



City Public Website Style Guide and Standards

Version 1.0

Updated Jan 29, 2008

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Introduction

Website Overview

The City of Bellingham public website www.cob.org is in place to provide access to city government news, information, and services. Emphasis is placed on timely, accurate, and understandable content. The site receives almost 40,000 unique visitors each month making it a key communications and service delivery tool.

About This Guide

By policy this guide must be adhered to by all City staff (see PRA 03.09.03) and is based on industry best practices, executive direction, and feedback from City departments. It provides a high-level overview of key style and standard considerations and is not meant to be comprehensive. For questions or issues which are not addressed in this guide, please contact the City's Information Technology Services Department.

Support Contacts

Technical Support

Service Desk
Information Technology
(360) 778-8088
servicedesk@cob.org

Department Web Content Coordination

Every department has a designated web representative that can either post web content or facilitate the posting of the content. See the [Department Web Representatives](#) section for a complete listing.

Home Page Content Coordination and Web Policy Questions

Janice Keller, Communications Manager
Office of the Mayor
(360) 778-8100
jkeller@cob.org

Information Architecture

Content Organization

There are seven main areas of the website:

Home—All feature stories, top issues, news, and meeting and event information.

Government—Content related to the process of governing, the City as an agency (including departmental information and projects), other government agencies, and public involvement.

Services—City provided services with select government services from other agencies such as schools, transportation, and recycling.

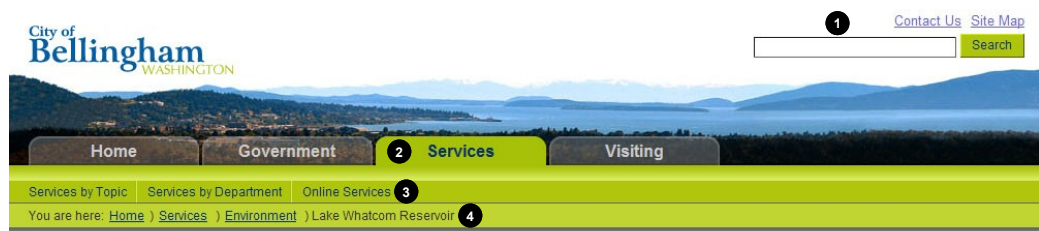
Visiting—Information for visitors to Bellingham.

Employment—All content related to employment with the City.

Contact Us—All content related to contacting the City. Phone numbers, email addresses, and mailing addresses are only authorized to be published in this location.

Policies and Disclaimers—All policy and disclaimer information for any content or web application available on the public website. For example refund or return policies for online registrations.

Site-Wide Navigation



- 1 Site utilities (future location for single sign-on option)
- 2 Primary navigation
- 3 Secondary navigation
- 4 Breadcrumb navigation—shows where visitors are in the site and allows them to access higher level sections of the site.

Menus

In-line menus may be used to create a jump page for related information and links (see [Menu Pages](#) in the Templates section for optional layouts).

You are here: [Home](#) > Government

Government

Mayor 1
Office of Mayor Dan Pike... 2

Council 3
Meeting Schedules, Agendas, Minutes, Videos...

Court
Court Schedule, Rules, Programs, Payment Options...

Departments
Goals, objectives, projects, performance and activity measures...

Public Involvement
Boards and Commissions, Community Planning, Opinion Surveying, Planning Notices, Volunteering...

Rules and Regulations
Municipal Code, City Charter, Development and Design Standards...

Quick Links

- [About Bellingham City Government](#)
- [City Budget](#)
- [Grants and Funding](#)
- [Public Records](#)
- [Other Government Agencies](#)
- [Whatcom County Voter Information](#)

[Council meetings online](#)
View proceedings or download audio of past Council meetings

- 1 Main menu item link should take visitors to the main index page of the section being represented.
- 2 Short lead-in text may be used to describe the section the menu item links to
- 3 As an alternative to short lead-in text, links representing distinct sections under the main menu item section can be used. If there are more links than there is room, use an ellipsis at the end to represent more options.

Quick Links

Links to related content may be placed in the Quick Links area of the page. For [Department pages](#) and [Service pages](#), the first link must be to contact information for finding out more about the content listed on the page. There is a limit of 10 Quick Links per page.

You are here: [Home](#) > [Services](#) > [Planning & Neighborhoods](#) > [Community Planning](#) > Neighborhood Planning

Neighborhood Planning

[Bellingham's 23 Neighborhood Plans and Zoning](#)

Bellingham is composed of 23 Neighborhoods, each with its own plan, zoning table, and map. The neighborhood plans are adopted as part of the [Comprehensive Plan](#), and the zoning table and maps are part of the [Land Use Code](#).

