

City of Port Townsend

APRIL 2024 NEWSLETTER

CITY COUNCIL MEETINGS

Mon, Apr 1:

Regular Business Meeting
Presentation on Forest Management and Timber, Poetry Month Proclamation

Mon, Apr 8:

City Council Workshop Meeting
Quarterly Workplan Review, Transportation Update

Mon, Apr 15:

Regular Business Meeting
Emergency Shelter and Housing Code Public Hearing

Meetings are held at 6 p.m. unless otherwise noticed, and are subject to change.

Visit cityofpt.us/calendar for updates.

ENGAGE WITH OUR COMPREHENSIVE PLAN IN THE COMMUNITY!

1

Transportation Lab (T-Lab) Conference

Friday, April 19
9 a.m.-4 p.m.
American Legion

l2020.org/conf2024

2

Jefferson County Connectivity Fair

Saturday, April 20
10 a.m.-4 p.m.
Chimacum School

l2020.org/connectivity-2024



HOW ARE WE DEFINING THIS “SMALL TOWN”?

A letter from Councilmember Monica MickHager



It's Comprehensive Plan (Comp Plan) season, again. So, you ask – what is our Comp Plan? Washington's 1990 Growth

Management Act (GMA), “requires fast-growing cities and counties to develop a comprehensive plan to manage their population growth.”

We completed our required plan in 1996, followed abruptly by a Builders' Association lawsuit objecting to growth management here. The WA Growth Management Hearings Board found in our favor. Without managed growth, what we get is sprawl with loss of open space and urban forests. Urban sprawl is not conducive to building communities of neighbors, or to active transportation options like public transit, walking, and bicycling.

We now approach a required update, to imagine what we want. Let's consider what is working and what needs fixing. In the 1996 Plan, we spoke of the importance of protecting our “small town character,” but we didn't carefully define what that means. Is our “small town” about our people, our buildings, or both? Small towns can be open and welcoming, but they can also be xenophobic and untrusting of change.

Continued on next page

UTILITY RATES: A PROGRESSIVE APPROACH

A message from City Manager John Mauro



About a month ago, I wrote in the PT Leader about our broken state tax system and the challenges

we have carving out a bit of fairness. When we raise rates – something we do to help pay for the sustainable operation of critical services like water and sewer – how can we avoid putting a higher burden on those already highly burdened?

City Council asked City staff to investigate progressive approaches to easing the burden on our sewer rates that go into effect this month. The result is a major enhancement of our existing utility discount program so that far more households are eligible.

For instance: instead of only providing a discount to two-person households who make \$40,000 a year or less, we now provide a discount to those making \$75,000 or less a year. Those at the low end don't get a 50% discount, they get a 75% discount

COFFEE CHAT

with City Manager
 John Mauro

April 12
May 3
June 7

Reveille Café
Fort Worden
at the Nora Porter Commons
210 Battery Way

9:00 to 10:30 a.m.

First Friday of Every Month*

*Note: April's Chat will be held the 2nd Friday



Join John at Reveille Cafe for coffee, tea, and conversation April 12, May 3, and June 7.

– while others get 25% and 50% depending on their incomes.

While this doesn't solve the problem of high rates and major infrastructure needs, it helps reduce the burden on those most unable to pay while making progress on infrastructure unable to perform. In some cases, rates may actually go down instead of up for those who need the discount. It's a big step ahead of many communities around the state who are dealing with these same challenges.

Please help us get the word out. You can find the form on our Utility

Information page: cityofpt.us/finance/page/utility-information. You can also call us at (360) 385-3000 and we'd be delighted to help guide you.

We're aiming to take the 200 households currently participating in the program (about 4% of all 5,400 households) closer to 1,000 households (about 18%). It doesn't solve for our regressive state tax system, but it gives us a progressive edge in making our community just a tiny bit more fair.

John Mauro, City Manager

Councilmember letter, continued

Many of us declare our number of years or number of generations here and scoff politely at newcomers, but few of us remember what "time immemorial" means. Our peninsula has been home to indigenous peoples for more generations than any of us can count. Most of us are newcomers.

Our local government – electeds, staff, and volunteers – need us to join in this process of updating our Comp Plan.

We are working out how to best include everyone in the discussion over this next year. We want to meet you where you are. We hope to talk with you at grocery stores, open houses, community gatherings, and on the bus. Please help us make a Comp Plan update that will serve future generations as they face climate change impacts.

Councilmember Monica MickHager



Our Comprehensive Plan website lists upcoming events for how you can engage and share your vision for 2045. Sign up for updates sent directly to your email.
PT2045Planning.org



"I am hoping to play a big part in getting Kah Tai to a place where people can enjoy nature and a place where it feels safe for everyone," says Susan Bishop, the park's first Caretaker.

NEW PARK CARETAKER

Welcome Susan Bishop to Kah Tai Lagoon Nature Park

"I was born in Port Townsend, as were my parents and grandparents and I have lived on the Olympic Peninsula for all of my life. I enjoy gardening, hiking, beach-going, reading, cooking, and making jewelry. I am happy to be the first Caretaker at Kah Tai Nature Park. I have lots of love for this place. I remember as a child we used to call it "The Flats" and I have watched this park grow since it was started. I even remember the year they had the carnival at Kah Tai. I am hoping to play a big part in getting Kah Tai to a place where people can enjoy nature and a place where it feels safe for everyone."



