

CITY OF ISSAQUAH
City Council Committee-of-the-Whole

6:30 PM
October 10, 2022

MINUTES

Council Chambers
135 E. Sunset Way

COUNCIL AND ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL PRESENT

Councilmembers:

Barbara de Michele (*Attended Virtually*)
Zach Hall
Victoria Hunt
Russell Joe
Tola Marts
Chris Reh
Lindsey Walsh, Chair

Administration/Staff:

Wally Bobkiewicz, City Administrator
Andrea Snyder, Deputy City Administrator
Tisha Gieser, City Clerk

CALL TO ORDER

Council President Walsh called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

AGENDA ITEMS

a) **Public Comment**

The following public comment was provided:

Ann Fletcher, representing People for Climate Action, made comments regarding funding for the City's Climate Action Plan goals included in the proposed 2023-24 budget and urged prioritization and finding sources of continued funding.

David Kappler, resident, spoke in support of the addition of positions in the proposed 2023-24 budget for parks and trails.

b) **ID 1184 - 2023-24 Budget: Deliberations**

Presented by:

Robert Hamud, Chief Financial Officer
Susie Monsell, Budget Manager
Minnie Dhaliwal, Community Planning & Development Director
Dale Markey-Crimp, Management Analyst
Jeff Watling, Parks & Community Services Director
Stacy Vynne McKinstry, Sustainability Coordinator

The following public comment was provided:

Ann Fletcher, representing People for Climate Action, shared that it would be helpful to hear what criteria is used as the City Council considers funding additional climate initiatives.

A majority of the City Council provided the following input:

Title 18 Next Steps - Central Issaquah Parking Analysis:

- Retain funding but recommend having a future policy discussion to determine scope of Parking Analysis

Green Necklace:

- Request information on how the City can be more proactive with establishing better connections along the Green Necklace

Sustainability Fund & Solid Waste Fee:

- Do not increase Administrative fee now due to rate increases impacting residents next year

Other City Council feedback was provided, including:

Title 18 Next Steps

- Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) Landscape Conservation and Local Infrastructure Program (LCLIP) Feasibility Study item was not an identified priority by the Planning, Development & Environment Committee
- Missing middle priority should also include pedestrian accessibility and mobility

NW Sammamish Road Non-Motorized Improvements (TR 028):

- Request information on funding spent on this project to date be provided at the Oct. 17 City Council meeting

Sustainability Fund & Solid Waste Fee

- Develop strategy, then consider funding
- Would like to add additional funding for municipal building retrofits and fleet electrification

General

- Expressed strong support for the Affordable Housing position
- Support for and concerns with the police take home car proposal and budget request for additional vehicles
- Support continuing to learn and coordinate with partners to deliver behavioral health support
- Support moving towards providing 24-7 behavioral health coverage in the future
- Support for process of developing budget priorities in advance and using that to build a foundation for the budget

c) **ID 1278 - Community Investment Strategy: Community Mobility Survey Projects**

Presented by:

Gene Paul, Management Analyst

This item was delayed to the Oct. 17, 2022 City Council meeting.

d) **ID 1280 - Community Investment Strategy: Park Project Recommendation**

Presented by:

Jeff Watling, Parks & Community Services Director

City Council provided feedback, including:

- Support for the Park Board's recommendation to use the funding towards the Veterans Memorial Field consolidated park, including a combination of Pedestrian Park, Depot Park, and the Senior Center Plaza

10-10-22 City Council Committee of the Whole
Minutes

Page (0000)

- Concerns with the inability to fund all three of the Veterans Memorial Field projects with the proposed \$4 million
- Support for funding improvements to Confluence Park, specifically improvements to the Ek House
- Support for the Rainier Trail Dog Park

Questions were also asked regarding the existing capital funding for a dog park in the proposed 2023-24 budget.

The City Council agreed to continue this discussion to the Oct. 17, 2022 City Council meeting.

e) **Good of the Order** - None.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 10:11 PM.

Lindsey Walsh, Council President

Tisha Gieser, City Clerk



Informational Update

ID # 1107 – Communications Update

Meeting Date Dec. 5, 2022
Department Administrative Services
Staff Lead Thomas Rush, Communications Manager

Purpose

The purpose of this informational update is to provide City Council with a status report on current Communications activities and accomplishments, as well as future work plan items.

