A New Way to Communicate with YOUR Government

-Development Director Nick Bond

One of the great frustrations of being a city planner is getting the public to participate in their democracy. In many communities, it is a small group of people who attend the majority of meetings and influence the process. Many people, especially people who work long hours and/or have children, simply don’t have time to keep tabs on what is going on in city government, much less provide input on the front end of planning or rule making. While meeting videos are available online and the local press will tell people what is happening or what actions a local government has taken, it isn’t easy for most people to get involved.

As the City of Port Orchard began the process of updating its comprehensive plan, one of the things that we heard from the public is that people want to be more connected to their government and the decision making process. One of the recommendations that the City received was to use technology to help busy people share their ideas and thoughts. Recently, the City Council decided to take action to do just that.

The City has just launched a new internet-based platform for the purpose of soliciting public feedback in an open forum online. This platform, called MySidewalk (previously Mind-Mixer), is a crowd-sourcing platform that local governments can use to generate ideas and input from the public. Your leaders can use this platform to solicit feedback and see which ideas rise to the top as well as who is supporting those ideas. The platform makes it easy to share your thoughts without having to write emails, attend meetings, or testify in person. The system can be accessed on a computer or mobile device.

The system has just been launched by the City and 3 issues for discussion have been introduced. Other questions and topics for discussion are being developed and will be launched in the near future. One of the nice things about the system is that City officials and residents can share topics posted for discussion through social media such as Facebook or Twitter. This means that citizens will be able to learn about current topics without necessarily having to seek them out in the public notices section of the newspaper or on the City’s website. Furthermore, once someone has participated using the platform, the City will be able to notify them when related questions are posed or when actions on particular topics are taken.

The City’s MySidewalk page can be accessed at https://mysidewalk.com/sidewalks/1278/port-orchard-wa. Once you have visited the site, please feel free to share topics or items for discussion through social media so that your friends and family can join the conversation.

Public Works Department
-Andrea Archer-Parsons, P.E., Assistant City Engineer/Stormwater Manager

Brief Overview – City’s Stormwater Strategy: Identifying needed stormwater improvements, coupled with the compliance with the City’s Municipal National Pollutant

Upcoming Events
-Clerk’s Office
- Council Meeting, May 12 & 26, City Hall, 7:00 p.m.
- Work Study Session, May 19, City Hall, 7:00 p.m.
- Port Orchard Farmers Market, Saturdays, 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.
- Annapolis Sunday Market, 1st & 3rd Sunday, 12 p.m.-5 p.m., 2065 Bay Street
- Seagull Calling Festival, Pirate’s Rendezvous Craft & Vendor Show, Port Orchard Seagull Splat 5K Run in conjunction w/ Harbor Festival, May 23-24, Downtown Port Orchard
- The Unforgotten, Run to Tahomea V, May 23, 9:15 a.m., Kitsap Co Administration Bldg
- Port Orchard First Saturday Art Walk, June 6, 2:00 p.m.-5:00 p.m.
Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit, has been a priority mission for the City of Port Orchard and their Public Works Department over the past five years. Here is a brief overview of stormwater efforts and happenings.

Puget Sound Starts Here Month:
May is Puget Sound Starts Here Month to raise stormwater awareness. Each year jurisdictions around the Sound participate in various events to help promote stormwater awareness in our communities. The City has once again provided coasters and coffee sleeves associated with this event to local restaurants and coffee stands, so stop by for yours. You can visit [http://www.pugetsoundstartshere.org/](http://www.pugetsoundstartshere.org/) for more information on tips and tricks on yard care and automotive care, and for news and events around the Sound.

Don’t Let Your Dog Pollute, Mutt Mitt Stations:
All dog poop, no matter the size of your dog, is really raw sewage loaded with parasites, viruses, and bacteria that can contaminate our waters and make people sick, especially children. Does your neighborhood have community open space, especially near stormwater ponds or other waterways where people often walk their dogs, sometimes leaving unwanted droppings behind?

The City offers neighborhoods free stations, including the sign, dispenser for the mutt mitts, an initial supply of bags, and possibly a trash can to homeowners associations, property management companies and other responsible organizations. The receiving organization must agree to install the station and keep the dispenser stocked with bags from that point forward. Contact Public Works for an application or more information at (360) 876-4991.

Help keep our streams, groundwater, and children healthy: Scoop it, bag it and place it in the trash every time!

Spills and Illicit Discharges: What are they and how do I help fix them?
One of the leading causes of pollution of water is (urban and agricultural) stormwater runoff. During a rain storm anything toxic or dangerous that has been spilled or “illicitly discharged” into the storm drainage system enters our waterways, often without being properly treated. To comply with Federal and State laws, the City of Port Orchard must make illicit discharges illegal, plus report, track, and cleanup illicit discharges. Under Port Orchard Municipal Code 15.30 Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination, it is illegal to discharge pollutants into a storm drainage facility and may carry penalties. Types of illicit discharges include paint, wash water from either carpet cleaning or car washing, oils, antifreeze, transmission fluid, brake fluid, lawn clippings, construction debris, and fertilizers to name a few.

If you’re out and find a spill or illicit discharge has occurred, please report it to Kitsap One at (360) 337-5777. The City uses Kitsap One as part of a one phone number call center in Kitsap County to report spills. If you are in other communities or the County area and notice a spill or discharge you can also use this number to report it. Be prepared to provide the following about the incident: location, a rough size, date and time you found it, where it is coming from if you know, and did the spill or discharge enter into a catch basin or stormwater facility.

What’s Happening in the Storm Drainage Utility:
This year the City accepted delivery of a new street sweeper. This will allow Public Works Staff to sweep more areas of the City throughout the year. The City continues to stay in compliance with their Municipal National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit. This involves maintenance of catch basins, City-owned stormwater facilities, sweeping our roads, education and outreach opportunities in the community, and various other items.

Also, during the next year and a half, the Public Works Department is working jointly with the Planning Department to review and update City municipal codes to be compliant with Low Impact Development, which is also a condition of our Municipal NPDES Permit. By the end of next year the City will be transitioning from Low Impact Development (LID) being optional to being mandatory on all new construction and redevelopment.

2015 Spring/Fall Clean-Up Week Schedule:
The 2015 Spring/Fall Clean-up Weeks are as follows:

**Spring Cleanup Dates:** June 22 thru June 26, 2015

**Fall Cleanup Dates:** October 5 thru October 9, 2015

Customer's Views Welcome
Please call us at our Public Works Admin Office at (360) 876-4991, or email publicworks@cityofportorchard.us with any questions. For billing information call (360) 876-5139.