Business survey results are in

The City of Black Diamond is pleased to present the results of our first business survey.

The City posted the survey on the website and mailed a copy directly to current business license holders and commercial property owners. The survey included 15 questions on City services and the needs of business owners for various types of economic development support, as well as opportunities for free-form comments.

We received more than 55 survey responses, of which 20 respondents run in-home businesses. Most respondents have been in business for more than 16 years. Most respondents don’t foresee moving out of the city. Thirty seven out of 51 respondents are satisfied with the City’s permitting process, fees and regulations and 36 out of 43 indicated they were satisfied or very satisfied with current services from the City of Black Diamond. The economic development services people were most interested in include pre-development consultation, marketing and customer service, and other workshop/training opportunities. The respondents also offered many ideas about the types of challenges or opportunities the City faces and how to improve our services.

The intent of the survey was to provide a foundation for service improvements to aid existing and future business owners in our community. Over the next year, the City will continue its economic development planning efforts and will ask for additional community input.

Detailed results of the survey are available on the City’s website at www.ci.blackdiamond.wa.us. Look under Departments on the homepage and pull down to Economic Development. Thanks to everyone who filled out the survey and for taking the time to provide thoughtful responses.
Sensitive areas regulations mean changes for property owners

1. Why is the City doing this?
The State required the City to update its Sensitive Areas Regulations. All cities and counties in Washington are required to adopt sensitive areas regulations by the Growth Management Act (RCW 36.70A.060). The GMA was amended in 1995 to require counties and cities to include the Best Available Science in developing policies and development regulations to protect the functions and values of sensitive areas (RCW 36.70A.172). All jurisdictions are required to review, evaluate, and if necessary, revise their sensitive areas ordinances in order to remain in compliance with the GMA.

2. How do I know if this applies to my land?
You can get an initial sense of whether your property might be affected by looking at the maps the City has created. The City will utilize the map for planning purposes only. The map displayed in a map that shows the City of Black Diamond's inventory of sensitive areas within its borders. You can get an initial sense of whether your property might be affected by looking at the maps the City has created. You can also look under Departments on the homepage and pull down to Natural Resources.

3. What if I don't agree with what is shown on the City's inventory map of sensitive areas?
You will have an opportunity to provide alternative information to the City as you pursue development on your property. Applicants will provide updated information on wetlands, streams and other areas through the work of consultants individually procured to provide information to accompany applications. It is expected that some changes might occur, since staff was limited to the extent of environmental work associated with sensitive areas.

4. Am I allowed to do anything in a sensitive area buffer?
Although significant activities within sensitive areas will be limited, there has been flexibility put into the draft ordinance for activities that have minimal or little impact on the functions of buffers in relation to the sensitive area being protected. That includes recreational uses such as trails and community gardening and siting of utilities in some instances. The City also offers a reduction in buffer size program for some sensitive areas and a Transfer of Development Rights program for participating property owners. More information can be obtained by contacting the Development Rights program for participating property owners.

5. What if my property is so encumbered by sensitive areas and buffers that it would be difficult to build a house on it?
Again, the updated draft ordinance has flexibility built into it so that property owners have options when it comes time to build on their investment. Depending on the depth of your particular lot, a percentage of the property can be utilized. If the applicant can still not meet these requirements, the City has included a “reasonable use” provision that would allow conditioned, building-type activities as approved by the Hearing Examiner.

6. It appears under the ordinance that my house is non-conforming and may be within a sensitive area or its buffer. Will the City require me to do something on my property now?
No. The regulations apply to new applications or activities as they are brought forward to the City only.

Need more information? Please contact Aaron Nix, Natural Resources/Parks Director at (360) 886-2560 extension 220.

What is “Best Available Science?”