The Planning Department provided citizen training to empower the neighborhoods with a [Planning Academy for Neighborhoods](#). Other resources for neighborhoods are available on the [Neighborhood Resources](#) page.

[2008 Neighborhood Plan Amendments/Rezoning](#)

[2007 Neighborhood Plan Amendments/ Rezoning](#)

Quick Links

- [Planning Contacts](#)
- [Historic Preservation](#)
- [Neighborhood Profiles](#)
- [Mayor's Neighborhood Advisory Commission](#)
- [Planning Commission](#)

Files and Folders

Naming Conventions

All files, folders, and web pages posted to the website need to conform to the following naming convention:

- No spaces
- All lowercase
- No underscores (use dashes to separate words)

Example of a nonconforming file name: My_Web Document.pdf

Example of a conforming file name: my-web-document.pdf

Web pages that serve as the main page of a section should be named index.aspx whenever possible.

Locations

Documents—All documents, forms, publications, and presentations, are stored in the documents section of the site:

www.cob.org/documents/

Images—All images are stored in an images folder relative to the web page they appear on. For example:

the photos displayed on www.cob.org/services/index.aspx
would reside in www.cob.org/services/images/

Audio and Video—All audio and video files are stored on the streaming media server and are accessed using the following addresses:

www.cob.org/video/
www.cob.org/audio/

Site-Wide Resources—Images used on every page, style sheets, and scripts are stored in:

www.cob.org/lib/

Controlled Vocabulary

In order to improve site usability and search results, a controlled vocabulary has been established for key words, terms, and acronyms (see the [Controlled Vocabulary](#) section).

Search Engine

Indexing—The City’s website uses a search engine that indexes the entire site nightly. If a new web page or document is published to the site, it will be included in search results the next day.

Page Titles—One of the elements that is given the most weight for search results is the title on the page. Use clear, concise titles that use the most common words that people might use to search for that topic. For example, instead of “Golf Course” a title of “Lake Padden Golf Course” is more effective as visitors may search on the term “Lake Padden” or just “Golf”.

Keyword Matches—The search engine can be configured to return a specific web page as the top search result based on a designated keyword. For example, if someone search on “budget”, the search engine may be configured to return the City Budget home page. To request a keyword entry in the search engine, contact [technical support](#).

Synonyms—If there are common words that are used interchangeably, a synonym rule can be set up in the search engine so that the option to see search results using the related word can be chosen by the visitor to the site. For example, if someone searches on “greenways”, the option to see search results on “greenway” would be presented. To request a synonym rule be added to the search engine, contact [technical support](#).

Misspellings—The search engine automatically suggests correct spellings when a visitor searches using a misspelled word.

Colors and Typography

Color Palette

Primary Colors:



RGB Values: R=175 G=198 B=12
CMYK Values: C=37 M=6 Y=100 K=0
Web Values: #AFC60C



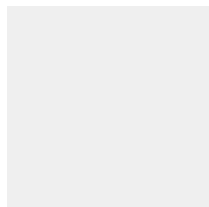
RGB Values: R=18 G=106 B=172
CMYK Values: C=90 M=58 Y=5 K=0
Web Values: #126AAC

Secondary Color:



RGB Values: R=255 G=64 B=0
CMYK Values: C=0 M=88 Y=100 K=0
Web Values: #FF4000

Neutral Color:

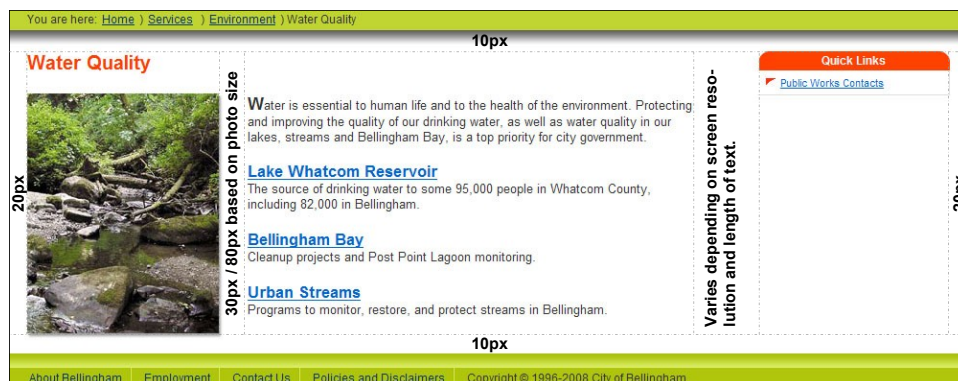


RGB Values: R=239 G=239 B=239
CMYK Values: C=5 M=3 Y=3 K=0
Web Values: #EFEFEF

Alignment

Margins

In general, the main body of content has the following margins:



Justification

All headings and body text are left justified.

Typeface

Arial is the standard font site-wide.

