

City of Port Townsend

MARCH 2024 NEWSLETTER

CITY COUNCIL MEETINGS

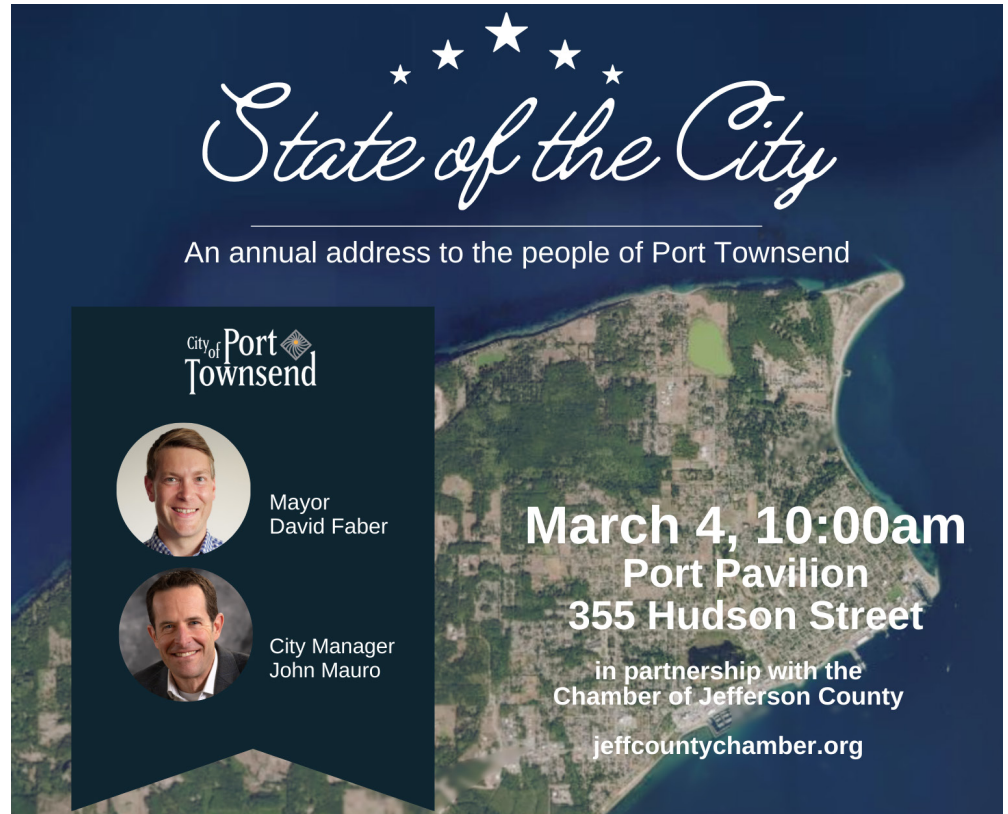
Mon, Mar 4: General Business Meeting
Community Read Proclamation
and Library Artwork

**Mon, Mar 11: City Council
Workshop Meeting**
Comprehensive Plan Update

Mon, Mar 18: General Business Meeting
Public Hearings: TBD and Emergency
Shelter and Housing Code


Meetings are held at 6 p.m. unless otherwise
noticed, and are subject to change.
Visit cityofpt.us/calendar for updates.


The 2024 State of the City address will take place
in a hybrid in-person/virtual format. To register
for online access, visit jeffcountychamber.org



State of the City

An annual address to the people of Port Townsend


Mayor David Faber


City Manager John Mauro

March 4, 10:00am
Port Pavilion
355 Hudson Street

in partnership with the
Chamber of Jefferson County
jeffcountychamber.org

ADVOCATING FOR OUR COMMUNITY'S NEEDS

A letter from Deputy Mayor Amy Howard



One of the
highlights of my
role as Deputy
Mayor is the
opportunity
to connect
with regional
government

leaders through the Association of
Washington Cities (AWC). I serve as
Port Townsend's representative to
AWC and as the AWC Board Member
for District 12, covering the Olympic

Peninsula. AWC's City Action Days is
held annually in Olympia during the
legislative session, and this year, I
participated in planning and hosting
the event. City Action Days provides
the opportunity to engage with
statewide decision-makers about
Port Townsend's legislative priorities.
We discuss common issues faced by
Washington's cities and residents,
collaborate on policy initiatives, and
advocate for our communities' needs.

