eastern border, prompted lively discussion at two public open houses last month.

Parks and Recreation Director Jeff Watling fielded a steady stream of questions, some of them quite pointed, at the two sessions.

Many residents in attendance objected to the proposed active recreation facility, saying Soaring Eagle's roughly 630 acres of hiking trails and open

space should be left untouched.

Others asked for compromise, saying 30 acres for kid's ball fields would still leave 600 acres for hikers

and bikers.

The proposal calls for the city to build the facility at the south end of Soaring Eagle Park, previously known as Section 36. In the process, the county would transfer the 30 acres into the city's possession. The remaining 600 acres would remain under King County's control.

The comments gathered at the two open houses have been passed on to the City Council and King County.

No decision has been made on whether to proceed with the proposed park project.



Jeff Watling, Parks and Recreation Director, answers questions at one of last month's open houses.

FIELD – cont. from pg. 1

evening lights will allow both fields to provide almost continuous use.

“These partnerships with the school districts offer tremendous advantages,” Parks and Recreation Director Jeff Watling said. “The schools have flat space we can build on, plus the parking is already in place. Students use the parking during the day, and residents can use it after school hours.

“The city owes both school districts a big thank you for entering into these partnerships. They take some work, but they’re a ‘win-win’ all the way around. Both students and non-students in our city get a great new recreational facility.”

Residents and sports organizations wanting to use the Community Sports Field at Eastlake High School, 400 228th Ave. N.E., should contact the city’s Parks and Recreation Department at 425-443-7390. For more information on the the new field, residents can visit the city website (www.ci.sammamish.wa.us) and click on the “projects” tab.



Park Commissioner Hank Klein (background, left), Lake Washington School Superintendent Don Saul and School Board President Doug Eglington, Mayor Michele Petitti and Councilmembers Kathleen Huckabay, Mark Cross (in profile) and Lee Felling cut the ribbon.



Young residents venture out to test the field.



There's plenty of room on the three-acre field.

PARK-AND-RIDE, from pg. 1

town Seattle during peak commute times on Metro and Sound Transit buses.

The garage will be served by existing Metro Route 269 (Issaquah-Sammamish-Redmond-Overlake), and Sound Transit Express 554 (Issaquah-Eastgate-Mercer Island-Seattle). There will also be a brand new Metro Route 218 with commute-time service direct from Issaquah Highlands Park-and-Ride to Seattle.

Then, also in February, Sound Transit will open the new South Sammamish Park-and-Ride at the intersection of Issaquah-Pine Lake Road and 228th Avenue Southeast. (A specific date was not available at press time.) This lot will have 265 parking stalls, plus bicycle storage.

The South Sammamish Park-and-Ride will be served by Metro routes 216 (Bear Creek-Sammamish-Seattle), 269 (Issaquah-Sammamish-Redmond-Overlake) and 927 (Issaquah-Klahanie-Sammamish).

Sound Transit is planning to expand service from the Issaquah Highlands Park-and-Ride with express trips to downtown Bellevue, the University District, and Northgate later this year. Sound Transit was one of Metro's financial partners in the Issaquah-Highlands project.

The two new park-and-ride lots will also help ease local traffic congestion when the Issaquah Park-and-Ride on Newport Way closes later this year. Sound Transit is building a new transit center with more parking in that loca-



Southbound vehicles approach the Issaquah Highlands Park-and-Ride in late January, shortly before the 1,000 stall garage reached completion.

tion. During construction, there will be fewer park-and-ride spaces in the Issaquah Valley and the Highlands garage could be a good alternative for many bus commuters. It also gives Sammamish and Plateau residents who currently use the Issaquah Park-and-Ride more choices right now.

Sometimes people need more than just bus service. That's where Rideshare Services can help by providing connections to carpooling, vanpooling or vansharing.

Carpooling and vanpooling match people traveling to common destinations. VanShare helps those who need to make a connection to or from bus service. You can VanShare from home and connect to your bus, or use VanShare from the bus stop or park-and-ride lot to complete a trip to work. Here are some online links to help you

explore all the travel options:

- King County Metro Transit transit.metrokc.gov
- Sound Transit www.soundtransit.org
- Online Regional Trip Planner tripplanner.metrokc.gov/
- Rideshare Online www.rideshareonline.com
- VanShare transit.metrokc.gov/tops/van-car/vanshare

You can also call 206-553-3000 for assistance in planning your transit trip.

Legislature listens to Sammamish

During their yearly visits to Olympia, city officials have made a strong case for passage of a “Streamline Sales Tax” bill, a measure that would funnel additional sales tax revenue to Sammamish.

