

Happy Holidays from City Hall. By the time you get this, Christmas will have come and gone and we should be approaching New Years. Several experiences over the past year have led us to look for a more rapid and complete system to provide important information to the public. With this in mind, I encourage everyone to sign up for Pierce County's "PC Alert". Pierce County ALERT is a free service that allows you to sign up and receive notifications about emergencies and other information that may affect you. This service allows fire, police and other agencies dealing with emergency response to send out accurate, up-to-date information they feel residents need. The City is now utilizing this service. You can sign up at the link below! We will conduct a test of the system at 9 am on Monday, 7 January. If you sign up for the system and do not receive a notification by 10 am, please contact Erin Gowenlock at 253-312-3273 or egowenlock@dupontwa.gov. It took me less than 5 minutes to complete the online registration.

www.piercecountywa.gov/ALERT

Regarding the large traffic jam we had on Wednesday 12 December beginning around 4 PM and going until 10 PM, it was caused by a semi-trailer accident around exit 109 in Lacey around 2:30 PM. All southbound traffic on I5 was blocked causing motorists to try bypassing through DuPont. Eventually Center Drive was blocked and the traffic was backed up on Wilmington, Palisade, McNeil and some other surface streets. We are exploring using the same procedures we used last year when the train derailed (hard to believe that has been a year) to limit access to DuPont to local traffic only and keep the I5 traffic heading towards Exit 119 on DuPont-Steilacoom Road. We can setup access control points at DuPont-Steilacoom and Center Drive and at Barksdale and Wilmington. We will also look at appropriate times to open Haskell in and out of the Historic Village and the back gate from Hoffman Hill to Mounts Road for local traffic only. We are working with JBLM to open the southern gate off exit 118 to allow for a southern bypass of I5. Although not perfect, these measures allow residents and emergency vehicles to continue to move in town even when I5 is blocked.

On December 11th we thanked and said goodbye to our City Administrator Ted Danek (staying in DuPont and becoming the owner operator of the Ace Hardware opening in March) and welcomed Andy Takata as the new City Administrator. Ted had an extremely positive impact on our City during the 5 years he served as our City Administrator. We are a better, more professional City because of the processes and ideas implemented under Ted's leadership. Andy comes with over 35 years of municipal experience and will help us continue to improve how our City operates. Our new Chief of Police, a Navy Veteran with 23 years of law enforcement experience, Doug Newman, also confirmed by the City Council, will begin work on 1 January.

After several years of negotiations on a range of subjects, the City and Amazon reached an agreement, which includes Amazon building and opening a new exit out the back of their facility onto Wharf Road. We expect this to become the primary entrance and exit for truck traffic by this spring, greatly reducing truck traffic on Center Drive. We will publish the progress of this project on City FB pages as it moves towards completion.

I will ask Council in January for funding to contract an engineering firm to take the results of last summer's survey and the subsequent stakeholders meetings to conduct a design and feasibility study for a community center. This process includes multiple public meetings to solicit your input on what a community center should include. Based on your input they will do initial work to come to council with a proposal establishing; what we want, what we need, what we can afford. Council will then consider if we should proceed to a public vote for a bond on a new facility. I expect the process to take most of 2019 and it will not come to a vote of the public before early 2020.

It has been a good year for the City; many commercial projects that have long been discussed are now beginning for real. Public involvement in the process to; update the sub-area plan for the Old Fort Lake area, the accompanying Development Regulations and our Critical Areas Ordinances was spirited and fruitful. I want to thank all of you who participated in this process and contributed to the excellent products that guide future development and protect our sensitive areas. Our Council passed and implemented two important changes to how we govern a biennial (2-year) budget and a Council Committee system. Both of these changes make the City's government more effective. I appreciate the work Council did to make these changes. I hope you have a great holiday season and a wonderful 2019. Thank you for making DuPont your home.



Mayor, Mike Courts