The event covers topics such
as infrastructure development,
affordable housing, environmental

sustainability, and public safety,
through workshops, panel
discussions, and networking
opportunities. It was inspiring to
hear municipal leaders from across
the state share concerns, celebrate
success stories, and connect around
innovative solutions. The event
provides a significant platform for
local leaders to connect with state
lawmakers, building relationships
that are lasting and crucial for
effective policymaking and resource
allocation once we arrive back in our
home cities.

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READING AND STAYING HEALTHY TOGETHER

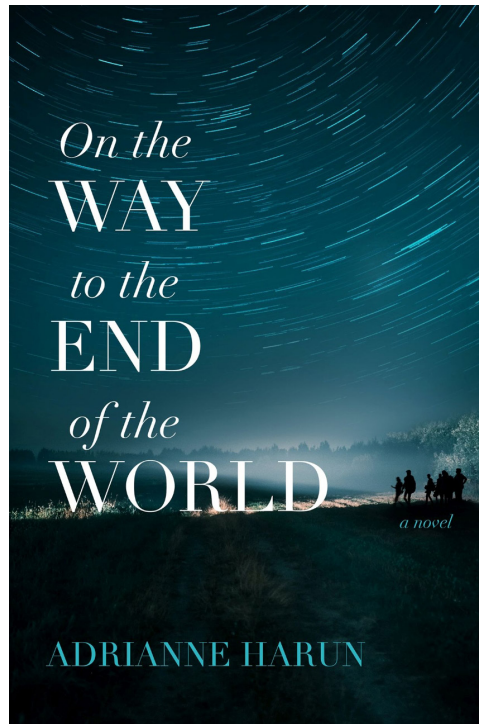
A message from City Manager John Mauro



I bet one thing most of us can agree on is that we want to live in, enjoy, and be part of a healthy community. It's

likely one reason many of us are here, as PT has tremendous natural advantages when it comes to health and wellness. Whether your thing is outdoor physical activity, indoor classes and learning of any kind, or gathering together to celebrate and build a stronger sense of place and community, it's all right here. Moreover, our individual goals and community goals have a chance to intertwine, and we're able to stretch ourselves and what's possible in community with whatever vim and vigor we're willing to apply. Doing so can be an investment in ourselves and an investment in our community.

One of the things I'm most invested in – and one of the best health and wellness role models in my life – is my daughter, and two of her absolute favorite activities are hiking and



On the Way to the End of the World by Port Townsend author Adrienne Harun is the 2024 Community Read. This year's events include a screening of *The Wizard of Oz* (March 2), a Larry Scott Trail Talk (March 6) and a Meet the Author presentation (March 30). For more events, ways to participate, a discussion guide, and more, visit ptpubliclibrary.org. A limited number of copies of the book are available at the Port Townsend Public Library on a first-come, first-served basis.

reading. Add the backdrop setting of our amazing community, and it all happens to come together perfectly this March as part of our 2024 Community Read: *On the Way to the End of the World*, by local author Adrienne Harun.

I enjoyed this read myself for its localized historic perspective on the



"JFK 50-Milers" embedded with the same identifiable places I enjoy with my family or while out for a long walk or run myself. I challenge you to have a read, take a walk, and get into community to invest in our collective health and wellbeing.

John Mauro, City Manager

Deputy Mayor's letter, continued

Planning and attending City Action Days provided a space to communicate the unique challenges our city is facing and to hear that we are not alone in our shared challenges. I left the event this year with a strengthened sense of unity, and a knowledge that we are collectively advancing the interests of Washington's cities, laying

the groundwork for continued collaboration between local and state officials. You can learn more about Port Townsend's legislative agenda, as well as those of other cities, and see photos from City Action Days on AWC's website: wacities.org/advocacy/advocacy-tools.