Type Size

The standard type size is 80% of the size specified as default in the browser being used to view the site. All other type sizes are based on this standard type size. This allows visitors to increase and decrease all of the text on a page based on their preferences and increases accessibility to the visually impaired. Headings base their size on this standard type size in the following way:

- Heading 1 = 160% of standard type size
- Heading 2 = 130% of standard type size
- Heading 3 = 100% of standard type size

Type Color

The following is a list of the type colors used in the main body of pages:

- Default Type Color = #333333
- Default Link Color = #0066CC
- Default Link Hover Color = #FF4000
- Default Visited Link Color = #6666CC
- Heading 1, 2, 3 = #FF4000

Note: For complete type size and color information refer to the [Cascading Style Sheet](#) section of this guide.

Case

Whether you choose uppercase or lowercase letters has a strong effect on the legibility of your text. Words set in all uppercase letters should generally be avoided because they are difficult to scan.

We read primarily by recognizing the overall shape of words:



Words formed with capital letters are monotonous rectangles that offer few distinctive shapes to catch the eye:



Capitalize only the first word and any proper nouns for your headlines, subheadings, and text. It is more legible because as we read we primarily scan the tops of words:



Notice how much harder it is to read the bottom half of the same sentence:



If you use initial capital letters in your headlines, you disrupt the reader's scanning of the word forms:



Emphasis

Underlining—should never be done unless the text is a link.

Colored text—the use of color on text to draw the viewers attention is prohibited except for the established colors for headings and links.

Initial capital—The use of an initial capital letter should be used on the first word of the first paragraph on a page if no heading precedes it as shown below:

You are here: [Home](#) > [Services](#) > [Human Services](#) > [Housing](#) > Home Buyer Assistance

Home Buyer Assistance Program



The City of Bellingham and [Kulshan Community Land Trust \(KCLT\)](#) sponsor a program that helps [low- and moderate-income households](#) purchase single-family homes in Bellingham.

How the Program Works

KCLT acquires land and provides a long-term lease to the homebuyer, while the

Quick Links

- [Consolidated Plan](#)

Cascading Style Sheets (CSS)

The website colors, fonts, and page layouts are driven by Cascading Style Sheets. There are four main style sheets:

Screen—Affects what visitors see on their screens: <http://www.cob.org/lib/css/cob-screen.css>

Print—Affects what web pages look like when they are printed. Elements such as the site navigation and footer are suppressed to provide more room for page contents. Quick Links are listed at the bottom of the printed pages: <http://www.cob.org/lib/css/cob-print.css>

Mobile—Affects what web pages look like on mobile devices such as mobile phones and personal digital assistants (PDA). Some navigation, and images are suppressed to make it easier to get to content and faster to download pages. There are many mobile devices and little industry standards currently. There is no official support for mobile devices access the City's website at this time. <http://www.cob.org/lib/css/cob-mobile.css>

Internet Explorer Fixes—Affects changes that are required to maintain the functionality of the screen style sheet above in Internet Explorer 6 and below: <http://www.cob.org/lib/css/cob-ie-fixes.css>

Note: In order to avoid conflicts with vendor-provided web applications, most of the selector names in the style sheets begin with cob. For example:

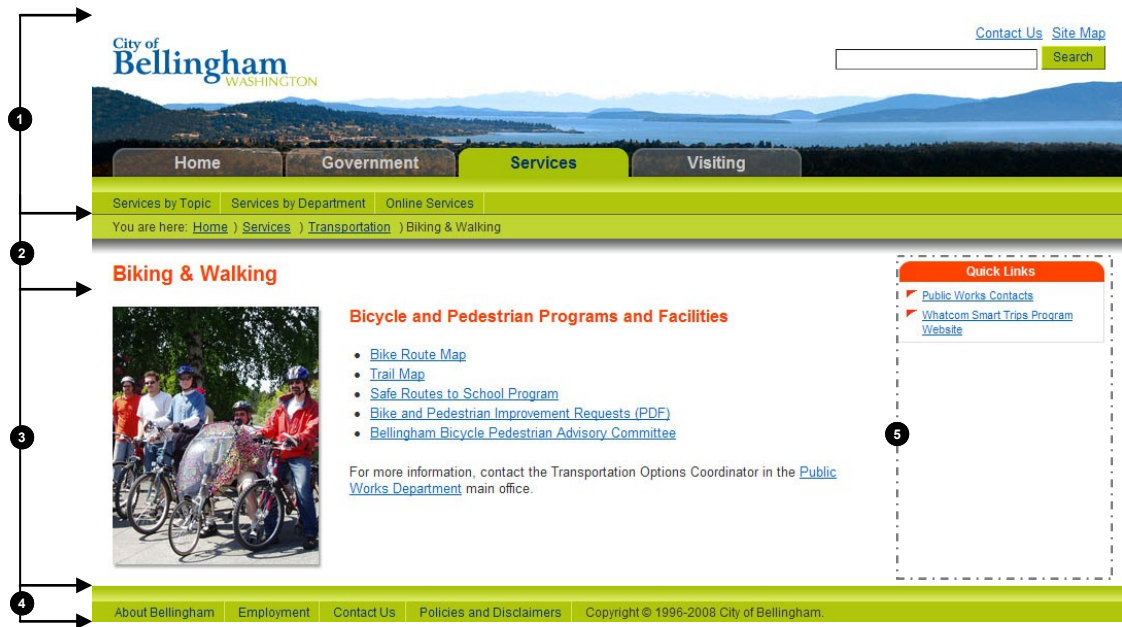
```
.cob-lead-icon-200x250 {
  float:left;
  width:200px;
  height:250px;
  margin:0px;
  padding:0px 10px 10px 0px;
}
```

