

WHAT A SUMMER! ~ by Mayor Dave Earling

As the summer draws to a close, we should pause, reflect and value the splendid summer we have had and the community in which we live.

What more can be said about the weather than splendid? Yes, I have heard a few complaints about how hot it has been. However, when I think of the 9 months of cloudy, 47 degrees and drip, drip, drip which preceded summer, I will embrace the sun and warmth, thank you very much!

The summer also allows us to fully celebrate the quality of life we have in Edmonds. The flower baskets, the corner gardens, outdoor dining, the Saturday and Wednesday Markets, families in the parks, Sunday Concerts in the Park as well as the concerts at the new, gorgeous Hazel Miller Plaza , and the several celebrations we look forward to each summer. The list goes on and on.....

If you get to downtown in the evenings, you know that five years ago after six o'clock, you could park anywhere on 5th Avenue or Main Street. Now after 6 o'clock, the downtown is busy and vibrant, a marvelous transformation! With the fine restaurants, outside dining, movie theater, Center for the Arts, our coffee houses, yogurt and gelato shops, the town comes alive!

Our waterfront is also alive, with harbor traffic, waterfront dining, busy beaches and walkers everywhere. The Highway 99 area has an amazing collection of traditional and ethnic restaurants and Westgate bustles with grocery stores, restaurants and service businesses.

Yes, there are several infrastructure projects that cause inconvenience. Water and sewer lines, lift stations, storm water and street repair. And yes, 5th Avenue is about to receive a street overlay where the waterline was replaced last year thanks to a grant we received to do the project. As we know projects, while inconvenient, are best done in good weather.

Speaking of infrastructure improvements, we must face reality. Our streets are in, at best, sad disrepair. A few years ago in the truly tough economic times, the Council used dollars usually set aside for street overlays to balance the general fund budget. The money has never been replaced.

My focus in the upcoming budget is to replenish those dollars as best we can. And it will not be a one year fix. Whether I am able to find the dollars, or we need to face a levy, we have to fix the problem. If we do not, all of the energy, vitality and commerce described above will be for not, good weather or bad.

We love our fabulous city, its amenities, the seaside setting, the hustle and bustle, the people and our "Edmonds Kind of Day". We have celebrated an idyllic few months. While we can and should be pleased, we must think and plan for the next generation.