Deputy Mayor Amy Howard

NEW BUILDING CODES NOTICE

The effective date for new building codes is March 15, 2024. All complete building permit applications submitted and paid for prior to March 15 vest to the 2018 codes. All permits submitted after March 15 vest to the 2021 codes. For more information, visit the City's Building page on our website: cityofpt.us/planning-community-development.



Sebastian Barragan working on Washington Street. Sebastian joined the City in February. Say "hi" if you see the crew!

NEW CITY STAFF

Sebastian Barragan, Maintenance Worker in the Streets/Stormwater/ Sewer division, started February 5 of this year. "Born and raised on the Peninsula, I'm a local tribal member of the Hoh Indian Tribe and I am also Hispanic," says Sebastian. "I grew up in Forks and enjoy many outdoor activities like hiking, surfing and hunting. I like to spend quality time with my family and love to challenge myself with making traditional Mexican dishes! One month in, my experience working at the City has been great. I appreciate the tools provided for the job and all the training and support provided by the team."

ENGAGE IN THE CITY'S WORK IN MARCH

Main Street and Creative District Arts & Culture Plan Launch Party set for March 28

Port Townsend
creative district

PT CREATIVE DISTRICT
ARTS & CULTURE PLAN:
CELEBRATING CREATIVITY

28th March | 05:30PM

OLD WHISKEY MILL - 1038 WATER ST.

JOIN THE PT CREATIVE DISTRICT AS WE UNVEIL OUR NEWLY COMPLETED ARTS & CULTURE PLAN. COME HAVE A DRINK, MINGLE WITH OTHER ARTISTS AND MAKERS AND LEARN HOW YOU CAN GET INVOLVED. NO HOST BAR.

PTCREATIVEDISTRICT.ORG

Join Port Townsend Main Street, the Creative District Subcommittee, and City officials in unveiling the newly completed Arts & Culture Plan.

Come celebrate the abundance of creativity here in Port Townsend, mingle with local artists, and learn how you can get involved. The Arts & Culture Plan was funded, in part, by City of Port Townsend Lodging Tax.

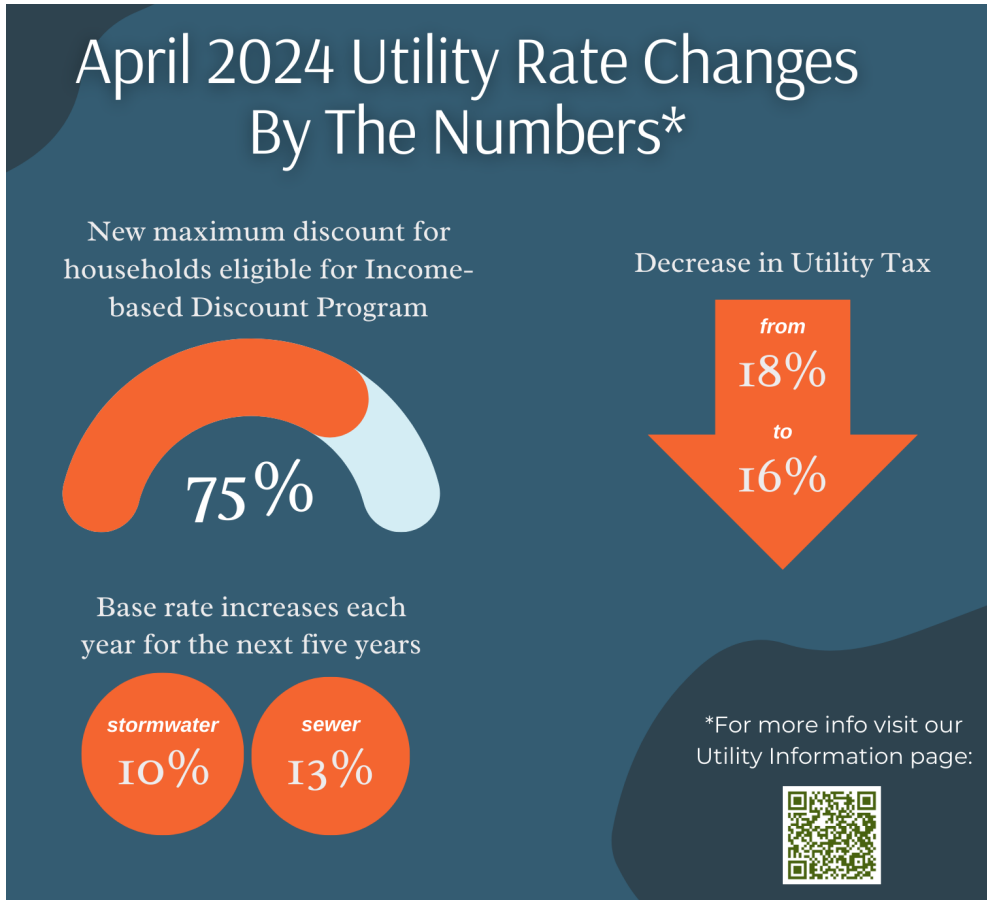
The event takes place 5:30 p.m. Thursday, March 28, at the Old Whiskey Mill, 1038 Water St. Read the full Arts & Culture Plan on the Creative District website, ptcreativedistrict.org.