Last month, those efforts paid off when the Senate passed the bill 48-0. As this newsletter went to press, the House had not yet voted on the bill.

The measure would help Sammamish in this way. Currently, when residents order goods from out of town, the sales tax revenue, if there is any, goes to the point of sale. The new bill would divert a portion of the sales tax back to the point of delivery. Given that Sammamish residents make most of their large purchases out of town, or over the internet, it’s estimated the bill could funnel another \$450,000 in sales tax revenue back to the city.

Led by Mayor Michele Petitti, the



State Representative Jay Rodne (second from right) during a visit with Councilmembers Don Gerend, Lee Felling and Mayor Michele Petitti.

city delegation, which included Councilmembers Don Gerend and Lee Felling, and Communications Manager Tim Larson, visited Olympia late last month.

In addition to lobbying for the sales tax bill, the city also asked for more clarity in state law regarding a city’s right to contract with a neighboring city for court services, and more

support for municipal control over zoning and growth issues. Several other topics were also discussed.

Among the legislators city officials met with: Representatives Jay Rodne, Toby Nixon and Larry Springer, and Senators Cheryl Pflug and Bill Finkbeiner.

Commissions add new members

The city’s citizen commissions, which make recommendations to the City Council on a variety of topics, have added several new members.

The Parks Commission added four new faces:

- Randy Jackson
- Vincent Santoro
- Mary Doerr
- Steve Wright

There are a total of 12 members on the Park Commission, which typi-

cally meets at 6:30 p.m. on the fourth Monday of each month at the Sammamish Plateau Water and Sewer District, 1510 228th Ave. S.E.

The Planning Commission, which has a total of seven members, added two new faces:

- Ron Brown
- Erica Tiliacos

The Planning Commission typically meets at 6:30 p.m. on the first and third Thursday of each month, also at

the Sammamish Plateau Water and Sewer District.

The seven-person Arts Commission has one new member:

- Joanne Elliott

The Arts Commission usually meets at 7 p.m. on the third Wednesday of each month at City Hall, 486 228th Ave. N.E.

All members of the city’s commissions and boards are appointed by the City Council.

County trail delayed by rain

The East Lake Sammamish Trail, plagued for years by a torrent of litigation, is now suffering at the hands of a steady drizzle.

At press time, King County Project Manager Mike Lozano said the unusually wet winter will likely push the opening date to late March. Originally, the county had expected to open the trail in late December. The construction schedule has also been stretched by higher than expected demand for fencing and gates along the trail path.

The 11-mile recreational trail along the eastern shore of Lake Sammamish will link Redmond, Sammamish and Issaquah. The county has already completed the Redmond and Issaquah links. All that remains is the 7-mile segment of the trail that lies inside Sammamish city limits.