The exceptions are:

```
body {
  font-family: Arial, Verdana, Helvetica, sans-serif;
  padding:0px ! important;
  margin:0px ! important;
  background-color:#FFFFFF;
  min-width:720px ! important;
  max-width:1280px !important;
  color:#333333;
}
a { color:#0066CC;
}
a:visited {
  color:#6666CC;
}
a:hover {
  color:#FF4000;
}
```

Templates

General Layout



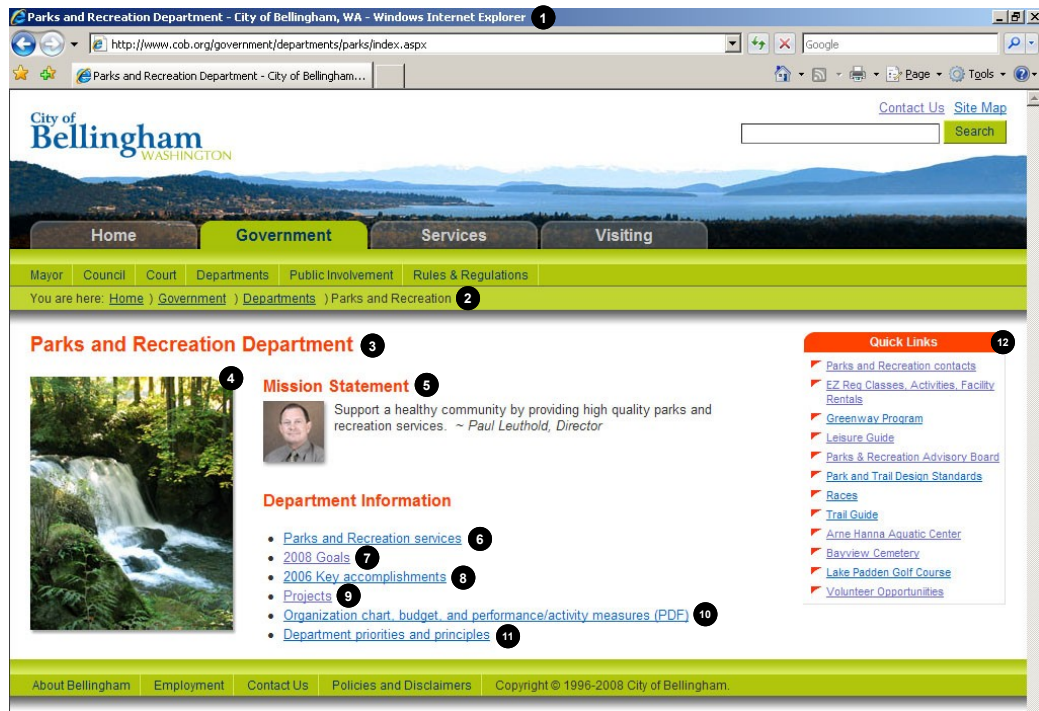
- 1 Mandatory headers for main sections: Home, Government, Services, and Visiting. Not customizable.
 - 2 Mandatory "You are here" breadcrumb navigation and main heading required. Customizable.
 - 3 Main content area. Customizable.
 - 4 Mandatory footer for all site pages. Not customizable.
 - 5 Optional Quick Links. Customizable.
- Note: The width of the page scales based on the screen resolution it's being viewed on. The minimum width is set to 720px and the maximum width is set to 1280px.