Illustration by Terrapin Architecture

POCKET PARK PLAN

Plans are in the works for a potential City park at 12th Street and Hancock, and we would love to hear your ideas and feedback! A community outreach event for the neighborhood will take place from 3:30 to 5 p.m. on Thursday, April 4 at the end of 12th Street, where you can see concept drawings and share your ideas – whether it be trails, a playground, or a covered shelter – with the City. For more information, contact Michael Todd, Facilities and Parks Manager, at mtodd@cityofpt.us.

CLEAR OUT WEEDS, WASTE

Annual Spring Clean-Up

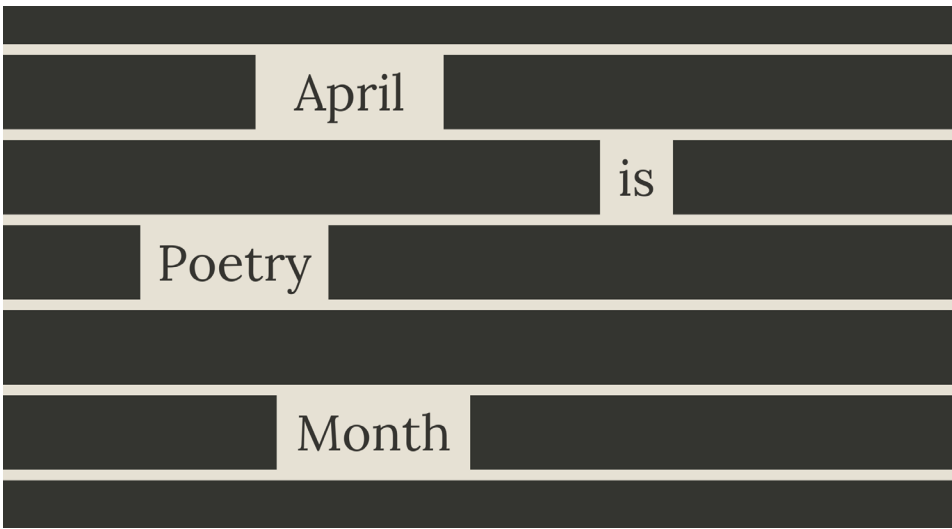
Olympic Disposal sponsors an annual spring clean-up program in early April. Extra yard waste will be collected the week of April 1 through 5 and extra garbage will be collected April 8 through 12. In addition, Olympic Disposal will accept one appliance item per household. Call for scheduling of appliance pickup and fees for disposal: 1-800-422-7854.

Eradicate Poison Hemlock!

Poison Hemlock is a noxious weed found in Port Townsend. It has fern-like leaves, clusters of small white flowers, and smooth green stems with purple streaks. It grows 6-10 feet high. Together, the City of Port Townsend Parks Department and the Jefferson County Noxious Weed Control Board are working to control Poison Hemlock around the city. Small infestations on private property can be hand-pulled while wearing long sleeves and gloves. For more information visit bit.ly/jcnwcb.



VOLUNTEER FOR EARTH DAY! Main Street's Earth Day Spring Clean Up is just around the corner. Help beautify our town! Join Main Street Saturday, April 20, from 9 a.m.-Noon. This year's focus will be giving the downtown rain gardens some much needed love. Visit ptmainstreet.org.



CREATE BLACKOUT POETRY

Help us decorate the Port Townsend Public Library with poetry created from old books, newspapers, and magazines during the month of April! Materials for creating blackout poetry will be provided in the entry way of the library. Turn in your poetry submission at the front desk, and library staff will add it to our visual display during the month of April. Library staff will make the final determination regarding all poetry submissions and materials displayed. All poetry submissions must be picked up from the library no later than 5 p.m. on Tuesday, April 30, unless arranged otherwise with library staff.



SOLAR ECLIPSE VIEWING

Come view the solar eclipse at the library! Stop by from 10:40 a.m. to 12:20 p.m. Monday, April 8. Viewing glasses will be available for the partial eclipse, and footage of the eclipse will be streaming in the Carnegie Room. Glasses will be available before the event, while supplies last.

PUBLIC HEALTH TALKS

How to Save a Life: Learn to Identify an Opioid Overdose and Administer Naloxone

Thursday, April 18, 5 p.m.

Learn about the life-saving overdose treatment Naloxone from Jefferson County Public Health Harm Reduction Coordinator, Anya Callahan at a talk set for 5 p.m. Anya will explain what an overdose looks like, and how to approach a person who might be experiencing an overdose. She will show participants how to administer Naloxone and share locations in the community where it is available. The event is at the Pink House at the Port Townsend Public Library.

What If We're Wrong about Drugs?

Thursday, April 25, 6 p.m.

Fifty years into "Just Say No," the United States has made little progress with its significant drug problems. The overdose crisis is escalating, access to addiction treatment is limited, and people are still sent to prison for simple possession. In a talk that incorporates both scientific data and examples from popular culture, professor Ingrid Walker (UW, Tacoma) shows that our perceptions about "drugs" depend on who is taking which drugs. This event is sponsored by Humanities Washington and the Friends of the Port Townsend Library and will take place at the Port Townsend Public Library's Carnegie Reading Room.



Sewer and Stormwater Rate Adjustments go into effect April 1 – you will see the new rates reflected on your Utility Bill arriving in the first week of May. Want to apply for an Income-Based Utility Rate Discount? Visit cityofpt.us/finance/page/utility-information to find out if you qualify and download the application.