Background

This report summarizes the Communications Division's 2022 focus areas, including:

- Communication Tool Improvements
 - Major Projects Webpage Redesign
 - Public Engagement Toolkit Update
 - Podcasts
 - New Parks Newsletter: The Park Bench
 - Enhanced Promotion of Upcoming Legislation

- Special Projects
 - City's 130th Birthday
 - Time Capsule
 - LinkedIn Retention and Recruitment Strategy
 - Virtual State of the City
 - Veterans Day

- Public Engagement Data
 - Surveys
 - Social Media Strategy and Website Metrics
 - Video

- Strategic Plan Progress

Update

Communication Tool Improvements

- The communications team is currently redesigning and enhancing the functionality of the website's [Major Projects pages](#). This popular section of the website sees about 10,000 pageviews a year, and outlines ongoing projects with either major public interest or physical footprints. To help keep the public informed on progress, status and key deliverable timetables on these projects, the team is working to display these projects via a map, as well as redesign each project page with clearer timelines, engagement opportunities and more. Work to date includes researching mapping tools and reaching out to other municipalities on best practices. The goal is to launch these new pages by the end of Q1 2023.
- The communications team is also updating the City's [Public Engagement Toolkit](#), which was created in 2017. Goals for this update include adding new communication tools/techniques that are now available, as well as ensuring project managers approach engagement with an equity lens. The team has gathered valuable feedback from project managers on what would make the toolkit more useful and plans to present a draft to the Equity Board in early 2023, with a presentation to the City Council soon after.
- To diversify how the City communicates to the community, the team launched new podcasts in 2022. "Issaquah Buzz" features local businesses in partnership with Economic Development. Residents are now reaching out to the team with ideas on future topics, which are then covered in subsequent episodes. In addition, another podcast called "Uniquely Issaquah" is now hosted by Mayor Mary Lou Pauly that provides a platform for sharing community and staff stories. Both have been well received in the community, with more than 1,600 streams on YouTube and 5,000+ views across the City's other social platforms.
- The team, in close coordination with the Parks and Community Services Department, sunsetted the traditional printed Parks and Rec Guide, and transitioned to online tools, including a new quarterly e-newsletter called "The Park Bench." With more than 19,000 subscribers, this newsletter highlights upcoming programs, spotlights key events, and provides another platform to maximize awareness of parks projects. In its initial launch, it had an impressive 65% open rate and staff noted increases in both awareness and registration of featured programs. In the future, other e-newsletters will also be created for specific audiences, featuring topics like preschool, the Senior Center and more.
- The team is now highlighting more legislation from the City Council's calendar via the website, email subscribers and across the City's social media channels to increase resident awareness and engagement.

Special Projects

- Communications led efforts to mark the City's 130th birthday this year. Celebrations included a special, limited-time logo and unified branding that were used online throughout the year. The team also commissioned chocolate coins from Boehm's Candies and a special 130th anniversary challenge coin. Both were used as giveaways to the community at public events like Chalk Art, various summer Farmers Markets and Concerts on the Green. The challenge coin was also gifted to each board and commission member.
- To further celebrate the 130th birthday, Communications created a time capsule. The team collected the public's ideas on what should be included in the time capsule, and then set to work in collecting the items (including letters from elementary students, local restaurant menus, pickleball paddles, COVID-19 items and more). Once the collection was curated, the time capsule was displayed at several public events, including Farmers Markets, Chalk Art, Concerts on the Green and Salmon Days. The completed time capsule will be buried along Rainier Trail near the Trails House later this month.
- To increase the City's ability to attract and retain key personnel, the Communications team implemented a new approach to LinkedIn. By setting up additional resources to engage with staff members on the platform, and adjusting the City's voice to the wider audience, Issaquah had a 1,446% jump in unique visitors and a 1,280% improvement in visitors using the LinkedIn page as the springboard to view open positions. These increases advanced the LinkedIn account from being a peripheral tool to being fully immersed with the City's other social platforms when it comes to social media strategy.
- In early 2022, the Communications team completed upgrades to the City Council Chambers and Tibbetts Creek Manor to operate hybrid meetings and Issaquah City TV (ICTV) more effectively.
- The team tried a new approach to storytelling this year by building a dynamic State of the City [website](#). Mayor Pauly guided residents through the City's accomplishments through quotes, video and more. The new approach led to much higher engagement than the City's standard video coverage in years past.
- Working with Issaquah's local VFW post, the team created a special video for Veterans Day. Beginning with a call to the community for submissions, the team stitched together a tribute to local veterans who have called Issaquah home over the years. This work continued a longstanding tradition of The Issaquah Press from many years ago.

