

NEWSLETTER

Issue 211 * October 2015

Your questions, concerns, ideas guide leaders of City government

One of the things that make Grants Pass a vibrant place to live, work and play is our connectivity.

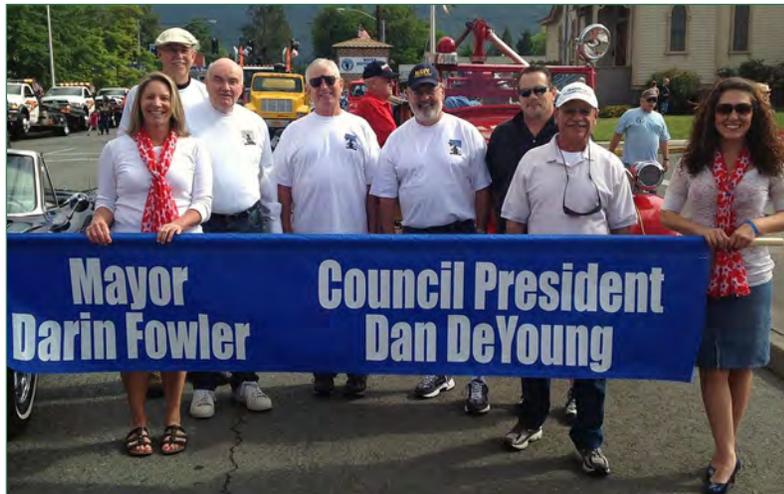
The Grants Pass City Council has 14 committees and task forces to gather information, make recommendations to the Council, and help with communication. The skills and talents of the volunteers on these committees help develop better plans and ultimately a better City for us to enjoy. The Council also conducts a formal survey every year to help it better understand the attitudes of residents.

As we all know, communication is a two-way street.

The Council needs to tell residents what its plans are and what is going on. Residents need to tell the Council about their thoughts, ideas and concerns.

Your City Council shares information in many ways, such as:

- This newsletter,
- The internet (www.grantspassoregon.gov),
- Twice a month shows on KAJO radio,
- Regular and special Council meetings,
- Cable broadcast of meetings and workshops,
- Live streaming of meetings,
- Viewing of recorded meetings,
- Special programs about City services,
- Use of local television and newspaper,
- Adding messages to monthly utility bills, and
- A new Facebook page: "City of Grants Pass, Local Government."



The Mayor and City Council take part in the Boatnik Parade every year.



The City Budget Committee visits sites of proposed capital improvement projects before making decisions.

"We base our decisions on the following values: Accountability, Communication, Credibility, Integrity, Respect, Responsibility, Truthfulness."

Values statement for the Grants Pass City Council

Your City has a volunteer Mayor and eight City Councilors who are eager and willing to share information, as are City employees. You may walk into City Hall and visit them any time during regular business hours.

Councilors have frequently mentioned their interest in hearing from their constituents. Councilors publish their email addresses on the last page of every newsletter, hold meetings, and reach out in many other ways.

It is not a requirement to have a complaint or a problem to share information with the City. Do you have a question? Do you like something that you have seen in the City or somewhere else?

Please take a minute and share your thoughts with City Councilors and employees. Your contributions are truly appreciated.

Floods can happen *anywhere*

Floods are the most common natural disaster. Flooding can occur with any river or stream even if your property is not in a floodplain. In Grants Pass, that includes the Rogue River and Gilbert Creek.

Know your risk

Call the Parks & Community Development Department at 541-450-6060 to find out if your property is in a floodplain. The City website has maps that let you see the closest flooding source to your property.

In addition, ground charred by a wildfire cannot easily absorb rainwater for several years. Even properties located away from a burned area can be affected by the increased runoff from these areas.

Insurance protection

Flood damage is not covered by homeowner or renter insurance.

Because the City participates in the National Flood Insurance Program, you can get flood insurance.

Anyone may buy flood insurance, regardless of their location. There is a 30-day wait until a policy is effective, so don't wait until the wet season begins in November.

Prepare for the worst

You might need to take action before an official flood warning is issued. Take the time now to plan how you will take care of yourself and your family during a flood. Planning can minimize the effects of a disaster and reduce fear by knowing what to do.



More Information

FloodSmart provides information on flood risks and preparation. Go to www.floodsmart.gov or call 1-800-427-2419.

The American Red Cross sells disaster kits and has lists of basic supplies (1-800-733-2767).

HOLIDAY EVENTS

DEC. 3: **Handel's Messiah**, Rogue Valley Symphony. Tickets at 541-708-6400, or www.rvsymphony.org.

DEC. 3-7: **Rogue Winterfest** benefit for local mental health community. Tickets for the Gala and Auction, Golden Social, and Culinary Classic at 541-890-5672 or www.roguewinterfest.com. Public viewing tickets at the door.

DEC. 4: **Santa, Christmas tree** lighting, and caroling downtown at "G" and 5th streets.

DEC. 4-20: **A Christmas Story**, Barnstormers Theatre. Tickets at

541-479-3557 or barnstormersgp.com.

DEC. 5: **Christmas parade** on 6th Street.

DEC. 6: **Messiah Community Sing-Along** at River Valley Church.

DEC. 12: **Wreaths Across America** at Hawthorne Memorial Gardens honors fallen veterans.

DEC. 12-25: **Holiday lights** at Riverside Park.

DEC. 19: **A Celebration of Christmas Past** at the Historical Society's Schmidt House; 541-479-7827.

Tips to make your Halloween safer

Here are tips and notes from the Public Safety Crime and Fire Prevention Bureau to help make your Halloween safe and fun!