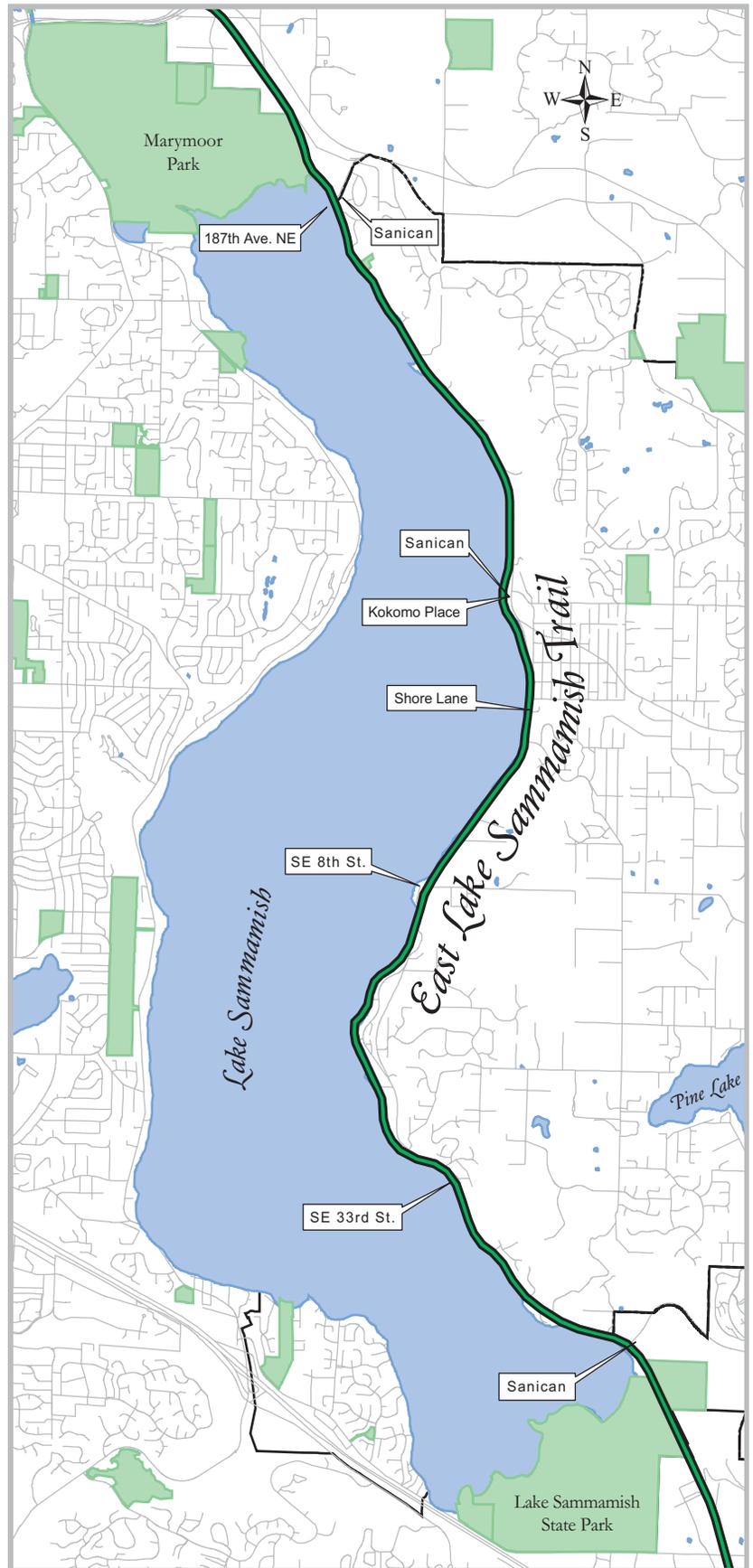
King County refers to the new gravel surface path as the “interim” trail because a more elaborate paved trail is planned for the future. It’s unknown when that paved “Master Plan” trail will become reality.

The map to the right shows the five access points recommended by the county. Those access points, chosen because there are parking opportunities on public streets nearby, are:

- 187th Avenue Northeast
- Kokomo Place
(just north of Inglewood Hill Road)
- East Lake Sammamish Shore Lane N.E.
(350 yards north of Thompson Hill Road)
- Southeast Eighth Street
- Southeast 33rd Street

King County acknowledges that its plan may need some adaptation as usage patterns develop over time. For its part, the city will be monitoring trail use closely and passing on concerns to King County.

Residents with construction questions about the trail should call Mike Lozano at 206-296-4240. Property questions should go to Robert Nunnenkamp at 206-263-6207.



East Lake Sammamish Trail

City improves emergency preparedness

Continuing a process that began shortly after incorporation, the city is working hard on improving its emergency management plan.

Headed up by Assistant City Manager Pete Butkus, the effort to revamp the plan relies heavily on cooperative agreements with area cities, school districts, churches, fire and police departments, and organizations like the Red Cross.

“No city can respond to a disaster by itself,” Butkus said. “It takes many to help a few.”

Improving and re-writing the Emergency Management Plan will take a year. This effort will be the fifth modification of the plan since it was first approved by the City Council in 2001.

“We’re also joining the ‘Foothills Communities,’ a group of cities that

will do joint disaster training,” Butkus said. “As our emergency plan evolves, we’ll need to train staff to handle their new responsibilities.”

Speaking of city employees, they are all being supplied with a personal 72-hour kit to keep handy in case disaster strikes. The kit will not only help them survive, but allow those in the city to help with the emergency response.

“Since we’ve been preaching about the importance of the 72-hour kit to all our residents, we thought it only made sense to lead by example,” Butkus said. “The kits should provide enough food, water and other emergency supplies to last three days.”

As the recent hurricanes demonstrated, the best preparedness often comes in the form of personal pre-

paredness. Butkus says all Sammamish residents should have kits sufficient to take care of their family members and pets for 72 hours.

“The kits are easy to put together and they’re not expensive,” Butkus says. “You’ll be glad you made the effort if we get hit by an earthquake or some other disaster.”

For information on emergency kits, Butkus suggests going to the city website (www.ci.sammamish.wa.us).