Public Engagement Data

- In 2022, the Communications team implemented and promoted 24 surveys to the public. Each survey required working with departments on developing materials, defining outreach goals and ensuring project managers closed the engagement loop with sharing results. Some of the most successful surveys (in terms of engagement) covered Solid Waste Hauling and Collection (956 responses), Northwest Sammamish Road Non-Motorized Improvements (578 responses), and the Community Mobility Investment Fund (411 responses).
- As one of the primary methods for direct interaction with the community, Issaquah's social media strategy is critical to the success of the City's outreach. Issaquah's engagement and reach metrics continues to outpace its larger neighbors. In 2022, the City's audience size

increased 16%, while the engagement rate (how frequently someone likes, clicks or watches a post) is up 28% from 2021. Social media has a point of view that reflects the ethos of Issaquah and is recognized in the community and in the field, as an example [Issaquah was nominated](#) for the People's Choice Award for [#CityHallSelfie](#) Day.

- According to Issaquah's 2021 Community Survey, 66 percent of residents use the City's website as a major source of information about the City. The Communications team continually updates the site, and manages more than 15,000 webpages. In 2022, traffic on the website rose again (up 8% from 2021). The website now has more than 1.2 million unique page views a year.
- In 2022, the team produced more than 75 promotional and/or fun videos to share with the community. These videos covered a variety of topics, including events (such as Salmon Days and Light up the Night); podcasts; a timelapse of artists at work; local business spotlights; a Little League World Series sendoff, a Community Emergency Response Team drill, City department appreciation videos and much more. To highlight just how important video has become, the public consumed over 312 hours on Facebook and over 3,600 hours on the City's YouTube channel in the past year.

Strategic Plan Progress

The Communications team is implementing several ideas listed in CS1a of the City's workplan concerning public outreach strategies:

- Remained connected to neighborhoods through HOAs and neighborhood champions.
- Assisted with both neighborhood City Council meetings (Community Listening Sessions).
- Produced outreach on City's decision-making progress through news items and visuals to allow the public a higher level of awareness on key City Council decision topics.
- Increased the number of materials that are translated to enhance outreach and to lower barriers to public engagement. In total, 16 surveys were provided in multiple languages this year.
- Created, formalized and trained staff on an on-demand translation service to assist with answering phone calls.

2023 Work Plan Items

- Promote and support the 2023 Community Survey implementation.
- Start the next cycle of a website redesign (once every five years).
- Launch the utility billing module on the City's website.
- Assist IT with development and integration of internal SharePoint sites for departments.
- Create educational videos on City services (first up is the Pavement Management Program).
- Build online visuals (OpenBook) linked to the Capital Improvement Plan in coordination with Finance.
- Increase the number of podcast episodes produced to more than 25 a year.
- Support and promote the three Community Listening Sessions.
- Increase in-person neighborhood engagement through more local meetings and events.



Informational Update

ID # 1117 – Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) Plan

Meeting Date	December 5, 2022
Department	PW - Public Works
Staff Lead	Isabel Diaz, Traffic Signal Operations Engineer

Purpose

The purpose of this informational update is to provide Council with a status report on the Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) Program.

Background

The 2022 adopted budget included \$100,000 to do an ITS needs analysis and recommendations study. The ITS Plan will serve as a roadmap to the design, implementation, and operation of ITS projects in support of the ITS Program.

On April 2022, the Administration kicked off the ITS Plan with an assessment of ITS inventory and introduced the plan to the Transportation Advisory Board (TAB) during the April regular meeting.

Update

Following the TAB meeting, the Administration conducted a community survey and held stakeholder meetings to gather input on City objectives pertaining to transportation data and technology and help establishing the ITS Plan goals. The goals are guiding statements that set priorities for the implementation of ITS in the City. The following six goals have been established for the ITS Plan:

1. Improve the safety and security for the transportation system
2. Improve the efficiency of the transportation system
3. Provide accurate traveler information
4. Develop and deploy cost efficient ITS infrastructure
5. Integrate City ITS projects with regional partners
6. Monitor transportation performance measures