COMP PLAN
WEBSITE LIVE

Our Comprehensive Plan website is live! Visit often to learn about how you can engage and share your vision for 2045. Better yet, sign up for updates sent directly to your email. Visit: PT2045Planning.org.

RATE ADJUSTMENTS GO INTO EFFECT ON APRIL 1

On February 20, 2024, Port Townsend City Council passed historic ordinances for utility rates and utility tax to address our aging sewer and stormwater infrastructure. In tandem with the new rate structure, Council voted to expand the City's Income-Based Discount Program in order to address affordability of the rate increases. The ordinances have been presented and discussed in several Council meetings since late 2023, including Infrastructure and Development Committee, Regular Meetings, and Council Workshops. All meetings and presentations on utilities can be found in the Agendas & Minutes archive on our website.



Overview:

The City's current stormwater and sewer rate ordinances require rate increases annually to keep up with inflation and fund capital improvements. A study was conducted to set rates for the next five years, and the new rates will be effective starting April 1, 2024. The new ordinances include four main components, with detail below:

- 1 Updating sewer and stormwater rates including merging the capital surcharge into the base rate
- 2 Updating the code for an expanded Income-Based Discount Program
- 3 Updating the System Development Charges (SDC) amount and structure
- 4 Updating the utility tax rate based on gross revenue calculations and proposed rate structure.

- 1 Sewer rates will increase by 13% each year and stormwater rates will increase by 10% each year for the next five years.
- 2 The City's Income-Based Utility Discount Program has expanded from one level of eligibility to include three tiers of eligibility with discounts ranging from 25% to 75% off the base rate. Information on eligible income levels and how to apply are available at cityofpt.us/finance/page/utility-information.
- 3 Stormwater and SDCs are now based on a graduated scale for the square footage of impervious area. The stormwater fees now include an urban forestry fee for tree planting and maintenance.
- 4 The utility tax rate is currently 18% and will be reduced to 16% starting April 1, 2024, to reflect changes in the rate structure and maintain general fund revenue as budgeted in 2024. City taxes fund general government services such as parks, streets, police, facilities, planning, and more. Other taxes included in your rates are State B&O Tax at 1.75% and State Sewer Collections Tax at 3.852%.



New rates are necessary to support the separate business units of Water, Sewer, and Stormwater at the City. Significant investments are needed to maintain and upgrade our aging systems. Learn more about the history, key issues, and financial considerations for the sewer system in a new video on our YouTube channel.