

CITYWIDE NEWS

TANJA CARTER MEANS BUSINESS!



As the City looks to transform Federal Way into a regional leader, Mayor Jim Ferrell explained that business and economic strategy begins with Tanja Carter, appointed Economic Development Director in December 2022.

"Tanja is incredibly talented," said Ferrell. "Her unique international economic development experience is what I believe sets her apart. Tanja worked in over 60 countries and lived on three continents, including Dubai, Munich, and North America, bringing a wealth of global business experience to Federal Way."

Carter, whose family immigrated from Germany, is a native German speaker also fluent in Spanish and English. Carter most recently worked as the Economic Development Strategist for the City of SeaTac and spent time with the City of Auburn in the Mayor's office as Economic Development Officer.

Carter, who has over 20 years of experience in the private sector, brings supply chain know-how, from running a retail ski shop in downtown Seattle owned by

Warren Miller to managing international exports for Tecnica Group in Italy. Carter also owned a consultancy for over a decade, launching global companies across Europe.

Carter is developing a strategy to uncover and showcase the unique opportunities that Federal Way offers.

"Perception is nine-tenths of the law," said Carter. "My philosophy is that business retention and expansion is the cornerstone of economic development."

Carter frequently gets asked to explain what economic development is.

"Simply, it means improving a community's financial well-being and quality of life," said Carter. "Economic development involves creating, retaining, and attracting jobs, promoting a resilient tax base, and building an inclusive economy. This short and fun [LEGO video](#) explains it all."

Carter recognizes our Greater Federal Way Chamber of Commerce is a critical driver in the economic vitality of this City and is working closely to support the Chamber and its mission.

With Carter's expertise and passion for economic development, local businesses can look forward to a prosperous future in Federal Way.

FEDERAL WAY'S IAM TONGI WINS 'AMERICAN IDOL' SEASON FINALE!



Congratulations to Federal Way's Iam Tongi for being crowned the newest 'American Idol' on May 21!

"Winning American Idol is a life-changing moment for the pride of Decatur High School," **Federal Way Mayor Jim Ferrell said**. "The City of Federal Way understands his hometown may be in Kahuku, Hawaii, but we want Iam and his family to know we're proud to claim Iam as one of our own. It is the beginning of what we know will be an illustrious career for Iam!"

"It still hasn't set in yet," said Tongi about winning the series finale. "I want to give a shout-out to Federal Way for supporting me. I love you guys!"

The City of Federal Way contacted his professional management company and will finalize a celebration **soon for our local hero and**

'American Idol' winner! We can't wait to share the details with you. Stay tuned!

BIG NEWS FOR PUBLIC WORKS!

On May 19, The City Center Access Project was chosen by the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) for financing the Move Ahead Washington (MAWA) - Capital Projects program of the 2023-25 Transportation Budget.

That state funding for the City Center Access Project is \$30,000,000.

Widening S 324th St. in Federal Way, adding more lanes and bike lanes, and enhancing multi-modal access to the Federal Way Transit Center and light rail station are all included in the project's scope.

As the City of Federal Way looks to take some procedural steps to obligate this with the State, this is enormous headline news for our Public Works department!

In honor of **National Public Works Week**, May 21-27, **Deputy Mayor Susan Honda and the Federal Way City Council presented a proclamation to the Federal Way Public Works Department on May 16.**

"It truly does mean a lot to all the employees out there day in and day out," **EJ Walsh, Public Works Director, said**. "Our staff works hard every day on behalf of the City seven days a week, doing everything from picking up trash on the road to building new sidewalks to the large capital projects that move ahead the policies the council sets."

The City of Federal Way recognizes Public Works professionals' contributions daily in our community. Thank you to all our hardworking Public Works staff who sweep our streets, approve building plans, analyze and improve traffic flow, manage surface water systems to keep our waterways healthy, manage construction, and so much more!



FWRPD OFFICERS ARE CATCHING KIDS (FOR DOING GOOD)

The **Federal Way Police Department** is looking to reward kids for **doing the right thing** this summer as part of the Positive Tickets Program, launched in 2016.

Examples of good behavior include:

1. Playing a game of soccer in the park.
2. Wearing a seatbelt during a traffic stop.
3. Helping someone in need.

Officers have positive tickets they hand out to youth who are "caught doing something good."

The **Positive Tickets** are an innovative tool in a community-based outreach effort to connect with youth to build trust and forge positive relationships between police and young people.

The **Federal Way Police Department** thanks **Chick-fil-A**, **Sub Zero Nitrogen Ice Cream**, and **Federal Way Community Center** for their partnership and **Wild Waves Theme & Water Park** for donating the tickets again this year.

FWCC LEISURE POOL RENOVATION UPDATE



Mayor Ferrell visited the Federal Way Community Center site, where work continues to get our **leisure pool up and running with a new slide and aquatic child's play unit!** The steel column installation begins this week. Stay tuned for the official opening of our new and improved leisure pool!

"We're making good progress toward our goal for our citizens to enjoy fully," **said Parks Director John Hutton.** "Thank you for being so patient. We know it's been challenging. It will be worth it when we unveil our unbelievably fun leisure pool."

The FWCC swim lesson program has reached its maximum enrollment, and for the current swim lesson session—six sessions in a row of the swim lesson program sold out during its first week of operation. Kudos to our reliable instructors for their dedication and hard work in providing this service to our community.

PARKS & RECREATION NEWS

Our Parks & Recreation staff members recently attended Spokane's Washington Recreation & Park Association (WRPA) conference. Recreation Manager Cody Geddes and Arts & Events Coordinator Cassie Swan - partnering with the City of Auburn - were presenters during a learning session of the meeting, sharing information with other municipalities throughout the state about our experience implementing the new Mobile Recreation Program last summer and what we learned from it.

45 attendees were on hand for the conference in Eastern Washington. It provided an excellent opportunity for Federal Way to showcase the new program, engage children in enriching activities, and have a Q&A discussion to help us strengthen our program and influence others to start or grow their current Mobile Recreation programs.

Look for **our Park & Play van at parks** throughout Federal Way this summer during the week!

The National Storytelling Network has informed the **Dumas Bay Centre** they want to proceed with a full-facility rental in July 2024. It will be the organization's inaugural booking and the Center's first "official" full-facility booking.

CELEBRATING 40 YEARS OF AMERICORPS



On May 19, **The City of Federal Way celebrated 40 years of AmeriCorps volunteer service**; Mayor Ferrell acknowledged this partnership that began with our Parks department in 2007.

“Working to improve your community makes a big difference,” said Ferrell. “We appreciate the time and your investment. Congratulations on 40 years.”

We were grateful to have our City Council President Linda Kochmar, Deputy Mayor Susan Honda, Councilmember Jack Walsh, Federal Way Public Schools Superintendent Dr. Dani Pfeiffer, and others gather for the special day at Celebration Park.

The **City of Federal Way thanks our Parks Deputy Director Jason Gerwen** and the fantastic volunteers for their hard work.

TOUCH-A-TRUCK EVENT



Now in its ninth year, the Parks and Recreation team organized another memorable **Touch-A-Truck** event with over 1,200 people in attendance on May 20.

It was the most successful Touch-A-Truck, with over 40 vehicles, food vendors, and community sponsors on hand.

Sound Transit was the title sponsor this year, playing a huge role by providing event coordination and staff support, fun, bright construction vest giveaways, a food tent, and more.

The community was all smiles at this fantastic and memorable event! Seeing so many kids and families in our community curious about how trucks serve our City was a great example of making learning fun and interactive.

COUNCIL'S CORNER

The City Council is a seven-member legislative branch of the City's government that is elected by and represents the people of Federal Way. There is a vacancy on the City Council with the unexpected departure of former Councilmember Erica Norton. Applications are being accepted to fill that appointment through June 15. Interviews with the Council will follow. We thank former Councilmember Norton for her service to Federal Way and wish her the best of luck with her future endeavors.

This Week's Council Happenings:

- Arts Commission Meeting at the Federal Way Community Center, **June 1 at 9 a.m.**
- PRIDE Flag Raising Ceremony at City Hall, **June 1 at 9 a.m.**
- Parks & Recreation Commission Meeting at City Hall, **June 1 at 5 p.m.**
- Arts Explosion Event at the Performing Arts & Event Center, **June 3-4, beginning at 10 a.m.**

During the City of Federal Way's Council Meeting on May 16, we had the privilege of presenting two additional proclamations to these groups:

- **Councilmember Jack Dovey presented the Affordable Housing Week Proclamation** to South King Housing & Homeless Partners members. In addition, affordable Housing Week strives to bring attention to the need for affordable housing in communities.
- **Councilmember Jack Walsh presented the Mental Health Awareness Month Proclamation** to a King County Recovery Coalition representative and community members. Mental Health Awareness Month strives to end the silence and stigma of mental health-related issues.

THE FINANCIAL UPDATES

Finance Director Steve Groom and Deputy Finance Director Chase Donnelly attended the national Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) conference in Portland, Oregon, May 21-24, attending sessions on compliance, reporting, budgeting, debt, treasury, and more. Steve participated in a GFOA alert released Thursday warning governments across the US that the Federal Debt Ceiling issue could delay Federal payments, which local government should be mindful of. The safety of public funds in banks was also a topic of discussion and communication. Steve and Chase expanded information-sharing contacts with similar cities and met with representatives of all three rating agencies.

Our Finance department team continues to monitor the economy in general, the investment environment, and City revenues as they are received. Two reasons monitoring monthly payments are essential: firstly, managing the City's budget requires ensuring that the funding we forecasted when we authorized the current year's budget arrives.

Secondly, revenues such as Sales Tax, Lodging Tax, and Real Estate Excise Tax (REET) are current indicators of the health of the economy's local retail, hospitality, and real estate sectors within the City of Federal Way. According to the most recent receipts, Sales Tax is up 16% over the prior year, Lodging Tax is up 3% over the preceding year, and REET is down 22% compared to the previous year. Property values rose 19% last year, and mortgage rates have impacted the pace of local sales.