

## ***2021 ANNUAL REPORT***



## Covid-19 Response Continued

The City of Sequim continued to respond to the needs of the community caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. New rounds of the Small Business Rapid Relief Grants and Tourism Sustainability Grants were approved by the City Council to assist local businesses and tourism-related nonprofit organizations weather the impacts of the pandemic.

The City continued to support other organizations in responding to the pandemic. Drive-through vaccination clinics were administered by the Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe beginning in January and running through April. Food Care packages were distributed by the Sequim Food Bank through June. Both programs were supported by City staff and held at Carrie Blake Park.



## AWC Municipal Excellence Award



The City received a Municipal Excellence Award from the Association of Washington Cities for its Small Business Rapid Relief Grant program in support of the local business community impacts of COVID-19. The awards were given to five cities out of 22 applications for putting creative ideas to use for their communities.

Sequim's retail and hospitality industries are critical to the local economy. When COVID-19 struck and small businesses began closing their doors, the City responded quickly by partnering with the Sequim-Dungeness Valley Chamber of Commerce to create the Sequim Small Business Rapid Relief Grant Program, funded mainly through a rainy-day account created by the City Council a few years earlier. The program enabled the City to award over \$500,000 in grants to 58 local businesses including salons, restaurants, boutiques, fitness centers, and dog groomers. Sequim business owners describe the grants as a lifeline that enabled them to stay afloat, providing crucial support to weather the pandemic and its many challenges.

## Community Conversations on Race, Equity, and Inclusion

The City of Sequim partnered with the community to develop conversations on race, equity, and inclusion after local and national events brought a heightened need for the community to address these topics. A volunteer committee of City staff and community members worked together for several months to develop a plan to engage the community. The committee was dedicated to creating a safe environment for participants to share their ideas and points of view. The meetings were hosted by the City via Zoom and facilitated by community members. The meetings were well attended with meaningful dialogue.



## Wastewater Treatment Plant Outstanding Performance Award

The City of Sequim Water Reclamation Facility received a Wastewater Treatment Plant Outstanding Performance award for 2020 by the Washington State Department of Ecology (DOE). The Sequim Reclamation Facility received the award for achieving full compliance with its National Pollutant Elimination System (NPDES) Permit. Only 126 systems out of approximately 300 received the award in 2020.

## Independence Day Fireworks

The City of Sequim hosted a professional fireworks show on Sunday, July 4 in celebration of Independence Day. This was the first time the City had hosted fireworks in recent memory. It was estimated that approximately 4,000 residents and visitors came to Carrie Blake Park to enjoy the show.



Photo courtesy of Gretha Davis

## First Sequim 101 Class Graduates



The Sequim City Council congratulated the first graduating class of the Sequim 101 Citizen's Academy in March. Fourteen Sequim area residents completed the 10-week program designed to educate on government structure and City operations lead by elected officials and City staff.

Program graduates are Janine Bocciardi, John Bridge, Dave Eberle, Ben Fisher, Katina Hester, Karen Hogan, Cathy Kurtz, Tim Kurtz, Catherine McKinney, Kevin Roth, Jon Sneed, Autumn Wolfgang, Charla Wright, and Nicole Wright.

## ICMA Local Government Excellence Award

The City of Sequim received the 2021 International City/County Management Association (ICMA) Local Government Excellence Award for Community Partnership in communities under 10,000 population in recognition of the development of the Sequim Health & Housing Cooperative (SHHC). The SHHC is a collaborative of six local nonprofit agencies formed to better assist the City in responding to substance use disorder, homelessness, mental illness, and food insecurity in the community.

## 911 Remembrance Ceremony



The City of Sequim and first responders held a 911 Remembrance Ceremony at the Civic Center Plaza on September 10 to recognize the 20th anniversary of the terrorist attacks on the Twin Towers of the World Trade Center in New York, the Pentagon in Arlington, Virginia, and an intended attack by a fourth plane that crashed into an empty field in western Pennsylvania.

Marc Abshire served as the keynote speaker. He is a retired United States Air Force Lieutenant Colonel, was the speechwriter for the Secretary of the Air Force and was in the Pentagon when the building was attacked on September 11, 2001. He is an Olympic Peninsula native and currently serves as the Executive Director of the Port Angeles Chamber of Commerce.

