

NextTech Event

On February 20 our NextTech group hosted a very successful event in partnership with the Economic Development Association of Skagit County (EDASC) and Skagit Valley College. Over 80 people enjoyed lunch while listening to John Cook, CEO of GeekWire.com discuss Innovation and Tech Economy in the Pacific Northwest. GeekWire keeps a pulse on all things technological in the greater Seattle region. The City of Mount Vernon continues to work towards supporting tech companies in Skagit County and attracting relocations and entrepreneurs. John's discussion outlined that successful regions commonly have:

- Strong Education Systems – Technology education beginning in high school and supported by higher education.
- Tech Titans - Similar to the 'anchor' store concept in retail business. When you have a larger company in your area there tends to be entrepreneurs that spin out of them.
- Angel Investors – Successful people who are looking to invest in start up companies.
- Cross Pollination – Other industries that share skill sets such as software, aerospace, and biotech.
- Confidence and "Richard Sherman Swagger" – The Pacific Northwest has wildly talented people, but we tend to be quiet about it! It's time to have a little swagger!

The next step in our focus on technology is to host a large technology summit in October and invite folks from Western Washington to Mount Vernon. We are partnering with the Whatcom County Technology Alliance and are already lining up a half day event at McIntyre Hall.

Coaching to Success

A new structure of evaluations for all City employees will be implemented during the month of March. All Directors and Managers have attended training on how to coach our employees to be their best. It is critical for the City to support our employee growth and professional practices in order to fulfill our mission of professional and efficient services to create a lifetime positive difference for our Community.

Our workforce is our most valuable asset! With many employees eligible for retirement in the next few years, it is important for us to focus on succession planning, leadership development, and being able to capture years of institutional expertise in our 11 Departments.

Mayor's Coffee Hours

Friday, March 14
10:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.
Grace Christian Fellowship
2120 E. College Way

Friday, March 21
10:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.
Little Mountain Estates
2610 E. Section Street

Saturday, March 29
11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
Meet at Haggen Starbucks, 2601 E. Division Street, and
walk a nearby trail with the Mayor



Mayor Boudreau and John Cook, co-founder of GeekWire

Mount Vernon Planning Commission Public Hearing on Possible Jail Sites

Tuesday, March 18, 6:00 p.m.
Mount Vernon Police/Court Campus
1805 Continental Place

Before the new Skagit County jail could be built on either of the two proposed sites, they would need to be redesignated from commercial use to public use. Public comment will be taken at the Planning Commission meeting on this proposed change. After a recommendation by the Mount Vernon Planning Commission it will go before the City Council.

Parks Comprehensive Plan Focus Group Meetings

Join in one of the Comp Plan Focus Group Meetings to share your input and discuss with other community members ways to improve our City of Mount Vernon Parks.

Upcoming Focus Group Meetings:

- March 11th ~ Active Recreation
- March 18th ~ Seniors
- March 25th ~ Teens

All Focus Groups will meet 6:00-7:00 p.m. at the Vaux Retreat Center, 3011 E. Fir Street.

Call Mount Vernon Parks and Recreation at (360) 336-6215 for more information.

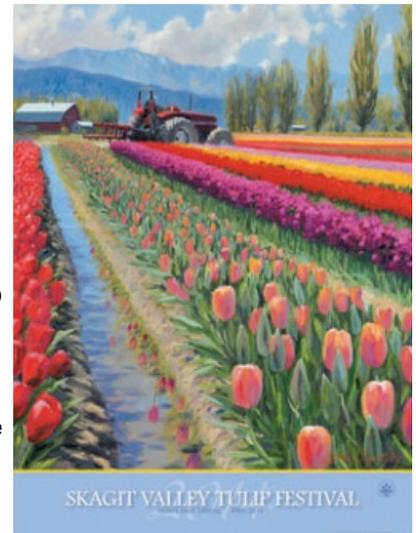
Mayor Jill Boudreau
910 Cleveland Avenue
P.O. Box 809
Mount Vernon, WA 98273

360.336.6211
www.mountvernonwa.gov



Skagit Valley Tulip Festival and Street Fair

The 2014 Skagit Valley Tulip Festival will run from April 1-30 and the Tulip Festival Street Fair will be April 25-27. A map depicting downtown Mount Vernon public parking areas and the Skagit Valley Tulip Festival Route from I-5 Exit 226 (Kincaid Street) can be found on the City's website at www.mountvernonwa.gov



The City has worked in partnership with Tulip Festival staff and our Downtown Business Association to maximize public parking during this busy time of year. Thank you to Skagit County, who is sharing their employee parking lots during the weekends!

Do you know the history of our beloved festival? Here is information from the Skagit Valley Tulip Festival website: tulipfestival.org

The Skagit Valley Tulip Festival was officially inaugurated in 1984 by the Mount Vernon Chamber of Commerce. In 1994 the Tulip Festival broke off from the Chamber of Commerce and became an entity of its own.

From humble beginnings, the Skagit Valley Tulip Festival grew. It moved from 3 days to 10, then 17 and now, for the past 5+ years, to 30 days. The expansion to 30 days was to ensure that the huge fields of tulips grown in Skagit Valley would actually bloom sometime during the festival.

Today the festival boasts an amazing assortment of events – including two signature events in Mount Vernon --the Downtown Mount Vernon Street Fair and the Kiwanis Salmon Barbecue.

Street Tree Maintenance on 1st and 2nd Streets

The City has completed an initial assessment of the street trees in our downtown area, and will be beginning some needed trimming in the coming month. In addition, several trees have been identified for removal due to damage to sidewalks and tree health. The City is working on a comprehensive review and a multi-year maintenance plan that will address the appropriate placement, required conditions, height, canopy, and aesthetics of street trees.

Waterfront Update

Strider Construction is currently continuing with the installation of the concrete walkway adjacent to the river.

The installation of the steel sheet piling for the south half of the floodwall is now complete and work will begin on the concrete floodwall foundation.

This project remains on schedule to be complete by September 2014.



Grading the riverwalk trail