

CITY MANAGER WEEKLY UPDATE REPORT ~ KENT MYERS

July 9, 2010

This week has gone very well with a number of positive events to include in this weekly update. First of all the week ended on a very positive note with a tour of the new Maier Hall at Peninsula College. This new facility will certainly be a showpiece when completed early next year. In addition to the incredible beauty of the building, it will be a very functional center for various art programs at the College. The building will also likely qualify for a LEED Gold Award which is the highest level of environmental certification for new buildings. I think that you will be very impressed.

We also had some very positive interviews with consultants for the design of the waterfront improvements as well as the completion of our transportation plan and signage / wayfinding plan. One of our primary goals is to create a waterfront plan that can be implemented in the very near future. Following the interviews, the Committee ranked the consultant teams. City staff will now begin negotiations with the team with the highest ranking with the objective to have a contract to recommend to the Council sometime in August.

Another positive event that took place this week was the opening of the new Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe Heritage Center. This is a very beautiful addition to our community and the Tribe did a great job in transforming this building. We also congratulate Nathan West for being recognized at this grand opening for helping to facilitate the remodeling project.

Finally, I have completed the informal survey of residents who have recently relocated to Port Angeles. I have attached a summary report on the survey responses. This was an interesting project that revealed how pleased and excited these residents are to be living in our community.

- Kent Myers

CITY OF



PORT ANGELES

WASHINGTON, U. S. A.

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To: City Council
From: Kent Myers, City Manager
Date: July 9, 2010
RE: Survey of New Residents

During the past several months I have met several people who have recently moved to Port Angeles from other cities within the State of Washington as well as across the country. I have found that these individuals are very positive about their relocation decision and are very content with living in our community.

The thought occurred to me several weeks ago that it might be interesting and useful to know exactly why so many people are moving to Port Angeles. This information might help the City shape future programs and activities that are intended to increase the growth and development of the city.

Recently I decided to contact a number of residents who have moved to Port Angeles in the past year. I obtained several names from the Chamber of Commerce and the Young Professionals Association. However, the majority of the contacts were provided by our Customer Service personnel. I asked them to provide me with the names, phone numbers and previous locations for utility customers who had moved here in the past 30 days. They provided some 41 names with about half locating from inside the state and half from outside the state. These residents moved here from Utah, Arizona, California, Oregon, Texas and several other states.

I had originally planned to talk with about 20 new residents but ended up speaking with 43 new residents. I asked them only two questions for this informal survey. First of all, I asked what particular assets or qualities of our community resulted in their decision to relocate to Port Angeles. Second, I asked if there were any negative aspects of our community that they considered when making the decision to relocate here.

The responses are listed below and I have to admit that I was surprised with some of the results.

1. What particular assets or qualities helped you decide to move to Port Angeles?

	<u>Number of Responses</u>
Natural Beauty	18
Friendly People	15
Closer to Family	12
Non-Urban Area	11
Employment Opportunity	11
Climate	9
Price of Real Estate	3
No Income Tax	3
Access to Ferry	3
Access to Mountains	3
Access to Water	3
Hunting and Fishing	3
Fiancé (Engagement)	3

Other Responses:

Biking opportunities, walkability/hiking, downtown area, pace of lifestyle, beautification (lack of graffiti), location, community orchestra, good place to raise a family, low crime rate, bus services, small retail and antique shops, farmer's market, activities/special events, recent efforts to beautify community, support for sustainability, quality of life, lack of traffic, affordable, and Peninsula College.

2. What particular issues made you hesitant to move to Port Angeles?

	<u>Responses</u>
Limited Employment Opportunities	5
Limited Shopping	4
Distance from Metropolitan Area	4
Lack of Social Network for Young Professionals	3
Cost of Utilities	2
Climate	2

Other Responses:

No natural gas, uncontrolled intersections, limited housing, small town politics, school system (low graduation rate), limited spousal employment opportunities, lack of affordable childcare, open burning, cost of living, lack of community pride, unattractive entrances, difficult to make living wage, impossible to find primary doctor, limited hospital services, dying downtown, and lack of privacy in a small town.

From my standpoint, one of the surprises in this survey includes the fact that many of the respondents had a difficult time responding to the second question. They were very pleased and excited to move to our community. About half of the respondents could not provide any reason why they may have been hesitant to move here and instead only could comment that everything was positive about their decision to relocate here.

I was also surprised with the high response rate regarding the friendliness of our community as this appears to be something that we often overlook. The fact that a large number of respondents want to live in a non-urban area is also a factor that we tend to forget about. A lot of people are tired of big-city living and want a slower pace that a city like Port Angeles has to offer. The response to our great climate and natural beauty was expected but this is something that perhaps we do not appreciate as much as these newer residents. Finally, I was surprised in the low response rate to several factors including lack of traffic, low crime rate and biking opportunities. These were some of the factors that attracted me and my wife to this area and I thought they would be rated higher in this informal survey.

In terms of factors that made new residents hesitant to relocate to this area, most of the responses were expected but I thought that limited opportunities for spousal employment would be given a higher rating. The other factors listed identify some areas that we need to continue to work on if we want to continue to grow and progress in the future.

In summary, I was pleased with the results especially the amount of excitement and positive comments that I received from new residents. All of the respondents seemed to indicate that they moved here because they really wanted to - not because they had to. They continue to have very good feelings about our community with a large number indicating that they plan to stay for many years.