Best Available Science is “current scientific information derived from research, monitoring, inventory, survey, modeling, assessment, synthesis, and expert opinion” that is:

- Logical and reasonable
- Based on quantitative analysis
- Peer reviewed
- Used in the appropriate context
- Based on accepted methods
- Well referenced

What happens with streams outside the core?
For streams and lakes outside of the Lake Sawyer basin, it is important to continue to ensure productive fish habitat and healthy water quality. Buffers for these waters varies from 50 and 200 feet, with provisions for adjustment down to 30 to 150 feet.
Science helps determine City’s sensitive areas ordinance

What are the goals of this study?
The goal of the Black Diamond Best Available Science study was to identify and assess the importance of the City’s natural systems, including wetlands, streams, wildlife habitat and other sensitive areas. Based on the location and function of those systems, the study presents actions for preserving the City’s unique ecological systems, while accommodating growth and development in the Black Diamond Urban Growth Area (UGA).

How will this information be used?
The City has created a draft “sensitive areas ordinance” based upon the findings and recommendations of the Best Available Science (BAS) report. This ordinance identifies protection measures for the City’s wetlands, streams, wildlife habitat, and other ecological systems. Development must adhere to these protection and mitigation guidelines once approved by the City Council.

What are the recommendations?
The City of Black Diamond’s approach to sensitive areas is to provide the highest level of protection for the natural systems that contribute the highest ecological functions. This is accompanied by a lower level of protection for resources that provide less critical function. This method is unique to the specific environmental characteristics of Black Diamond, and allows for a balance of natural systems protection and urban and economic development.

Specific elements are:
1. The Rock Creek/Jones Lake/Jones Creek and the Black Diamond Lake/Stream corridors and the associated wetland complexes should be recognized as a core area that provides a variety of water supply, water quality, and habitat functions. These functions are critical to the preservation of water quality in Lake Sawyer, and to continue to provide the rich ecological functions of these systems.
2. To function as wildlife corridors, the complexes should extend to Ravensdale Creek to the north and the UGA boundaries to the east and west. These corridors also should extend to the boundaries of adjacent steep slopes and may be widened where possible through a transfer of a portion of the buffer area from lower priority stream complexes.

3. Wetlands outside of the core wetland complex and the headwaters of Ginder Creek and Lawson Creek provide important hydrologic function. Their ability to provide productive wildlife habitat will be limited by future urbanization. In recognition of their lower productivity, opportunities for transfer of buffer area to the core wetland system are appropriate.
4. Streams outside the core complex should be protected to continue to provide high quality water and fish habitat, where available.
5. Geological hazards should be assessed on a case-by-case basis. Where feasible, slopes adjacent to wetlands and streams should be incorporated into buffers to provide a more effective overall buffer system.
6. Coal mine hazards should be assessed and mitigated based on specific levels of risk. High risk areas should be left undeveloped, unless mitigation can assure the reduction of risk to acceptable levels. Lower risk areas should be assessed to assure that risks are mitigated including risks to buildings from settlement.
7. Aquifer recharge areas are generally in the moderate risk range and can be effectively addressed by regulation of activities most likely to discharge hazardous materials and through wellhead protection.
8. Frequently flooded areas in the Black Diamond UGA are contained within the recommended stream and wetland buffer areas of the core Rock Creek/Jones Lake/Jones Creek corridor. Therefore separate regulations for flood plain hazards are not needed.

For more information contact Aaron Nix, Natural Resources/Parks Director at (360) 886-2560 extension 220.

What about wetland buffers outside the Core?
Wetlands not associated with the highest level of function in the City still need protection.

For these “non-core” areas, the recommended buffers vary between 50 and 180 feet with provisions for adjustment down to 30 to 125 feet.
Permit and building information at your fingertips

Over the last few months the Community Development Department has been working to make sections of the City’s webpage informative and useful to customers, in addition to the in-person and telephone services offered at the City’s permit counter. Following is a short summary of what you can find at [www.ci.blackdiamond.wa.us](http://www.ci.blackdiamond.wa.us) if you look under Departments and scroll down to Community Development.

