



Living by the Nooksack

A Quarterly Newsletter from the City of Ferndale

Fall 2020

What is This?

While many of our residents follow us on social media and check our website, we know that plenty of you don't have time for that.

This quarterly newsletter is our latest effort to help you understand what is going on in your city.

Inside this article, you will find:

- 4 Ways to Connect with City Council
- Updates on the Thornton Overcross Project
- Tips for staying safe and dry this flood season
- Details on the Old Settlers Variety Show
- COVID-safe activities for the fall

... and more!

If you have thoughts about this newsletter, please call Communications Officer Riley Sweeney at (360) 685-2353 or email him at Rileysweeney@Cityofferndale.org

Accessible online at www.cityofferndale.org/newsletter



Countywide Partnership Secures \$230,000 for Ferndale Businesses and Organizations

The City of Ferndale, in collaboration with Whatcom County, other local cities and the Port of Bellingham has secured over \$230,000 for 29 businesses in Ferndale. These resources are part of the Whatcom ReStart grants, where local jurisdictions pooled their federal funds from the CARES Act passed in the initial outbreak of COVID-19.

Grant applications were received from every city and town in Whatcom County, and an intentional effort was made to ensure that the recipients were also representative of the county by geography and industry.

Approximately \$440,000 was allocated to businesses in unincorporated Whatcom County. A full list of the recipients and the amounts awarded will be made available on the Whatcom ReStart webpage.

"We are a resilient community. When we get knocked down, we don't complain, we get back up and try again," said Ferndale Mayor Greg Hansen. "With these resources, I believe our businesses can come back after this crisis better and stronger than before."

The grants are only eligible to cover specific expenses. The list of eligible expenses is limited by conditions under which CARES Act funds are distributed. Eligible expenses include, but are not limited to: rent, ordinary loan payments, employee wages and benefits, typical operating costs and COVID-19-related public health measures.

In addition to these business and economic response efforts, CARES Act funding has also been dedicated to support the public emergency response, food and housing security, childcare services and services and facilities to those living unsheltered.

Need Financial Assistance with your Utility Bill? Help is Here!

If you and your household have been impacted by COVID-19 and need assistance with your utility bill, there are funds available to help. The Ferndale Community Service Cooperative, in partnership with the City of Ferndale and the Whatcom Community Foundation has, created an assistance fund. The income limits are generous and they are standing by and ready to help. Please reach out early to ensure you can get the resources you need. **For more information and details, go to www.ferndalecsc.org**



Thornton Street Overcrossing Project Continues

Construction is underway to complete the improvements needed to provide a direct connection to I-5 via Thornton Street. Strider Construction Co., Inc., the City's contractor for this project, has completed most of the underground utility work and is currently building the approaches that will carry traffic to and from the bridge planned over the BNSF railway tracks (see right). This process involves assembling



many layers of gravel, wrapped in special fabrics, to create the earthen walls and embankments needed to raise the new roadway. Before work on the bridge can begin, it is necessary to allow the embankment some time to settle and allow the ground beneath time to compress and stabilize while the City's engineers monitor the progress. The geotechnical engineers are anticipating this could require up to 18 months, and work will resume once it's clear the ground improvements necessary to establish a strong foundation are successful. For more details, pictures and videos about the Thornton Street Overpass Project, check out www.cityofferndale.org/thornton, or search #ThorntonOverpass on social media.

Ferndale Police Working in Your Community



Being a Ferndale Police Officer means so much more than just taking a call; it means working in the community to make our lives better. In September, Officer Steve Gamage encountered a family that had lost their jobs to COVID and were trying to keep a roof over their head.

Thanks to help from the Opportunity Council, they were able to stay at Super 8 but after funding ran out they ended up living in their car with their young son. The car broke down and things were looking grim.

That's where Officer Gamage stepped in. He worked with the family for a week to facilitate a free tow (paid for by Heston Hauling and Rockwood Realty) to get the car, and the family, up to Blaine where they could stay with relatives. When things are difficult, the Ferndale Police are there to help, to go above and beyond to get folks back on their feet.

FLOOD SEASON

Time to Clear those Storm Drains

Are you ready for the rain? Help prevent pollution and flooding by thinking ahead!

- Make sure catch basins are clear of leaves and debris.
- Make sure storm ponds and facilities are inspected and maintained.
- Pick up pet waste and debris that can pollute stormwater runoff. Dispose of waste properly and store materials inside or under cover.
- Be flood ready. Visit the City's website for **more information on flood preparedness at www.cityofferndale.org/flood**.