The ceremony was attended by local law enforcement, fire district personnel, and members of the community.

## Sequim City Council Appoints Matthew Huish as City Manager



Matthew Huish began his employment with the City on November 1 as City Manager. He comes to Sequim from Sandy, Utah where he served as Chief Administrative Officer. Prior to working in local government, Huish has enjoyed an extensive professional career in both the public and private sectors, including launching several start-up ventures, working as a corporate officer in a Fortune 500 public company, and more recently at the University of Utah Academic Medical Center. He grew up in Tacoma where he attended high school and college.

## Charisse Deschenes Recognized by the Washington City/County Management Association

City of Sequim Assistant City Manager Charisse Deschenes was recognized with the Outstanding Assistant Award for populations under 10,000 by the Washington City/County Management Association (WCMA) at their annual conference in August.

Deschenes became City of Sequim Assistant City Manager in 2018 following her roles as Assistant to the City Manager and Senior Planner. She was acknowledged for her participation in the City's facilitation team, Sequim Service Fest, legislative advocacy, regional childcare, management of housing funding, COVID-19 Emergency Coordination Center support, LEAN program support, launching the City's Performance Management Program, and supporting fellows and interns. She served as Interim City Manager February through October in 2021.



## Leadership Sequim



City employees Mike Hill, Carolee Edwards Devin McBride, Connie Anderson, Joel Dressel, and Tiffany Banning were recognized by the Sequim City Council for their successful completion of the inaugural Leadership Sequim program. The year-long internal professional development program gave the employees the opportunity to gain direct knowledge of high-level City Government management and operations, and the community we serve, through interactive learning, exposure, and service. The program supports the City's organizational value of continuous improvement and invests in staff to build capacity for future leaders through succession planning.

## Sequim Understory in Progress



At the request of the City Council, the City Arts Advisory Commission and Parks department have begun a “Creative Placemaking” project, the Sequim Understory, to engage with the community on creating a plan for the development of Centennial Place, the open lot at the northeast corner of Sequim Avenue and Washington Street.

Photographer Marina Shipova was selected as the Artist Fellow recruited to engage with the community and tell stories through her art. An exhibit of her work was on display at the Sequim Civic Center and a book was created.



A survey was put out to the community to find out not only what types of things should be included in the new plan, but also how people want to feel when they are in the space. Survey results have been tabulated and the team is now reviewing those results and determining next steps.

## The Sequim Sunshine Festival Returned for its 2nd Year



When it came time to start planning the 2nd Annual Sequim Sunshine Festival, the committee decided to focus on a few key events that could be held safely during the pandemic, yet keep the spirit of the festival alive. The Sun Fun Color Run was a huge success again with nearly

450 runners and walkers. The event was a bit different as participants started in groups throughout the day instead of one big crowd to allow safe distancing. It was a welcome opportunity for the community to come out and have some much-needed



fun. Hundreds of people took part in the Sunny Sequim Scavenger Hunt sponsored by the Sequim-Dungeness Valley Chamber of Commerce. The non-competitive scavenger hunt encouraged explorers to visit locations throughout the valley and complete a simple task and track it on the Goose Chase app. Throughout the weekend, participants were encouraged to look for signs of Kindness throughout town and help spread that message.

## Arbor Day Celebration

The City planted a new Himalayan Cedar tree in Pioneer Memorial Park to celebrate Arbor Day. The celebration recognizes Sequim’s designation as a “Tree City USA” by the Arbor Day Foundation. The City plans its Arbor Day celebration in the fall season when it is the best time for planting trees.



## 2021 The Year of Kindness

The City Council declared 2021 the Year of Kindness in Sequim. Banners went up on City streets, the “Be the ‘I’ in Kind” sign graced downtown, kindness quotes and inspiring ideas were published monthly, local businesses posted kindness messages on reader boards, Sequim Rocks distributed painted rocks with kind messages, and City staff provided cards and notes to senior living facilities, supported local families at the holidays, and provided for the school Caring Closet with support from a Walmart grant.



*“Three things in human life are important. The first is to be kind. The second is to be kind. And the third is to be kind.”*

- Henry James



152 West Cedar Street  
Sequim, WA 98382  
(360) 683-4139  
sequimwa.gov