Trick or treating

- Take a flashlight to see – and be seen.
- Walk on the sidewalk, use crosswalks, and always walk – don't run – across a street.
- Inspect candy before eating.
- Never go into a stranger's home or car.
- Go with a group – do not take off on your own.
- Parents, the safest option is to go with your children.

Fire safety

- If you use a candle in your jack-o-lantern, don't leave it unattended.
- Dried flowers, cornstalks and crepe paper are highly flammable. Keep these kind of decorations well away from open flames and heat sources, such as light bulbs, heaters and jack-o-lanterns.
- Keep exits clear of decorations so nothing blocks escape routes.



Costume safety

- Wear reflective and bright colors.
- Avoid costumes that are too long or too loose to prevent tripping.
- Make sure the eye holes in your mask are large enough to easily see through.

Driver safety

Be extra alert for trick-or-treaters, especially between 4 p.m. & 10 p.m.

Haunted houses

Haunted houses not located in a private residence must be inspected by Fire Prevention (541-450-6200).

Look, health and vibrancy of downtown no accident



The City, merchants and Kiwanis work together to dress-up downtown with flags and flowers.

Our downtown is an area of diverse interests and uses. Many things go into making it a great place to visit.

We have many great events: First Friday Live, Growers' Market, wine and beer strolls, Back to the '50s, Antique Fair, Art Along the Rogue, and the Christmas parade and community tree-lighting.

Downtown is a designated National Historic District with an interesting mix of shops and restaurants. It has trees, flowers, sculptures, murals, benches, bears, nutcrackers and musical Christmas murals.

What visitors and residents notice about downtown depends on how long and why they visit.

Someone driving through during summer might notice the colorful flower baskets, bears, flags and sidewalk displays. These attractions encourage them to stop for a few hours to sight-see, eat and shop.

Someone shopping for that special present might notice attractive window displays, restaurant aromas, clean sidewalks, and colorful flower beds.

It's no accident that our downtown is vibrant. A lot goes into making it that way.

Property and business owners must keep their buildings and storefronts clean and attractive. The decades-old buildings and infrastructure in the core area are a challenge to maintain.

City staff take care of flower baskets, planters, bicycle racks, trees, parking lots, sidewalks, light poles, park-like alleys, grass, tree wells, benches, drinking fountains, sculptures and signs.

Our downtown is special because of the work and consideration of everyone from business owners to city staff to visitors.

We work together to make our downtown great.

City's improved fire rating can save you money on insurance

Outstanding fire protection not only saves lives and property, it also can save you money.

Grants Pass recently received an improved fire protection rating. The Insurance Services Office's (ISO) protection ratings provide nationally consistent fire-insurance ratings, based on the level of a city's fire department, water availability, and 911 services.

After a recent review of our City's Fire Rescue Division, water utility, and 911 center, our rating rose from a Class 3 to a Class 2. Of



The Fire Rescue Division must be able to respond to all kinds of fires, such as the 2013 Beacon Hill Fire.

the 47,855 fire departments across the country, only 917 are Class 2.

Fire Rescue requested the review after the addition of the Redwood and Parkway Public Safety stations, replacement of fire equipment, staffing additions, and improvements to 9-1-1 services.

Insurance companies can vary widely on how they use the ISO ratings to determine premiums. Please contact

your insurance companies to see if the improved rating will lower your premium.



Residents ranked walking No. 1 and dog walking No. 4 in a survey about what they want from their parks.

Board focused on providing parks that residents want

“Parks are so important to the livability of our community,” said Dick Matti, chair of the Grants Pass Parks Advisory Board. “Especially with today’s denser housing, it is vital to have that green space.”

The Parks Board is one of 14 committees, task forces and boards that help the City Council investigate issues. Council and committee members all are volunteers.

“I admire the tremendous amount of time the councilors put in and all the different issues they have to deal with,” Matti said. “If we can take a little off their plates with things that don’t necessarily require their attention, I think it’s a good thing.”

The Parks Board’s prime responsibility is to look at projects to ensure they meet the needs of users. Matti is a retired optometrist who has spent the past 31 years coaching soccer in Josephine County. Since he was appointed in 2006, the board pushed for and helped create a 20-year parks master plan.

“We were operating off a plan that was developed in the 1980s and found it inadequate considering all the changes that had occurred,” Matti said.

For the plan, residents were surveyed about what they want from their parks. The top category was walking.

“As a result, we’ve added paths at Riverside Park and expanded paths at Reinhart Park,” Matti said. Another popular use was dog walking. So Greenwood Dog Park was created and a no-leash area was added to Gilbert Creek Park.

The Parks Board now is working on development of Allen Creek Park. The park will be located on the city-owned Allen Creek Reserve property west of Allen Dale Elementary School. The park also will include land across the creek near the school. A new footbridge across the creek will connect the two halves.

Development happens in phases as funds become available from system development charges, the hotel/motel tax, grants, and community donations.

The first phase is to upgrade Garrison Fields and develop a field between the ballparks and the school.

The next phase will take place after Allen Creek Road is improved. The Allen Creek Reserve will have soccer fields, a restroom, shelter and small playground.

WHERE THE ROGUE RIVER RUNS

GRANTS PASS

OREGON

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Your Grants Pass City Government

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City Council meetings begin at 6 p.m. on the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of every month at the Council Chambers, 101 NW “A” Street. The meetings are televised on Cable Channel 183 and posted on-line at www.grantspassoregon.gov.

City councilors and staff talk about local issues on radio station KAJO (1270 AM) at 9:30 a.m. on the 1st and 2nd Tuesday of every month.

www.grantspassoregon.gov • 541-450-6000