“Just click on ‘Community Links’ and scroll down to ‘Emergency Preparedness,’ Butkus said. “Information is provided in English, Spanish, Russian and Vietnamese.

“Your family will really appreciate it if something nasty and dangerous comes our way.”

City Hall Calendar

FEBRUARY

Thursday, Feb 2, 2006

Planning Commission Meeting, 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm
Sammamish Plateau Water & Sewer District

Friday, Feb 3, 2006

Permit Center Closed, 11 am - 4 pm
Sammamish City Hall

Tuesday, Feb 7, 2006

City Council Meeting, 6:30 pm - 10 pm
Sammamish Plateau Water & Sewer District

Tuesday, Feb 14, 2006

City Council Study Session, 6:30 pm - 10 pm
Sammamish Plateau Water & Sewer District

Wednesday, Feb 15, 2006

Arts Commission Meeting, 7 pm - 8 pm
Sammamish City Hall

Thursday, Feb 16, 2006

Sammamish Youth Board Meeting, 6 pm - 7:30 pm
Sammamish Library

Planning Commission Meeting, 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm
Sammamish Plateau Water & Sewer District

Monday, Feb 20, 2006

Presidents' Day, All day

City offices closed

Tuesday, Feb 21, 2006

City Council Meeting, 6:30 pm - 10 pm
Sammamish Plateau Water & Sewer District

Monday, Feb 27, 2006

Parks & Recreation Commission Mtg., 6:30 - 10 pm
Sammamish Plateau Water & Sewer District

Tuesday, Feb 28, 2006

City Council Study Session, 6:30 pm - 10 pm
Sammamish Plateau Water & Sewer District

MARCH

Thursday, Mar 2, 2006

Planning Commission Meeting, 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm
Sammamish Plateau Water & Sewer District

Tuesday, Mar 7, 2006

City Council Meeting, 6:30 pm - 10 pm
Sammamish Plateau Water & Sewer District

Tuesday, Mar 14, 2006

City Council Study Session, 7:30 pm - 10 pm
Sammamish Plateau Water & Sewer District

Wednesday, Mar 15, 2006

Arts Commission Meeting, 7 pm - 8 pm
Sammamish City Hall

Thursday, Mar 16, 2006

Planning Commission Meeting, 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm
Sammamish Plateau Water & Sewer District

Tuesday, Mar 21, 2006

City Council Meeting, 6:30 pm - 10 pm
Sammamish Plateau Water & Sewer District

Thursday, Mar 23, 2006

Sammamish Youth Board Meeting, 6 pm - 7:30 pm
Sammamish Library

Monday, Mar 27, 2006

Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting, 6:30 pm - 10 pm

Sammamish Plateau Water & Sewer District

Tuesday, Mar 28, 2006

City Council Study Session, 6:30 pm - 10 pm
Sammamish Plateau Water & Sewer District

NOTE: Times, dates and locations are subject to change. Please consult the city website for the most current information.

2006 comprehensive plan amendments coming up

The city will hold an Open House in March to discuss potential amendments to the city’s comprehensive plan.

A specific date has not yet been chosen for the public session, but details will be available in next month’s city newsletter.

This year’s proposed amendments are expected to focus on the city’s annexation policies.

For more information on the amendment process, please contact Senior Planner Emily Arteché. She can be reached via email at eartech@ci.sammamish.wa.us and by phone at 425-836-7920.

SAMMAMISH CITY COUNCIL



*Michele Petitti
Mayor*



*Mark Cross
Deputy Mayor*



*Jack Barry
Councilmember*



*Lee Felling
Councilmember*



*Don Gerend
Councilmember*



*Kathleen Huckabay
Councilmember*



*Nancy Whitten
Councilmember*

Committee of the Whole



In the past, the City Council formed small committees to focus on public works, parks, finance and other subjects. The committees were usually made up of three councilmembers who would then report back to the entire council. Starting this year, the council will meet as a group (Committee of the Whole) to study these subjects.

The meetings, referred to as study sessions, will typically be held on the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month at Sammamish Plateau Water and Sewer District, 1510 228th Ave. N.E.

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Pete Butkus	Assistant City Manager
Delora Kerber	Public Works Director
Kameron Gurol	Community Dev Director
Lyman Howard	Financial Svcs Director
Jeff Watling	Parks & Rec Director
Mike Sauerwein	Admin Svcs Director
Steve Hartwig	City Engineer
Bruce Disend	City Attorney
Melonie Anderson	City Clerk
Richard Baranzini	Police Chief
John Murphy	Fire Chief
Tim Larson	Communications Manager


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