



Updates from the City Manager

Martin D. Casey

December 2019

Administration and Finance

- Council held public hearings on November 12 and 25 on preliminary 2020 budget proposals. Council had asked that we balance the budget, set aside a \$750,000 ending fund balance reserve, and avoid general tax increases in the General Fund. Through a careful review of expected revenues and spending, we achieved those goals - all without proposing any staff layoffs. Council is scheduled to take action to adopt a final 2020 Budget on December 9.

Public Safety

- Firefighters and the City have agreed to a three-year contract that provides cost-of-living adjustments and advances shared interests in training, scheduling, communication, and safety, among other topics.
- Recently hired Police patrol officer Garrett Stephens is starting his six month Basic Law Enforcement Academy program at the Criminal Justice Training Commission in Burien.
- The Police Department also recently passed its first of two external audits of its evidence room, which is an important step in the accreditation process.

Public Works

- In late November, the courts placed a hold on I-976 regarding car tab fees and Transportation Benefit Districts (TBDs). This is not a final ruling on the constitutionality of the initiative, and governments may continue collecting car tab fees while the case proceeds. Sunnyside created a TBD in 2019, but Council proceeded carefully by holding off on any funding decisions until after the election. Cities still have some TBD financing tools available that require voter approval, and we'll be monitoring the outcomes of potential legal or legislative action as city leaders consider possible options.
- City employee Randy Peters (Public Works' Waste Water Division) was recognized with a plaque on Veterans Day for his work at the Jerry Taylor Veterans Plaza. Randy is the City's certified crane operator and set all of the large granite slabs at the plaza.

Community Development

- The City and Port have partnered to apply for a Pacific Power grant to fund an electric vehicle (EV) charging station downtown. The nearest EV stations are in Yakima and Benton City, leaving a 60+ mile gap on the I-82/YVH corridor. The planned site is on 5th Avenue between Varietal and Co Dinn, both of whom joined in supporting the project for local economic development and regional tourism. The Port contributed \$1,500, and no City match is required. If funded, the project will occur in 2020.

Best Wishes for the Holidays!