

APRIL, 2006

CITY CONNECTIONS

A Publication from the City of Washougal

PROPOSED PLAN FOR DOWNTOWN

The Downtown Washougal Improvement project is the first step of the Downtown Washougal Revitalization Plan, which strives to create a unique identity for downtown Washougal as the historical and community center of the City. Because Washougal is Washington State's western gateway to the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area, the design elements of this project celebrate the natural environment, indigenous plant species and native materials. The vision of the Plan is to create a revitalized, pedestrian/bicycle-friendly downtown atmosphere. The Downtown Washougal Improvement project will reconstruct large portions of curb and sidewalk in the downtown area, incorporating innovative streetscape and landscaping design to create an inviting downtown center. The goal of this project is to motivate community members and visitors to access the downtown through the creation of bicycle lanes, disability access, and improvements to pedestrian, automotive and bus transit. Additionally, a variety of low-impact development practices have been proposed to reduce stormwater runoff while at the same time creating an inviting streetscape. Previous pavement will be utilized on portions of the project, along with landscaped bio-infiltration swales to collect, treat, and dispose of stormwater runoff from the streets and sidewalks. The intent of this approach is to encourage the downtown Washougal area to attain its vision to grow and redevelop as a sustainable and livable community unique to the Northwest.

The first phase of construction encompasses the area within the right-of-way of 15th Street between SR 14 and "B" Street, "B" Street

between 15th and 18th Street, and 17th Street between "A" Street and "C" Street.

Improvements will include pedestrian scale illumination, landscaping, new curb, sidewalk, concrete intersections/crosswalks, ADA ramps, bicycle lanes, undergrounding of exiting overhead utilities, and other associated stormwater and streetscape improvements.

Why is this Project Needed?

Every great town possesses an identifiable and lively town center. A place that defines the community's image, where citizens congregate for shopping, eating, visiting, and participating in special events and ceremonial activities. This place is commonly referred to as the village square, the heart of town or the city's living room. Currently the City of Washougal lacks this special place. The primary

purpose of this project is to revitalize the downtown and create a town center for Washougal. The project seeks to re-establish the downtown core by creating a walkable and livable community based on sustainable development practices that also significantly improves the appeal of the downtown streetscape. Construction of an enhanced pedestrian environment, disability access, bike lanes, and improved bus and automobile access will encourage citizens and visitors to the downtown core area. This will create a stronger sense of community, enhance the quality of life for residents and induce new retail, professional offices and housing development downtown.

Historically, downtown Washougal was the central commercial and community hub for the town. In recently years, growth and commercial activity has moved outside of the downtown area, forcing greater dependence on the auto-

mobile for routine trips such as grocery shopping. It is the goal of the City to reduce the dependence on automobile travel by reinventing the public marketplace and the downtown service center. It is important to note that complaints from Washougal residents regarding the apparent "lack of life" in the City center have stimulated much of this effort. As a result of community activism, the City formed the Downtown Revitalization and Improvement Committee (DRIC) in 2002 and completed the Downtown Washougal Revitalization Plan in May of 2002. In August of 2004 the DRIC facilitated the first Washougal Farmers Market, which is currently held in the Pendleton Woolen Mill's private parking lot. A high priority of the Revitalization Committee was to create a public living room to hold special events such as the farmer's market, performances, holiday activities and ceremonial moments (i.e. September 11th candlelight vigils). This priority has been incorporated into the proposed improvements through the creation of a town center plaza that spills out into "B" and 17th Streets for events such as the Farmer's Market and other community events.

If this project does not move forward however, the city-center commerce that was historically present will continue to take place on the outskirts of the City, further promoting urban sprawl, unnecessary fuel consumption, and suppression of the public's growing desire to stronger social interact and sense of community.

What's Next?
The project is in the final design states and will be put out to public bid in the next few months. After the successful low bidder is awarded the construction contract, work (construction) will begin on the project.

CITY COUNCIL CONSIDERING POSTED SPEED LIMIT CHANGES

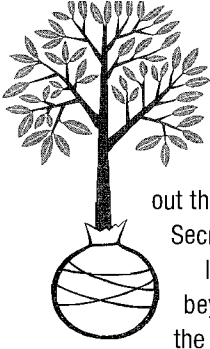
As residential development within the City of Washougal continues to expand toward the edges of the city, it is occasionally necessary to review the posted speed limits in various locations. As a result, staff has been directed by Council to confirm that the speeds that motorists are permitted to travel matches with the changing levels of congestion in those areas.

To aid in this decision-making process, the City Council would welcome your input on the following proposed speed limit changes:

Street	Limits	Current Posted Speed	Proposed Posted Speed
34th Street	City Limits to 30th Ct.	35 mph	25 mph
Stiles Road	30th Ct. to 32nd St.	35 mph	25 mph
Washougal River Road	City Limits to O St.	35 mph	25 mph
Shepherd Road	3rd Ave. to 17th St.	35 mph	25 mph
Sunset View Road	City Limits to Evergreen Way	40 mph	25 mph
Evergreen Way	Sunset View Road to 34th St.	40 mph	30 mph

Please forward your comments by
May 26th to the following:
City of Washougal
1701 C Street • Washougal, WA 98671
RE: Speed Limit Change Input
OR
Emails can be received at:
rstevenson@ci.washougal.wa.us
Please indicate "Speed Limit Change
Input" as the email subject

WASHINGTON STATE ARBOR DAY IS APRIL 12TH . . .