The Community Development Department has four different sections of information:

- **The Planning** section focuses on aspects of the land use process and the applications and submittal packets you would need to develop your land.
- **The Permit Center** section contains pretty much every form or packet you would need to construct, alter or add on to a building. If you can build it, this page will help you permit it.
- **The Building** section is there to help you get answers to your construction questions. There are links to multiple agencies and contact information for City staff.
- **Finally, the Code Enforcement section** covers all those nagging questions about what is and isn’t allowed per the Municipal Code. The Code Enforcement officer is tasked with making sure this is a clean, appealing, healthy and welcoming community.

The webpage is still a work in progress, but we hope you will find it a good resource. If you have questions or feel that something is missing, feel free to call the Permit Center at (360) 886-2560 or email the Permit Center Supervisor, Amy Donlan at ADonlan@ci.blackdiamond.wa.us.

Home cooking safety burning issues for holidays

It is difficult to believe that it is already November and the holidays are quickly approaching. Home cooking is at the top of the list in preparation for holiday celebrations, and cooking safety should be too.

Cooking fires are the leading cause of home structure fires and home injuries, and Thanksgiving is the peak day for home cooking fires. Please review some of the safety tips below to help protect your loved ones and belongings.

- Never use a wet oven mitt, as it presents a scald danger if the moisture in the mitt is heated.
- Always keep an oven mitt and lid nearby when you are cooking. If a small grease fire starts in a pan, put on an oven mitt and smother the flames by carefully sliding the lid over the pan. Turn off the burner. Don't remove the lid until it is completely cool. Never try to remove a pan that has caught fire and take it outdoors. This is a major cause of burn injuries to someone who gets in your way, most often children.
- If there is an oven fire, turn off the heat and keep the door closed to prevent flames from burning you and your clothing. Have the oven serviced before you use it again.
- Try to avoid using turkey fryers. Tests have shown that many turkey fryers have a risk of tipping over, overheating, or spilling hot oil, leading to fires and burns. Never use a turkey fryer indoors or in a garage.

Thanks for your attention in this important matter. Mountain View Fire & Rescue/Black Diamond Fire Department would like everyone to have a happy and safe Thanksgiving. Please contact Tim Perciful for more information on cooking safety at (253) 735-0284.
Utility Rate Increases for Water and Storm Drainage

The City will need to have a dedicated source of funds for the storm water utility activities. The state and federal requirements of the Clean Water Act will be increasing the City’s work load in educating the public, monitoring and documenting the stormwater quality efforts of the City, adopting codes that meet state requirements, and bringing City practices into compliance with the state law. The primary effort in maintaining the stormwater system has been funded through the sewer utility. Given that this effort is proposed to shift to the new stormwater utility, a rate increase in the sewer utility will not be necessary. A stormwater rate of $13.00/month is being considered by the City Council. In the proposal, businesses will be assessed according to the comparable amount of impervious area to a single family home (2500 square feet). Public Hearing for Stormwater Rates on November 6th at 7:00 p.m. Council Chambers.

The City’s last water rate increase was $4.80 per residential meter 10 years ago, a 57% rate increase to the base rate. Several options are under consideration:

• Option A: 27% rate increase for three years to our current rate structure.
• Option B: 27% rate increase with addition of two more higher cost tiers encouraging conservation for three years.
• Option C: 15% rate increase for 3 years also with higher cost tiers encouraging conservation. With this option the cash reserves would drop by about $200,000. Under this scenario the residential base rate would increase by $2.33 along with the commodity charges for three years. Public Hearing for Water Rate Increase on November 20th at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers.

Full copies of the Stormwater and Water Utility Rate Studies are available on the Black Diamond website and at the front counter of City Hall.

Marine services celebrates safe summer on Lake Sawyer

The officers of the Black Diamond Police Department’s Marine Services Unit would like to thank all of our citizens and surrounding friends who used Lake Sawyer this year for yet another fun, safe boating season.

With your help, we were able to end the boating season without any major accidents. While boating safety is a year-round concern, marine patrol is typically heavier during the months of May through September when more people are out enjoying the beauty of our lake.