Flood Safety Tips

As the flood waters rise this fall, remember to keep your family safe. Here are some tips to safely navigate our wettest season.

Turn Around, Don't Drown: It only takes twelve inches of flowing water to carry a small car, and even a little bit of water over the road can carry dangerous debris. Please abide by road-closed signs. Roads are closed for public safety. If there is water on the roadway, do not drive through the area.

Get the Latest Updates: When the rain starts falling, you can check the river level via the NOAA River Gauge, linked at www.cityofferndale.org/flood. For the latest updates on road closures, follow the City's social media channels.

Make a Plan, Build a Kit: Talk to your family members before the rains fall so you know what to do before, during and after a flood. Plan an evacuation spot and make sure you know how to get in touch with each other. Build a kit that includes food, water and other supplies to last at least 72 hours. Make sure your vital documents (and first aid kit) are in a water-proof container.

Missing the Old Settlers Weekend? Discover the Old Settlers Variety Show!

With the outbreak of COVID-19, the Whatcom Old Settlers Association and the City were unable to hold our 125th Old Settlers Weekend. Undeterred, they collaborated to create a unique celebration of Ferndale's history and culture.

Presenting the Whatcom Old Settlers Variety Show! Dive in for storytelling, musical performances, an original radio drama and celebrations of our community.



Stream it anytime at www.cityofferndale.org/varietyshow

Connecting with Elected Officials in the Age of COVID-19

During this pandemic, it is more important than ever for the public to be able to share their thoughts with their elected officials. This input is an essential component of public decision-making and the City has provided several opportunities for public comment. Below are the four ways in which the public can submit comments to their elected officials. The City encourages all who reside in the City of Ferndale to participate in the City's decision-making process.



- **Email Your Elected Officials.** By far, the quickest and most direct way to provide input is to send an email to the City Council (council@cityofferndale.org) or the Mayor (GregHansen@cityofferndale.org)
- **Submit a Written Comment to be Included in the Council Record.** Email City Clerk Susan Duncan (susanduncan@cityofferndale.org) a statement to be included in the council minutes as public comment. Please state in your email that it should be included in the written record. It must be received by 4pm on the Monday of a Council meeting at the latest to be included in that meeting's minutes.
- **Submit a Comment to be Read Aloud at a City Council Meeting.** Email City Clerk Susan Duncan a statement to be read aloud as public comment. The statement must be shorter than 3 minutes when read aloud at a normal pace, this usually means about 400 words or less. Please state in your email to the City Clerk that you would like the comment read aloud. Public Comments submitted without a preference for inclusion will be included in the written record. It must be received by 4pm on the Monday of a Council meeting at the latest to be included in that meeting's minutes.
- **Provide a Comment In Person During a Council Meeting with a Public Hearing.** When City Council has a public hearing on the agenda, the City Annex (5694 2nd Ave) will be open to provide an in-person public comment. Those who wish to offer the comment in person will be required to wear a mask and observe social distancing requirements while in the City Annex.

Mask Up Ferndale!



Look, we know that masks are uncomfortable and we all miss seeing our friends in person or having school in person, but COVID cases are spiking in Whatcom County, specifically in the Ferndale area. We need to do all we can to keep everyone safe.

Please continue to wash your hands, maintain social distancing with people outside your household, utilize a mask when you cannot socially distant (such as in a grocery store or walking around downtown) and keep your gatherings small (visit no more than 5 people from outside your household per week).

Safe and Fun Activities

- **Enjoy a picnic** in Pioneer Park, make sure to grab some takeout from one of our fantastic Ferndale restaurants!
- Challenge your friends to a **game of disc golf** at our VanderYacht Disc Golf course. Winner grabs the ice cream at Edaleens.
- You know what actually works well over Zoom? **Charades!** It gets your body moving and allows for some great laughs.
- **Stargazing!** Bundle up and watch the Leonids meteor shower Nov. 16th-17th or just see what constellations you can find.
- **Voting** is not exactly an every day activity but thanks to mail-in ballots, it is 100% safe. Make sure to get your ballot turned in by Nov. 3rd!

The biggest increase in cases has come from private social gatherings so check out the list on the right for fun ways to connect with your friends and neighbors while keeping all of us safe. Thank you for your help protecting each other!