The first Arbor Day took place on April 10, 1872 in Nebraska. It was the brainchild of Julius Sterling Morton (1832-1902), a Nebraska journalist and politician originally from Michigan. Throughout his long and productive career, Morton worked to improve agricultural techniques in his adopted state and throughout the United States when he served as President Grover Cleveland's Secretary of Agriculture. But his most important legacy is Arbor Day.

In the years following that first Arbor Day, Morton's ideas spread beyond Nebraska. Today all 50 states celebrate Arbor Day although the dates may vary in keeping with the local climate. State of

Washington celebrates Arbor Day as the second Wednesday in April of each year. At the federal level, in 1970, President Richard Nixon proclaimed the last Friday in April as National Arbor Day.

For the homeowner, Arbor Day is an excellent opportunity to take stock of the trees on your property and plan for the future. Inspect your trees. Note any broken branches or evidence of disease or insect infestation. Think about how planting new trees might improve the look of your property or provide wind or heat protection. Take a trip to your local nursery to see what's available and to get new ideas. Walk around your neighborhood. Are there any public areas where tree planting or tree maintenance might make a real difference to your community? Talk with your neighbors. Find out what their opinions are. And, oh yes, plant a tree.

FOR THE BIRD LOVERS by Wilson Cady

Migrating April and May

Lewis and Clark identified about 50 species of birds during their journey of discovery across the country two hundred years ago. Many of these birds were new to science including the California Condor which they first spotted in the Columbia River Gorge. With the exception of that large member of the vulture family all of the birds they encountered in this areas can still be seen here, although in reduced numbers.

April and May are months of change when the majority of birds that have migrated to the tropics return to the Washougal area. During migration a small number of individual birds will go astray and wind up in areas where they are not normally found. These unexpected birds are one of the things that offer identification challenges as well as a sense of discovery to birders. During April, Mr. Cady writes that he had the privilege to experience two of these birds. The first was when a homeowner in Vancouver alerted me that a Costa's Hummingbird was coming to their feeder. This is a hummingbird normally found in Southern California and the Desert Southwest and was the first record for Clark County and about the fourth ever seen in Washington State.

While Mr. Cady was conducting his monthly bird census as a volunteer for the US Fish and Wildlife Service on the Steigerwald Lake Refuge the second he spotted a Burrowing Owl. Burrowing Owls live in ground squirrel or prairie dog holes and have only been seen once before in the Clark County during the last fifty years. Prior to that there was a small colony near Hazel Dell that occupied the open prairies that are now covered with homes and businesses. This small owl was most likely a bird in migration that was blown down the Gorge by strong east winds and eventually will make its way back to eastern Washington where they still breed in isolated colonies.

Spring Birds

Spring has returned to the West end of the Columbia Gorge and many of the migrant birds are returning. During each week from now until the end of May we can expect a different set of migrant species to return to our region. The peak of the migration is in April when over a dozen species per week will reappear from their tropical wintering grounds., Rufous Hummingbirds and Violetgreen Swallows arrived during the first week of March so now is the time to put up your hummingbird feeders and clean out any old nesting material from birdhouses. By removing the old nests you reduce the numbers of parasites that may have wintered in the bird box and make room for the birds to build a new nest for this year. Mr. Cady has not noticed any activity at the Washougal Wastewater Treatment Plant swallow next boxes that were placed there by Blake Souders as his Eagle Scout project. Once the swallows begin next building these boxes will help increase the population of these flying insect eating birds over the wetlands. Anything that we can do to reduce the number of mosquitoes in our areas helps lessen the threat of West Nile Virus.

During migration the Steigerwald Lake Refuge is a good place to check for migrant birds. The marshes, ponds, and fields are an attractive rest stop for migrants as well as the species returning to nest there. Many of these birds can be seen from either the Washougal Dike or the shoulder along Highway 14. In mid-April migrant Western Kingbirds can be found perched on fence lines from where they flutter up to catch flying insects. These birds nest East of the Cascades but every year a few can be found locally around open fields for a few weeks before they continue up the Gorge.

Other out of place species to be watched for during the next month include Calliope and Black-chinned Hummingbirds. These two species also nest in Eastern Washington but do appear at local feeders every spring.

What Do We Plant When We Plant A Tree?
What do we get when we plant the tree?
We plant the ship which will cross the sea;
We plant the pencils to scribble our notes,
We plant the ballots to cast our votes;
We plant the paper in which we read,
The news that o'er wooden poles we speed,
We plant the piles to erect our docks;
We plant the rayon for shirts and socks.

What do we plant when we plant a tree?
We plant the houses for you and me;
We plant the rafters, the shingles, the floors,
We plant the studding, the lath, the doors,
The beams and siding, all the parts that be;
We plant the house when we plant the tree,
We plant the barrel, the box, the crate;
In which to ship all sorts of freight

What do we plant when we plant a tree?
A thousand things that we daily see,
We plant the spire that out-towers the crag,
We plant the staff for our country's flag;
We plant the shade from the hot sun free,
We plant all these when we plant the tree.
Henry Abbeys