Site Home Page



- ❶ Rotating photos—approved by City Communications Manager
- ❷ Limit of one feature with maximum of 4 lines of text (including headline) - approved by City Communications Manager
- ❸ Limit of two top issues with maximum of 4 lines of text each (including headlines) - approved by City Communications Manager
- ❹ Limited to top 3 news headlines (headlines should be short and concise)
- ❺ Limited to top 3 public meetings and key events (entries should be short and concise)
- Prohibited:
 - ⇒ Content that would force the footer “below the fold” on a 1024x768 screen.
 - ⇒ Ads

Department Home Pages



- ① Department home page title is “*Department or Office - City of Bellingham, WA*”
- ② You are here text is “Home) Government) Departments) *Department or Office*”
- ③ Page heading is “*Department or Office*”
- ④ Lead graphic may be static or can cycle through a series of images. See [Images and Media](#) section for requirements.
- ⑤ Option 1: Photo of Department head and department mission statement (limit to 4 lines—link to separate page if longer).
Option 2: Department mission statement text only (limited to 4 lines—link to separate page if longer)
- ⑥ Required: Link to department public services page or departmental website.
- ⑦ Required: Must be approved by Department Head
- ⑧ Required: Must be approved by Department Head
- ⑨ Optional: Must be approved by Department Head
- ⑩ Required: Link to most current published budget section for department including revenues, expenditures, organization charts, and performance/activity measures
- ⑪ Optional: Up to 5 additional links to department or division information (e.g. *Awards*)
- ⑫ Required: Link to department contact information (must appear first in quick links list). Optional: Additional links to key services, other sections of the site, documents, and approved external organizations.
- Prohibited:
 - ⇒ Additional graphics, including department logos
 - ⇒ Feature stories, top issues, news releases, and meeting/events (these are published in a central location on the website).

Service Pages



- 1 Service page title is “Service - City of Bellingham, WA”
- 2 You are here text is “Home) Services) Category) Subcategory) Service”
- 3 Page heading is “Service Name”
- 4 Optional: Main photograph may be static or can cycle through a series of photographs. See [Images and Media](#) section for requirements.
- 5 First paragraph begins with an initial cap or a Heading 2
- 6 Required: Link to service contact information—must appear first in the quick links list (see [Contact Information](#) section for more details)
Optional: Additional links to related services, other sections of the site, documents, and approved external organizations.
Limit: 10 links
- 7 Ads for related City services may be placed below the Quick Links section. Images should be 60 pixels x 60 pixels x 72 dpi.

Menu Page—2 Column With Thumbnails

You are here: [Home](#)) Government

Government



1 Mayor **2**
Office of Mayor Dan Pike... **3**

Departments
Goals, objectives, projects, performance and activity measures...



Council
[Meeting Schedules](#), [Agendas](#), [Minutes](#), [Videos](#)... **4**



Public Involvement
[Boards and Commissions](#), [Community Planning](#), [Opinion Surveying](#), [Planning Notices](#), [Volunteering](#)...



Court
[Court Schedule](#), [Rules](#), [Programs](#), [Payment Options](#)...



Rules and Regulations
[Municipal Code](#), [City Charter](#), [Development and Design Standards](#)...

Quick Links

- [About Bellingham City Government](#)
- [City Budget](#)
- [Grants and Funding](#)
- [Public Records](#)
- [Other Government Agencies](#)
- [Whatcom County Voter Information](#)



5 [Council meetings online](#)
View proceedings or download audio of past Council meetings

- 1 Thumbnails are 60 pixels x 60 pixels x 72 dpi.
- 2 Main menu item link should take visitors to the main index page of the section being represented.
- 3 Short lead-in text may be used to describe the section the menu item links to
- 4 As an alternative to short lead-in text, links representing distinct sections under the main menu item section can be used. If there are more links than there is room, use an ellipsis at the end to represent more options.
- 5 Ads for related City content may be placed on menu pages.

Menu Page—2 Column Without Thumbnails

You are here: [Home](#)) [Services](#)) Planning & Neighborhoods

Planning & Neighborhoods

Community Planning
City-wide planning documents, land use code, and neighborhood plans & zoning.

Neighborhood Resources
Helpful tools, grant support and contact information for neighborhoods.

Historic Preservation
An interactive collection of photos, maps and resources for Bellingham's historic districts and landmarks.

Planning Notices
Planning notice database organized by neighborhood for major land use and development applications.


Quick Links

- [Planning & Community Development Contacts](#)
- [Neighborhood Plans & Zoning](#)
- [Police Daily Activity](#)
- [Planning & Community Development - Major Projects](#)
- [Neighborhood Maps](#)
- [Mayor's Neighborhood Advisory Commission](#)

Menu Page—1 Column With Lead Image

You are here: [Home](#)) Visiting

Visiting



Nestled between the mountains and the sea in northwest Washington State, Bellingham is at the center of a uniquely picturesque area offering a rich variety of recreational, cultural, educational and economic activities.

About Bellingham
Find out about Bellingham's location, history, community, economy, population and demographics, environment, business and government.

Tourism
Entertainment, events, lodging, historic districts, transportation options...

Photo Tour
Catch a glimpse of life in Bellingham.