This year, the Police Department retired the 10-year-old police boat (Lake Sawyer 1) and introduced a new vessel to many personal watercraft users and boaters on the lake. The new boat served the City well. This summer, Marine Services logged 575 hours on the lake and visually or “spot” inspected 805 vessels. Other statistics include:

Written vessel inspections: 106 vessels
Written warnings issued: 35 violations
Citations Issued: 35 violations

Again, thanks for helping keep Lake Sawyer the safest lake around. If you have any questions about our Marine Services Unit, please contact Sergeant Greg Goral, Marine Services Coordinator at (253) 631-1012.
Where do your property taxes go?

With most folks just having paid their second half property tax bill, this is a timely question, as many homeowners are a bit mystified as to what these taxes actually fund. Here is the scoop:

Property taxes will bring in $978,661 next year to Black Diamond and is our City’s largest and most reliable tax revenue source. Our tax rate includes both a regular levy and an excess public safety levy voted in by the people of Black Diamond. The excess public safety levy makes up 42% or $411,037 of Black Diamond’s total property taxes collected. Property taxes are calculated based on the value of property applied to specific rates set by each taxing district or jurisdiction. King County is in charge of assessing property values and in collecting these taxes.

In Black Diamond, depending on where the property is located, the largest portion goes to local school districts of Enumclaw, Tahoma or Kent and to the state of Washington for schools. The balance goes to cities, the Port of Seattle, libraries, emergency medical services and other special districts.

For example, property owners in the Enumclaw School District paid $9.69 per $1,000 in assessed valuation in 2008. Of this, $1.65 was Black Diamond’s portion. The City’s tax rate has decreased 25% from $2.03 in 2005 to $1.52 per thousand in value for levy 2009. As property values have risen these past years, the rates have fallen in order for the City to stay within a 1% allowable dollar increase per year as set by state law.

If you have a home valued at $300,000 you would have paid $2,907 in property taxes this year, computed by the rate of $9.69 times each $1,000 in value, or $9.69 x 300. Of that total, Black Diamond received only $495 or 17% (see pie chart). That amounts to less than $45 per typical home per month to help pay for services such as local police and fire protection.

2008 Black Diamond Property Tax Distribution
Taxed amount is per each $1,000 in assessed value

This graph reflects the core Black Diamond area, as not all properties within Black Diamond city limits pay the same levies due to different school and fire districts. The total rate with all jurisdictions combined is $9.69 per $1,000 of assessed value.
Recently adopted ordinances

At the October 16, 2008, Council Meeting the following ordinances were adopted:

♦ Ordinance No. 08-871 — Boating Regulations

Copies of ordinances and resolutions are available for review at City Hall, 24301 Roberts Drive, or by contacting Brenda L. Streepy, City Clerk, at (360) 886-2560.

City surplus sale — November 1, 2008 — 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

The City of Black Diamond will be holding a surplus sale on November 1, 2008 from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the City Shops, located across the street from the Police Department at 25510 Lawson St. Black Diamond, WA

Items being surplused are desks, chairs, book shelves, filing cabinets and other office items. Items will be sold for cash only and must be removed at the time of the sale. A list of the items can be viewed on the City webpage at www.ci.blackdiamond.wa.us.

EVENT CALENDAR

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<td>EIS Open House — Black Diamond Elem. — 6 p.m.</td>
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COMMITTEE MEETINGS

- CITY COUNCIL MEETINGS
  - 25510 LAWSON STREET
    - NOV 6 - 7 p.m.
    - NOV 13 - 7 p.m.
    - NOV 20 - 7 p.m.

- COUNCIL STUDY SESSIONS:
  - NOV 5 - 7 p.m.
  - NOV 6 - 6 p.m.
  - NOV 13 - 6 p.m.

- PLANNING COMMISSION
  - 25510 LAWSON STREET
    - NOV 10 - 7 p.m.
    - NOV 25 - 7 p.m.

MONTHLY MEETINGS

- CITY COUNCIL:
  - 1st & 3rd Thursdays
    - at 7 p.m.

- PLANNING COMMISSION:
  - First Tuesday after the first Council meeting - at 7 p.m.

