



College Place in Review

VOLUME 22, ISSUE 6

JUNE 2015

MAYOR'S MESSAGE

Quick Fact:

City Water Usage

April 2015

21,875,000

April 2014

15,731,000

YTD 2015

58,012,000

Total 2014

429,267,000

Your City Representatives Mayor

Julie L. Scott

Council Members

Melissa Williams
Adam Keatts
Marge Nyhagen
Loren Peterson
William Jenkins
Larry Dickerson

City Administrator

Patrick H. Reay

Planning in College Place

Jon Rickard has been with College Place's Community Development Office for eleven years this month. In this role he has many regular operational duties like reviewing and processing building permits, enforcing zoning requirements, drafting code changes and revisions, and answering queries and requests from the citizens of CP related to all of the above. He especially enjoys facilitating cohesive long-term planning to build strategies that realistically address the infrastructure we have, while exploring creative options for meaningful upgrades.

Jon comes to this role with not only his formal education in urban and regional planning (from Eastern Washington University), but has also work experience in construction and business ownership, which helps him understand the needs of our city. He moved to the role of City Planner in 2013 after time as associate planner under the leadership of Kathy Bowman. One of his most significant recent projects (in partnership with the City Council) is the rezoning of the downtown corridor to achieve a mixed-use model. This plan will help us to build on the infrastructure improvements of the CARS project with

consistent guidelines for builders, owners, and investors--assets that we hope will attract new development to our newly-improved corridors.

The current Comprehensive Plan for the city, first issued in 2008 and updated in 2014, can be accessed at: <http://wa-collegeplace.civicplus.com/DocumentCenter/View/703>. A further updated version of this document will be created by 2018 and involve the collected wisdom of the planning commission, interested citizens, city staff, and the city council – all coordinated by Jon Rickard. The work of all these groups is very appreciated, but Jon's continued vision, and coordination of the planning groups is essential to the success of this very important project. Jon continues to enjoy his role in crafting long-range solutions that improve our citizens' quality of life, create a development-friendly environment, and strengthen CP's sense of community.

A warm thanks to all of our patient community members putting up with the inconvenience of progress on College Ave, and thank you, Jon, for your part in making our community better.

WE NEED YOUR HELP

The City's wastewater treatment plant has been experiencing an increase in material coming into the treatment plant and lift stations that is causing increased maintenance and repairs to expensive equipment. The material causing the problems are wipes, diapers, and

cloth rags. These materials clog pumps and can result in expensive damage repairs. The proper way to dispose of such items is to place them in your trash. Please do NOT flush or put anything into the toilet that is similar to the wipes that are used for cleaning floors and cupboards, diapers and wipes, or cloth rags. Your cooperation in this matter will be much appreciated.

WHAT ARE THE TAXES ON MY TELEPHONE BILL?

You may have noticed a list of taxes at the end of your monthly phone bill. At City Hall we often receive questions about why these taxes are there, what they are for, and how they were determined. Because we live in a state that does not assess income tax, revenues must be collected in other ways. Here is a quick explanation of the taxes on your telephone (and other utility) bills:

Retail Sales and Use Tax

Telephone service is subject to retail sales and use tax, as per state statute. As you are probably aware, the total sales tax rate within the city of College Place is 8.7%. Of that 8.7%, the first 6.5% goes directly to the state. The next 1.6% is allocated between College Place and Walla Walla County. The remaining 0.6% is the "Special District" tax and it is distributed to Valley Transit. For every dollar of sales tax collected in College Place, the city actually receives less than 10 cents. Local taxes were determined either by voter ballot or during public meetings at either the county or the city. Please note, *retail sales and use taxes are also present on your cellular telephone bill.*

Utility Tax

In addition to retail sales and use tax, telephone service is also subject to a utility tax (on your billing statement this is the "City Occupation" tax). Utility tax is 6% in the city of College Place. The tax was implemented by ordinance during a public meeting in 1981. This is a tax imposed on the service provider for using public space in our city, or in other words, "occupying" our city (for their infrastructure such as poles and telephone lines, etc.). The utility company passes that tax directly through to you on your bill. Please note, *this tax is also present on your electricity, natural gas, cable television, garbage, and cellular phone bills.*

Enhanced 911 Tax

Last but not least, in every county in the state, the 911 tax is 70 cents to the county and 25 cents to the state. These amounts are assessed each billing period. The rates in Walla Walla County were set by ordinance during a public meeting in 2010. This tax funds our 911 emergency communication system. Please note, *this tax is also present on your cellular telephone bill.*

NOW OFFERING ONLINE BILL PAYMENT AND PAPERLESS BILLING

As a way to offer you more choices in how you pay your bills, College Place now lets you pay your bills online. We have partnered with Xpress Bill Pay, the premier provider for online bill payment systems. All you need is an Internet connection through a Web browser and an e-mail address. Once you sign up for your free account and start using this service, you'll wonder how you ever got along without it!

It's simple to use. Every month we'll send you a reminder e-mail to let you know when your bill is online. Then you just log in to your account at XpressBillPay.com and view your bill. It's formatted like your paper statement so it will look familiar to you. When you're ready to pay your bill, select a payment type. You can pay with credit card, debit card, or electronic funds transfer. Then enter the information and you're done! It's that easy, and it only takes you a few minutes each month. To sign up, just go to Xpressbillpay.com and follow the instructions there. And remember, it's free to sign up and free to use. Sign up today!