Maps
Historic areas, neighborhoods, parks, topography, transportation...


Quick Links

- [Facility Reservations](#)
- [Recreation](#)
- [Traffic - Washington DOT](#)
- [Weather - Google](#)

Calendar Entry Pages

You are here: [Home](#) > [Meetings & Events](#) > Example Event Sat, Dec 27 2008

Example Event December 27 2008



Description

Come celebrate the new year with free festivities in Elizabeth park.

- [Activities, food, and live entertainment details \(PDF\)](#)

Time

Start: 07:00 PM
End: 10:00 PM

Location

Some City Park
Street Address
[Map](#)

Contact

[Parks & Recreation Department](#)

Attachments

[details.pdf \(26k\)](#)

Quick Links

- [Facility Rentals](#)
- [Holidays & Closures](#)

[Council meetings online](#)
View proceedings or download audio of past Council meetings

- 1 Lead graphics are optional. See [Images and Media](#) section for requirements.
- 2 Required. Should be short and concise but informative. Links to existing pages or documents on the website may be included. Recognition of sponsors optional.
- 3 Start time is required. End time is optional.
- 4 Street address required. Additional information such as room or other special instructions related to location may be included. An optional map link that takes visitors to a Google map of the location may be included.
- 5 Required. Link to an existing contact page on the website is preferred as shown above. A specific staff's contact info is acceptable.
- 6 Optional. Files which are not already posted to the website and linked to in the description section may be directly attached to the calendar entry in this section.

News Pages

City of Bellingham WASHINGTON

Contact Us Site Map

Search

Home Government Services Visiting

Feature Stories Top Issues News Meetings & Events

You are here: Home > News

Arts Commission awards municipal art grants ¹

Posted: November 26, 2007 09:36:01 PST ²

The Bellingham Arts Commission recently announced grant awards for the 2008 Municipal Arts Program, awarding nearly \$30,000 in funding to eight local projects. ³

"This funding will help support a diverse array of quality community art and performance events in Bellingham," said Alex Wiley, Chair of the Bellingham Arts Commission. "We were very pleased with this year's applications," she added. The commission made awards to all applicants.

"A thriving arts community contributes to Bellingham's attraction as a cultural center," noted Darby Galligan, Development Specialist in the Planning & Community Development Department. "Support of the arts in our community is an economic development goal in the Comprehensive Plan," Galligan added.

⁴

Media Contact: ⁵
Darby Galligan
Planning & Community Development
(360) 676-6982
dgalligan@cob.org

Quick Links

- News Photos
- Planning Notices
- Police Daily Activity
- Sex Offender Notices
- Administrator Login

BTV10
See what's showing on BTV10 now

About Bellingham Employment Contact Us Policies and Disclaimers Copyright © 1996-2007 City of Bellingham.

- ¹ Headline should be short and concise
- ² The posted date and time are automatically added by the news posting software.
- ³ The initial paragraph should briefly summarize the content of the release.
- ⁴ The “###” symbols indicate the end of the release and the start of information for news agencies only.
- ⁵ The media contact is the person the media should contact for questions about or follow-up on a news release. You should list contact information in the body of the news release if you want general readers to contact someone for more information.

Contact Pages

You are here: [Home](#) > [Contact Us](#) > Human Resources Department

Human Resources Department Contacts ¹



Main Office ³
Human Resources
Department
210 Lottie Street
Bellingham, WA 98225
Email: hr@cob.org
Phone: (360) 676-6960
Fax: (360) 738-7363
[Map](#)

Interim Director ⁴
Andrew Rowison
Human Resources
Department
210 Lottie Street
Bellingham, WA 98225
Phone: (360) 676-6960

Benefits and Safety ⁵
Human Resources
Department
210 Lottie Street
Bellingham, WA 98225
Email: hr@cob.org
Phone: (360) 676-6808
Fax: (360) 676-6873
[Map](#)

Payroll ⁴
Human Resources
210 Lottie Street
Bellingham, WA 98225
Email: hr@cob.org
Phone: (360) 676-6957
Fax: (360) 676-6873
[Map](#)

Quick Links ⁶

- [Department Information](#)
- [Employment Information](#)

- ¹ "Name of Department or Office Contacts"
- ² Optional: Main photograph may be static or can cycle through a series of photographs. See [Images and Media](#) section for requirements.
- ³ Required: Primary contact such as the Main Office listed first.
- ⁴ Required: Primary leadership position such as Director listed second.
- ⁵ Optional: Key services with direct phone lines may be listed. No staff names should be included unless they hold a specialized title. Must be approved by Department Head.
- ⁶ Required: The first link must lead to more information about the related department, office, board, or commission.

Optional: up to 3 other service-related links may be added.

