

# LA CENTER BULLETIN

BE IN THE KNOW WITH THE CITY CLOSE TO NATURE



## NEW CITY HALL PREPARES US IN MEETING OUR MISSION

Warren G. Bennis once said, “In life, change is inevitable. In business, change is vital.”

To better represent the public interest of our citizens by balancing the needs of our commercial and residential community while enhancing the quality of our park system and infrastructure, our professional planning, maintenance, and financing had to become more efficient. For us to accomplish this, and successfully manage our growth, we combined our Community Development, Public Works, and Finance department under one roof.

In November of 2018, the city was the high bidder in the auction of the TDS

Office Building owned by Lewis River Telephone Company that had been vacant since 2014. Our purchase price was \$959,750 with an assessed value of \$1.5 million. The city received a \$1.2 million grant to assist with renovations. This acquisition has no negative impact on other planned projects.

It is important to the city that we enhance customer service while staying efficient with the growth of our city staffing. By consolidating the city facilities and staff, we have lowered our operation, utilities, and maintenance costs, not to mention that the public can obtain all city services at one location. Our vacated buildings will become future homes for small busi-

nesses as leasing the space generates revenue for the city.

While retaining the small-town feel, we are working to expand the small, but growing, commercial and industrial areas. We believe in strong family values that are reflected in all aspects of our community.

As we continue to unpack boxes and abide by the Governor’s COVID proclamation, we will eventually have an open house for all to see.

“Growth is never by mere chance; it is the result of forces working together.”  
– James Cash Penney

## LA CENTER EXUDES THE CHRISTMAS SPIRIT

It rained the day before and the day after but on Sunday, December 5, it was the perfect, dry, and crisp evening for the annual Christmas Festival in downtown La Center.

Nothing went amiss in the details of planning activities for the community of La Center. From the local businesses lighting up their stores on 4th Street to live music and singing from our La Center schools, joy and happiness were felt by all. Hot cocoa and cookies were offered which were a delight to the children. One boy was overheard saying to his friends, “I went back three times and got three different flavors!”

There were plenty of activities to keep families entertained from an interactive Nativity Scene (a real camel named Curly!), a visit from Mr. and Mrs. Claus, to a festive laser light show. And, let us not forget as the community came together in counting down to lighting the beautiful tree in Sternwheeler Park, thanks to our Public Works Department.

This event for the city couldn’t happen without the hard work and dedication from the employees at the City of La Center and the numerous volunteers of our citizens.

“I would like to say thank you to all who participated in making it all come together for another great annual event for our community. The continuous enthusiasm and joy that it brings to so many is a great thing to see year after year,” stated Melinda Mazna, the director of planning this annual event.

To all citizens old and new, bundle up in your warm coats, gloves, and hats, and bring your families for our next Christmas festival this year on Sunday, December 4 at 4:30 p.m. An event you surely don’t want to miss!

**FUN FACT: The first bridge spanning across the East Fork Lewis River in La Center was built 139 years ago in 1883 and it was a draw bridge!**

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MARCH 2022

## A NEW JOB IS LIKE A BLANK BOOK - YOU BECOME THE AUTHOR

William James is quoted saying, “Act as if what you do makes a difference. It does.” The people we hire to work for the City of La Center are people who do just that – make a positive difference. We are excited to introduce three new people working for you – our Public!

You will recognize our public works maintenance worker, Emery Oldham, with his full beard working a wide variety of tasks for the City of La Center. Emery comes to La Center with nine years of combined experience in landscaping, maintenance, crane operator and forklift operator, most recently working for the City of Vancouver in the Fleet Services department. He loves teaching his kids, building things, off-roading, camping

and hunting. One thing very important in Emery’s life is his family!

Guests and employees see a new face as they are greeted in the front lobby of our new City Hall facility. That is our Customer Service Representative, Alexander Richter. Alex comes with several years of customer service experience, most recently with the Department of Labor and Industries where he worked with contractors and licensing. He will be processing building permits and plans for the City of La Center, just to name a few of his many tasks.

Bryan Kast is the new Public Works Director, replacing Matt Jenkins. Bryan comes to us from the City of Ridgefield

where he was the Public Works Director for nine years. He has a degree in Civil Engineering and a Master’s in Business Administration. From a Stormwater Engineer for the City of Battle Ground to a City Engineer for the City of Ridgefield, Bryan has put his education, training, and experience to successful use when obtaining grants, hiring staff, defining budgets, managing projects, collaborating with staff members, and working with citizens, council boards, and community groups. He enjoys golfing, scuba diving, auto racing and has been a Cub Scout Leader and foster parent.

We look forward to them making a positive difference in our City!

## COMMUNITY EVENTS

Mark your calendars for upcoming community events. More details to follow!

**April 16**

Community Center  
EASTER EGG HUNT &  
PANCAKE BREAKFAST  
Hosted by the Lion’s Club

**July 24**

Sternwheeler Amphitheatre  
18th ANNUAL MISS LA CENTER  
TEEN PAGEANT  
For more information, contact  
Linda Tracy at  
linda.aformalaffair@comcast.net

**July 29 & 30**

Sternwheeler Park and Holley Park  
OUR DAYS STERNWHEELER  
CELEBRATION  
For more information, contact  
Wendy Chord at  
Ramco@tds.net  
or call (503) 860-5973

## CITY OFFICE CLOSURES

**Monday, May 30th - Closed**  
Memorial Day

**Monday, June 20th - Closed**  
In Observance of Juneteenth

**Monday, July 4th - Closed**  
Independence Day

Visit the Civic Web  
[lacenter.civicweb.net/portal](http://lacenter.civicweb.net/portal)

**City Council Meetings**

March 9th & 23rd  
April 13th & 27th  
May 11th & 25th