For meeting agendas and packet material please view the homepage of the website www.ci.blackdiamond.wa.us and click on the meeting date of your choice.

CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE @ WWW.CI.BLACKDIAMOND.WA.US

Anyone wishing to be added to the Council Agenda Distribution list please contact us at (360) 886-2560 or by email: bstreepy@ci.blackdiamond.wa.us

Get involved with your community - attend Public Hearings

November 6 ~ 2008 — 2013 Capital Improvement Plan
November 6 ~ Stormwater Utility and Rates
November 6 ~ YarrowBay Special Events Permit
November 13 ~ Sensitive Areas Ordinance
November 20 ~ 2009 Preliminary Budget
November 20 ~ 2009 Preliminary Property Taxes
November 20 ~ Water/Sewer Rate Increase

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If you would like to be added to the City’s E-Alert Program, email Rachel Pitzel at rpitzel@ci.blackdiamond.wa.us, please include “E-Alert Addition” on the subject line.

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COMMUNITY CONTACTS

- Black Diamond Library (360) 886-1105
  - Hours of Operation:
    - Monday — Thursday 10 a.m. — 9 p.m.
    - Fridays — 10 a.m. — 6 p.m.
    - Saturdays — 10 a.m. — 5 p.m.

- Black Diamond Community/Senior Center (360) 886-1011
  - Hours of Operation:
    - Monday – Friday 8 a.m. — 4:30 p.m.

- Black Diamond Post Office (360) 886-9429
  - Hours of Operation:
    - Monday — Friday 9 a.m. — 5 p.m.

- Black Diamond Museum/Historical Society (360) 886-2142
  - Hours of Operation:
    - Thursdays — 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.
    - Saturdays and Sundays — Noon - 4 p.m.

CITY OF BLACK DIAMOND

- CITY HALL
  - P.O. Box 599/24301 Roberts Drive
  - (360) 886-2560
  - (253) 631-0351

- COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT/NATURAL RESOURCES/ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
  - P.O. Box 599/24301 Roberts Drive
  - (360) 886-2560
  - (253) 631-0351

- POLICE DEPARTMENT
  - P.O. Box 309/25510 Lawson Street
  - (253) 631-1012

- MUNICIPAL COURT
  - P.O. Box 599/25510 Lawson Street
  - (360) 886-7784

- FIRE DEPT. DISTRICT #44
  - P.O. Box 599/24301 Roberts Drive
  - (253) 735-0284

- PUBLIC WORKS
  - P.O. Box 599/24301 Roberts Drive
  - (253) 631-0351
  - (253) 333-5555

If you would like to be added to the City’s E-Alert Program, email Rachel Pitzel at rpitzel@ci.blackdiamond.wa.us, please include “E-Alert Addition” on the subject line.
The City of Black Diamond will be celebrating its 50th Anniversary in 2009. To commemorate this grand affair, the committee is seeking photos of Black Diamond’s past for the 50th Anniversary Calendar. All photos dated 1959 to the present are accepted and must be turned in to the City of Black Diamond by November 15, 2008. Several photos will be selected, printed and credited in the 2009 calendar. So do some digging; if your photo is featured, you will receive a free copy of the 50th Anniversary Calendar.

To enter your photo:

1. Please provide the following information with your photo:
   - Full Name
   - Mailing Address
   - E-mail Address
   - Phone Number
   - Photo Description
   - Date Photo was Taken

   Note: Photo(s) will be returned to owner.

2. Include the following statement with your signature:

   I hereby certify that the photo I am entering into the contest is my original work and has never been copyrighted or, if copyrighted, that I am the sole copyright owner. If selected, I hereby consent that my photo will be printed and reproduced in the City of Black Diamond’s 50th Anniversary Calendar.

   ____________________________   ____________________
   Signature                      Date

3. Bring in your photo and signature certification to:

   City of Black Diamond
   24301 Roberts Drive
   Black Diamond, WA

If you would like to enter your photo but cannot deliver it to the City of Black Diamond, please call Luzville Goebel at 360-886-2560 to make arrangements.