Custom Pages

Every effort should be made to format content to fit within existing templates. If the need arises for a unique page layout, contact [Technical Support](#) for assistance.

Images and Media

Standard Sizes and Formats

Lead image sizes—photos or graphics which serve as the lead image on a page have three authorized sizes:

- 200 pixels x 250 pixels x 72 dpi
- 200 pixels x 150 pixels x 72 dpi
- 150 pixels x 200 pixels x 72 dpi

When a photo is used as the lead image, a drop shadow should be applied to it by using the appropriate style for the size:

- .cob-lead-image-150x200
- .cob-lead-image-200x150
- .cob-lead-image-200x250

Thumbnail image sizes—thumbnails may be used for menu items, features, advertisements, and other uses. The authorized size for thumbnails is 60 pixels x 60 pixels x 72 dpi.

In-line image sizes—photos or graphics placed within paragraphs must not exceed 150 pixels in width. If a larger image is necessary, have the smaller image link to a larger one.

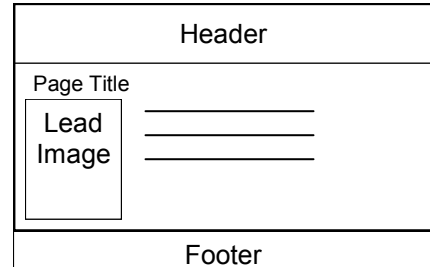
File formats—images must use the following file formats:

- Photos = jpg (with high quality compression)
- Graphics = jpg, png, or gif (use gif if transparency is necessary)

Photographs

Photos used on the City website must meet the following requirements:

- Be of high quality (sharpness, lighting, subject matter, etc)
- Must have documentation on file verifying the City's right to use them. All City stock photos are properly documented and can be found in X:\images\stock photos\



Logos

The only City logo permitted to be displayed on the public website is the official City logo located here: X:\images\logos\city of bellingham\. Departmental, program, and other logos may appear in documents, forms, publications, and presentation—but not on web pages.

Recognizing sponsors is allowed, including the display of their logos on select pages. See the [Recognizing Sponsors](#) section for details.

Audio

The City provides a media server to publish audio files to. File encoding requirements include:

- MP3 encoding
- 24 kps bit rate (to all low-bandwidth access)
- 1 mono channel
- 24 kHz sample rate
- Valid title accurately describing contents

Video

The City provides a media server for streaming videos. File encoding requirements include:

- WMV encoding (non-variable bit rate)
- Combined audio/video bit rate of no more than 256kbps (230kb video + 28kb audio)
- Title, author, copyright, rating, and a brief description must be added to the file during the encoding process

Documents, Forms, Publications, and Presentations

Standard File Format

All documents, forms, publications, and presentations must be presented in the Portable Document Format (PDF). This ensures viewers can open the file with the free Adobe Reader software instead of possibly requiring them to purchase software.

File Size

When creating a PDF, the final file size should be considered. If the file is large, it may take visitors a long time to download depending on what Internet connection speed they have. There are a couple of ways to address large files sizes:

- When creating the PDF, down-sample the images by selecting web conversion settings. Note that this may affect quality for printing images within the document.
- Split the PDF into sections and allow visitors to download them individually. A download of the complete document should always be provided as an alternative to downloading the sections.
- Use standard fonts such as Arial, Verdana, and Times News Roman. Using custom fonts may increase the file size of PDFs.

Formatting Conventions

When creating content that will become a PDF, consider the same [web authoring guidelines](#) as for web pages.

Adding title information to a PDF file is required. The title should take the format of "Title - City of Bellingham, WA". This improves access to the document when viewers look for it using a search engine.

Forms should be clearly dated, including the year. Deadlines must be included at the top of the first page if applicable.

Authoring Guidelines

Writing for the Web

Cutting the Content—People surfing the web usually read web pages as if they were billboards on the side of a freeway. Information must be brief, informative, and easy to understand to be affective. Use the following tips to cut content down to its essence:

1. Think about the topic from the site visitors' point of view.
2. Make sure to include answers to the questions site visitors might ask on the topic and address them in a logical order.
3. If there is information the site visitor neither needs nor cares about, omit it.
4. Focus on the facts, cut the flab.
5. Cut out words that talk about you or your organization—unless visitors want or need that information.
6. Have several colleagues review and read it out loud. Revise based on what you hear.

Keep in mind a visitor can land on any page of the website so writing the content on that page to stand alone and link to other supporting materials is important.

Special attention should be paid to headings and headlines of news releases or feature stories to ensure the shortest, concise wording and should start with descriptive words. For example:

- The City of Bellingham announces road closures and restrictions for the week of Jan 13, 2008—Jan 19, 2008 (too long)
- Road closures and restrictions, Jan 13-19 (good)

Formatting—see the [Case](#) and [Emphasis](#) section for details about underlining, using all capitals, etc.

Associated Press Style Guide—should be used as a supplement to this website style guide for writing purposes. A few exceptions include:

- Use Bellingham instead of Bellingham, Wash.
- Use Washington, D.C. instead of Washington when referring to the US Capitol.
- All Whatcom County cities and other well-known Northwest cities do not require a state name except Vancouver, Wash.
- Abbreviate Canadian Province names such as Vancouver, B.C.

Date/Time—Make sure to include a date/time posted or date/time last updated on web pages that have content which is date/time sensitive. When including a date or time, use the following format:

- Jun 12, 2010 or Jun 12 or Thursday, Jun 12
- 8 a.m. or 8:00 a.m. or 1 p.m. or 1:00 p.m.

Links

External websites—Links which take visitors to a site other than www.cob.org should be configured to open a new window containing the target website. They should also end with the word website if it is not obvious the link is to an outside site. For example:

- Washington Department of Revenue (no need to include “website”)
- Domestic Violence Commission website (it’s not clear if this is content published by the City or not so the word website should be included)

When referencing an external website within the text of the page, more flexibility may be used in titling to avoid the need to include the word website in the link. For example:

- Review the [Homeowners Guide to Property Taxes](#) published by the Washington State Department of Revenue.

Files—Links to files such as PDFs, JPGs, WMVs, etc. should indicate the file format: “Mayor’s Budget Message (PDF)”

If the file is larger than 100K, the size should be listed as well: “City Budget (1,600K PDF) or “City Budget (1.6MB PDF)”

Internal pages—Links to internal web pages should use the exact title or very near the title of the target page to avoid confusion.

Download/click here—Avoid using the terms “download” or “click here” when creating a link. For example:

- The Seamonkey Has My Money Reimbursement Form needs to be submitted two weeks prior to committee review. [Click here to download \(PDF\)](#). (incorrect)
- The [Seamonkey Has My Money Reimbursement Form \(PDF\)](#) needs to be submitted two weeks prior to committee review. (correct)

Contact Information

All contact information should be kept in a central location whenever possible. Phone numbers, addresses, and email addresses are not authorized to appear on pages outside of the Contact Us section, a news release, or a meetings and events entry. Instead, a link to the department contact page should be used.

Telephone/Fax Numbers— should always include the area code and be in the format of (360) 555-1212

News releases—Make sure to differentiate between the contact listed in a press release for readers to refer to for more information and the media contact which media agencies should use to ask questions and follow up on the news release.

See the [Contact Page](#) section of this guide for more details.

Ordering Lists

By date—In general, when including lists which are date sensitive, place them in reverse chronological order from top to bottom. For example, a list of meeting agendas would start with the most recent agenda at the top.

Alphabetically—If a list has no other factor for placing it in a particular order, alphabetical is the default.

Advertising

Promoting the City website

When referring viewers back to the City website, use www.cob.org whenever possible as it is least likely to change over time.

Custom Web Addresses

Departments—may have their own custom web address for their department home page in the format of www.cob.org/department keyword.

For example: www.cob.org/parks or www.cob.org/pw

Services—addresses for key services may also be requested based on availability of the keyword being requested. Contact [technical support](#) to request an address.

For example: www.cob.org/lakewhatcom

Domains—the creation of a unique domain must be approved by the Communications Manager (see policy PRA 03.09.03).

For example www.bayviewcemetery.com

Recognizing Sponsors

The City allows recognition of sponsors on the public website. However, the recognition may only appear on the web page(s) related to the City activity being sponsored. For example, a meeting or event calendar page.

Appendix A

Department Web Representatives

Council

J Lynne Walker jlwalker@cob.org

Finance

Linda Anderson landerson@cob.org

Fire

Andrew Day aday@cob.org

Human Resources

Angela Beatty abeatty@cob.org

Information Technology

Steven Niedermeyer sniedermeyer@cob.org

Judicial & Support Services

Adelle Ringus aringus@cob.org

Legal

Jeff Capell jcapell@cob.org

Library

Jennifer Lovchik jlovchik@cob.org

Mayor

Janice Keller jkeller@cob.org

Museum

Toni Nagel tnagel@cob.org

Parks & Recreation

Elizabeth Haveman ehaveman@cob.org

Planning

Nicole Oliver noliver@cob.org

Police

Benjamin Huffman bhuffman@cob.org

Public Works

Joy Monjre jmonjre@cob.org

Appendix B

Controlled Vocabulary

In order to improve site usability and search results, a controlled vocabulary has been established for key words, terms, and acronyms.

- Greenway Program
- greenways or greenway
- wastewater
- City Budget
- stormwater
- Mayor's Neighborhood Advisory Commission

Appendix C

Change Log

The following is a history of changes to this document: