

# The Bully Pulpit

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*The Bully Pulpit* is named and based on Theodore Roosevelt's successful approach to Trust Busting and engagement of the Banks. Like Roosevelt, I speak softly, but I don't carry a large stick. Rather, I engage political / corporate power's hidden side: its Achilles Heel.

I will be showing you how to engage power effectively for results. I know this side well. I was raised in a (non political) power oriented family. I led that life unaware for many decades. After my second divorce, I started examining my use of power.

## Talking to the right people

Protestors often use blame instead of solution to promote their cause. Blaming tells us how unhappy you are. It fails to tell us what you actually want and the action the City should take.

The City Manager has the laws to deal with all blighting and fraud within the City. The City Council is the City Manager's boss and are the right people to engage managerial inaction.

Your City is a Municipal Corporation. It has rules that govern it. You are a shareholder and are allowed to: speak about policies; question why policies are not being enforced; propose policy changes. Additionally, the City Manager's tenure is a policy decision, which is open to public discussion.

### **Who is your audience?**

I am talking to the Council, but my message is directed to the voters – the final arbiters. I always avoid blame so that I don't polarize the community. Each of my presentations used loss of net worth as a common denominator. I then showed how these losses impacted businesses, jobs, house values, opportunities, and even the City finances.

In each presentation I ask for a specific action step from the City to resolve the issue.

This approach resonates with voters because it shows both the impact and a straightforward solution. It takes more time than carrying placards and time is your friend in a campaign like this. Each presentation is about two weeks apart – just enough time for the previous message to settle in and create a conversation about change.

I stitched together a wide range of issues, beyond vacant Bank owned properties – known as real estate owned (REO), that were impacting the City and neighborhoods. I showed how all of these problems intersected at the office of the City Manager. This inclusive approach is a powerful motivator to get unresponsive politicians to clean up problems or face the wrath of the voters.

### **The Dynamics of Speaking**

Speaking effectively, involves more than just words. Boundaries, strategies, and even adrenaline play a key role in delivering an effective speech that gets results.

Boundaries are often sources of conflict. They are places where we fight or engage. The choices are not nasty revenge or walking on eggshells. Rather, an effective boundary with City Hall is where I share: what I see happening, the consequences of the inaction, and request an action step that moves towards solution, all without blaming.

Political power that is unresponsive to the community won't like this approach. It

calls into question their governance. A reactive response is likely. How that response is handled, defines the campaign and shapes the conversation. I will be sharing more on escalation, as the City responds to my allegations.

I have a tab called [REACTIVITY](#) to help you better understand and deal with this issue. There are 11 other highlighted tabs on this site at strategic locations to give you a greater understanding of the topic being discussed. I will be referring to the information they contain throughout The Bully Pulpit. I request that you read them as they appear in the text. They will help you make an effective case for change in your City.

[The Artist Way](#) by Julia Cameron is a great book to learn how to engage boundaries effectively. My favorite chapter dealt with crazy makers and the way we appease them, and harm ourselves in the process.

If you're thinking, "I am not an artist!, and how does this relate to me?" I propose that you think about: John Steinbeck, Martin Luther King, and Leonardo da Vinci. All of them have one thing in common. They were communicating an idea, a belief, or vision they held to be true. The Artist Way will bring you to a more grounded place of passion, energy and conviction. You will be able to engage even the most stubborn City Council.

Strategies require that I am aware of my intent when I speak. My overarching intent is always to move the situation towards solution. From this context, I write and speak my material congruently. At the beginning of each presentation, I have included a brief note to help you understand my intent.

After intent comes aim. How am I going to deliver this material? My aim frequently used a velvet glove and an occasional dagger. The velvet glove is particularly unpleasant. If you have ever seen someone dressed down in public, where the speaker is choosing their words carefully and not raising their voice, that is the velvet glove in action. The dagger should be used sparingly. I use it only as an exclamation point to reinforce my message about egregious inaction.

Presentation courses are widely available throughout the United States. They are especially helpful for those who have never spoken before a City Council. In 1997, I took a three weekend class on presentation dynamics. These courses are designed to desensitize the fear of speaking in public. I became more accustomed to speaking before an audience. My presenting style also became clearer; I have an edge, and I own it.

Organizations like [Toastmasters](#) will be able to help you find your voice. (See the [TOASTMASTER](#) tab) They are committed to making people effective at speaking. They will help you understand the dynamics of presenting; from preparing your material through the presentation. You will receive feedback and support to make you effective as a speaker.

After my training, I only spoke in public six times over the course of one year. Now, fifteen years later, I would discover that the knowledge does not go away, nor does the adrenaline.

Adrenaline is a high octane stimulant that comes from making a stand for my ideas. It fuels the presentation. I magnify and sharpen my edge by burnishing my presentation materials. Every word is purposeful. Essentially what I am doing is tightening my words so that they become infused with the energy I am experiencing. There is no need to raise my voice or slam fists to be heard.

[The Pen Commandments](#) by Steven Frank gives great insights into writing succinctly. His chapter on writing short essays, will give you the guidance necessary to polish your words. The chapter on writing persuasively will give you insights into the construction of your campaign. (See the [CAMPAIGN](#) tab for my insights and the Table of Contents). Like the Toastmasters, he counsels against attack and revenge. I am confident you will turn that mountain of problems into three minutes of energy filled reasons why change is necessary.

There are four basic rules of speaking from the podium. All cities require them:

1. Address the Council
2. Address the office, not the person
3. Don't attack staff
4. Be respectful

These rules were not put in place to shield City Hall. They are there to keep things from devolving into a nasty personal attack. Staying away from blame, will make you an effective communicator. If you are saying something like, “but my City isn't listening!”, then the 5th (unwritten) rule is to offer solution.

This site is about the 5th rule. Its about creating and shaping a conversation to get results. Throughout my campaign I observed both the letter and spirit of the four rules. Making it personal, and engaging in blame and revenge will disconnect you from your audience. People don't want to be talked down to, hear your bile or be manipulated. People do want to know how things can be turned around.

## The Campaign

I had no idea how dysfunctional a City could be until my neighborhood was annexed. My initial attempt to turn things around involved providing a news tip. After the newspaper story was published about the abandoned bank REO's, nothing happened.

The real eye opener occurred four months later. I thought two presentations about

the lack of code enforcement and its costs would get the Council's attention. Again, nothing happened. The problem was clearly structural in nature.

The City Manager is the CEO of the City. Just like their counterparts on Wall Street or in business, some are effective and others less so. The situation in my City wasn't about lazy City employees. It was about the City Manager not doing his job as specified by law. The cost of inaction was killing the City.

At this juncture, I chose to use timing to my advantage; it was an election year. Instead of running for Council, I chose to speak about the cost of the status quo. I proceeded to lay out a campaign to make a case for turning the City around through hiring a better City Manager.

A campaign like this requires only an hour a day for researching and writing my materials – which was less than the amount of time I spent complaining about the inaction.

The Bully Pulpit articulates a National problem and how it showed up in my City. Then comes the presentation. After that, I will be talking about how cleaning up our Cities will move the Country forward by increasing both net worth and opportunities.

This site is designed to give you a basic template for this this kind of campaign if monied interests are destroying your City. City Hall does not arise out of some sort of Quantum Flux, rather it was incorporated by residents to serve residents. Egregious action on the part of Banks is most effectively dealt with by City Hall, not Congress.

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October 15 - 26, 2012

## STARTING THE CONVERSATION

INTENT: To show that the City is allowing the neighborhoods to decline while they are pursuing another annexation.

There wasn't an *Activism for Dummies* book on how to do this when I started. After speaking, I was struck by how straight forward my lessons learned were. I have chosen to share my experiences so that you can make a difference in your city too.

In April of 2010, Burien annexed my neighborhood. Then, within a month, Chase Bank stopped maintaining one of their REO properties in my neighborhood. Within days, garbage started accumulating. The quiet quality of life I had enjoyed for decades took an ugly turn for the worse.

I was alarmed and contacted my City. Nothing happened, and they ignored me and my neighborhood. City Hall was now preoccupied by something they believed was far more important: another annexation. The City lost its focus on the neighborhoods. The Council and the City Manager were spending thousands of hours on annexation strategies.

Then, three more houses were abandoned in my neighborhood, as the City continued to be preoccupied. These became overgrown with brush, while the Chase house accumulated 40 + yards of garbage. I went from fear to seething anger. My ire was visceral. Rather than sit on it, I chose to take action.

I provided the tip for the news story about the abandoned bank repos in *The Highline Times*. The news story quoted the City:

- A half dozen letters were sent to Chase demanding cleanup.
- No response from Chase Bank.
- City used taxpayers money to clean it up.
- City was unable to recover money because the owner was in bankruptcy.
- City acknowledged the existence of the three other bank houses in my neighborhood.

The City continued to do nothing with any of these other houses after *The Highline Times* story. I now was confronted with a choice: be silent and sullen, or speak to the Council directly about this matter.

I hired an attorney to research the particulars of the Chase house. I then began to speak.

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**November 5, 2012**

## **Attorneys**

**INTENT:** To understand the legal aspects of foreclosure and bankruptcy.

Attorneys can be quite useful in explaining complex legal issues. They are able to explain in plain English what is going on. They can also provide a legal synopsis with the PDF files they send.

It is important to hire a specialist, as there are many distinct fields in the legal profession. Your attorney can provide detailed analysis that will bring clarity to any situation. I hired a bankruptcy attorney to research the Chase house. My cost for information on that house was \$167, which included a legal synopsis of the documentation that was researched.

After the first batch of information arrived, I realized the answers also raised more questions. By the time I finished my campaign, my legal costs were just under \$700.

Here is a synopsis of what I learned from the bankruptcy attorneys on foreclosure and ownership responsibility:

- The house was surrendered to Chase 35 days prior to the garbage being dumped.
- When the house was surrendered, it was removed from the Bankruptcy process.
- Property tax liens for cleaning up property cannot be discharged through foreclosure. Its a Statutory Lien.
- The lien is put on the property, not the owner.
- When the bank makes payment for the property tax, the lien is paid. It is part of the property tax bill.
- A property tax lien will carry an interest penalty.
- Property tax liens have a higher priority than the mortgagor's interest.
- Chase was responsible to pay the property tax lien or it would lose the house.
- Chase had right of entry when the house was surrendered.

An attorney will be able to discuss the specific issues confronting you and your city. The confidence you will have in your material will make your case even stronger for facilitating needed change. Specialist attorneys have access to the databases that will make it quite inexpensive to get documents and answers.

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# The Bully Pulpit

## March 4, 2013 The Chase Bank House FORETHOUGHT

Intent: To show that the City spent taxpayer money to clean up the Chase house.

### Happening all across America

The 2010, G.A.O. Report on abandoned bank repos paints a bleak picture for continued income inequality. Banks are not required to notify anyone when they walk away from a house – this is according to the American Banker's April 23, 2013 article titled "[Banks Halting Foreclosures to Avoid Upkeep.](#)"

The G.A.O. estimates that between 14.5K -34.6K of these undocumented houses are scattered throughout the country. Frequently they occur in clusters. In 2010, four of these houses were abandoned in my neighborhood – millions of dollars in net worth were destroyed. It isn't just the immediate neighborhood that is damaged. Comparable values within one mile radius are reduced.

I believe much of the lethargy in today's economy is due to inaction by City Hall. Our net worth is being destroyed as the banks save \$150 per month of maintenance. City Hall isn't being paid off, they are simply ignoring the problem. They allow dumping, graffiti, and property destruction despite laws that proscribe it.

People give up on their government when it refuses to enforce laws against banks. As political apathy sets in, anger builds and people become reactive about their situation.

### Transforming anger into action

I am angry about what is happening in my neighborhood. Being angry about boundary violations can either propel me forward if I use my agress energy creatively, or destroy my case if I blame others for the problem.

Rather than buying into the power game, tonight I am focused towards solution. I am:

- Effective – I say what I want, naming the problem instead of reacting against the inaction of the City.
- Heard – I ask clearly and directly for what I want.
- Going to get results – By not blaming, I draw attention to my ideas.

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I choose to keep my anger in check, and not blame. Instead I ask for an accounting of the situation and how it came to be. My presentation was quite succinct and took just under 2 minutes to lay out.

I find short succinct presentations help keep me focused on solution, instead of blame.

## Law and Code

Tonight, at the podium, I am going to make a case to change the City's tolerance policy of allowing these blights to go unchallenged. State law says: "The City Manager shall faithfully execute all ordinances and law". It provides no exception for banks. See [Law](#) for more insights into integrating it into your campaign.

I am going use a Power Point presentation for the documents my attorney researched. I keep my audience focused by not showing the whole bankruptcy file – just the critical page. The community will see the house being surrendered to Chase 35 days prior to garbage being dumped.

Municipal Code is far reaching and prohibits these types of blights. It also provides the ability for the City to recover all monies spent on cleanup through property tax liens. These liens cannot be stripped off the property through the foreclosure process. The lien is placed on the property, not the individual in Bankruptcy. The City is first in line for monies from property tax liens; ahead of the Bank and even the IRS.

People in politics do not like their shortcomings pointed out in public from the podium. Combining that knowledge, with law and code, calls into question their continued employment. I will use the City Manager's refusal to deal with this issue to make a case for changing policies. The person serving as the City Manager is a policy decision. I will be making a case for a new direction of the City, and a new City Manager.

## Time for decision

I would ask you to suspend judgment about my speaking style until you see the results. Ultimately, I have to choose between:

- Blaming and not getting the results I want.
- Being effective and getting the situation cleaned up.

I choose to be effective.

## **Power's Achilles Heel**

Power that engages in control over others does not like being called out in public about its shortcomings. Instead it prefers to fight and deflect. Blame and excuses are its hallmark, not fixing problems. These behaviors are its primary weakness.

### **The Sting**

To motivate power into action I embed a sting into my speeches and letters. The bold text in the Reconnaissance sections shows the underlying message I delivered. I don't have to raise my voice to call out willful inaction when using this approach. Political power does not like being engaged this way.

In adding solution to the sting, the governance of the City is called into question. Councils live and die by the decisions and actions of their City Manager. Power will do whatever it takes to avoid stinging presentations: including fixing the problem.

In standing forth as an adult, and speaking to the issues without blame: I am heard. Some people call this, "Speaking Truth to Power".

## **TEXT OF SPEECH**

I hired a bankruptcy attorney to investigate the October 26th story in the Highline Times about the abandoned foreclosed houses. I believe I found evidence of mismanagement and misuse of City funds.

The public record shows Chase receiving free city cleanup at 11416 26th Ave. S. That was the house with 40 yards of garbage.

If you look at the overhead projector you will see Page 3 Section V of the bankruptcy filing. This is the section where the house was surrendered to Chase on March 25th 2010. That was 35 days before the dumping began and eight months before the City cleanup.

Instead of pursuing abatement action against Chase, the legal owner, the City Manager and City Attorney chose to cleanup the mess with City funds.

Since the City chose not to charge Chase, the legal owner, for the cleanup their property. I want to know what public accounts were charged for cleaning up Chase's legal obligation. How many thousands of dollars were involved. I want to know why

things were done the way they were.

I respectfully request that a due diligence report into this matter, including recovery of these monies be entered into the public record by August 1st. Recovery efforts should evaluate action against Chase and if that is not an option, then the Council should contact your insurance carrier for recovery of lost City funds.

**Video link:** [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dZeImi03\\_MY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dZeImi03_MY)

## **RECONNAISSANCE**

**March 4, 2013**

King County Recorders office showed no liens from Burien regarding clean up of the Chase Bank house.

**Cleaning up private property without a lien is an illegal use of City funds.**

News story in the *Highline Times* provided a number of points for me to investigate.

- Half dozen letters to Chase Bank
- No response from Chase Bank
- City funds were used to clean up private property
- City was unable to recover clean up costs
- Acknowledged the existence of other Bank REO's in my neighborhood.

**Shows a lack of follow through on the part of the City to known issues.**

Attorney documents showed that the house was surrendered to Chase 35 days prior to dumping.

**These documents call into question the City Manager's handling of both money and polices.**

Burien Municipal Code (BMC) does not allow blighting and provides full recovery for all monies expended. This includes administrative staff, attorney fees, and the actual clean up itself.

**This calls into question the oversight of the City Manager by the Council in regards to his execution of their ordinances.**

## **Good news / Bad news**

The bad news is things were far worse than I expected. The Council doesn't seem surprised or interested in the problem. The problem is far more pervasive than the Bank REO's. It extends into almost every aspect of the City.

No one appears to be in control of the situation; blame and deflection is substituted for meaningful action. The Council is highly polarized; there is infighting.

The good news is it was easy to lay out a campaign for change. Each of the problems I saw in the Council Chambers represented an opportunity. I used these possibilities to articulate a case for new direction. Staying through the entire Council meetings when I spoke, provided me with plenty of fresh material for each of my presentations.

I would invite you to attend a couple of Council meetings prior to speaking. That way you will have a better grasp of what is going on in your City. If your City is in decline; there will be no shortage of material to speak about. You will be able to quickly pencil out your campaign and get down to the business of writing.

With *The Bully Pulpit*, you won't have to reinvent the wheel to get things cleaned up in your City. You can use it as a template, or better yet; improve on it.

## **After Thoughts**

### **Presentation Issues**

Making a stand for my beliefs creates adrenaline. This is perfectly normal. I was:

- Very nervous
- Quite tight
- Having difficulty with the volume of my voice
- Voice sounded crackly to me

Adrenaline affected my perceptions, not the presentation itself. There is a tab to called **[Breathing](#)**. As a result, I am now doing breathing exercises for 3 minutes a day to help counteract adrenaline. By the middle of the 4th presentation you will see a dramatic shift in my energy as I become more relaxed by breathing easier. My presentations will become more nuanced and I will engage the audience more effectively.

### **Changing the course of the Nation**

Seeing what confronts you and your City, as an opportunity instead of as a problem, is an important distinction to make. Seeing it as a problem will make it just that. Seeing it as an opportunity allows anger to be transformed into passion. Passion is infectious. It gets results.

The easiest way to change the course of the country, is to change the discourse at the political level. The podium is perfect for this endeavor. It provides a high visibility message to the community and the Council for change.

Staying focused on solution instead of blame, is where connecting to the audience is made possible. I am modeling the behavior I want to see.

If the City ignores you – that's O.K., it has nothing to do with you, its just how power operates. If this happen to you too, this behavior can be quite useful for the community to see. It will help them comprehend why things are the way they are.

### **The Chase House**

My decision to speak for a more expansive change required I know more about this property.

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**March 5, 2013**

## **Public Records Request**

**INTENT:** To see the actual documents behind the Chase cleanup and use them to facilitate getting the rest of the Bank REO's cleaned up.

A Public Records Request is the way to access City information. I used this to get to the bottom of the Chase house issue.

One of the advantages of using the Public Records Request is you will have a copy of the actual documents. They can bolster your case when they are integrated into your campaign. I kept my request focused on a few key documents.

If your request is to broad you should expect:

- Delays in getting information.
- Paying for documents you don't need.

I made an error in my request. I'll share more on how to avoid this in a moment.

The information I requested from the City was:

- Waste Management Invoice for 40 yard dumpster and disposal fee for cleanup at 11416 26th Ave. S. during the week before thanksgiving in 2010.
- Journal Entry in Burien City books for the Waste Management Invoice above.
- Please include account charged to.
- Number of individuals at the cleanup site at 11416 26th Ave. S. Please include Burien employees and contractors if they were used.
- Journal entry into Burien City books for employees and contractor who performed the clean up at 11416 26th Ave. S.
- Please include account charged to.
- Please include a copy of the description in the Chart of Accounts that tells what the money is being charged to for the above Journal Entries.
- Copy of the "Limited Right of Entry" referred to in the October 26, 2012 Highline story about abandoned foreclosed houses.

Asking for cumulative information, such as number of individuals, is not allowed by law. I can only ask for the documents, not the tallies.

I asked that the information be sent via email, allowing for easier distribution.

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**March 18, 2013**  
**THE COST OF DOING NOTHING**  
**FORETHOUGHT**

INTENT: Demonstrate the cost to the City and residents of allowing these blights to go unchallenged.

**The downward spiral**

Hundreds of billions in net worth have been stripped from the economy. Quantitative Easing by the Federal Reserve can only do so much without net worth creation at the local level. Without net worth to move the Nation forward, the economy's wheels are spinning without gaining traction. Subsequently, jobs and opportunities continue to be lost. Despair has now settled in.

Inaction does have a real cost to both the City and the residents. The American Dream is anything but that when Banks are allowed to bludgeon neighborhoods. As Cities decline, many unsavory and costly things occur:

- **Graffiti** is a quality of life crime. Its strident message creates fear and depresses property values. As values drop, City revenues decline as well. Graffiti cleanup is expensive.
- **Crimes against people and property** increase as neighborhoods slip into disrepair and decay. There are two messages being sent: “the police aren't around” and “the City doesn't care”. Fear of crime negatively affects peoples spending habits. Business activities diminish and so do tax revenues to the City.
- **Homeowners being pushed underwater** denies them the ability to sell their home. Thus foreclosures become more common when people are laid off. Houses frequently sit for years in the foreclosure process. Empty homes do not support the local economy. Businesses fail and jobs are lost. City revenues from fees on phone, garbage, power, etc are lost.
- **Negative net worth** thwarts entrepreneurial opportunities. Job creation stalls. Tax revenue is lost.

The cost of inaction is far greater than the price of action. Price and cost are not interchangeable terms. Price refers only to the out of pocket expenditure of action. Cost is a more encompassing term. It takes into account how all of the pieces of a City are interconnected.

## **Burien 2013**

Cost would show that its not just a neighborhood issue. Declining neighborhoods aren't able to support a vibrant business community. That in turn creates a triple hit to the City finances. Sales taxes from businesses, property taxes from the residents, and utility taxes are the three pillars of revenue for the City. All are crumbling. The ability to have safe neighborhoods is now in jeopardy. Police protection is 56% of the the City Budget. The ability to fund this protection is now being called into question. The City has reached a tipping point.

### **Lies, damn lies and statistics**

Using information gleaned from the internet can be dicey. Google has over 25.8 million sites listed when I searched; what does an abandoned bank repossession cost municipalities. It is a large problem throughout the U.S.

I will be referring to houses costing the City 34K in this presentation based on an FDIC Report. I am referring to costing lost revenue, not price. My City didn't lift a finger or spend a dime (price) on any of these houses with the exception of the Chase house.

Allowing net worth to drop affects more than homeowners – it effects everything including the City's finances. That year, Burien had to dip into its “rainy day fund” for 1.4 million dollars due to savage revenue shortfalls. I believe the cost of doing nothing was far greater than the 34K I quoted from the FDIC.

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The cost of managerial inaction was so profound, that nothing was untouched. The decline was accelerating rapidly. I will be requesting the full implementation of the Municipal Code to turn this situation around.

### **TEXT OF SPEECH**

According to the King County Assessor's Office property values in Burien are falling 35% faster than Sea-Tac, 35.1% faster than Tukwila, and 34.6% faster than Des Moines.

Houses like these on the overhead projector are scattered throughout Burien. Each one affects the property values for three square miles and with the City having only 10.1 square miles these houses cannot be allowed to exist without serious financial results for the homeowners of Burien, the businesses of Burien and the City of Burien itself.

According to the FDIC each one of these houses cost the City 34K in lost revenue and the surrounding home values go down by 220K.

These 8 houses on the screen have cost the City 589K in lost revenue in the last three years.. The residents of Burien have lost \$208,125,000 in net worth last year above and beyond our surrounding Municipalities because the City refuses to take action against these type of houses.

The code policy of reactively dealing with code issues gives us houses like those on the screen. There are somewhere between 50 and 100 houses like this throughout Burien. Some are Bank repos and some are owned by slumlords.

Not one new law has to be enacted to deal with every house on the screen.

It would take the City no more than 40 man hours to abate each one of these. In one year the City would add 1.7 million dollars to the City coffers and increase homeowners net worth in excess of 1 billion dollars by dealing with these houses using the existing BMC.

It would send a powerful message to potential home buyers that Burien is the kind of City that will watch their backs and deal effectively with issues like these as they arise.

What it does require, is the City Council to send new marching orders to the City Manager to enforce the existing Burien Municipal Code.

**Video link:** [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MotXYy\\_B89Y](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MotXYy_B89Y)

## **RECONNAISSANCE**

**March 18, 2013**

I used the King County Assessors Office to acquire information on Burien and the surrounding Cities of Sea-Tac, Tukwila and Des Moines. All of these communities had a similar housing inventory. I compared the performance of these three surrounding Cities to Burien.

**This underscores the inaction on the part of the Council in monitoring the performance of the City.**

I Googled: what does an abandoned bank repossession cost municipalities. There were 25.8 million results. I used an FDIC report for my information.

**This shows the price of action. The actual cost of inaction was much greater.**

Comparable real estate values are affected for a one mile radius. That is 3 square miles.

**Shows the Council not being cognizant of the cost of these blights to the City's finances.**

## **AFTERTHOUGHT**

### **Presentation Issues**

My ability to control the volume of my voice has returned to normal. Though I still have some tightness in the Solar Plexus, the breathing exercises are starting to work.

### **Moving the Nation Forward**

Engaging City Hall is the easiest way to add hundreds of billions of dollars to the Nation's GDP. As these Bank REO's are cleaned up, neighborhoods will once again become desirable. Home values will improve. People will have money to engage opportunities. The economy will get moving. Underemployment will shrink and wages will rise. The economic recovery will become sustainable.

I am proposing a more expansive change than just a repatriation of our net worth. It involves a fundamental change in the way government engages corporate power. City Hall is the one that is allowing these problems to fester in our neighborhoods. They have the laws to deal with these issues – yet refuse to take action.

The key to turning this around at the National level starts with City Hall. Speaking effectively requires staying out of the blame game and keeping the audience focused on solution.

### **Moving Beyond Victim**

Political power frequently has a “control over others” component. That boundary violation fans the flames of anger throughout this Country. Dealing with this issue requires engagement, not fighting.

When we fight, we relegate ourselves to being a “victim”. Victim is a place where blaming and paralysis occur. Despair and fiery anger are its hallmark. Moving away from this stance requires a conscious choice – thoughtful action. The action I am talking about is giving up blame and moving towards solution.

Solution is about engaging my audience – the community. The Council won't like it, but judiciously articulating the problem and offering a solution will get their attention. Councils don't like being questioned about their policies. Being portrayed as ineffective, meeting after meeting, will get action.

Banks also represent a vicious form of power over others – casual unconscious violence. City Hall is the venue to engage this pernicious boundary problem. Using Code and Law will call into question the City Manager's job performance. The Manager will do what it takes to save their job – they can move mountains when they are motivated.

I've seen the results of motivating a City Manager to get even the most obstinate bank into compliance with Municipal Code. The monetary results – increased net worth – are what the Federal Reserve refers to as the “wealth effect”.

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## March 28, 2013 State Auditor's Office

INTENT: To stop the City from using City funds to cleanup private property without reimbursement.

I have received the Public Records Request email from Burien. It is full of interesting information about the Chase house. Specifically, the use of City funds to cleanup bank owned property.

I contacted the Washington State Auditors office because this information discloses illegal use of City funds. The Auditors will see to it that procedures are put in place so this does not occur again. This will help point the City in the direction of what it needs to do about the houses I am discussing with the Council.

The State has supervisory authority over municipalities. The Auditor's office is tasked with seeing that public money is properly spent. Burien's annual audit is scheduled to commence in two weeks. At a minimum, the auditors will be CPA's and many will be tax attorneys.

They will have the depth of knowledge to untangle situations like these. I discussed the documents I had with the auditor. During this time I kept myself focused on the facts in front of me. (This is where hiring the attorney gave me greater knowledge, so I could be effective with the auditor)

He asked for copies of the bankruptcy documents and public records request. I forwarded my email from Burien so they see the documents in their full context. I attached the following note:

I have attached the bankruptcy filing we talked about for the house in Burien located at 11416 26th Ave. S. plus the Order Approving Amended Plan. Additionally, there is the response from Burien.

What I see in Burien's response to my records request is:

- That Burien charged this matter to their legal department instead of filing a lien against the house.
- Burien cannot provide the dollar amount for the labor.
- The various invoices were for dates other than the time line that the work occurred. Specifically, the job ran from November 22nd through November 24th 2010. These invoices according to Dunn Lumber were for the dates the material was ordered.
- The limited right of entry document only allowed Burien the right to clean up garbage and debris. Page 16

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- There were no provisions in the limited right of entry for restitution. Page 16
- Burien additionally secured the house by boarding it up which was not included in the right of entry and had unknown costs.
- Burien states that Waste Management donated the hauling and disposal fee. Dumpster was picked up at that location on 11-24-10.

The Bankruptcy filings indicate:

- The house was surrendered to Chase on March 25, 2010. Page 3 of the Amended Plan Section V under Secured Property Surrendered.
- The Judges signature ordering this plan can be found in the Hoeun\_Tun\_Order Approving Amended Plan.
- The house was surrendered 35 days prior to the start of dumping at this property.

Hopefully this information will provide you a starting point to determine if further investigation is warranted.

Thank you in advance for your time.

Dick West

Auditors rely on these types of tips.

If the issue confronting your City is of a different nature, these State agencies might be more appropriate:

- Auditor's Office – Financial irregularities, misuse, mismanagement of City funds
- Fire Marshall – Fire and safety issues
- Public Health – Sanitary issues, garbage, and communicable diseases
- State Police – Criminal misconduct, street, intersection and sidewalk safety issues
- Ecology – Pollution of air, water and land

Your State's website can direct you to these agencies.



April 1, 2013

## ASK THE COUNCIL NOT TO RUN FOR RE-ELECTION FORETHOUGHT

INTENT: To show the Council is not properly overseeing the health of the City

### Fiddling while the City burns

City Councils are the ones who are presiding over the decline of this Country. The issues that bedevil the Nation aren't happening on the South Lawn of the White House; they are happening right in our neighborhoods.

Councils formulate the policies and directives that are carried out by the the City Manager. They alone, are directly responsible for the oversight of the health of the municipal corporation.

Many Councils are permitting tolerance policies to exist. These policies are in direct contradiction to the ordinances they passed. This kind of willful inaction is illegal. Essentially, a City is taking money for services it has no intention of performing.

### Boundaries

Tonight I am going to establish clear and effective boundaries about the conduct that is damaging the City and the neighborhoods. I always stay away from legal jargon like: malfeasance and misfeasance. These are legal determinations reserved solely for the Court system.

To allege these, requires significant sums of time, money and effort. The legal process is neither cheap nor speedy. The process is often fraught with peril. Rulings are very limited in scope, and the term "reasonable attorney fee recovery" is an oxymoron statement.

In contrast, a change in City policies can be far broader in scope and is much easier to achieve. These kinds of changes requires getting the attention of the Council. Establishing boundaries from the podium is high profile. I will not be walking on eggshells tonight, nor am I engaging in revenge. I am articulating what I see happening.

The Council and City Manager won't like being engaged like this. They most likely will want me to stop speaking. They have two ways they can proceed:

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1. Clean up the issue
2. Deflect it

In the next presentation, their choice will become clear.

### **TEXT OF SPEECH**

I am both pleased and disheartened by the City Council's decision on voting wards. I am pleased that it is not going to go forward at this time. I am also angry at the waste of time and money this issue has caused.

The four Council members who were advocating it had the votes, the legal prerogative to make it happen, yet were unable to execute this.

This pattern of failure to execute policy shows up repeatedly in Burien:

- Failure to enforce the Burien Municipal Code has caused housing prices to decline.
- Failure to followup with the City Manager on requests for information is pervasive.
- Failure to respond in a timely manner to requests for Public Records is pervasive.
- Failure of Council to vote when a quorum is present because certain members choose not to attend that evening happens frequently.
- Failure of the City to follow its own laws.
- And the list goes on and on.

At a recent Council meeting on Planning for Business development the members of the Council were heard talking about calling it an action plan so that it wouldn't sit on the shelf like the others.

Unfortunately, talk doesn't make things happen, it is passion and conviction to see it through that makes things happen.

Ultimately, life comes down to DO IT, DELEGATE IT, or DUMP IT.

The City and the community cannot afford to be led by people who will not stay focused and appear incapable of implementing their own directives.

I am respectfully requesting that the members of the Council whose terms are up, not run for reelection.

## RECONNAISSANCE

April 1, 2013

Wards was a controversial program that the Council proposed. It was covered in the Council meetings and the press. It was seen as form of gerrymandering. There were enough votes to pass it, yet the City Council was unwilling to execute.

**Shows a lack of follow through on the part of the Council to implement policies.**

Requests for information can be seen at the Council Chambers as members request more information from the City Manager. There had been much written on this topic to suggest that many members of the Council were being ignored.

**Specifically, the number of requests far exceeded the information provided by the City Manager. Stonewalling – naming it is a powerful tool.**

The Council requires a quorum to conduct business. There were numerous times that a quorum was present, yet voting on key issues was not allowed because certain members chose not to show up. A case in point was the meeting in which a Council member proposed changing Burien to a Mayor system instead of a City Manager. Members who supported the City Manager walked out. The meeting was then adjourned due to a lack of a quorum.

**Calling out their behavior gets attention.**

City right of way was strictly a City issue. The City was not keeping up its own property and thus degrading the City further.

**Naming specific points of action.**

Failure to implement the BMC led to blights such as: dilapidated Bank REO's, slumlord dwellings, graffiti, etc. All of these contributed to the decline of the City.

**Pointing out the Councils failure to direct the City Manager to enforce its Ordinances.**

The “action plan” I referred to happened on the first night. The Council was discussing a Business Development Plan. Several Council Members were in agreement that it should called an action plan so it wouldn't sit on the shelf with all of the others. At a candidate forum in July, it came out that there were over a million dollars worth of these plans sitting on the shelf.

**Detailing your Council's lack of follow through will be a powerful impetus for action or change.**

AFTERTHOUGHT

Changing the course of this Country starts with the discourse – yours and mine. The language we choose frequently determines the outcome, for better or for worse. For every person who speaks, thousands remain silent. Many of the silent are very angry about what is going on around them. This site is designed to give you a different perspective on speaking effectively to the issues happening in your City.

Tolerance policies are about poor boundaries. Blaming the Council for their boundary issues with monied interests is not congruent. Blame, while juicy, takes no responsibility for what is happening. Responsibility is not about fault and blame, rather its sharing what I/you are experiencing, and offering solutions.

Audiences frequently dismiss people who criticize others' boundaries. This isn't a choice between care taking or rage, its about boundaries. Boundaries are the place we engage in solution or fight about being right.

There was nothing wimpy or vengeful about my presentation when I asked the Council not to seek reelection. I use ownership language at all times – both at the podium and in my life.

There is a tab called [OWNERSHIP LANGUAGE](#) to give you more insight. I believe you will be more effective communicating with everyone. Co-workers, spouses, business partners, etc will notice the difference when blame is not used. It tends to be more inclusive. People will want to know more. They will be more engaged. The Council will notice when consensus is being created at the podium. Speaking this way acts like a catalyst, change will occur.

Creating consensus through inclusion is how conversations like these are shaped. This process requires a more thoughtful approach. Reactivity will generally diminish and results will improve.

If you are the kind of person who “hates drama”, I propose this approach is well suited for you. There is no slamming fists, loud voices or crazy making here. It is about having clear boundaries while sharing what is happening. Staying away from the blame game is all that is required – nothing more.

The individual does make a difference, when they speak effectively.



# The Bully Pulpit

**April 15, 2013**  
**BUDGETS**  
**FORETHOUGHT**

INTENT: To bring the City into compliance on budgeting as required by State Law

Gone are the giddy days of ever increasing house prices and revenue streams for Cities. Now in its place, is a pervasive sense of lack and limitation The paradigm has shifted - Cities are now in decline.

The lack of political will and understanding of the human dynamics in budgeting, is a major factor in this malaise. Cities ignore the neighborhoods and wonder why the business community is struggling. Excuses and blame are substituted for effective action. The budget equation doesn't balance, if the neighborhoods are not taken into account. They are the ones doing the purchasing.

## **Understanding the pieces**

The City's refusal to follow State Law on Budgeting had profound consequences. Residents were losing 750K per day (208 million annually) in net worth above and beyond the adjacent Cities. This in turn directly impacted businesses as consumers curtailed spending. All of this was avoidable.

The City's failure to grasp how all of the pieces were interconnected, led to problems with neighborhoods. A cost analysis would have shown that it was a good investment to engage problems as they occurred. This would have led to a greater demand for homes in Burien. Prices would have firmed and net worth would have grown. This in turn would have led to greater spending and more revenue for the City from both residents and businesses.

Instead the consequences rippled outward, nothing was unscathed. Businesses experienced a body blow as residents curtailed spending. Jobs were lost, and the cycle spiraled downward.

A City of any size cannot endure these kinds of losses, especially a small one of only 48K, whose average household income is 48K.

## **City Manager's Report**

The City Manager will be responding to my previous request for a due diligence report into the Chase house cleanup. Reports like these are always included in the

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[Council Packet](#). See tab on COUNCIL PACKETS for a better understanding of how to read these and use them for information.

I was not watching the Council Packet in advance of showing up that evening. This report is going to be read into the public record. I have about 15 minutes to review the report before my turn to speak.

### **Shaping the conversation**

Timing is a key piece here. Public Comment is at the beginning of the meeting, while the City Manager's Report is later.

I chose to take the initiative. I will acknowledge my omission of providing a copy of the bankruptcy filing that has a Judge's signature.

I choose to build on what I see as a positive development: the City is willing to entertain being proactive on Code Enforcement. However, they want to wait until the next budget cycle to begin this process.

I will be engaging the City Manager in a series of questions. They will be of a cost analysis nature on going proactive. The questions are reasonable and pertinent to the report.

The Council has the opportunity to ask further questions, if they choose. I don't have that privilege. The Council is divided on the issue, questions are likely.

### **The Presentation**

There will be very little eye contact on my part while I am talking about budgeting. I am concerned about running out of time. However, when I get to the City Manager's Report, I will be in full contact as I speak. As I concluded my presentation, the City Manager shared his displeasure with me. Although you cannot see me, you can hear my calm thank you.

Tonight, as I start to engage in dialogue, with the City Manager, you will see my breathing exercises starting to work. My voice will become more resonant and the tempo of my speaking will ease.

This is where I start to integrate law in my presentations. Law is easy to read and understand. There is a tab called [LAW](#) to assist you.

### **TEXT OF SPEECH**

Washington State Law requires the City to submit Quarterly Report of Status to the City Council. To date not one submission has occurred.

These reports give a snapshot of how the City is doing in regards to its Budget assumptions.

The finance department would be responsible to give the City Council a quarterly report on shortfalls or surpluses in revenue and expenditures and why they were occurring.

These Quarterly Report of Status provide a high level of transparency to the City's financial dealings. Information that the Council does not want the public to know such as how much the White Center annexation really cost would be available to everyone. I believe this would lead to more thoughtful use of our public funds.

Budgets are the basis of sound planning. With planning we can reach our stated goals with certainty.

The new quarter has just started. Today Burien's job is to start compiling the data for the their upcoming presentation to the City Council as mandated by law.

**Video link:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1vZzOhoFHh4>

#### **RCW 35A.33.140**

#### **Funds — Quarterly report of status.**

At such intervals as may be required by city charter or ordinance, however, being not less than quarterly, the clerk shall submit to the city's legislative body and chief administrative officer a report showing the expenditures and liabilities against each separate budget appropriation incurred during the preceding reporting period and like information for the whole of the current fiscal year to the first day of the current reporting period together with the unexpended balance of each appropriation. The report shall also show the receipts from all sources.

[1967 ex.s. c 119 § [35A.33.140](#).]

### **RECONNAISSANCE**

**April 15, 2013**

Information for budgeting can be found in State Law.

**Using Law underscores the cost of inaction.**

Policies that the Council maintains are another source of information on budgeting.  
**Pointing out willful disregard of policy directives will create a momentum for change.**

Wards and Annexation were highly unpopular programs that the Council undertook. They refused to provide the monetary costs of these endeavors.  
**Calling out the refusal of the management to tell how much unpopular programs cost.**

The Council Packet contained the information on the City Manager's Report.  
**Engaging defiant political power proactively, will allow the community to see it in action.**

## **AFTERTHOUGHT**

### **Presentation Issues**

In the past I had always talked to the Council, exclusively. Now I am broadening my audience to include not only the City Manager but the community as well.

I will remember this presentation in the fall as I begin the closing arguments.

Wherever you can engage in dialogue, I would invite you to take the opportunity. It shapes the conversation and gives practice for concluding your campaign.

### **The wealth effect**

Creating wealth in the neighborhoods across the Country will have a profound effect. It will power the economy; creating more opportunities and jobs. Putting the neighborhoods into the budget equation is the first step.

The second is engaging the community. An engaged community has a voice – a reason to be optimistic about a better tomorrow. This is going to take change to occur. This will require a leadership that is more engaged and understands that businesses do not operate in a vacuum. They require financially healthy customers to be successful. One of the easiest and least costly ways to achieve this, is to increase net worth in the neighborhoods.

### **City Manager's Report**

The City Manager's Report was not read into the public record tonight. It will be discussed on April 22nd.

## **Dialogue**

The statement, “We should not be afraid of the government, they should be afraid of us” is a power position. Making them afraid, will only make them less effective at getting things resolved.

Taking the time to engage in dialogue, when the opportunity presents itself, also provides a path for resolution. Ultimately, a choice has to be made – do I really want what I say, or do I just want to blame and continue the status quo?

Choosing not to blame opens another avenue – autonomy. In this place I am not the victim, rather I make choices to further my goals instead of reacting. I will be sharing more on this when the City Manager reads the report into the Public Record on April 22nd.

## **PDF File**

I committed to sending the City a copy of the PDF file of the Bankruptcy documents that contained the Judge's signature ordering the reorganization into action.

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**April 16, 2013**  
**Response to the Council**  
**FORETHOUGHT**

## **Opportunities**

Situations like this are golden opportunities to shape a conversation. By taking the initiative, I am in motion. Momentum is a game changer. I am an opportunist in situations like this, and I hope you are too.

I want there to be absolute clarity about my intent to get this issue cleaned up. Sending the letter to Council automatically puts it in the next Council Packet, where it can be seen. Copying it to the blog allows the community to see and comment on the matter.

I forwarded the email I sent to the State Auditor's Office as part of my response to the missing legal document. The Council and the community can see more clearly what is happening. They will see:

- Missing Court document
- My Public Records Request
- City's Response
- My assertions to the State Auditor
- My commitment to continue speaking to this matter

The City is now fully aware the Auditors are involved in this matter. The State Auditors have already arrived for the City's annual audit. Auditors do take action when they are contacted.

The action the State takes in matters like this are not punitive, rather they are corrective. This is exactly what I want. The auditors will show how the Chase house should have been dealt with. This will point the City in the direction needed to get the other houses that I am discussing with the Council cleaned up.

This also provides me an opportunity to share my hopes for a better City, with the Community.

**LETTER TO THE COUNCIL**

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Dear Council Members,

I am forwarding you my letter to Jim Griggs of the Washington State Auditors Office. This document has a variety of attachments and assertions that pertain to the questions surrounding the house located at 11416 26th Ave. S. The letter was written prior to the latest information found in last night's Council Packet.

I apologize for not including the file Hoeun Tun Order Confirming Amended Plan. When you open this PDF file you will note that it bears a Judge Samuel J. Steiner's signature ordering this plan into effect on March 25, 2010. I have also included the Chapter 13 Amended plan. The pivotal passage can be found on Page 3 Section V called Secured Property Surrendered.

I believe the City Manager is correct in the assertion that the Council will have to beef up the Code Compliance Department to proactively deal with these enforcement issues that the City is facing. I believe RCW 35A.33.140 (Quarterly Report of Status) will facilitate the City being able to determine the exact cost vs price for this endeavor. Additionally, it will answer definitively what Burien's actual losses due to these houses are versus the FDIC report indicating \$34,000 per house for abandoned bank repos.

Additionally, I believe the implementation of Quarterly Report of Status will fundamentally change the structure of the way Burien conducts business. Specifically:

- Council and the public will be fully informed at each quarterly report.
- Information will be easy to understand. Please see Mercer Island's. Page 3 is a good place to start: <http://www.mercergov.org/files/AB4788.pdf> .
- Budgeting can become an ongoing endeavor instead of an every two year ordeal.
- Projects you wish to undertake will have a higher level of success due to having all the facts before committing City funds.

Over the next six months I will be speaking to the Council on a variety of issues that confront both the City and residents. I am committed to bringing about positive change in Burien.

I believe the \$200 million dollars Burien is losing in homeowners net worth annually above and beyond our surrounding municipalities is a staggering problem that effects almost every aspect of our lives. It not only shows up in our neighborhoods that are in decline, but also decimates the business community as well as crippling the City's finances.

My presentations from this point forward will show what is going on as well as a

solution that is within the current capability of Burien to actually implement. While at times you may be agitated with my presentations, I would invite direct dialogue on these issues so that both sides can see each others perspective and fix the problem.

Fixing this problem will not only eliminate the \$200 million dollar problem the residents are experiencing, but will actually add over 1 billion dollars to our net worth. For every 50 houses that are cleaned up the City will generate \$1.7 million dollars in new revenue each year.

I believe the Council has done an extraordinary job with the BMC. It is crisp and to the point and the descriptors such as will, shall and must eliminate the ambiguity I see in many of the documents that cross my desk. What I am committed to seeing is the full implementation of the BMC and the City flourishing.

The choice before us is a \$200 million dollar problem or a 1 billion dollar solution. I choose solution. What is your choice?

Dick West

## **AFTERTHOUGHT**

INTENT: To share my commitment to get this issue resolved

### **Commitment**

Commitment to positive change is a powerful place to make a stand for your beliefs. W.H. Murray in his book The Scottish Himalayan Expedition shares: “Until one is committed, there is hesitancy, the chance to draw back, always ineffectiveness. Concerning all acts of initiative, there is one elementary truth, the ignorance of which kills countless ideas and splendid plans: that the moment one definitely commits oneself, then Providence moves too.

All sorts of things occur to help one that would otherwise never have occurred. A whole stream of events issues from the decision, raising in one's favor all manner of incidents and meetings and material assistance which no man would have believed would have come his way.”

In my campaign, synchronicity like Murray shares happened throughout the months I spoke. The names of all of those who provided assistance go unnamed, because I don't have their permission to recognize them. Nonetheless, there were countless encounters that would not have been possible without my commitment to speak.

Unbeknownst to me, another speaker will emerge just before my campaign begins. She too, will make a positive difference: graffiti abatement. Her campaign also used a solution based approach.

Our paths crossed many times in the Council Chambers. Synchronicity does occur.

Perhaps it's synchronicity that you are reading this site.

### **Being in motion**

Waiting impatiently for someone else to fix the problem is no substitute for commitment. The [Action Tunnel](#) tab shows how the power orientation is ineffective. Being in positive motion creates many opportunities to make a case for a better City.

Today, not tomorrow, is the time for commitment for turning your City and our Nation around.

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**April 22, 2013**  
**City Manager's Report**  
**FORETHOUGHT**

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## **Being right**

Political inaction is a national contagion. It isn't just limited to Congress, it percolates all the way down to City Hall too. The roots of this issue are found in the way power operates: escalation and blame. The nutrients that feed these roots are fear. Fear and anger are intertwined. Instead of experiencing the fear and taking effective action, being right(eous) is frequently substituted. Explosive emotional outbursts are generally the outcome when being right becomes part of the equation.

## **Being engaged**

The way to deal with defiant political power is straightforward; don't engage the escalation. I let the City Manager's inaction and excuses become part of the narrative. The audience for both of us is the community.

There are many ways to ameliorate intransigent behavior:

- Bring the action to the attention of the State Auditor (03-28-13 email)
- Engage in dialogue (04-15-13 presentation)
- Communicate with more information (04-16-13 Letter to Council)

The original City Manager's report (below) and the actual video presentation that follows shows how things can be calmed through solution based action.

## **Original City Manager's Report**

### **Abatement of code violations at an abandoned property in November, 2010**

The following is submitted at the request of Councilmember(s) at the March 4 Council meeting in response to the public comment from Dick West about the City's abatement of code violations at an abandoned residential property in North Burien.

Mr. West stated at the Council meeting that he had hired a bankruptcy attorney to investigate the city's handling of abandoned foreclosed homes and believed he had discovered mismanagement and misuse of city funds in providing Chase Bank free

cleanup at the home at 11416 26th Avenue South.

Actual events are as follows: in June, 2010, shortly after annexing the above property North Burien, the city began receiving complaints from law enforcement officers and residents (including Mr. West) about excessive dumping of trash, construction debris, mattresses, and stolen vehicles on the property and adjacent street and reports of unknown individuals entering the abandoned house during the day and night. The city was informed by King County that dumping in the street in front of the property had been habitual problem prior to annexation and the county had frequently been called on to remove the debris.

After researching property records, the city found the Chase bank had scheduled a foreclosure sale of the property but had not yet acquired ownership and the property owner had filed Chapter 13 bankruptcy protection. The city attempted to obtain code compliance from both Chase and the property owner but was unsuccessful in doing so.

Due to the urgency of health and safety violations and complains that had been received from the police, neighboring residents and Mr. West, the city negotiated a right of entry agreement with the property owner's bankruptcy attorney, in order for the City to enter the property to remove the garbage and secure the premises from unauthorized entry. On November 10, 2010, the property was cleaned and secured by the city public works crew (less than \$2500 in in-kind labor costs). Waste Management provided dumpsters and vouchers to cover disposal costs and the city crew used materials on hand for securing the premises, so the City did not incur any additional out-of-pocket costs.

The city was not legally able to file a lien against the property for the abatement costs due to the "automatic stay" provisions in section 362 of the United States bankruptcy code., Which prohibits such liens for charges incurred from the time the debtor has filed the bankruptcy of petition until the bankruptcy has been discharged. As stated in the document provided by Mr. West, the property would not be surrendered and the automatic stay would not be lifted until the debt reorganization plan was confirmed.

This document did not state, as indicated by Mr. West, that the property was surrendered to Chase Bank on March 25, 2010. To the contrary, according to King County property records, the trustees deed upon sale transferring ownership from the bankrupt property owner to Federal National Mortgage Association did not occur until December 9, 2011. This was over a year after the city cleaned and secured the property. If Mr. West or his bankruptcy attorney has accurate contrary information regarding bankruptcy law or how and when the transfer of this property occurred, city staff would be very interested in reviewing it.

It should also be noted that April, 2012, the City Council adopted a new code enforcement ordinance, Chapter 1. 15 BMC. In this new ordinance, the city expanded the definition of "persons responsible for violation" to include mortgagees

(such as Chase Bank) property that is subject to a foreclosure action or that has been abandoned for at least 90 days. This now gives the City an additional tool to deal with mortgage companies such as Chase Bank; however, it still does not avoid the problem of dealing with properties involved in bankruptcy proceeding. Accordingly, in order for the City to clean and secure the above property in response to the urgent complaints of Mr. West and others, the City would still have no choice but to absorb the cost of doing so.

It should further be noted that the City's code enforcement staff was successful in obtaining code compliance for several properties in the North Burien shortly after annexation without the City incurring any abatement costs other than staff time. These properties were being used as hangouts for various illegal activities, had been of significant concern to law enforcement officers for a long time, and had not been brought into compliance by King County code enforcement.

### **Cost of Abandoned Residential Properties**

At the March 18 Council meeting, Councilmembers asked staff for information in response to the public comment from Dick West about the cost to the City of eight abandoned residential properties and 50-100 other such properties throughout Burien.

Mr. West showed the Council photos and eight apparently they can houses. He said, "According to the FDIC each of these houses cost the city \$34,000 in lost revenue and surrounding home values go down by \$220,000". He further said that these losses occur every year. Apparently extrapolating these amounts, Mr. West then said, "These eight houses on the screen have cost the city \$589,000 in lost revenue in the last three years. The residents of Burien have lost \$208,125,000 in net worth last year above and beyond our surrounding municipalities, because the City refuses to take action against these types of houses."

Staff has reviewed the FDIC website and found the following statements, which were based on 2005 Chicago studies:

"Homes in foreclosure that become vacant provide sites the crime and other neighborhood problems. One foreclosure can impose up to \$34,000 in direct costs on local government agencies, including inspections court actions police and fire department efforts, potential demolition, unpaid water and sewage, and trash removal....One foreclosure can result in as much as an additional \$220,000 and reduce property value and home equity for nearby homes."

Thus, as actually stated on FDIC website, the \$34,000 figure does not represent annual lost revenue to city government nor does the \$220,000 figure represent annual property value reduction in Burien. Although city staff does not disagree that abandoned foreclosed homes are a significant problem, Mr. West calculated total

cost attributed to this problem are difficult to substantiate.

Staff has also reviewed the eight houses reference by Mr. West. All are apparently up to date on King County property tax payments. One of the eight (#6) is an active code enforcement case. Three of the eight (#1,3,7) are closed code enforcement cases that have been brought into compliance. Four of the eight (#2,4,5,8) have never been reported to City code enforcement.

Thus, the record contradicts Mr. West's statement that the city refuses to take action against these types of houses.

Although City staff does not have a precise or approximate count of the number of vacant homes in foreclosure in Burien, needless to say there are more than anyone would like to see. If Mr. West's estimate of 50-100 such homes and his estimate of 40 hours of staff time to abate each one are fair approximations, then the city Council would need to significantly increase the city's code enforcement budget in order to proactively address the situation. As part of the budget process, city staff is very willing to review this situation more carefully and propose possible courses of action and budget options for dealing with it.

### **City Manager Video**

The first couple of minutes the City Attorney will share the legal aspects of the situation. Immediately following him, the City Manager will provide his position on the matter.

I do not own the copyrights to this video. It can be seen on the [City website](#). Choose April 22, 2013. Click Video and at 1 hour 21 minutes, the presentation begins with the City Attorney.

### **RECONNAISSANCE**

**April 22, 2013**

The information from this presentation comes from the City Manager's Report found in the Council Packet.

Engaging in revenge and escalation is what power is used too. **I denied him a way of deflecting his responsibility in this matter.**

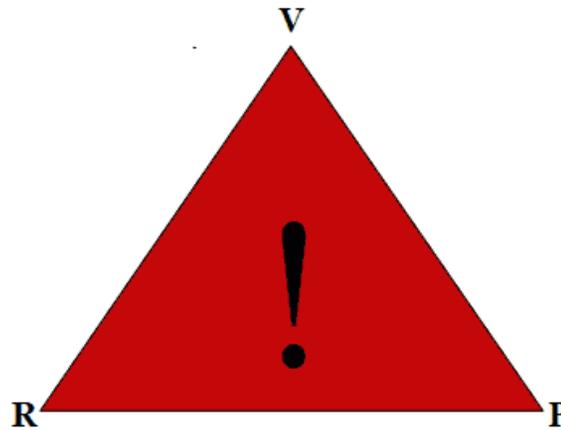
**Allowing power to act ineffectively through its own word and actions is the way to engage it.**

He only did this once before starting to deal with the issue.

## AFTERTHOUGHTS

Gifts in the political world are where a person oversteps / overreaches / blames etc. This “gift” is then used against the giver. I don't offer gifts, and I don't accept them either. If I had accepted a gift from the City Manager, the following would have occurred:

### The Drama Triangle



Excerpted from *A Game Free Life*, by Stephen B. Karpman M.D.

The Drama Triangle is about power struggle. Each role is either dominant or submissive. Someone is the:

- Victim
- Persecutor
- Rescuer

Each person's role would change as the power struggle unfolded.

- Had I retaliated for statements from the City Manager, I would have found myself in the persecutor role.
- The Council's role would then be that of the victim.
- The City Manager would be seen as that of the rescuer, helping defend his employers against unjust attacks.

This situation would have continued to escalate with the roles changing with each

volley of blame and counter blame. In this scenario, resolution and cleanup of these houses would elude me. The Drama Triangle shows how engaging in escalation maintains the status quo.

### **Victim**

In order for me to become the Persecutor in the Drama Triangle, I would first have to assume the role of the Victim. We are only victims if we choose to play with the Drama Triangle. It is a three sided teeter totter requiring a Persecutor, Rescuer, and a Victim to function. It grinds to a halt, without the participation of all three parties. Without the Drama Triangle, solution now becomes possible.

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May 1, 2013  
Advertising in a Digital World

I have uploaded my Clean Up Burien website. See the tab for [Clean Up Burien](#). I am using button advertising in the B-Town Blog to connect my message to a wider audience. My campaign relies on branding and providing informative insights into why things are the way they are; and how to remedy them.

Digital advertising is cheap, compared with the column inch rates found in newspapers. One of the greatest advantage in this medium is in the click through to a greater wealth of information for my readers.

## Branding

This is the same concept a business uses to get people interested in their products. It requires the message to be focused:

- My brand message was: “What is the 200 Million Dollar Problem?”
- I incorporate the “200 Million Dollar Problem” in my presentations until the change up at end of my campaign, in mid August.



I maintained my single issue focus with the Council and Blog, even though I had strong beliefs about other issues. I refrained from commenting on them.

## Websites

One of the best values for under a \$100, is a website. Keeping it visible amongst the billions of other websites is the challenge. To that end, I:

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Kept it updated every two weeks with new presentations. If it isn't updated at least once a month it will be downgraded by the search engines at Google.

- Use videos. Google is rather narcissistic, and gives higher search results to You Tube. That was where my videos were hosted.
- Used a name that contains my City name in the URL. When I typed in my City name, I was always on page 1 with the City's website.
- Links are another thing search engines rate favorably. My button ad had a link.

### **Button Advertising**

Currently, there is a shortage of advertisers for all news outlets. Thus, advertising in blogs or electronic newspapers is remarkably inexpensive. To get an even better value; I paid upfront for the whole campaign – cash does talk.

All of my button ads directed the clicker to the Issues page which contained all of my presentations. My latest presentation was the one at the top, so the person did not have to navigate the site to find the information.

### **Conclusion**

Button ads combined with websites are great for getting information out. That combination helped me articulate what was happening and how it could be remedied.

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# The Bully Pulpit

## May 6, 2013 40 HOUR ABATEMENT FORTHOUGHT

INTENT: To show how the City can be turned around without increasing taxes

I am going to be acknowledging the City's due diligence report I asked for in my first presentation. I am going to continue to shape the conversation on this matter. I will share where we agree, and I will provide more information on topics where we disagree.

This is the presentation where I start adding more information for the community to evaluate the continued tenure of the City Manager.

### The new Norm

A City's performance shows up electronically at the County Assessors Office. There is more information than just losing another 13.9% in property values. This section also shows the performance of the management team of the City itself. This is an overlooked component, that will open peoples' eyes as to why things are the way they are.

I will be showing how to plot and interpret it so that people can understand it, in the [ASSESSOR](#) tab. An average City will experience up and down swings. This is normal, it shows the management reversing the downward dips by taking corrective action. What isn't desirable is a City consistently below the median line, or worse yet; a City in free fall, like mine.

### What it takes

Empowering employees to excel at their job is one of the attributes of a great manager. Every day, Burien's employees are driving the City roads doing their job. What is lacking is a means of communication when they see something that needs attention.

In the previous presentations, I have been talking about a 40 hour abatement program. Here I am going to propose using the City employees as the eyes and ears of the management. There will be no need for new taxes. The employee will use their camera phone to capture the problem, and email it to Code Enforcement.

This proposal breaks down the complete enforcement process: from being initially

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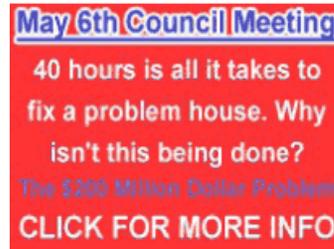
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seen all the way through abatement.

### **Designer Buttons**

I coined the phrase, “Designer Buttons” to describe how I keep my click through campaign fresh and enticing. In just a few words they describe the essence of what I will be sharing in the presentation. They only run on the Blogs busiest days – Tuesday through Thursday. Then its back to “What is the 200 Million Dollar Problem?” button.



### **TEXT OF SPEECH**

I appreciate the City Manager and City Attorney sharing the staff's position on the properties I have been talking about lately.

I believe the issue is reactive enforcement vs proactive enforcement.

The City Attorney was correct in stating that most cities use a reactive approach.

The real question is, “Why be like the rest of the cities when we can create something better?”

I don't believe that cleaning up Burien's \$200 million dollar problem has to be expensive at all. In fact Burien already has all the tools it needs:

- A well defined Municipal Code that is easy to understand.
- A workforce that covers most streets at least once a month.

I propose that when City employees spot a problem house that they use a simple camera phone to send a picture to the Compliance Officer. From that point on it is largely an administrative issue.

All of the costs associated with abatement are fully recoverable, including staff time. This makes it revenue positive.

In becoming proactive, Burien and the neighborhoods will no longer be victimized

by these trashy homes and the problems that come with them.

I don't believe we can wait to the next budget cycle to become proactive. The King County Assessor says we are now 5th from the bottom on assessed value change. If we continue to do nothing, in four years we will be at the bottom.

These houses are like graffiti. If they aren't promptly dealt with then they tend to multiply. I don't want to see that happen.

I want the Council to work with the City Manager and City Attorney to find ways of implementing the BMC so that the City can flourish and our neighborhoods are desirable.

I propose a 40 man hour abatement program that I have attached to the City Clerks copy. If the City disputes these numbers, they should bring their own numbers to the Council for discussion.

Video link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cadg6CKWN3g>

I propose that Burien adopt a proactive approach to Code Enforcement like this one: I am allocating 4 hours for each step.

1. City worker sees a problem and sends camera phone picture to the Compliance Officer.	4 hours
2. Compliance Officer examines photo and BMC	4 hours
3. Compliance Officer visits site and takes additional photos	4 hours
4. Admin prepares letter and file for property	4 hours
5. City reviews response from property owner	4 hours
6. City responds with abatement demand	4 hours
7. If no action City contacts appropriate companies for abatement such junk removal companies, landscape contractors, etc.	4 hours
8. City reviews bids from abatement companies	4 hours
9. City issues purchase order for abatement	4 hours
10. City oversees abatement.	4 hours
	40 hours

1. Over the course of a month I believe most if not all streets in Burien are driven by Burien employees while on the job. It is likely that the employee reporting the problem will be called back to take followup pictures. Thus the 4 hours.
2. Having the camera phone picture sent to the Compliance Officer's computer will facilitate a rapid response as well as enabling it to be put in a folder for transferring to other individuals such as the City Attorney or Admin.
3. I believe this line item can be significantly reduced in hours by visiting more

- than one property at a time.
4. Template type letters can reduce this hourly amount if they are prepared by the City Attorney.
  5. City Attorney reviews response from property owner against applicable statutes.
  6. City Attorney directs Admin to write abatement demand letter.
  7. If property is not cleaned up, than the City contacts appropriate abatement companies from the City's approved vendor list who have the necessary bonds, insurances, and expertise. I don't believe City employees should be involved in the actual clean up of private property.
  8. Purchasing Department reviews bids and selects company to abate property.
  9. Purchasing Department issues purchase order for clean up.
  10. An individual from the City oversees abatement.

**If the City has issues with any of my assumptions, I only ask that they bring their numbers to the Council for discussion.**

**Burien Municipal Code provides full recovery for all of the above expenses including time spent by the City employees and contractors performing the abatement.**

**Below is a chart that shows Burien's performance over the last several years from the King County Assessor's Office website.**

Rank	2008>2009	2009>2010	2010>2011	2011>2012
20th	Medina	Snoqualmie	Auburn	Kent
19th	Sammamish	Issaquah	Enumclaw	Woodenville
18th	Beaux Arts	Des Moines	Federal Way	Maple Valley
17th	Black Diamond	Sea-Tac	Tukwila	Kenmore
16th	Tukwila	Auburn	Milton	Bothell
15th	Des Moines	Kenmore	Pacific	Enumclaw
14th	Covington	Milton	Maple Valley	Carnation
13th	Maple Valley	Covington	North Bend	Duvall
12th	Burien	Pacific	Covington	Renton
11th	Woodenville	BURIEN	Lake Forest Pk	Auburn
10th	Seattle	Clyde Hill	Sea-Tac	Des Moines
9th	Enumclaw	Kirkland	Kent	Sea-Tac
8th	Milton	Bothell	Carnation	Tukwila
7th	Kent	Federal Way	Black Diamond	Federal Way
6th	Federal Way	Beaux Arts	BURIEN	Lake Forest Pk
5th	Snoqualmie	Tukwila	Yarrow Point	BURIEN
4th	Shoreline	Normandy Park	Medina	Pacific
3rd	Pacific	Kent	Hunts Point	Algona
2nd	Algona	New Castle	Beaux Arts	Covington
Bottom	Renton	Skykomish	Clyde Hill	Kirkland

These numbers are taken from the King County Assessor's Office website. In the 2008 > 2009 time period, Burien was in the bottom 30 percentile of the 39 cities in King County based on assessed value change. This also was the current City Manager's first full year on the job. In the 2011 > 2012 period Burien was close to the bottom 10 percentile. The figures for 2012>2013 are not yet compiled by the Assessor's Office.

I have also included the numbers for Kent, WA. Our City Manager was the City Manager of Kent prior to coming to Burien. You will note that a different management style has a significant effect on property value performance in Kent. Areas are highlighted in orange for easier viewing.

If the same City Council policies continue with the same City Manager, it is a mathematical certainty that the trend downward will continue. The consequences will be dire if this trend is not reversed immediately through Council directives.

## **RECONNAISSANCE**

**May 6, 2013**

The information that I refer to about statements from the City Manager and City Attorney are found in both the previous Council Packet and the Council video from April 22nd.

### **Building on where we agree points the situation towards solution**

The graph showing Burien's decline was gleaned from the King County Assessor's Office information. It covered a four year period. It is perfectly normal for a City to experience up and down swings. What is unhealthy is seeing a steady trend downward.

See the [ASSESSOR](#) tab for more information on graphing your City's performance.

### **Shows the consequence of not doing their job as specified by law.**

The reference to being able to recover costs associated with clean up can be found in the [Municipal Code](#) tab.

### **Showing the costs are recoverable (BMC) calls into question their management of the City.**

The information on a 40 hour abatement program involved all the steps necessary to complete the process. I chose to present it on a one house at a time basis. A more efficient use of staff time would involve cleaning up multiple houses at a time. I allowed generous numbers.

### **Showing that clean up can be done in 40 hours creates the question, "Why isn't this being done?"**

## **AFTERTHOUGHT**

### **Presentation Issues**

You will note me coughing twice and then excusing myself. What has happened is an unexpected burst of adrenaline. My lung diaphragm has locked in the exhaled position. To compensate, I release the last bit of air out of my lung with the two tiny coughs. I am now able to manually tell myself to breathe, at which point I share “excuse me” and continue.

The first one caught me off guard, and seemed like 5 seconds to restart breathing. The video shows less than a second.

There will be countless times through the campaign you will hear me saying, “excuse me”. Each of these times will be adrenaline related. With the exception of one, in September, there is no noticeable ripple in my presentations.

### **The Persuasiveness of Solution**

If you want different results, you've got to do things differently. Tearing things down is easy. However, a campaign based on solution will stand out from the reactive din that is common in today's politics.

Offering solution, gives something for people to ponder – it calls into question the City Manager's performance. Offering solution – be it an action step, or a more extensive proposal, shapes the conversation. It communicates to people's better side. There is nothing Pollyanna about this, especially in an election year.

### **Not about flipping houses**

I am not a fan of house flippers. They do create money for themselves, but they don't create the foundation of wealth in the community for a sustainable tomorrow. Sustainability requires a longer viewpoint. Flipping is like today's financial sector mentality – cash and dash.

We have to have access to our net worth, to take advantage of opportunities. The house is one of the biggest nest eggs most people have. A banker is unlikely to view negative net worth approvingly, no matter how enticing the proforma business plan looks.

Neighborhoods that are desirable have tremendous value. They cost the City next to nothing to initiate and maintain. All enforcement and abatement costs of the City

are fully recoverable. It is only the City watching our backs that is necessary. The residents are the ones putting in the sweat equity. As one part of the neighborhood starts to improve; the rest soon follow. Our Cities and the Nation will prosper as all of us become involved in the rebuilding process.

### **Reaching for Sustainability**

Municipal Code is far reaching. If your City is in continued decline – code is not being used to the advantage of the neighborhoods, the businesses, or even the City itself.

Who is at fault (blame) doesn't matter. What does matter is turning the situation around through action. The easiest action to take, is to speak with solution as a major component. People will listen and things will happen.

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# The Bully Pulpit

**May 20, 2013**  
**WIN – WIN**  
**FORTHUGHT**

INTENT: To broaden the reach of the campaign by offering solutions

The issues that Cities and the Nation are experiencing today, have been building for decades. They have a political and corporate component, both are rooted in power; win – lose.

## **Prelude to disaster**

In the beginning, “supply side economics” looked like it might work. The memories of the painful recession(s) from 1979 -1981 were fading, and economic activity was accelerating rapidly. Then:

- 1987 Stock market loses 22% in one day (mini recession)
- 1989 Junk Bonds tank (recession)
- 1999 Proforma accounting for internet IPO's implode (recession)
- 2008 Sub prime mortgages collapse (the great recession)
- 2010 > Present Banks abandon their REO's (economic stagnation)

Starting in the 1980's, with deregulation of the financial sector, the roles of Cities and Banks diverged. Prior to that time, both of them had a symbiotic relationship: Cities provided a hub where people lived and commerce occurred. Banks helped underwrite that economic activity and everyone prospered.

Since the 1980's, trillions of dollars were lost to flimflam products and practices, i.e. junk bonds, the LIBOR scandal and shady IPOs. Fraud is not allowed by Municipal Code. Cities do have absolute dominion within their boundaries when it comes to these types of practices. Instead of engaging the banks about their behavior, Cities turned a blind eye in the name of “economic progress”.

## **Broadening the Campaign**

The downtown corridor had been struggling for a number of years: poor sales and layoffs were the norm. Many businesses were unable to survive.

As each of these 100's of houses in the City were foreclosed upon, significant amounts of spending power (85K+ each) disappeared. Each and every one of these foreclosures impacted businesses and jobs. It also affected the City's finances.

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I will be showing how all of these problems are interconnected. People are now able to see the way things are, and a way to fix them. I am not going to blame, rather I am going to show how fixing one problem, also fixes another.

The key to turning this situation around is getting the banks out of the foreclosure business. To do that, the banks need an incentive to sell their distressed properties. The easiest way to motivate them, is to improve house prices.

The sorry state the City neighborhoods had been allowed to reach was counterproductive to this goal.



## LETTER TO THE COUNCIL

Dear Council Members,

There are hundreds, maybe even a thousand, foreclosed houses sitting empty in Burien. Each and everyone of them destabilizes our neighborhoods, and deny the City revenues to provide services that are required by law. A few of the affects are:

- There are no utility, phone, or cable taxes being collected.
- Businesses are losing customers and B&O tax revenues decline.
- Sales tax collections are slumping as businesses leave Burien.

The average house in Burien sells for just over \$200K. That would require an income of about \$85K to buy that house plus a stellar credit report. Most of that \$85K would be spent initially in Burien. For every twelve houses sold, over one million dollars in new purchasing power would be brought into our City.

- Businesses activity would start to revive.
- Hiring of employees would occur.
- Sales and B&O tax revenue would increase.
- Utility & communication type taxes would increase.

The Banks must be given an incentive to unload their foreclosed properties. The incentives I am talking about are for the banks to improve their balance sheet by selling off their foreclosed house portfolios into an improving housing market. Then

millions of dollars in new money would come pouring into Burien.

Unfortunately, Burien house values continue to remain weak. When home buyers see slumlord dwellings and abandoned bank repos that our City Manager chooses to ignore, they spend their money elsewhere or pay rock bottom prices. This further exacerbates the downward home price trend.

I believe it is time to define the City Manager's job description using existing Washington State Law. The majority of the City Council continue to give high marks for performance that is contrary to the City Manager's job description as defined in RCW 35A.13.080 (4). Specifically, the City Manager is tasked with faithfully executing the BMC under Washington State Law. Yet, he doesn't lift a finger, except under duress, when confronted by slumlords and abandoned bank repos even though the law clearly requires action to be taken.

I believe it is in the Community's best interest that the City Manager be proactive. I am not just referring to Code Enforcement. I am talking about as a way of approaching the governance of the City as a whole. A proactive City Manager would be looking for ways to get the Banks out of the repo business so that our City can move forward. Instead of doing what is required, the City Manager has ignored the neighborhoods, which is causing the City to drift downward. This Council approved approach is costing us an additional \$200 million dollars a year in lost property values.

I want the City Council to address this issue directly and unequivocally. I propose that the Council put some skin on the line by publicly directing the City Manager to start enforcing the BMC immediately using a 40 hour abatement program against these houses outlined in my May 6th Public Comment. Remember, this is a revenue positive solution. This announcement will send a powerful signal to new home buyers and residents alike, that Burien will not allow these type of houses to go unchallenged any longer.

Everyone will know it, and the effect will be palpable.

- Neighborhoods will become cleaner and more desirable.
- More people will want to move into Burien.
- Houses will sell faster.
- House prices will improve.
- Burien businesses will expand.
- Jobs will be created.

An additional benefit will be that the structural deficit that Burien faces will start to be dealt with, without raising new taxes.

Dick West

## RCW 35A.13.080

### City manager — Powers and duties.

The powers and duties of the city manager shall be:

1. To have general supervision over the administrative affairs of the code city;
2. To appoint and remove at any time all department heads, officers, and employees of the code city, except members of the council, and subject to the provisions of any applicable law, rule, or regulation relating to civil service: PROVIDED, That the council may provide for the appointment by the mayor, subject to confirmation by the council, of a city planning commission, and other advisory citizens' committees, commissions, and boards advisory to the city council: PROVIDED FURTHER, That if the municipal judge of the code city is appointed, such appointment shall be made by the city manager subject to confirmation by the council, for a four year term. The council may cause an audit to be made of any department or office of the code city government and may select the persons to make it, without the advice or consent of the city manager;
3. To attend all meetings of the council at which his or her attendance may be required by that body;
4. To see that all laws and ordinances are faithfully executed, subject to the authority which the council may grant the mayor to maintain law and order in times of emergency;
5. To recommend for adoption by the council such measures as he or she may deem necessary or expedient;
6. To prepare and submit to the council such reports as may be required by that body or as he or she may deem it advisable to submit;
7. To keep the council fully advised of the financial condition of the code city and its future needs;
8. To prepare and submit to the council a proposed budget for the fiscal year, as required by chapter [35A.33](#) RCW, and to be responsible for its administration upon adoption;
9. To perform such other duties as the council may determine by ordinance or resolution.

**Notes:**

**Severability -- 1987 c 3:** See note following RCW [3.70.010](#).

## **RECONNAISSANCE**

**May 20, 2013**

Information on the increased net worth each house brings in is found in the King County Assessor's Office. Burien's current house value is 200K. Traditional lending would require a household income of 85K plus a credit score in excess of 775.

**Using the Assessor's information underscores the inaction. Showing the added spending power of 85K per house calls into question the City Manager's judgment of not dealing with this issue proactively.**

I also refer to State Law about the City Manager's responsibility to faithfully execute all ordinances and laws.

**The refusal to follow State Law names the problem.**

I am also referring to the Burien budget when I talk about utility, phone, and garbage taxes.

**Referring to budget points where the City Manager has authority, yet didn't exercise it, thus costing the City needed revenue.**

The request that the Council put some skin on the line was from the previous meeting where the Council wanted the School district to do the same with the drop out rate.

**The "skin on the line" is a way of mirroring what the Council asks of others but don't do themselves.**

The high marks I referred to were from the City Manager's evaluation that was published in both of the media outlets in Burien. The media acquired these through the Public Records Request. Click [here](#) to see the evaluation.

**Pointing out high marks calls into question the Council's judgment when the results are abysmal.**

## **AFTERTHOUGHT**

### **Problems and Opportunities**

I believe the Country can be moved forward by making a case for change at the local level. This is not only where the problems are happening; its also where the solutions can be implemented to create opportunities.

City Managers are paid to see the big picture and navigate the City to generate wealth for all. When that is not happening, a sense of despair descends upon the City. Gloom is everywhere.

On the other hand, articulating a solution will capture peoples attention. In doing that from the podium, there is pressure on City Hall to clean up the issues.

### **Present Day**

Skinning the banks may sound good to many. The reality is, it polarizes people. When people become polarized they frequently begin to blame. The road of life always has a fork in it: Blame or solution. You can't have both, a choice has to be made.

The road of blame is juicy. Righteousness is palpable. Down that road further, is a place called revenge; people fighting each other, solution isn't found here. At the end of this road is a cul de sac called apathy. The last thing I want is my audience going to blame. People who find themselves in this place, frequently experience despair, and believe their voice doesn't count – they often don't vote.

The road of solution is often not visited in political settings. It is simply straightforward talking about what is going on in the neighborhood, sans theatrics. This road does not have a cul de sac. Rather, it extends onward beyond the horizon. Along the way are opportunities to create wealth. Solutions are what attract people's attention for change.

### **Incentives**

Engaging the banks on what is going on right now, not yesterday, but right now, is where results are found. Giving them a reason to close the chapter on the Subprime fiasco will help not only them, but also the City and the neighborhoods.

They need a reason to sell their foreclosed properties. The motivation I am talking about is increasing house values by getting these blights cleaned up.

### **Connecting the dots**

Building consensus from the podium for change, is easy. I:

- Show what is happening
- Show the costs
- Show how it is impacting other parts of the City.

Share solutions that people can understand.

As my campaign unfolds, you will see how I connect the dots in my City. The dots may be different in your City, but they are still interconnected. Sharing them will create solutions, and positive results.

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**June 3, 2013**

## **TIME FOR A NEW CITY MANAGER FORETHOUGHT**

INTENT: To make a case for a new City Manager

When Cities are in decline, despair and apathy frequently set in. Despair is perhaps the most contagious ailment known to man. Today, thousands of such Cities dot the National landscape. Every year they continue to ratchet down in value. Opportunities are lost and gloom is pervasive everywhere. Each of them are contributing to the bleak stream of statistics we see everyday in the news.

It easy to become fixated and depressed by the failures occurring in your neighborhood. Its unlikely that your issues are occurring in a vacuum. Most likely, other regions of the City are experiencing different, yet important problems. Knowing (reconnaissance) what these issues are will give you the opportunity to become an inclusive speaker.

Inclusiveness allows the message to engage different regions, socioeconomic classes or any other concern that is not being attended too. Stitching together a coalition of areas that are impacted by inattention of the City Manager is a powerful way to engage City Hall for change.

### **Time for Change**

I will be quoting law tonight to make a case for recruiting a new City Manager. The State laws that govern Cities are there for a reason. They cement the contractual arrangement (Municipal Code) between the government and the residents.

There is a reasonable expectation that the City will fulfill its obligation to make the City a desirable place to live; it is collecting property taxes for that purpose. As I explored Code, I was struck by the lack of political will to engage the problems occurring in the City. I have a tab on CODE and how to read and understand it.

I will be sharing the top five concerns I see happening in the different regions of Burien. I will be proposing solution that involve the four departments that report to the City Manager: Legal / Code, Planning, Finance, and Public Works.

Perhaps the most interesting piece of information I discovered was how little the pay difference was between a top performing City Manager and the rest. The decline I showed earlier, shows what happens when less than a top tier person is at the helm. The difference in pay is just 2K per month. We are currently losing 750K per day in

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net worth because of the inattention.

It is now time to ask for a new City Manager.



### TEXT OF SPEECH

Washington State Law requires the City Manager to:

- Faithfully execute all laws and ordinances. These laws were put in place by the Council to make Burien a safe and desirable place to live.
- Keep the City Council informed on financial condition of the City. Hundreds of thousands of dollars are unaccounted for. Projects such as annexation, wards, business development projects that never materialize, etc., are not being shown on these reports.
- Provide information that the City Council requests. There has been much written on this that indicates many requests are being ignored by the City Manager.

I believe it is time to look for a new City Manager. I propose that we pay \$2000 a month more to get the caliber of a Mercer Island City Manager. A person like this is not going to come just for the money. They are going to want to see that the City Council has its act together before accepting the job. This person is going to be taking on a large backlog of problems and will need a Council that is willing to join them in turning this City around.

I have attached a more detailed outline to the City Clerk's copy for the the Council to review. This outline will deal with issues ranging from pollution of Lake Burien, slide dangers in Seahearth, graffiti, bank repos, and slumlord dwellings and every other issue that degrades our City.

Our current City Manager's refusal to direct his department heads to follow the law needs to be stopped. If the Council is unwilling to deal with this issue, than we need to replace the City Council.

Video link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1DLIOEA4xHY>

## **Proposed Changes**

A significant number of issues confront Burien. Most of them are directly related to the City Manager's performance. Resolution will require the full good faith effort of Burien's legal, finance, planning and public works departments in conjunction with the City Council.

### **Legal / Code Compliance:**

- Written code compliance objectives need to be established.
- Establish a written reasonable response time to code violations.
- Track all time on these violations so that money can be recovered.
- Establish a system to keep track of all compliance issues.
- Review Washington State statutes to determine internal City non-compliance issues.
- Employ on an hourly basis specialty attorneys for unique problems.
- Coordinate with Public Works to establish a proactive approach to implementing the BMC.

### **Planning:**

- Maintain maps and documentation such that they do not contradict each other.
- Recognize that surface water issues are only part of the situation causing slides. The constant filling and discharge from the Highline Aquifer will encourage slumping and catastrophic slides too.
- Coordinate with Legal on all surface water issues, ie pollution, slides, etc.

### **Finance:**

- Quarterly Report of Financial Status should indicate both the budget and expenditures on all Council directed projects, ie annexation, wards, business development plans, etc.

### **Public Works:**

- Coordinate with Code Compliance to provide necessary training to all employees on basic code violations, as well as the means to report these issues such as a camera phone.
- Empower employees with the ability to address graffiti immediately.
- Brush / hedge trimming along the public right of way by the City should be such that by the time the next scheduled trimming, the vegetation has not yet encroached upon or blocked sidewalks, roads, or intersections.
- Provide all City cars with gloves, plastic bags and other implements necessary to address small compliance issues on the public right of way.

### **City Council:**

- Direct the City Clerk to keep a running tally for information from the City Manager by individuals on the Council. This should include the date of the request, the completion date, as well as a brief description of the material sought. This is to be placed in every Council Packet.

### **RCW 35A.13.080**

City manager — Powers and duties.

The powers and duties of the city manager shall be:

1. To have general supervision over the administrative affairs of the code city;
2. To appoint and remove at any time all department heads, officers, and employees of the code city, except members of the council, and subject to the provisions of any applicable law, rule, or regulation relating to civil service: PROVIDED, That the council may provide for the appointment by the mayor, subject to confirmation by the council, of a city planning commission, and other advisory citizens' committees, commissions, and boards advisory to the city council: PROVIDED FURTHER, That if the municipal judge of the code city is appointed, such appointment shall be made by the city manager subject to confirmation by the council, for a four year term. The council may cause an audit to be made of any department or office of the code city government and may select the persons to make it, without the advice or consent of the city manager;
3. To attend all meetings of the council at which his or her attendance may be required by that body;
4. To see that all laws and ordinances are faithfully executed, subject to the authority which the council may grant the mayor to maintain law and order in times of emergency;
5. To recommend for adoption by the council such measures as he or she may deem necessary or expedient;
6. To prepare and submit to the council such reports as may be required by that body or as he or she may deem it advisable to submit;
7. To keep the council fully advised of the financial condition of the code city and its future needs;

8. To prepare and submit to the council a proposed budget for the fiscal year, as required by chapter [35A.33](#) RCW, and to be responsible for its administration upon adoption;
9. To perform such other duties as the council may determine by ordinance or resolution

[2009 c 549 § 3025; 1987 c 3 § 17; 1967 ex.s. c 119 § [35A.13.080](#).]

**Notes:**

**Severability -- 1987 c 3:** See note following RCW [3.70.010](#).

## **RECONNAISSANCE**

**June 3, 2013**

I refer to State Law about the City Manager's responsibilities:

- Faithfully execute all laws and ordinances.
- Keep the City Council informed on the financial condition of the City.
- Provide information that the City Council requests.

I give an example into how each of them has been handled by the City Manager.

**Quoting Law and providing a synopsis of what is actually occurring will have a stinging quality that will prompt action.**

City websites provide salary information for the City Manager. I will be using Mercer Island as a comparison. It is a well run City and the salary difference is only 2K per month. The difference in pay is paltry; compared with the losses of 750K per day in net worth of the residents.

**This calls into question the Council's judgment.**

Council Packets contain letters to the Council. They articulate different problems occurring in different neighborhoods. Council Packets can be easily downloaded from the City website. (Google Street View can provide more visual information with just a click about information found in the packet)

**The issues being ignored by the City Manager and City Council are best brought to light showing how they all intersect at the City Manager's office.**

## **AFTERTHOUGHT**

Changing how your City operates, will have a dramatic impact on the Nation.  
Clearing the obstacles that preclude access to our net worth is the first step towards

wealth creation. As positive net worth becomes available to us, the City will become richer in both money and opportunities. With opportunities and the money to pursue them, the wealth creation cycle will continue in a sustainable fashion.

The good news about taking the time to make a case for change is: you are in motion.

Action is the cure for apathy and despair. For every person who speaks, thousands remain silent, and angry. By being inclusive, those thousands become involved in your campaign as they see how things can be better.

Since the days of the Parthenon, inclusion has been used to make a case for change. People's curiosity is piqued when they see how things relate to them in an unexpected way. As they become aware of the consequences of inaction, they want to know more. Adding solution to the presentation allows them to see how things can be better.

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**June 13, 2013**

## **CITY MANAGER ANNOUNCES DEPARTURE FORETHOUGHT**

INTENT: To urge thoughtful action.

I want the City Manager search to be part of the calculus that the voters use to pick a new City Council.

Campaigns like these will always have unexpected turns of events. The City Manager's announcement that he was leaving was a surprise. I was certain that he would stay until the November elections. At which time, his fate would be determined by the make up of the new Council.

In this presentation, I am making a case for patience in the search for a new City Manager. I believe the current Council is comfortable with the status quo, and would likely hire someone who was comfortable with it too.

State Law requires a 30 day severance pay if the City Manager is terminated. If the Council should hire a person that doesn't meet the expectations of a new City Council, the City would be out 14K in termination pay, plus the expenses associated with the search ~25K.

His departure dovetails with the change up that I planned for mid August. Then I will be using the selection of a new City Manager as a basis for my presentations. I will be showing the possibilities of how a new City Manager can turn this City around.

### **Letter to the Council**

Dear Council Members,

I propose that when the City Manager leaves, that an interim City Manager be hired until January 2, 2014. The hiring of an interim City Manager will save the City approximately \$14,000 in termination fees (RCW 35A.13.130) that would otherwise be paid to a permanent City Manager who may not represent the ideas and ideals of the new City Council. With an interim City Manager, the day-to-day affairs of the city can be managed while the political process plays out. Additionally, the City Manager should be tasked with implementing the BMC proactively during this transition.

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Recently, the City Manager was heard to say, the City would need new revenue to beef up code enforcement to make the City proactive. I propose the following alternative:

- City Council direct the City Attorney to notify the Washington State Legislature in writing that Burien will not be pursuing annexation of White Center.
- City Council direct the City Manager to not devote any further staff time to Wards until after the election in November.
- That all employees who quit be given an exit interview. Copies of these interviews shall be forwarded to all members of the Council. I believe, that the cost associated with staff turnover, is harming our city.

For every 40 hours of staff time spent on wards and annexation, the city could have cleaned up one bank repo or slumlord dwelling. The city would have realized \$35,000 in new revenue from this cleanup and the community's net worth would have increased in excess of \$20 million. Total cleanup of Burien would take 2000 – 4000 man hours. Whatever merits annexation and wards had, has passed, and the time to direct the City Manager to focus on making Burien the first priority, has now arrived.

The choice before us is the continuation of the \$200 million dollar problem or the \$1 billion dollar solution. Again, I choose solution. What is your choice?

Dick West

### **RCW 35A.13.130**

#### **City manager — Removal — Resolution and notice.**

The city manager shall be appointed for an indefinite term and may be removed by a majority vote of the council. At least thirty days before the effective date of his or her removal, the city manager must be furnished with a formal statement in the form of a resolution passed by a majority vote of the city council stating the council's intention to remove him or her and the reasons therefor. Upon passage of the resolution stating the council's intention to remove the manager, the council by a similar vote may suspend him or her from duty, but his or her pay shall continue until his or her removal becomes effective.

[2009 c 549 § 3028; 1967 ex.s. c 119 § 35A.13.130.]

## RECONNAISSANCE

June 13, 2013

I will be referring to State Law on termination fees of a City Manager.

The search fees I don't want to be duplicated are based on the current City Manager search. The fee is about 25K. Alternatively, other local Cities who have had a recent City Manager could assist you in this information. Generally, the Council Packet, the Council Video, or the local news outlet will be able to give you that number.

**Using State law to urge caution creates a conversation about the danger of haste.**

I will also be referring to giving exit interviews to departing staff. This is to find out what is happening in the City and ways stop the cost associated with staff turnover. This appears to be a problem based on the number of times I heard Council Members bring up the subject with the City Manager.

**Articulating a plan to reduce staff turnover names the problem.**

I am also wanting to stop projects that are draining resources from the City. These include Wards and Annexation. Another one that I didn't use was the cost of the Red Light camera that was installed at a major intersection. The cost of the one in Burien was 600K per year. There were no decreases in accidents or injuries with its use.

The fines the city collected fell short of the 600K annual cost of the system. The City still had to pay staff time to research the license plate numbers and issue tickets.

Generally, once a year the Police Department gives a presentation on public safety issues. Public Comment comes before these presentations. Proactively asking about reductions in accidents with these lights is a way to bring this information to the attention of the public.

Public Disclosure Requests are unlikely to be useful in gathering this information. This kind of information involves tallies; cumulative information is not permitted by Public Disclosure Request rules.

**Asking that wasteful spending be stopped, puts the ball in the Council's court.**

## AFTERTHOUGHT

Cities are corporations, and are not immune to the follies that befall poorly run businesses. Cities that are declining have structural management issues going on. These issues can always be traced to the very top; the Council. They are the ones who hire the City Manager to run the City.

Not all City Managers are created equal:

- Some will be more attuned to what is going on around them, and will be more proactive. Their tenure will be one of engagement and accomplishment.
- Others will be reactive and their accomplishments will be minimal.

The City Managers resignation is not a guarantee of better things to come. It is merely an opportunity. It is still going to require a Council up to the challenge of engagement and dialogue with the community. To do any less, will deter top tier candidates from applying.

People tend to hire others who share common management styles. Councils that are reactive will not be comfortable hiring a proactive person. Proactive Managers require a greater time commitment on the part of the Council. People of this caliber do not suffer fools gladly. They are not here just for the paycheck, they are doers.

The vetting process that goes with this type of management change is time consuming. Nothing can be done to shorten it that won't compromise the City. High quality candidates will want to know who they will be working with, thus they are going wait until the dust settles from the election before tossing their hat into the ring for consideration.

Making a case for patience is a good thing.

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June 17, 2013  
**THANKING THE CITY MANAGER  
FORETHOUGHT**

INTENT: To say thank you for cleaning up the Bank REO's in Burien

Driving around, I noticed all of the houses I have been talking about are cleaned up. I choose to speak. This is my shortest presentation, I will not be using notes. I will just share my observations and say thank you.

“Thank you” is one of the least used phrases in the English language. I asked the City to do a very challenging task, and they did it. Cleaning up these bank repos isn't just a problem here in my City, it is pervasive throughout the Country. Thanks to the City Manager, all of the houses I mentioned got cleaned up, by their Bank owners.

Video link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ioxM4G5xkK4>

**RECONNAISSANCE**  
June 17, 2013

The information I gathered for this presentation was done by driving around. I noticed that all of the houses I had been discussing were cleaned up.

The things I discussed were personal observations from my neighborhood.

**Being gracious is a great change up. Only use it if it is true.**

**AFTERTHOUGHT**

Wealth creation in the neighborhoods is going to be what turns this Country around. The hundreds of billions of dollars in bank repos alone, represents just the tip of the iceberg of what is holding this country back. Correcting the other issues affecting your City will add even more to that sum. It will be government watching our back, at the local level, making this possible. Confidence in a better tomorrow starts with action today.

## **The Burien Solution**

Burien's approach to dealing with these houses is a stark contrast with the rest of the Nation. Other Cities are suing the Banks, and now are waiting for their day in Court. I believe the allegations that these Cities have made are going to be problematic. Asserting racial bias is a difficult thing to prove in the absence of documenting evidence. Not only is it expensive; its uncertain. After all the appeals, any award will be dwarfed by the losses that the Cities endure during the litigation. Meanwhile, neighborhoods continue to flounder while time passes slowly away.

Instead of using the legal system, which is a version of the Drama Triangle, Burien just leaned on the Banks quietly and effectively. Burien got results in less than 3 months, not years, after I started speaking to the issue. This shows the reach of Municipal Code. Not even the Banks are beyond it.

The one thing about being gracious and saying thank you is it shows things can change. It instills hope in a better tomorrow, by showing what is happening today.

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July 1, 2013

## TIME TO AUDIT THE CITY MANAGER FORETHOUGHT

INTENT: To connect the performance of the City Manager with the Council

The City Manager is the one who implements the Council's policies. This is where the rubber should hit the road. The City Manager only reports to the Council. They are the ones tasked with seeing to it that their policies and directives are being carried out as intended.

Cities have two basic ways of raising revenue:

1. Improve house values. This is a win-win strategy. There is a built in incentive; more effort on the part of the City to make itself desirable, equals more revenue. Everyone wins.
2. Raising taxes is a lose-lose strategy, particularly if it is for operating revenue.

### Burien 2012

In April of 2012, my City passed Ordinance 561. This law clarified the banks responsibility about abandoned bank repos. A house that is in foreclosure and has been unoccupied 90 days must be maintained by its bank owner. This should have been a win-win, but failure to enforce this ordinance led to a lose-lose outcome.

In December of 2012, the City needed more money. To get that money the City Manager proposed doubling the electrical tax. This was shortsighted, and costly to everyone. Property values continued to plunge, another \$20,000 was lost by each homeowner that year.

Some of this was related to the poor condition the City was in. A percentage of it was related to the fact that banks will only loan homeowners an amount based on percentage of income. This consideration takes into account the amount for: principal, interest, and taxes. Raising taxes required the homeowner, who wanted to sell, to reduce their price to accommodate this ongoing cost 'increase. Its an affordability issue. And, the City was taking money without giving anything in return.

Audits

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Under State law, City Councils are not allowed to micro manage the City Manager. They are, however, allowed to audit the departments that report to the City Manager. In this proposal I am asking “What does it take for these departments to become compliant with the laws and ordinances the City has on record?”.

I believe this is important information for the Council and the community to know. Being able to answer these question will enable Burien to hire a top tier City Manager, and turn the situation around.

### **City Manager Evaluation**

Every year, the City Council evaluates the City Manager's performance. There are 5 areas that are evaluated:

1. Community Relations
2. Intergovernmental Relations
3. Communication
4. Policy making / Vision implementation
5. Management of Organization

The outcome of these evaluations determine whether the City Manager's employment will continue.

Both of the local media outlets in Burien acquired these evaluations through the Public Records Disclosure. The B-Town Blog's article is [here](#).

### **Tying it together**

In my presentation, I will be covering a lot of ground. I will be calling into question the performance of the City Council's oversight of the City Manager.



**TEXT OF SPEECH**

A couple weeks ago the King County assessor's office published the latest property values for Burien. We lost almost 10% in property value compared to last year. That means each homeowner lost \$20K in net worth. That is \$400 a week per home in losses. This shouldn't have happened. The City Manager requested Ordinance 561 to deal with the abandoned bank repo problems in April 2012, and did nothing to enforce it for over a year until pressured by the public. Of course, as property values declined, so did revenues to the city.

When the City needed an extra \$93,000 late last year due to revenue shortfalls, the City Manager proposed doubling our electrical tax. This was the same time frame that the Council did the reviews of the City Manager. The members that gave glowing reviews were the same members who voted to tax us because the City Manager did not provide the City employees with the directive to use their camera phones to report these houses to Code Enforcement.

As long as this Council cannot agree on such a basic thing as what the City Manager's job description is, we will continue to get poor performance from the City Manager, and a general decline in the value of Burien as a whole.

I have attached a copy of an audit request for the City Manager's office to the City Clerk's copy. This information will help us determine what is necessary to make this City proactive in Code Enforcement, Finance, Planning, and Public Works.

Tacoma, many years ago publicly declared war on slumlords, and took action. Today, the City of Destiny is turning around, and so can we, by taking action.

**Video link:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ikS2oAC-ttw>

I propose:

- The Council audit the departments that report to the City Manager.
  1. This will help determine what resources these departments need to proactively enforce the ordinances and mandates the Council passes.
  2. This will put all departments on a proactive approach, not just Code Compliance.
- Establish a concise job description that uses Washington State Law and ordinance enforcement as a starting point for defining the City Manager's responsibilities.
  1. Having a unified Council will make the selection of a new City Manager easier.
  2. Evaluations will be easier. The City Manager is either doing the job or not.
- Define good faith effort in Code Compliance with these bank repos and

slumlords as “If a problem can be seen at the posted speed limit, it needs to be dealt with”.

- The implementation of these proposals will allow the public to see and have confidence that our tax monies are being spent wisely.

I believe that if the Council publicly announces an adoption of a proactive approach to governance, the City will attract more newcomers to Burien.

- Unoccupied foreclosed homes that are an eyesore will now contribute to the livability of the neighborhoods by being cleaned up by the Banks.
- Home prices will increase.
- Homes that are sitting empty and draining the City coffers will find new owners.
- These new homeowners will bring tens of millions of dollars in new income into our City. This will help ignite the business comeback in Burien. Job creation will start to happen here in Burien, and the City will flourish.

#### **RCW 35A.13.080**

##### **City manager — Powers and duties.**

The powers and duties of the city manager shall be:

1. To have general supervision over the administrative affairs of the code city;
2. To appoint and remove at any time all department heads, officers, and employees of the code city, except members of the council, and subject to the provisions of any applicable law, rule, or regulation relating to civil service: PROVIDED, That the council may provide for the appointment by the mayor, subject to confirmation by the council, of a city planning commission, and other advisory citizens' committees, commissions, and boards advisory to the city council: PROVIDED FURTHER, That if the municipal judge of the code city is appointed, such appointment shall be made by the city manager subject to confirmation by the council, for a four year term. The council may cause an audit to be made of any department or office of the code city government and may select the persons to make it, without the advice or consent of the city manager;
3. To attend all meetings of the council at which his or her attendance may be required by that body;
4. To see that all laws and ordinances are faithfully executed, subject to the

authority which the council may grant the mayor to maintain law and order in times of emergency;

5. To recommend for adoption by the council such measures as he or she may deem necessary or expedient;
6. To prepare and submit to the council such reports as may be required by that body or as he or she may deem it advisable to submit;
7. To keep the council fully advised of the financial condition of the code city and its future needs;
8. To prepare and submit to the council a proposed budget for the fiscal year, as required by chapter [35A.33](#) RCW, and to be responsible for its administration upon adoption;
9. To perform such other duties as the council may determine by ordinance or resolution.

[2009 c 549 § 3025; 1987 c 3 § 17; 1967 ex.s. c 119 § [35A.13.080](#).]

**Notes:**

**Severability -- 1987 c 3:** See note following RCW [3.70.010](#).

## **RECONNAISSANCE**

**July 1, 2013**

I refer to the drop in home values. That information can be found at the local County Assessor's office.

**Pointing out the continued decline underscores the lack of focus of the City Manager and Council.**

The City Manager's evaluation enabled me to determine who supported the policies. That information was available through the local media. If they don't publish it, it can be acquired through a Public Records Request.

**The evaluation highlights the incongruity between expectation and performance of the City Manager.**

I want an audit of the City Manager's office to determine what it takes to make the City compliant with its own laws. Law allows for an audit of the departments that report to the City Manager.

**Audits are something that the Council should have done prior.**

I refer to Ordinance 561. That was the law that was put into effect to manage the foreclosed Bank REO's. It was never implemented by the City Manager. If your City has problems, it probably is not a lack of laws, rather a lack of enforcement. A good place to look is in the Municipal Code and note the date it became effective. Reviewing the video of that Ordinance's passage will provide a greater depth of information.

**Pointing out that the City Manager isn't enforcing the laws he requests casts doubt about Council oversight.**

I want a definition of good faith effort, as required by law.

**Lack of consensus about the City Manager's job description is highlighted by his evaluation.**

I refer to the City raising taxes for the general fund when other avenues were available. Specifically, cleaning up problem properties to increase value. A good place to look for raising taxes is going to be the Council Packet, the Council Videos, or the local Media.

**Raising taxes instead of having the City Manager do his job points to the real problem – the Council.**

## AFTERTHOUGHT

A mad as hell Tea Party person shares one common belief with a disillusioned Occupier; things could be better in government. Taking the time to speak-effectively- is the one thing that will define your campaign. Laying out the story of what is happening, without the theatrics, will change the course of this Country one City at a time.

Change is already underway, here in Burien. The rest of the country may take a couple of more years. If this sounds audacious, consider this piece: This isn't about thousands of people milling about, angry and blaming. Rather its about an individual engaging political indiscretions with the clear intent of changing those policies.

Auditing the City Manager's office is a great place to start that process of changing the course of the Country.



July 15, 2013

## TIME TO REGULATE SLUMLORDS FORETHOUGHT

INTENT: To point out another area holding the City back.

### The Traditional Slumlord

Slumlords are like diamonds – they are forever. Many tenants are paying rent for houses that fail to meet basic habitability requirements. All City codes have provisions defining habitability, and many of these houses fail that basic test.

Code additionally defines how they are to maintain their properties so that they do not negatively impact neighborhoods. They are a home business, and as such might come under all the rules that apply to anyone operating a business out of their home.

A paraphrase of Burien's code on home based businesses would read: “The business shall not degrade the surrounding neighborhood through any actions on the part of the business”.

In my City, and possibly yours too, there is a gap in the regulation of these rental properties. Any property with less than 4 units is exempt from regulation in Burien. I will be providing a detailed proposal to the Council to rectify this problem and at the same time create a more livable City for everyone. I also asked that owners be charged \$35 a year for a home business license to offset the cost of enforcement.

### The New Slumlord

Banks are wholesale dumping their portfolios of foreclosed houses to large institutional investors. Most of these houses had the power cut as a cost saving measure by the Banks. They were without power for years as the foreclosure process wound its way through the legal system. When the properties finally reach the market; the banks inserted an “As Is” clause to release themselves of all liability.

Many of these houses are like Typhoid Mary waiting for new tenants to infect with dangerous mold spores. The CDC has written much about the dangers of mold infecting people's respiratory systems and damaging other vital organs. None of it is good.

You will be impacted by the cost of mold even if you do not rent one of these houses. Health Insurance companies will raise premiums to cover the additional

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costs associated with the diseases associated with mold infections. This reduction in personal net worth will impact you cumulatively. Year after year, higher premiums and less disposable income will deny you and your City many opportunities to get ahead.



## Letter to the Council

Dear Council Members,

Rental property is a business that is not adequately dealt with in our existing BMC. Rental properties with less than four units are unregulated and some of them would easily be classified as slumlord dwellings.

Slumlord dwellings are easy to spot:

- Some have cars parked all over the lawn.
- Some have two foot-high grass that hasn't been mowed.
- Some are in serious disrepair.
- Some have rubbish scattered about.
- All of them degrade our neighborhoods.

Most landlords do a good job of managing their properties because they know that it is in their best financial interest to do so. Slumlords on the other hand, are always looking for an easy buck, and will lease to anyone, including those that damage property.

Burien should rectify this gap in the BMC by requiring all rental businesses to maintain their properties. I believe if the rental market was required to maintain their properties in accordance with the same code homeowners have to follow, it would dramatically improve our neighborhoods.

Licensing these smaller rental properties the same way it licenses home occupied businesses, \$35 per year per dwelling, would generate sufficient money to pay the cost of an extra full time compliance officer to monitor these businesses located in our neighborhoods.

I propose:

- Burien hire a full time person to drive by all rental units located in Burien once a month. There is 150 miles of paved roadway in Burien with thousands of rentals.
- 2 photos be taken from the public right-of-way of all rental properties monthly.

By requiring the landlords to register online:

- The city can efficiently monitor neighborhood activities that harm our city.
- The city can maintain an email database to quickly notify landlords of problems. Dealing with the tenant on code issues does not work. The owner is the responsible party for maintaining their property.
- Photos of the property can be sent via email monthly.
- Any bounced emails will alert the city to update the email database.
- Pertinent updates to the BMC regarding landlords can be quickly distributed.

Burien should have a PDF file with current regulations that can be downloaded and inserted into the lease agreement. These PDF files should also have a synopsis to make them easy to understand:

- Four cars maximum. Same as homeowners.
- Parking only in designated driveways. Same as homeowners.
- Vegetation shall not encroach onto sidewalks, roadways, or intersections. Same as homeowners.
- Lawn to be maintained between March 1st and October 15th at an interval not to exceed three weeks.

This current economic cycle is fueling the slum lord problem in Burien. Specifically, many of the foreclosed houses in Burien are being sold to investors. A small percentage of these will become slum lords. Each of these slum lord dwellings degrade property values for 3 square miles. Burien has only 10 square miles. This isn't a problem we can afford to ignore anymore when an easy solution is at hand to improve our neighborhoods.

Dick West

## **RECONNAISSANCE**

**July 15, 2013**

I refer to rental properties as home based businesses. These businesses are regulated under Municipal Code. The fee in my town is \$35 per year. Tacoma, Washington (a City I referred to earlier) has a \$95 fee. When there is a code violation, in Tacoma, the fee doubles. On the fifth violation, inspectors from electrical, plumbing,

structural and police do a survey of the property. Many properties are condemned at that point. Tacoma's policy was prompted by blighting problems. 47% of its housing stock is rental.

**Pointing out that these are unregulated businesses operating to the detriment of the neighborhoods names the problem.**

Houses have regulations on parking. Your code will give you insights into these regulations. Generally, there is a maximum number of vehicles per house. All vehicles have to be in running condition and licensed. Parking on driveways is often specified.

**Showing that the City is driving by and allowing these problems calls into question the City Manager's performance.**

Habitability requirements are specified in Code. Mold is often a problem in rundown properties.

**This questions the commitment to a healthy community.**

Driving around is often the easiest way to get a sense of the scope of problems in your City. Vegetation is always dealt with in Code. There may not be lawn mowing requirements, but there will be prohibitions of vegetation encroaching on sidewalks, roadways and obscuring intersections.

**Allowing known safety and blighting problems calls into question the City's conformance with Law.**

## AFTERTHOUGHT

To undertake the challenges that our Nation confronts, we must have access to our net worth. New wealth can easily be created in the neighborhoods. It only requires that these businesses follow the same rules as those operating downtown. Three positive things will occur:

1. Downtown businesses will see increasing sales and profits.
2. This will lead to more job creation.
3. As the underemployment dries up, wages will naturally rise.

Wealth will be created by making the neighborhoods more livable. People pay more to live in areas where the City watches out for the residents. A City like this is more engaged with the community. These types of communities become hubs for commerce, the arts, and other endeavors that will make our Cities and Nation more sustainable.

We (you and I) are both the responsible parties in this issue. Responsibility isn't about blame, rather its about taking the time to talk about the policies that allow these degradations to occur. I believe its important to always propose a solution.

That way people can understand not only the problem, but also see a way forward,  
and through it.

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**July 24, 2013**  
**CITY MANAGER DEPARTS**

The final accomplishments of the City Manager should be a model for the rest of the country. Not only did the abandoned bank repos get cleaned up by the banks, but the graffiti that was so pervasive also was cleaned up. The latter at the insistence from the podium by another speaker.

Her speaking style is both powerful and effective. Her solution based strategy kept the focus on the City's involvement in the problem. Much of the graffiti was on the public right of way, which the City has absolute control over.

As of 2015, there have been no new abandoned bank repos, and graffiti is now hard to find anywhere in the City. The policies that were put in place during the closing months of the City Manager's employment have laid the groundwork for dealing successfully with some of the City's biggest blights.

## **Looking Forward**

The two of us spoke repeatedly before the Council about issues we cared about. Both of us stayed away from the blame game and kept the focus on solution. It shows what can be accomplished by engaging power effectively and not “fighting City Hall”.

Below are her presentations before the City Council:

**Video link:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rIeUVWINLPk>

**Video link:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=74S1WMtAeLw>

**Video link:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZbUTdEEHFfM>

## **Clean Up Burien Website**

I am pleased that I chose to design my original website to hold all of the various presentations. This website was available for viewing by the City Manager candidates as they did their due diligence research into the City.

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This is also the time to keep in mind the expiration of your domain registration, so that it is visible for the new City Manager candidates. It will provide a perspective they might not otherwise be aware of when they are hired.

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## July 25, 2013 PRIMARIES FORETHOUGHT

INTENT: Asking the Voters to begin the change now by voting

Burien shares a common denominator with cities that are in decline – low voter turnout. Each person who votes in a city like this has a disproportionately greater say in the direction of the community.

I am using my Clean Up Burien campaign to encourage people to take a stand on the direction they want the city to go. I am asking people to talk to their neighbors and then vote. Unlike 2009, 12 candidates are now running for 4 seats vs 5 people running for 4 seats previously. I am not endorsing candidates, I am endorsing a change in direction of the City.

In the ad, I am also beginning my change up to point out what is possible through the act of voting. People have the opportunity to pair up the candidates that will better represent them.



## July 25, 2013 Paid Advertisement in the B-Town Blog

We don't have to wait until November to change the direction of Burien. The August 6th primary gives us an opportunity to change the pairing of who is running for the City Council this November. The most pressing job before the new Council will be selecting a new City Manager and tasking him or her with a new direction for the City. The current Council has given us the results we see all around us. Without a change in the Council, we can expect more of the same. We should seize this moment, by taking the time to vote for change on August 6th.

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All the candidates are underfunded. A \$15,000 campaign (which is large in Burien) works out to less than seventy cents per voter. It is not possible to run a campaign that calls on all neighborhoods with that amount of money. That is why the candidates concentrate on just a few critical areas to get the votes necessary to win. When that happens, we all lose. Incumbents have a name recognition advantage that stifles newcomers with good ideas. We can counter that problem by talking to our neighbors about why our favorite candidates will represent us better than others.

Everybody's vote counts, especially in low turnout races. Burien averages a 30% turnout in the primaries. Remember, Gregoire vs Rossi was decided by just 10 votes in 2004.

If I talk to:

- One neighbor I can change an election.
- Two neighbors I can create a landslide.

I am asking for your support to create a landslide here in Burien. Talking with your neighbors about which candidates will best lead us forward will make the August 6th primary a turning point for Burien.

The two winning candidates from the primary will have the opportunity to articulate their vision of a vibrant and prosperous Burien, where all the neighborhoods and the business community alike will prosper.

Please ask your neighbors to take the time to vote with you on August 6th. The future course of our City is in your hands.

Dick West

## **RECONNAISSANCE**

**July 25, 2013**

The information on voter turnout can be found in your County's election office.

The dollar amount for past campaigns can be found in the Public Disclosure Commission in your State. This information is available online.

Close elections happen everywhere. Everybody's vote counts. I am sure your area has had close elections too. I mentioned the Governor's race in my State that was separated by 10 votes. The media and local election office is a great place to look for the statistics.

Time for a new Council and direction of the City

## AFTERTHOUGHT

Each vote carries a disproportionate weight in a low turn out election. Frequently there are surprises. In Burien there is a split, in each race there will be one candidate for annexation and one opposed to annexation. Another surprising result happened in Sea-Tac, which shares a border with Burien.

The \$15 minimum wage was approved by just 77 votes in a low turnout election. Each person who voted did make a difference to their economic well being – every vote does count. This election has created a conversation that is now happening across the Country

I too want a conversation about City Hall's tolerance policies that are costing this Country hundreds of billions of dollars. This isn't about income redistribution. Its about repatriation of our net worth and effective boundaries with monied interests.

This turn of events will allow me to wrap up my presentations later this fall by circling back to one of my original themes. The Pen Commandments by Steven Frank shares extensively into writing conclusions.

Both writing and speaking are about communication. Writing effectively will enable you to speak effectively and layout the story of what is going on in your City – including an effective conclusion.

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# The Bully Pulpit

## August 19, 2013 THE 6 QUESTIONS FORETHOUGHT

INTENT: Show how the City Manager search can be used to turn the City around

Since the dawn of democracy, the podium has been used to engage government for change. Being inclusive by offering both hope and solution to the voters, is a powerful tool to engage recalcitrant governments. If you are thinking, “I don't know how to do that”, its quite easy. I'll explain as we go through the final four presentations.

### The 7th Inning Stretch

At this point in my campaign, the weight of the dagger is becoming heavy. The Artist's Way shares a lot about self care. This is especially important in long campaigns for change like this. I am preparing to take a vacation. I will be using the Labor Day holiday plus a week to relax.

### The Change Up

I am ready for a change up in my speaking style. I am certain you will be ready to drop the dagger after you reach this point in your campaign too. In the past, I was talking to the Council – now I will be talking with the Council.

I believe you will see the shift in speaking style in the video, the edge is gone. In the past it served a purpose, today it doesn't.

This change up would have occurred even if the former City Manager was still there. Showing how the City Manager selection process could benefit Burien was my intent, irrespective of who occupied the job.

In the past my audience was the community. Today, I am going to make a good faith effort to show what is possible to both the community and the Council. I have now stopped the “What is the 200 Million Dollar Problem” button ad campaign and have replaced it with “The 6 Questions”. Small shifts, yes, but definitely pointing the message towards solution. Each of the subsequent button ads will run for the whole time until the next presentation. Putting oil on the troubled waters takes the edge off of the issue. In doing so, I am inviting people to entertain the idea they can

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make a difference: there is an election coming up. No longer am I pointing to what needs to be dealt with. Now I am pointing towards the opportunities that exist from this selection process.

### **Published Early**

Frequently, the B-Town Blog would run my presentations as a letter to the editor. For reasons unknown, my presentation was published before I arrived at the the Council. Several people commented on it as I was waiting to speak. I couldn't in good faith just read into the public record what was already published. I chose a different approach; I would amplify on the six bullet points, and make them more personal – more expansive.

This approach worked well and allowed me to connect my message. This strategy will also help me when I get into trouble in my next presentation.



### **TEXT OF SPEECH**

We have two basic choices in this City Manager search that is before us:

- We can accept whoever the recruiting firm suggests.
- Or we can define what we want ourselves.

The second approach will require time, honesty and public input. The Council will have to spend several months listening to the homeowners and businesses in this town. This will require the Council going out into the community to see what is really going on. There are no shortcuts to this kind of due diligence.

With this information the Council will be able to tell the recruiting firms about:

- The condition of our neighborhoods and business district.
- Where we want Burien to be in four years.

- The support the Council will give the new City Manager in achieving these goals.
- How they will define good faith effort on the part of the City Manager in implementing these goals.
- How the City Manager is going to be objectively evaluated on the job performance.
- What was learned from our past City Manager experience. Good and bad.

There are many people who specialize in turning organizations around. Burien is not beyond redemption. Our current situation is a great opportunity for a qualified candidate to make the changes we need.

I believe that a united Council will be able to answer all these questions and will attract a great City Manager that can turn this City around and make it a true jewel.

Tomorrow is not created by decisions made in the future, but rather by the decisions and choices we make today. The time for decision is at hand.

**Video link:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rpdzoxIrAzk>

## **RECONNAISSANCE**

**August 19, 2013**

The direction the City Manager search is taking can be found in the Council Packet or better yet see the nuances in person by being there.

The reference to the neighborhoods and business district can be found in the Assessor's Office and the City Budget.

I am beginning to point the campaign towards solution. I am sharing the issues I see and how they can be used in the City Manager search. **In highlighting what is possible, the community can see the past inaction of the Council, and evaluate a different course.**

## **AFTERTHOUGHT**

These final four presentations are critical. In them I will be asking clearly and directly for what I want. I will not just leave it up to chance, I must ask people to

join me in change.

Throughout my campaign, I examined how each of the issues I was sharing affected the City and the residents. Not all people were affected by all of my presentation issues. However, in not demanding they blindly join me, I have the opportunity to get them to examine and explore how these issues are effecting them, even if its just one issue.

After this presentation I will be using the Vision Statement of Burien to point the way. Vision Statements are very local. They share what the City wants itself to be. The Vision Statement in your City will have similarities to mine and some decidedly different topics that are important to your City.

All Vision Statements essentially call for a better town. They are what we want our towns to be. They are grand visions of hope and possibility. It is easy to build closing arguments around them. Asking for the City Manager selection process to encompass Vision Statement implementation is logical.

If you tease these Vision Statements apart, you will find that they will do a variety of good things. In my campaign, I chose the Prosperity component because it was something that was sorely missing in the current administration.

The continued loss of individual net worth is not sustainable. Yet, there was a component in my City's Vision Statement that contained Sustainability. In today's non sustainable world it is easy weave these themes together in a coherent way that will attract attention.

Education is a cornerstone to healthy communities. I will be starting with that in my next presentation.

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September 16, 2013

## EDUCATION FORETHOUGHT

INTENT: To show how becoming congruent with the Vision Statement will transform the City

This is my favorite presentation. It was a challenge to write, and things will go terribly wrong from the instant I reach the podium. More about that in a moment.

Schools are the bedrock of a community. They are what draw people to want to live in a city. Schools are also what creates the future. Tonight, I am drawing on the [Vision Statement](#) of Burien. The three aspects I will present are Prosperity, Education and Collaboration.

Its not hard to imagine why the school drop out rates are so high in cities that are dysfunctional. Kids aren't blind, they see what is going on around them. They see Robber Barons pillaging neighborhoods and whole Cities, unchallenged. Is it any wonder that these kids lose a sense of hope? A sense of purpose? When these most basic of human needs are extinguished, the desire to stay in school flickers, then goes out.

Political apathy is a major problem facing the Country. It isn't that we don't care...its that we don't see a way out of the political gridlock that is hamstringing the country. When we give up on our dreams and all the things that are possible – reactivity sets in. Power oriented interests (political and corporate) benefit from reactivity and apathy.

Collaboration is a way of bringing more ideas to the table. Better solutions are possible with more input than the “My way or the highway” approach of today. Cities can, and should be a model of collaboration. This sets the example for the students to see the 1st Amendment of the Constitution in action, where everyone's voice is heard.

Before kids leave home they are learning life's skills. They will use what they learn the rest of their lives. Collaboration will be one of the essential skills that will benefit them and the Nation. Seeing it in action is the easiest way to model the behavior we want to see out of the future generations. City Hall is the best place to start that modeling. It deals with issues that are happening locally; and is the place where solution can be easily implemented.

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Tonight I will allow myself to become unfocused, and twice, you will see fear in my eyes. As I arrive at the podium I start to get off aim by not taking a moment to ground myself. Instead of organizing my papers prior to speaking, I choose to start my presentation without being properly organized. I have become overconfident.

Within a matter of 30 seconds of starting, there will be two disruptions in the room. All of the Council Member's eyes will shift from me, to the distraction. I will get that "Deer in the headlights" look. That is what field dependence, my default power position, looks like.

My adrenaline reaction caused me to be unaware of how much time had elapsed since I started speaking. The fear intensified when I realized I was just concluding the first paragraph! I still had much more to present with no clear idea of my remaining time.

I had two choices: I could take a deep breath or I could succumb to panic. In the **ACTION TUNNEL**, action (breathing) is the way back to Field Awareness; and reconnecting to the audience. You will hear me breathing deeply to keep myself grounded. In that centered moment, I chose to elaborate on this presentation like I did on the one prior. I simply connected to the Council by sharing more in depth on each of the pieces I was presenting until the red light came on.

My hopes in sharing this are simple: Breathing exercises will make you a better speaker, no matter what you may confront at the podium.



## TEXT OF SPEECH

One of the greatest things the Council can do is hire a city manager who will collaborate with the community and the Council to turn the City's Vision Statement into reality. There are several parts of the vision statement I'd like to cover:

- Prosperity
- Education
- Collaboration

I believe that they are all intertwined:

Prosperity provides the parents the ability to to improve the Highline School District through school levies. It also enables them to assist their kids with college tuition.

Collaboration will be where all of us join to find ways to make things happen in this City instead of finding excuses why they aren't possible. The wealth that will be created in this dynamic will be over a billion dollars in Burien alone. The possibilities from this kind of wealth creation will enable great things to happen for us, our schools, and our kids.

I believe that the Council can use the hiring of the new City Manager to begin the collaboration process. High performance candidates will be attracted to a City that is actively engaged with its residents. This kind of dynamic will enable us to spend time fixing problems and not just blaming.

Kids model their behavior after what they see. Its important to make sure the message we send is one of hope and possibility. Hope is without a doubt one of the most powerful emotions. It isn't just words...its tangible actions that are congruent with the words that make hope such a potent force.

We can change the course of our City through the City Manager selection process. It will require a renewed focus on the part of the Council. The time for us to collaborate for a better Burien is now.

**Video link:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dEJrv4GJqUQ>

## **RECONNAISSANCE**

**September 16, 2013**

The information on schools came from the Council Meeting where the local School District spoke.

The Vision Statement can always be found on the City's website.

I am contrasting 3 fundamental Vision Statement items not happening under the current Council:

- Prosperity
- Collaboration
- Education

I am sharing how the City Manager search process can address them.

**The renewed focus that I am calling for from the Council calls into question the status quo.**

## **AFTERTHOUGHT**

Prosperity, education and collaboration are important pillars as we transition from a non sustainable present to a sustainable future.

As the climate changes, many things are going to visit us: plague, famine, pestilence, and war:

### **Plague**

The West Nile virus is now spreading in North America. Our changing climate makes its adaptable mosquito hosts quite comfortable in areas not typically associated with this virus.

There will be a need for medical professionals in a variety of disciplines. Collaborating with the pharmaceutical industry will be important to combat this and other viruses that are spreading.

### **Famine**

Droughts, such as those now occurring in California, and other breadbaskets of the world are drastically reducing food availability. Simultaneously, the world's population is expanding rapidly. This is causing inflation to rise. A couple more years of this, and more serious consequences will become self evident.

Feeding an expanding population during droughts will require new methods of producing fruits and vegetables. Greenhouses located closer to the market will be one possible solution. As the prices continue to rise from California, these new greenhouses will become more widespread. Good quality produce will be available year round throughout the Country with [innovative technologies](#).

### **Pestilence**

Climate change has led to widespread destruction of lodge pole and ponderosa pines in the Rocky Mountains. [Mountain Pine Beetle](#) population has exploded as temperatures keep rising. They are now destroying the very trees that are necessary to absorb carbon dioxide here in the United States. These dead trees create dangerous fire conditions. Fires will release tremendous amounts of carbon into the air, further fueling this problem.

Industries such as forestry, fisheries, etc will have to come up with innovative new methods of eradication or control of these and other invasive insects. Jobs will be created, lumber will be harvested, and we can once again use the forests as a carbon sink.

## War

As resources such as water, oil, and minerals become more scarce, war becomes more likely.

An approach similar to the International Standards Organization's [ISO 14000](#) is a good starting place. This is a standard that has been around for many years. It has a large following in the business community. Essentially, it requires companies to optimize their use of resources. They aren't doing this for altruistic purposes; they are doing it because it is more profitable. Applying the same logic on a governmental level will have profoundly positive effects.

It will be cheaper to make ourselves self sufficient than to go out and commit acts of war.

## Conclusion

A sustainable future requires three basic ingredients:

1. A well educated population to deal with the challenges we are facing.
2. A willingness to collaborate to reach those sustainable goals.
3. Access to our net worth so we can undertake these endeavors while creating wealth and jobs at the same time .

City Hall has in its hands, all the Municipal authority to make the challenges we face, turn into opportunities instead of problems.

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**October 6, 2013**

## **RETIREMENT**

### **Forethought**

INTENT: To ask for a top performing City Manager

The economic decline we are experiencing today is exacerbated by the loss of our net worth. Over the next 10 years, the baby boomers will retire. That drop in the workforce will further dampen economic activities as Seniors cut back on spending. 70% of the GDP comes from consumer spending.

Increasing net worth is essential. The easiest way to increase net worth isn't redistribution, its about increasing the value of our basic nest egg – our homes. The wealth effect that the Federal Reserve refers too, is real. Greater economic activities do occur when we have a greater net worth. That makes more things possible for everybody.

Even before the last recession ended, there has been a tremendous drop in wages. This is impacting retirees and those still working. Lower contributions to both Social Security and 401K's will lower disposable income to retirees. Business activity and job creation will suffer as a result of this reduction. Those still in the workforce will not go unscathed. That wage drop will be aggravated by a likely increase in Social Security taxes to make up for the current shortfall in the system.

My City is not alone, thousands of poorly run cities dot the map of the United States. In each of them, opportunities are being squandered and decline is settling in. Businesses are shuttering, and jobs are lost. Some of the poorest neighborhoods can be found in Cities that don't take care of themselves or their residents. This sullen state of affairs creates an incentive for people to take advantage of property tax waivers. Unfortunately, this denies the City the needed revenue to operate and provide basic services. This is an issue that needs to be addressed at the local level now, not at some unknown future date before Congress.

Reverse mortgages have been around for years. Potentially, they could be of good value if safeguards are put in place to prevent abuses. Banks will need to be engaged at the local level. This should be an all inclusive collaboration between the banks and the communities to create sustainable wealth; for not only the retiree; but the City as a whole as well as the Bank itself. Property taxes have to be paid to maintain these mortgages. This helps the City meet its obligations. This type of mortgage provides a steady stream of income, so both the retiree and the business community will prosper. To get the maximum benefit for everybody, its going to require the Cities to engage all the issues holding back property values. This will create opportunities on a tremendous scale. We will need this type of wealth

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creation to deal with the issues that we are about to confront as we enter the Age of Carbon.



## RETIREMENT

### TEXT OF SPEECH

This spring I will turn 62. In the next 10 years one in four Burien residents will be at retirement age or older. Many of us have watched our 401k's evaporate and even Social Security is on shaky ground.

Burien's Vision Statement contains two important elements to help both the Seniors and the City itself:

- Good governance.
- Planning for the future.

Good governance makes all things possible. Our City will become more desirable and our home values will improve. This increase in our net worth will allow us Seniors to meet our retirement needs while still contributing to Burien's economic well being.

Burien's median household income is \$48K per year. Seniors receiving less than \$35K annually may legally avoid having to pay property taxes. This is where planning for the future is critical, because unless wealth is actively created here in Burien, there will be decades of reduced revenue that will debilitate the City.

I believe that every candidate for City Manager should be able to document their achievements in implementing their previous City's Vision Statement.

In Burien, our home values provide the backbone of prosperity for:

- Retirement
- Education
- All the decades in between.

The Council's final choice of City Manager will affect Burien for decades to come.

**Video link:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kksRVMCitsU>

## RECONNAISSANCE

October 7, 2013

The City website also contains information on age and income demographics.

The County Assessor's Office has information on income qualifications for property tax waivers.

The use of good governance and planning for the future are things missing under the current Council. I show how the City Manager search can be used to turn the City around.

**Not all City Manager's are created equal. I am looking for someone who has moved other Cities forward.**

## AFTERTHOUGHTS

Most of us took a 40% reduction in net worth during this last recession. The statute of limitations on recovering these monies have for the most part, expired. The role of the Cities in this new era will be dramatically different. To compensate for that loss in net worth, municipalities will have to find ways to lower the cost of living for the residents.

A trillion plus barrels of oil that have been burned since the Drake wells in the mid 1800's. The Age of Carbon isn't about burning oil, its about creating structural items that have lasting value. They can be as simple as snowboards, or as complex as the Boeing Dreamliner. All of them create sustainable jobs that pay well.

As the climate continues to change, water availability will become more unpredictable. Many of the breadbasket regions will turn into dust bowls. In that expansive wind blown prairie will rise giant windmills made from composites. They and photovoltaic will usher in a sustainable energy future. Gone will be the days of gyrating energy prices and the wars that come with oil. Jobs will be created as the Nation re-electrifies itself.

How does this apply to my city? Municipal Bonds. These are the financial instruments that cities use to improve the well-being of the community. Banks will

be engaged and money will flow to underwrite these projects. Every city will have a different need. Some will install windmills to generate power for businesses and residents alike. In the not so windy areas such as Seattle, photovoltaic provides a 7 year return on investment. That is a solid 10% return. Municipal Bonds can hasten the day of energy independence and prosperity.

Regions such as Southern California will have a need for water. Lightweight structural items are cheaper to install than heavy concrete and steel. Aqueducts have been used for thousands of years to transport enormous amounts of water to thirsty cities. Some of these aqueducts from antiquity spanned a hundred miles. With the Age of Carbon, the reach will be almost unlimited. It only takes ingenuity and lightweight composites to quench the thirst of our Cities.

The talent for these types of undertakings was not outsourced during the last 15 years. Be it a plant manager, an engineer, a factory worker or anyone in between, good paying jobs will be created as we enter the Age of Carbon. The secondary creation of jobs will be quite impressive. The barber, the baker and the butcher will have good paying customers to create even more jobs. What it is going to take is the chutzpah of City Hall asking clearly and directly for what it wants for its residents.

Turning cities around will energize the residents as the community becomes vibrant. Cities are already lobbyists in Congress. Cities don't bring bundles of money; they bring something more important: votes. City Hall will be modeling the behavior they expect from Congress. Some of these newly elected people in City Hall will move up the political ladder based on their performance.

Making a case for change at City Hall does effect the course of the Nation.

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October 15, 2013

## Asking the Voters to change the course of the City Forethought

INTENT: Asking for a fundamental change in policies: Burien first

### A National Problem

In the political arena, October is a deadly month; The October Surprise. Thirty second sound bites fill the airwaves with politicians slashing each other. The ensuing bloodletting is a precursor to how the voters will be treated by the “Victors”.

Voters frequently become disillusioned with their favorite candidates after the election. Why? Because blaming and attacking others does not answer the most basic question: how are they going to turn the situation around? In failing to offer genuine solution – the status quo is maintained and gridlock continues.

### Policies not Politics

My message was always focused on the policies of getting the City cleaned up and prosperous, not the blame game. This approach keeps the conversation vibrantly alive – it is a message of both hope and possibilities.

These were troubled times in Burien. It wasn't the Banks, the Slumlords, or graffiti that caused the City to decline; it was inaction by the City Council. They failed to set appropriate boundaries for both monied interests and the City Manager allowing problems to fester unattended. They had many simple choices based in law and code, yet did nothing.

I have detailed the results of the City Manager's inaction without blame and have offered many solutions. The Council's [evaluation](#) of the City Manager shows them supporting his management performance. The City was in economic free fall. And would continue to decline, until action to reverse it was implemented.

Accepting the Council evaluation of the City Manager without rancor, the choice before me and the voters is clear. A change in direction of the City is going to require a change in the City Council. The City Manager is the one who implements the directives and policies of the Council. The City Manager is hired by the Council and does their bidding.

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## **Asking clearly and directly for what I want**

The City Council had become disconnected and unresponsive to the residents over the years. The annexation issue was divisive, expensive, and time consuming. It occupied the Council and City's time for years on end. All of this to the detriment of the residents, and City alike. I believe it to be the primary cause of the City's decline.

I will be using a PDF file from the City website to demonstrate that annexation remains a real possibility again. I will be outlining where the candidates stand on the focus of existing Burien as first priority vs another attempt at annexation.

A City Council that is engaged with the residents in turning the City around will attract a first class City Manager. This Manager is going to require a significant amount of centered Council time and input. A quality candidate will rise to the challenge Burien presents, if there is follow through by the Council. I am asking for a shift in policies; Burien first.

The campaign has now come full circle. I will be tying the conclusion back to beginning – annexation. Each of my presentations articulated what was going on and ways to remedy it. I now bring the campaign to its logical conclusion – I ask people to join me in voting to change the course of the City, by changing the composition of the City Council.



## **LETTER TO THE EDITOR – B TOWN BLOG**

I believe Burien's quality of life started to decline when the Council became obsessed with annexation. It wasn't just the loss of dollars that caused the problem, rather it was the staff time not being focused on Burien that allowed the City to slip into decline.

The Burien website contains the [Seattle Financial Analysis Report of White Center](#). This report shows the daunting magnitude of what it would take to assimilate White Center, as well as the unmanageable tax revenue shortfall. The City Council was

fully aware of the issues in this report, yet still ordered the City Manager to attempt annexation. This caused thousands of man hours to be needlessly expended in Burien's:

- Legal Department
- Finance Department
- Public Works Department
- Planning Department

Today we are confronted by the specter of annexation and all of its problems again. In each race for the Council there is one candidate for annexation and one who wants to focus on Burien.

The candidates that are for annexation are:

- Lauren Berkowitz
- Rose Clark
- Joey Martinez
- Joan McGilton

The candidates that want to focus exclusively on Burien are:

- Steve Armstrong
- Jack Block Jr.
- Nancy Tosta
- Debi Wagner

I believe that getting Burien back on track is no more difficult than changing the composition of the Council. This change will also positively affect the City Manager search. Specifically, we will have a united Council that has a mandate to work on Burien. High performance City Manager candidates will want to work with a focused Council. With that, our new City Manager would:

- Make Burien more desirable.
- Help us improve our home values.
- Collaborate with the business community, thus creating jobs.
- Stabilize Burien's finances.

I am asking you to join me in voting for change, so that we can change the course of our City by staying focused on what counts most, Burien, the city we call home.

Dick West

## RECONNAISSANCE

October 15, 2013

Information on where candidates stand on issues can be found by attending Candidate Forums or check your local news outlets.

City websites contain enormous amounts of information for a campaign like this. The Seattle Financial Analysis Report of White Center was found in the Business Development Section. .

**Here is where I tie it back to the beginning – where the City Council lost focus: annexation.**

## AFTERTHOUGHT

### The Election

The voters connected with the message of 4 new candidates, and a year later, change is clearly underway. The City Council and new City Manager are actively engaging the community on a variety of fronts.

Abandoned Bank REO's are gone. Graffiti is now difficult to find anywhere in Burien. The City is noticeably cleaner. Economic spring has now arrived; property values in the City have risen by a half a billion dollars in the first year alone.

The tab called [Burien Today](#), provides a few links to Burien's change since the election.

### The Grass Roots

A City's refusal to faithfully execute its laws and ordinances is a serious matter. If your Council is unwilling to require compliance by monied interests; then starting and shaping a conversation is the way to motivate them. What it takes is calling out the behavior in front of the community. To be effective, blaming must never be used, or you will activate the Drama Triangle, and maintain the status quo.

City Council elections are important. Conveying how the election will affect who is chosen to be the City Manager is your task. Not all City Manager candidates are created equal. The composition of the Council will affect who is chosen to manage the City's desirability and your home's value.

Expounding upon your vision of a better City using solution, is an inclusive way of building consensus. Turning your anger about the way things are into passion for change, is a way to create the momentum for that change. What it takes is commitment to speak to the issues. In every problem there is an opportunity waiting to be shared. Solution draws people's attention to the idea that things can be better. People want solutions, not excuses.

A sustainable future is created by increasing net worth, not by the continued slide downward. All Cities have the tools they need in their Municipal Code to address what is holding back the City. What it takes is political will and passion to collaborate with the community in shaping a better, brighter tomorrow.

### **Sustainability**

Neighborhoods and Cities are the missing component in the National economic equation. Businesses can't add jobs without financially healthy customers to buy their products. We are all interrelated in this equation. The continuation of the Gilded Age is not sustainable with its asset bubbles and crashes. Real net worth based on tangible property has to be created, not financial derivatives. The statement, "It takes money, to make money", is true. Increased net worth will underwrite the opportunities of tomorrow.

The new challenges that face our Nation are immense. Where are we going to find: the water to drink and grow crops to feed an ever expanding population?, energy to comfort us and propel industrial output?, minerals to manufacture into products? We can look at these as opportunities or problems. Net worth creation is the catalyst that will usher in the The Age of Carbon.

### **The Age of Carbon**

This new Industrial Revolution will be more expansive than structural items. [Buckyballs](#), [graphene](#), and [carbon nanotubes](#) are just a few areas that will have a profound impact on society. Jobs will be created in R & D, the application sciences, the factory floor, and people doing installations. The secondary job creation will be far reaching as people once again have money to spend.

A few of the areas where these applications will show up are: high density room temperature storage of hydrogen gas – ushering in cheap hydrogen power for cars; super conducting properties – more efficient energy transmission; inhibition of viral reproduction – currently used as an HIV protease inhibitor; semiconductors – more powerful computer chips; paper thin batteries – will make mobile devices more efficient; carbon nanotubes – lightweight items that are 100X as strong as steel, yet much lighter. The list goes on and on, and is limited only by the imagination, and

the willingness to learn and create.

Education is a critical component in this transition to a new era. It will take money and commitment to master these new materials and skills. With a collaborative approach at the Municipal level, we can model the behavior we want from future generations, and create the wealth to make it happen.

### **The Podium**

It was an honor to have spoken and shared my thoughts about what my City can be. I have written *The Bully Pulpit* so that you too, can make an effective case for change in your City. Each of our Cities' individual needs are different – yet similar; a need for hope and prosperity.

All of the tools are here for you to speak effectively for change. In staying focused on solution, you will create a conversation that needs to happen all across this Nation. Our Cities will usher in the change that needs to happen. Speaking effectively at the local level will change the course of the Nation. Unlike politics, this is about the policy of inclusion and collaboration.

No matter how tyrannical the power structure of your City, it can be easily engaged for results. This isn't about mass demonstrations, its about Standing Forth and offering solutions to what is holding your City back. And in doing so, we will create sustainable wealth, and change the course of our Nation – one City at a time.

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## The Campaign

My campaign was laid out like a novel with each presentation being a chapter. There were 11 speaking presentations and 4 written ones. I made the story richer by building on the preceding presentation to move the story forward.

There were also numerous events leading up to speaking and many serendipitous events that occurred between presentations. I have interwoven them chronologically so that you can see how easy it is create a conversation for change. Like a book; there is a beginning, a middle and a conclusion.

## THE BEGINNING

**I am giving an overview of the problem and what is too come in this phase.**

**10-15-12** I contacted the *Highline Times* about Burien cleaning up Bank owned properties at taxpayer expense. I was concerned about the City taking on another annexation without satisfactorily completing the one that encompassed my neighborhood. The story also mentioned the other Bank properties that were abandoned and overgrown with brush. Story was published October 26, 2012..

**11-05-12** There was no action on the City's part to get these houses cleaned up. I decided to hire a bankruptcy attorney to do research into the Chase Bank house based on new data from the *Highline Times* story.

**FIRST SPEAKING PRESENTATION: 03-04-13** The Chase House presentation used information from *Highline Times* story plus documents and information from my attorney. I asked for a due diligence report into this matter.

**03-05-13** I filed a Public Records Request with the City to acquire copies of the documents related to the cleanup of the Chase house.

**SECOND SPEAKING PRESENTATION: 03-18-13** I showed the City losing 208 million dollars more than the surrounding communities. I asked for the full implementation of the Municipal Code to stop these losses.

**03-28-13** I forwarded the Public Records Request information from Burien with the bankruptcy file on the Chase house to the State Auditor's Office. These documents showed an illegal use of City funds. I asked the Auditor to investigate.

**THIRD SPEAKING PRESENTATION: [04-01-13](#)** I chronicled a pattern of systemic failures on the part of the Council and City Manager that caused the City to slip into decline. I asked the Council to not seek reelection.

### **THE MIDDLE**

**I laid out the specifics of poor governance in this phase including offering solution.**

**FOURTH SPEAKING PRESENTATION: [04-15-13](#)** I showed that the City Manager continues to ignore Council Policies and State Law concerning budgeting. This is also where the City began engagement on my first two presentations. I realized I had failed to provide a Judge's signature on one of the Bankruptcy documents. I committed to emailing it the next day.

**[04-16-13](#)** I forwarded the letter that I sent to the State Auditor's Office to the Council. This letter contains the missing Court document plus a note that outlined my hopes for a better Burien.

**[04-22-13](#)** City Manager's Report is read into the Public Record.

**[05-01-13](#)** Uploaded the Clean Up Burien website and started my Button Campaign in the B-Town Blog to reach a wider audience.

**FIFTH SPEAKING PRESENTATION: [05-06-13](#)** Acknowledged the City Manager's Report and showed the cost of inaction using data from the Assessor's Office. This is where I started providing written proposals to turn the City around. I showed how the 40 hour abatement plan worked without raising new taxes.

**FIRST WRITTEN PRESENTATION: [05-20-13](#)** I showed how to get the Banks out the foreclosure business in Burien. I also demonstrated how fixing one problem also fixes others. I have begun showing how the business community's poor sales were related to the neighborhoods decline.

**SIXTH SPEAKING PRESENTATION: [06-03-13](#)** I asked the Council to start the search for a new City Manager. I documented willful refusal on the part of the City Manager to follow State law as a basis for this request. I broadened my campaign to include other troubled areas in Burien. I showed how these areas are affected by City Manager inaction.

**SECOND WRITTEN PRESENTATION: [06-13-13](#)** City Manager announced his departure. I urge patience in searching for a new City Manager. I made a request for an interim City Manager so that the new Council would select this individual.

**SEVENTH SPEAKING PRESENTATION: [06-17-13](#)** I thanked the City Manager for getting the abandoned Bank REO's cleaned up.

**EIGHTH SPEAKING PRESENTATION: [07-01-13](#)** I proposed auditing the City

Manager's office so that the new City Manager and Council would know what was happening.

**THIRD WRITTEN PRESENTATION: [07-15-13](#)** Time to regulate Slum Lord dwellings was the last of my presentations dealing with blighting issues. I provided a detailed solution to the problem.

**[07-24-13](#)** City Manager departs.

## **CONCLUSION**

**My campaign is now focused exclusively on solution.**

**[07-25-13](#)** Asked people to vote for change in the Primaries.

**NINTH SPEAKING PRESENTATION: [08-19-13](#)** The 6 Questions is where I dropped the dagger and engaged the Council. This presentation showed how knowing what is going on in the community would enable Burien to hire the best City Manager possible.

**TENTH SPEAKING PRESENTATION: [09-16-13](#)** This presentation showed how Burien's Vision Statement can be used to engage the Community and in doing so attract a great City Manager.

**ELEVENTH SPEAKING PRESENTATION: [10-06-13](#)** Again I use portions of Burien's Vision Statement – Good Governance and Sound Planning. I showed the downside if these Statements are not implemented. I asked that the City Manager candidates be able to document their implementation of their previous City's Vision Statement.

**LETTER TO THE EDITOR: [10-15-13](#)** I asked for a change in direction of the City by changing the composition of the City Council.

## Reactivity

Reactivity is neither good nor bad, its just a sharp emotional signal that is hardwired into our way of being. Its purpose is to bring our attention to what's going on. What I do when I experience this energy is what determines its outcome: constructive or destructive. The constructive outcome requires curiosity. I must ask myself: Why am I experiencing this much angst? What's the message? Many people choose not to be curious. They frequently blow up in a blink of an eye and become quite destructive.

My interpretation of external events are what trigger the rise: a realization / denial that I am a certain way, boundaries being crossed, etc can lead to sudden bursts of reactive energy. Each one of us has our own personal repertoire of reactive hot buttons. Taking the time to become cognizant and curious about them will lead to a more grounded and engaged life. From this place I am also able to be more effectively engaged with my audience.

Below are just a few of the common areas where the rise maybe experienced in your campaign:

- Blind spots
- Boundaries
- Last word

Blind spots can be quite enlightening. I remember being asked what two things I saw that irritated me about the City Manager. The answers were easy:

- Controlling nature
- Rebellious way of doing things

Then I was asked what parts of these behaviors did I have? I have both. Knowing that is important. A principal idea in Psychology 101 is that "I hate in others what I can't stand in myself". In being aware of my own problems with control and rebelliousness, I can choose to be effective instead of reacting.

Becoming aware of these aspects of my Self enhances my ability to present information. If I were to continue being blind to these pieces, blame and finger pointing when I speak and write would be likely. The audience will pick up the incongruity in a heart beat, and disconnect.

What are the two top things that irritate you about your City Manager? How do these things show up in your life?

If you aren't certain they show up in your life, you could always ask a friend for

some no nonsense feedback. My friends would have told you they knew years before my epiphany about control and rebelliousness in me.

Boundaries being crossed can bring out the nastiest side of us. City Hall allowing Banks to damage neighborhoods unchallenged is going to highly charge people. Many people will experience explosive anger. A common response is to blame (act out) instead of engagement (act on).

Acting on vs acting out is an important distinction to know about reactive rises. If you act on anger's message, it can be a useful guide. It will help define your boundaries. It will enable you to do and say what is most effective in that moment.

Awareness of boundary issues is nothing more than experiencing the rise, taking a deep breath and making a choice to engage.

The last word is an arena where reactivity occurs frequently. It often has an I am right, and you are wrong (stupid) quality. Things can become quite charged in this environment.

Instead of the judgment terms: right and wrong, I propose that agree or disagree be used. This shift in perspective allows the other person's viewpoint to be seen without summarily dismissing it.

Viewing it this way isn't the dismissive, "yeah right, whatever" response. It is actually looking at how they came to their conclusion. All of us were raised and schooled differently. We were taught to view the world in certain ways.

As adults, we can examine the empirical truths we were taught growing up. Are these beliefs and views still serving me? The last word is a great place to start this examination. If there are still points you believe should be considered, dialogue is a way to expand the conversation. It is engagement, without the reactivity.

In a campaign like this, the last word is a dangerous ground to claim. The community are the ones who will be deciding the merits of your case. When confronted by a reactive response from the City; I always chose to yield and let them have the last word. I believe their reactivity helped underscore the merits of my case.

## **Conclusion**

Reactive rises still happen in me, I just act out less often. I frequently use the rise to fuel my Bullshimeter when things are not quite as they seem. The rise is telling me I need to know more. This leads to dialogue, and being a better presenter too.



## Toastmasters

Taking a professional public speaking class will give you the communication skills necessary to engage City Hall. Learning from experienced people will provide critical insights into both writing and presenting your materials effectively.

## Finding Your Voice

All of us has a unique way of speaking one on one. I use uhms and ahhs both at the Podium and when talking with friends. Speaking in our native way at the Podium actually allows your audience people to connect to the message. The reason for that is I am congruent. I am not pretending to be a Kennedy, Reagan or Clinton – I am being my Self.

Our idiosyncrasies are who we are. Be pleased in your uniqueness and stay focused on your message. You are here to tell a story: nothing more. Oscar Wilde summed it up perfectly: “Be yourself: everyone else is already taken”.

## Hands

I believe hands speak their own language at the Podium. As a presenter I am not overly animated. While presenting I let my hands communicate unfettered. My opinion of speakers who use choreographed hand movements is negative. To me they appear contrived.

## Defensiveness

All of us have blind spots. These are the ways of being that we unknowingly use to keep people distant. Public speaking tends to exacerbate them. The adrenaline people experience at the Podium will cause some speakers to become defensive; fight or flight.

Three weeks prior to my course beginning I learned about some of my behaviors. When I became defensive my chin would go up and one shoulder would drop slightly down. Essentially, I was looking down my nose at people with a chip on my shoulder. This stance did not help me connect with people.

## Receiving Feedback

Public speaking programs will give you feedback on a wide range of topics including your defensive strategies. This isn't criticism. It's information that can be quite useful. I remember experiencing reactivity when I heard about the chin up piece. I was also encouraged to be curious about it, and I was. That was the beginning of my exploration of my rebellious side.

The first step to a being a better presenter involves becoming aware of my defensive strategies. After that comes the simple act of acknowledging that I do them. This isn't about guilt, rather its about me shining a light on a behavior that I want to change. Recognizing that I am the kind of person who can be rebellious brings me to the place of choice. From that place I can either: act on my message or become reactive and act out.

What Is Is, is perhaps the most potent part of this equation. It involves an appreciation of all my ways of being, including my Rebel side. In not denying or resisting who I am, the issue tends not to persist. The statement, "that which I resist persists", is true, and so is its opposite corollary.

The videos taken during my training do not show any evidence of my chin up. They will however show the other piece of the Rebel; the control over others. I got plenty of feedback on that issue, and I worked through that too. I am confident you will get feedback on all of your strategies. I believe you will become a better speaker if you can stay curious about them.

## Blame

A presentation for change always contains an action request. It is important that the City know clearly what you want. People who engage in blame often fail to ask for action, and are disappointed when they get none.

The use of blame invariably leads to escalation and finger pointing. My original concern has now shifted to name calling. Remember this basic law of human dynamics: people will usually defend themselves against personal attack before fixing the problem.

In not fighting City Hall, you can shape the conversation instead. This is far more potent than blame at getting things resolved.

## Transforming Anger

Standing against something or someone is the stance of the Rebel. It is also where escalation and blame occur. Things tend to get very personal as people squabble about who is right. Rebelliousness is frequently associated with adolescent behavior.

On the other hand, standing forth and articulating a solution will attract an audience's attention, even if they don't agree with you. It's an adult place that doesn't demand conformance. It gives people something to ponder and invites dialogue. Standing forth is how conversations are started and shaped.

I believe you will find writing and speaking to be easier if you move away from blame. Rather than presenting a litany of complaints, I propose that you take each of your concerns and offer a solution with it. Showing how it impacts others and proposing a solution will get peoples' attention.

All of my presentations pivoted around the blights and the relationship of the City Manager and Council. Each showed a different perspective, and offered a proposed solution. I addressed each of the many impacts: economic, social, financial, etc. I did not have to repeat myself or engage in blame.

A varied and solution based speaking approach will get results that elude presenters who engage in blame.

### **The Marlboro Man**

Asking for support can be challenging for many people, yet it is an important part of a speaking campaign. If you are like me, you will encounter obstacles. Writer's block was and still is an issue that I confront. Having a person who will listen and hear what you're up against, will help you work through what you are confronting.

Speaking programs are taught by people who have a wealth of knowledge and experience. They will help you stay focused and on track with the issues you face. There may even be individuals who will be interested in joining you in speaking for change too.

### **Dress Code**

Your City is a multi-billion dollar corporation and merits respect, even if you disagree with its policies. Taking the time to dress appropriately will add credibility to your message. I used the Mayor's attire as a guide for my dress code.

One other thought: don't forget to silence your cell phone when you enter the Council Chambers.

## **Beyond the Podium**

As you become more attuned to the people around you through public speaking; your life will change. I am certain that you will notice a personal reduction in reactivity and defensiveness. Consequently, people will likely want to be more engaged with you in your endeavors.

Taking a public speaking course can be one of the greatest gifts you give yourself. It was for me.

# The Bully Pulpit

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## Breathing

These exercises will help counteract the effects of adrenaline. I would invite you to look at how the breathing worked for me. It wasn't until the forth presentation that I began to breathe more easily. Then, I started to engage my audience even more effectively.

In the morning I lay on my back for a couple of minutes with my eyes and mouth open and my knees upward so that it looks like I am in a sit up position and gently breathe in. By adjusting the angle of my knees I can find the most comfortable position that allows my diaphragm to expand with little effort. I can see and feel my diaphragm expand and my belly looks like I am a couple of months pregnant. What I am learning here is how to exercise my diaphragm so that it takes in air like a bellows. I gently breathe in and out for a minute, then I fully inhale, hold the air in for 5 - 10 seconds and then slowly exhale until my lungs are fully exhausted. Repeat a couple of times.

Exercising the diaphragm regularly will allow you to counteract the muscle tensing in the solar plexus associated with adrenaline. This will allow you to keep yourself calm while at the podium if you experience a rise in adrenaline.

I believe you will find it beneficial to start breathing exercises beneficial sooner rather than later. If you forget to do it in the morning...no problem, just spend a couple of minutes breathing standing up with your hand on the belly to feel the diaphragm expand.

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## OWNERSHIP LANGUAGE

*Adapted from A Model for Communication by Bennet Wong and Jock McKeen*

I believe using ownership language to be an effective way of engaging people who exert control over others. When I speak you will hear me frequently sharing statements that start with: I believe, I imagine, I assume, etc. These are not speaking strategies, they are me sharing my judgments about what I see and hear going on in the City.

## Judgment

Judgment arises out of the interpretation of my 5 senses. Only my sight and hearing are stimulated by what is happening in Burien. When I see abandoned bank REOs blighting my neighborhood, and hear the City justifying inaction, I form judgments. These thoughts aren't about right and wrong. Rather, I disagree with the City not doing its job as prescribed by both code and law.

Throughout history people have been admonished for the act of judging. Yet everyday, we do judge. It is how we make sense out of the information coming in through our senses. Judgment is our way of expressing what we like, prefer or want.

My judgments are about what I am experiencing, not the “you're with me or against me” approach. The latter style is often experienced as absolutism and tends to polarize people. I want my audience to see what is happening, and to entertain the idea that things can be better.

## Right and Wrong

We are all raised differently and have unique experiences that create our life's context. From that perspective, we then interact in the World. To judge another person as wrong, is likely to get a reactive response. Communication will likely cease. However, if I share that I believe the policies to be ineffective, I am not making it personal. I am just sharing my opinions about the situation, not the person. This dovetails with one of the basic rules of the podium: keep it focused on policies, not personal. Resolution is still possible with the approach.

In a personal relationship, I have the opportunity to engage in dialogue. I can find out more about the situation and hear the other person's perspective. Unfortunately, in a Council Chamber setting, that is not permitted. I am allowed to share my

thoughts and ask rhetorical questions only. The Council and City Manager may or may not respond. It is their choice.

## **Feelings**

Here I am referring to the primordial experiences we felt before words. Feelings are either positive and I move closer or they are negative and I move back and away. The feelings I experience with these abandoned houses and inaction is negative.

As we grow up we will name these feelings and experiences with words. Frequently they will be misnamed. This will cause serious communication problems. Statements like “I feel the City is doing a poor job on Code Enforcement” is not a feeling. Its a misrepresentation of the judgment “I believe / think the City is doing a poor job on Code Enforcement”.

Being less than direct in my language will send a mixed message to the Council about my commitment for change. Councils who engage in one up / one down, frequently ignore people who are insouciant in their choice of words. Using judgment statements about policies is a clean and direct way of communicating; it gets results.

## **Intention**

Intention is about how I translate my perceptions, judgments and feelings into action. I have choice: what I would like to do, intend to do, or will do. In each of my presentations I share my intent on how I am going to present this material.

## **Action**

Action is easy to execute and comprehend when I am clear about my perceptions, judgments, feelings and intention. I choose the act of speaking before the Council. When the City chose not to engage and clean up the problem, I add a sting: I call out their behavior. The bold text in the reconnaissance section shows the underlying message of my words. Communicating this way will get their attention, and connect my message to the community.

## **Conclusion**

I believe you will find using ownership language useful in your life and at the

podium. It is a blame free way of getting results, and your audience will know what you want.

When I hear other people using ownership language: I experience inclusiveness and a clarity of purpose.

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## Council Packets

Council Packets contain more than the agenda for the City Council meeting. They contain a wealth of information you are likely to find useful. Knowing where to look provides powerful insights into your City's inner workings.

Below is a brief description of what each section contains. The strategy section below will show how you can integrate this information into your presentations.

**Public Comment** is part of the Council agenda. It is where members of the Community can share their thoughts directly to the City Council. This generally occurs early in the meeting.

**Correspondence for the Record** are the emails to the City Council. These communications are always part of the Public Record.

**Consent Agenda** are the topics that the Council will be voting on that evening.

**Business Agenda** are the items that the Council is debating. When there is support to have the item voted on, it is placed in the Consent Agenda for a future meeting.

**City Manager's Report** is part of the Business Agenda. It has information that the Council has requested as well as information that the City Manager believes pertinent to the Council. This report generally comes towards the end of the evening.

## Strategies

Public Comment will present a different dimension to what is happening in your City. People who are willing to speak at the Podium are frequently passionate about their ideas. I always paid close attention to their presentations. A good portion of the information I used in my campaign originated in the Public Comment. Past presentations can be seen in the archives of your City's website.

Correspondence for the Record is an invaluable resource. It can help you identify problems going on in your City. They also contain the email address of the sender. This will allow you to contact the sender directly to get a better understanding of the issue they are writing about.

I would invite you to download the April 15, 2013 Council Packet [here](#) to get a sense of the scope of information available. These insights are quite helpful when

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you are building consensus. Your issue will only gain so much traction on its own. However, if you show that the other issues confronting your City have a common denominator: the City Manager, tremendous pressure can be brought to bear to get things resolved quickly.

Below are the page numbers for three examples of information I will be using in my presentations:

- Page 3. Quarterly Financial Reports
- Page 23. Wards
- Page 29. City Manager Evaluation and Public Records Requests

Sending letters to the Council is a good way of communicating to the Council and the Community. I used letters to the Council as a change up strategy for my presentations that were more detail oriented. I didn't have to worry about the 3 minute limit at the Podium. I believe you will find it to your advantage to not speak at every Council meeting. I did not want my audience to become desensitized to the issues I was raising.

Consent Agenda contains the minutes from the previous meeting as well items that the Council will be voting on.

The minutes contain:

- Names and addresses of the people who spoke in the Public Comment at the previous Council meeting. Using this information with the City Video of the meeting can be quite helpful. These individuals can be a good resource for information. They may even be willing to join you in speaking for change.
- The voting record for the Consent Agenda from the previous meeting. I found using this information in conjunction with the videos of the meetings to be quite informative. It allowed me to see where each of the Council Members stood on various issues confronting the City.

A Consent Agenda item located on page 57 (Updated Guidelines for City Council Meetings) will give you insights into understanding City Council Meetings. It is well written and easy to understand. It also reaffirms the State Law Statues I will be discussing throughout my campaign.

Business Agenda is where the Council discusses the direction and policies of the City. This is where Ordinances are originated and worked out. There generally is a back and forth between the Council and the Staff over wording and intent. Your City's website Video will allow you to get a more nuanced sense of what is going on. I used this to get a better understanding of Ordinance 561 – the Code that requires Banks to maintain their foreclosed properties.

City Manager's Report is an important document. It may contain a response to issues you are raising. If the information in it is not complete or its inaccurate; you can take the initiative at the Public Comment at the beginning of the meeting to

request more information. This is how I engaged the City Manager on April 15, 2013.

# The Bully Pulpit

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- Reactivity
- Toastmasters
- Breathing
- Ownership Language
- Council Packets
- Law

## Law

I integrate Law into my presentations so that my intent is clear and understandable about issues of non-compliance. Presenting this way removes ambiguity. I am pointing out the City's responsibility as defined by Law to deliver on its commitment (Municipal Code) to make the City safe and desirable. It is collecting property taxes for that purpose.

All States have laws that are written in plain English on how Cities are to be run. Your State's official website will enable you to easily access the laws that govern your City Manager. The laws in your State may be worded slightly different, but I believe you will find the underlying intent to be the same.

I will be using Washington State Law to illustrate how these laws pertained to my presentations. I have highlighted the provisions I referenced, and have included a brief synopsis for easier understanding.

I always include a highlighted copy for the Council and public to see when I reference law. That way people can see how straightforward and easy to understand the expectations of law are. Law provides the framework by which accomplishments or failures can be objectively measured.

The six points of law that I reference in my campaign are highlighted below:

RCW 35A.13.080

City manager — Powers and duties.

The powers and duties of the city manager shall be:

1. To have general supervision over the administrative affairs of the code city;
2. To appoint and remove at any time all department heads, officers, and employees of the code city, except members of the council, and subject to the provisions of any applicable law, rule, or regulation relating to civil service: PROVIDED, That the council may provide for the appointment by the mayor, subject to confirmation by the council, of a city planning commission, and other advisory citizens' committees, commissions, and boards advisory to the city council: PROVIDED FURTHER, That if the municipal judge of the code city is appointed, such appointment shall be made by the city manager subject to confirmation by the council, for a four year term. The council may cause an audit to be made of any department or office of the code city government and

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may select the persons to make it, without the advice or consent of the city manager;

3. To attend all meetings of the council at which his or her attendance may be required by that body;
4. To see that all laws and ordinances are faithfully executed , subject to the authority which the council may grant the mayor to maintain law and order in times of emergency;
5. To recommend for adoption by the council such measures as he or she may deem necessary or expedient;
6. To prepare and submit to the council such reports as may be required by that body or as he or she may deem it advisable to submit;
7. To keep the council fully advised of the financial condition of the code city and its future needs;
8. To prepare and submit to the council a proposed budget for the fiscal year, as required by chapter [35A.33](#) RCW, and to be responsible for its administration upon adoption;
9. To perform such other duties as the council may determine by ordinance or resolution.

[2009 c 549 § 3025; 1987 c 3 § 17; 1967 ex.s. c 119 § [35A.13.080](#).]

**Notes:**

**Severability -- 1987 c 3:** See note following RCW [3.70.010](#).

## Synopsis

**Section 2** gives the authority to the City Council to audit the City Manager's handling of the City. Councils are not allowed to micro manage the City Manager. They are however permitted to determine through the audit process the performance of departments that report to the City Manager.

**Section 4** requires the City Manager to make a good faith effort to implement the laws on the books. Good faith effort isn't about perfection. Its about having the necessary means and tools to address issues as they arise and to taking timely action.

**Section 6** requires the City Manager to respond to requests for information from the Council members.

**Section 7** requires that the City Manager keep the Council informed about the current and future financial health of the City.

RCW 35A.13.130  
City manager — Removal — Resolution and notice.

The city manager shall be appointed for an indefinite term and may be removed by a majority vote of the council. At least thirty days before the effective date of his or her removal, the city manager must be furnished with a formal statement in the form of a resolution passed by a majority vote of the city council stating the council's intention to remove him or her and the reasons therefor. Upon passage of the resolution stating the council's intention to remove the manager, the council by a similar vote may suspend him or her from duty, but his or her pay shall continue until his or her removal becomes effective.

[2009 c 549 § 3028; 1967 ex.s. c 119 § [35A.13.130](#).]

### Synopsis

This provision requires a 30 day notice of termination. A Council may remove the City Manager from office without 30 days notice by putting the City Manager on paid leave while the 30 days elapse.

RCW 35A.33.140  
Funds — Quarterly report of status.

At such intervals as may be required by city charter or ordinance, however, being not less than quarterly, the clerk shall submit to the city's legislative body and chief administrative officer a report showing the expenditures and liabilities against each separate budget appropriation incurred during the preceding reporting period and like information for the whole of the current fiscal year to the first day of the current reporting period together with the unexpended balance of each appropriation. The report shall also show the receipts from all sources.

[1967 ex.s. c 119 § [35A.33.140](#).]

### Synopsis

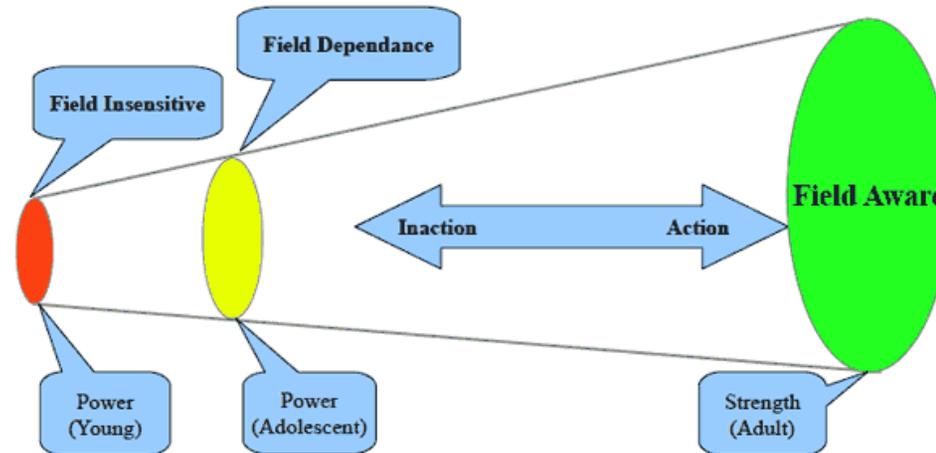
This law requires the City Manager to provide quarterly reports of how the City is

doing in respects to the budget assumptions.

# The Bully Pulpit

## THE ACTION TUNNEL

Your campaign will gain momentum by being in solution oriented action. In a tunnel your vision is sharply constricted. Tunnel vision if you will. However, as you move towards the opening, your vision becomes broader until you reach the opening; at which point you have maximum peripheral vision



**The movement towards Field Awareness is an active state that involves both dialogue and action.**

## Power and Strength

The Action Tunnel chronicles the developmental stages we all go through growing up. This maturation is not uniform in our lives. Passionate areas of my life are likely to involve a more aware state than areas where I experience resentment.

Field insensitive and field dependance are power positions. Both are rooted in need for control. Roles are found here: someone is dominant (control over others) and someone is submissive (victim), giving or taking orders. As hard as it may seem to believe the victim does willingly engage in a dance around control with the dominator.

Victim generally show up two ways: willing and unwilling. The willing victim is

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looking to be taken care of; they are entitled. The unwilling one resents the control, yet chooses not to take effective action. Frequently, they are rebellious, prone to acting out, and wanting to dominate. Manipulation and hidden agenda is common here.

The good news about the later state is: moving towards solution based action will move you into self control. Being aware of my intent when I speak is a good way to move out of power into strength. Strength is a place without roles. No one is submissive or dominating in this place. From this place I am the effect, not at affect. My voice is heard when I speak. That is why all of my speaking involves solution: I want to effect the outcome in a positive way; get things cleaned up.

**FIELD INSENSITIVE** individuals tend to see people as objects to be manipulated. This is a **reactive power** state.

When I am in this state I:

- Tend to act out.
- Blame without offering solution.
- Revert to my “terrible twos”.

Curiosity is a good way to address this issue.

**FIELD DEPENDENCE** is a **passive power state** associated with **inaction**. This leads me to speak in reaction to problems. If not addressed, this will lead to confusion at the podium.

When I am in this state I:

- Discount my ability.
- Tend wait for others to take action.
- Act like a seventh grader at my first dance, waiting for someone to ask me.

Getting involved is a way to address this issue.

**FIELD AWARENESS** is an **active and engaged** state. I am able to see the issues and I am able to create connection with what I am sharing; this is an adult place – self control. It is strength oriented. I am aware of my boundaries and those of others. I am able to see a much bigger picture of what is going on around me and take appropriate action.

When I am in this state I:

- See the issues and solutions clearly.
- Engage for the purpose of fixing the problem.

**IMMATURE vs ADULT** behavior is what distinguishes these three different states. Offering solution, moves a person out of the young / adolescent power stage

into the adult phase of strength – field aware. This state is compelling to audiences because I make a choice to stand forth and be an adult by offering solutions. I believe your audience will likely be more attracted to an adult behavior.

## Assessor's Office

A City is the wealth manager for its residents. It is tasked with creating the conditions where property values and net worth rise. When housing prices fall, it is the City Manager's responsibility to engage all blights, without exception. They have at their disposal the Municipal Code which provides all the tools necessary to make any town vibrant and desirable.

The numbers I chart are only the percentage of change in value. Richer and poorer Cities' management performance can be compared equally using this method. Later on in the Bell Curve section you will see that wealthier Cities do not always outperform less wealthy communities.

I chart the data over a four year period. A distinctive pattern will emerge showing how well the City Manager is navigating these troubled times. It is not unusual for Cities to fluctuate wildly from year to year. Some of the circumstances causing this are:

- A City becomes popular. Their house values will rise faster than those of other Cities.
- Certain economic groups become more active. The housing segment they buy will rise appreciably quicker than others.
- A major employer joins or leaves the community. Prices rise or fall in these Cities.

## Using the Data

I have highlighted four Cities that I will be discussing over three presentations. They are: Burien, Kent, Mercer Island, and Sammamish. Displaying information graphically takes under two hours to tabulate. This provides the community a unique perspective to view the City Manager's performance.

**March 18, 2013:** There are three communities that surround Burien that have comparable housing inventories. They are: Des Moines, Sea-Tac, and Tukwila.

The percentage of change is as follows: Burien -13.9%, Des Moines -9.1%, Sea-Tac -9.2%, and Tukwila -9.3%. This information is found in the far right hand column of the King County chart below. The difference in performance shows that Burien is falling faster than: Des Moines by 34.6%, Sea-Tac by 35%, and Tukwila by 35.1%.

**May 6, 2013:** I will be showing Burien and Kent's performance over a four year

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period. Burien's City Manager came from Kent. I will also be showing the performance of Kent with a new City Manager.

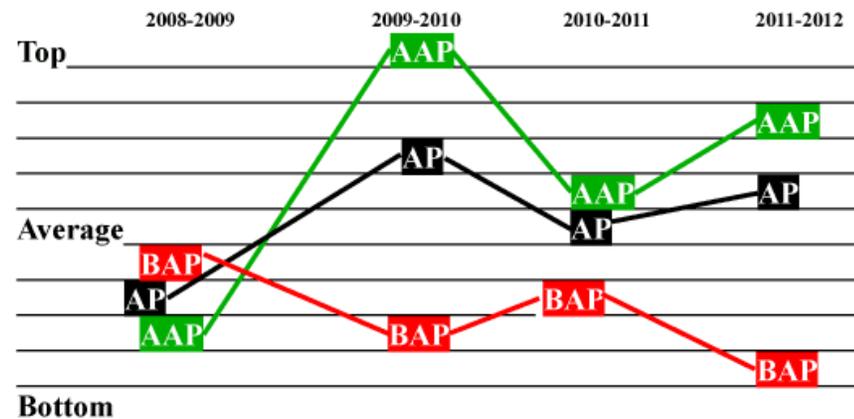
If your City Manager is from a different County, I believe you can still show the performance of their preceding City. This methodology shows only percentage of change. You will be comparing apples to apples.

**June 3, 2013:** I will be referring to the performance of Mercer Island. I chose this City over Sammamish due to its proximity to Burien. Burienites were likely to be more familiar with Mercer Island's well run City.

### Interpretation of Data

The graph below is designed to give you an insight into interpreting the data that you plot from your County Assessor's Office.

- **Above Average Performance (AAP)** will tend to trend above the median line.
- **Average Performance (AP)** will fall in midsection of the chart over time.
- **Below Average Performance (BAP)** will trend below the median line.



### Plotting the Data

On the far right column you will see a “% AV Change 2011 >2012”. These yellow numbers come from the highlighted yellow column in the Assessor's document that

follows this chart.

Filling out the chart is as easy as paint by numbers. The results can be a real eye opener for: the Community, the Council, and the City Manager.

## **KING COUNTY ASSESSOR'S OFFICE DATA**

Ranking	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	%AV Change 2011 > 2012
Top	Skykomish	Hunts Point	Normandy Park	Yarrow Point	1.00%
38th	Auburn	Carnation	New Castle	Skykomish	0.80%
37th	Mercer Island	Lake Forest Pk	Bothell	Medina	0.40%
36th	Redmond	Black Diamond	Issaquah	Hunts Point	0.00%
35th	Yarrow Point	Yarrow Point	Seattle	Clyde Hill	0.00%
34th	Duvall	Enumclaw	Skykomish	Beaux Arts	0.00%%
33rd	North Bend	Maple Valley	Shoreline	Sammamish	-1.80%
32nd	Carnation	Medina	Redmond	Bellevue	-3.00%
31st	Kirkland	Seattle	Duvall	Redmond	-3.60%
30th	Clyde Hill	Sammamish	Sammamish	North Bend	-3.80%
29th	Bellevue	Woodenville	Snoqualmie	Seattle	-4.30%
28th	Issaquah	North Bend	Kenmore	Mercer Island	-4.40%
27th	Normandy Park	Bellevue	Kirkland	Milton	-4.90%
26th	Sea-Tac	Mercer Island	Mercer Island	Snoqualmie	-5.10%
25th	New Castle	Redmond	Algona	New Castle	-5.20%
24th	Hunts Point	Shoreline	Des Moines	Issaquah	-5.20%
23rd	Bothell	Renton	Woodenville	Shoreline	-5.80%
22nd	Kenmore	Duvall	Renton	Normandy Park	-5.90%
21st	Lake Forest Pk	Algona	Bellevue	Black Diamond	-6.30%
20th	Medina	Snoqualmie	Auburn	Kent	-6.50%
19th	Sammamish	Issaquah	Enumclaw	Woodenville	-6.50%
18th	Beaux Arts	Des Moines	Federal Way	Maple Valley	-7.10%
17th	Black Diamond	Sea-Tac	Tukwila	Kenmore	-8.00%
16th	Tukwila	Auburn	Milton	Bothell	-8.30%
15th	Des Moines	Kenmore	Pacific	Enumclaw	-8.40%
14th	Covington	Milton	Maple Valley	Carnation	-8.50%
13th	Maple Valley	Covington	North Bend	Duvall	-8.50%
12th	Burien	Pacific	Covington	Renton	-8.80%
11th	Woodenville	BURDEN	Lake Forest Pk	Auburn	-9.00%
10th	Seattle	Clyde Hill	Sea-Tac	Des Moines	-9.10%
9th	Enumclaw	Kirkland	Kent	Sea-Tac	-9.20%
8th	Milton	Bothell	Carnation	Tukwila	-9.30%
7th	Kent	Federal Way	Black Diamond	Federal Way	-9.40%
6th	Federal Way	Beaux Arts	BURDEN	Lake Forest Pk	-10.40%
5th	Snoqualmie	Tukwila	Yarrow Point	BURDEN	-13.90%
4th	Shoreline	Normandy Park	Medina	Pacific	-15.50%
3rd	Pacific	Kent	Hunts Point	Algona	-15.60%
2nd	Algona	New Castle	Beaux Arts	Covington	-18.20%
Bottom	Renton	Skykomish	Clyde Hill	Kirkland	-18.60%

**COPY OF DATA FOUND ON ASSESSOR'S WEBSITE**  
**(Area highlighted with yellow is the data to be charted)**

City	2011 Median Residence Value	2011 Typical Levy Rate (%)	2011 Tax	2012 Median Residence Value	2012 Typical Levy Rate (%)	2012 Tax	Tax Change	Average Percent Tax Change	% AV Change
Seattle	375,000	9.66	\$ 3,621.78	359,000	10.17	\$ 3,649.48	\$ 27.72	0.8%	-4.3%
Algona	192,000	13.66	2,623.57	162,000	14.21	2,301.49	(322.07)	-12.3%	15.6%
Auburn	223,000	13.92	3,103.35	203,000	14.46	2,935.94	(167.41)	-5.4%	-0.0%
Beaux-Arts	723,000	9.12	6,591.98	723,000	9.66	6,983.06	391.08	5.9%	0.0%
Bellevue	465,000	8.70	4,043.41	451,000	9.25	4,173.16	129.75	3.2%	-3.0%
Black Diamond	255,000	12.50	3,187.57	239,000	12.96	3,096.79	(91.19)	-2.9%	-6.3%
Bothell	338,000	11.41	3,856.96	310,000	11.84	3,700.92	(156.04)	-4.0%	-8.3%
Burien	238,000	12.92	3,075.43	205,000	13.74	2,816.95	(258.47)	-6.4%	-13.9%
Carnation	260,000	11.68	3,035.90	238,000	12.32	2,932.59	(103.31)	-3.4%	-6.5%
Clyde Hill	951,000	8.29	7,879.28	951,000	8.80	8,372.92	493.64	6.3%	0.0%
Covington	247,000	13.13	3,243.26	202,000	13.64	2,755.06	(488.19)	-15.1%	-18.2%
Des Moines	231,000	12.87	2,973.68	210,000	13.71	2,878.40	(95.28)	-3.2%	-9.1%
Duwai	329,000	12.69	4,175.33	301,000	13.22	3,978.55	(196.78)	-4.7%	-6.5%
Enumclaw	226,000	11.49	2,597.21	207,000	12.18	2,520.62	(76.59)	-2.9%	-6.4%
Federal Way	235,000	12.77	3,000.67	213,000	13.53	2,902.52	(98.14)	-3.3%	0.0%
Hunts Point	2,084,000	7.37	15,368.85	2,083,000	7.88	16,407.73	1,038.87	6.8%	0.0%
Issaquah	443,000	11.13	4,931.05	420,000	11.60	4,872.21	(58.84)	-1.2%	-5.2%
Kenmore	338,000	12.96	4,245.45	311,000	13.17	4,095.79	(149.66)	-3.5%	-8.0%
Kent	231,000	13.23	3,057.23	216,000	13.73	2,954.85	(92.38)	-3.0%	-6.5%
Kirkland	425,000	9.66	4,105.61	346,000	10.54	3,647.44	(458.17)	-11.2%	-18.6%
Lake Forest Park	366,000	12.75	4,664.73	328,000	13.47	4,418.68	(246.05)	-5.3%	-10.4%
Maple Valley	266,000	13.01	3,461.62	247,000	13.75	3,395.15	(66.47)	-1.9%	-7.1%
Medina	1,034,000	8.60	8,889.05	1,038,000	9.13	9,473.21	584.15	6.6%	0.4%
Mercer Island	732,000	8.57	6,275.41	700,000	9.07	6,346.59	71.17	1.1%	-4.4%
Milton	224,000	11.68	2,615.20	213,000	12.19	2,596.83	(18.37)	-0.7%	-4.9%
Newcastle	459,000	11.67	5,311.30	435,000	12.50	5,438.34	127.03	2.4%	-5.2%
Normandy Park	444,000	13.03	5,783.34	419,000	13.93	5,822.54	39.50	0.7%	-5.9%
North Bend	342,000	11.46	3,918.43	329,000	12.08	3,973.95	55.52	1.4%	-3.8%
Pacific	207,000	13.42	2,778.59	175,000	14.00	2,449.77	(328.82)	-11.8%	-15.3%
Redmond	411,000	10.04	4,125.94	396,000	10.91	4,322.25	196.31	4.8%	-3.8%
Renton	261,000	12.21	3,187.77	238,000	13.23	3,148.18	(39.61)	-1.2%	-6.8%
Sammamish	495,000	12.14	6,010.27	486,000	12.62	6,132.88	122.61	2.0%	-1.8%
SeaTac	216,000	12.27	2,674.01	198,000	13.06	2,590.46	(83.55)	-3.1%	-6.2%
Shoreline	293,000	13.62	3,990.65	276,000	14.27	3,937.39	(53.26)	-1.3%	-5.8%
Skykomish	129,000	9.57	1,234.45	130,000	9.97	1,285.88	61.43	5.0%	0.8%
Snoqualmie	375,000	11.87	4,451.26	356,000	12.50	4,449.50	(1.76)	0.0%	-5.1%
Tukwila	225,000	12.68	2,853.17	204,000	13.46	2,745.60	(107.57)	-3.8%	-9.3%
Woodville	363,000	12.03	4,365.65	358,000	12.53	4,486.08	(119.57)	-2.6%	-6.5%
Yarrow Point	1,023,000	7.72	7,895.08	1,033,000	8.23	8,506.04	610.96	7.7%	1.0%
Unincorporated Area	325,000	13.06	4,244.45	304,000	13.57	4,126.65	(117.80)	-2.8%	-6.5%

\*1) Rates vary within cities. The rate shown is the predominant rate.

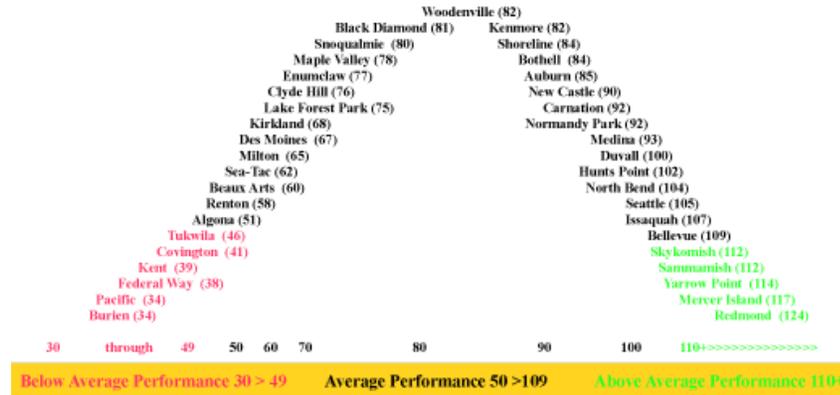
### The Bell Curve

The Bell Curve will help you understand and convey what your chart's data mean. The numerical data for the Bell Curve come from the King County Assessor's Office Chart above. Plotting this information will show your City Manager's performance accurately.

The statements I made during my May 6th presentation were based on charting the assessed value only. Had I had used the Bell Curve data, I would have known that my City was already at the bottom; not 5th from the bottom as I indicated.

The data is easy to calculate: add the City's annual ranking for each of the four years to get a total. That number is then compared to the rest of the Cities in your County to get a ranking. In the event of a tie; I look at which City performed better over the four years and awarded them the higher position.

Each of the Cities below have their four year cumulative score in parenthesis:



Charting the Bell Curve will allow you to make sense out of the squiggly lines that will show up on your chart. A four year moving average will wash out the year to year fluctuations Cities experience. It gives a better read on how your City is actually doing in comparison with the rest of the County.

Below are six Cities from King County that show that the management of the City is more important than the underlying house values in determining their ranking.

City	4 Year Performance	Average Assessed Value
Redmond	39	\$398,000.00
Skykomish	35	\$130,000.00
Hunts Point	31	\$2,083,000.00
Medina	27	\$1,038,000.00
Clyde Hill	15	\$951,000.00
Beaux Arts	8	\$723,000.00

I have integrated the Bell Curve information into the Assessor's data. Each of the below average performing Cities in King County is charted with notes on the right hand side. These notes show the four year cumulative annual placement score, and their rank in comparison to the rest of the County.

	2008 - 2009	2009 - 2010	2010 - 2011	2011 - 2012	4 YEAR TOTAL ANNUAL SCORE COUNTY RANKING	
20th	Medina	Snoqualmie	Auburn	Kent	39 / 4th	
19th	Sammamish	Issaquah	Enumclaw	Woodenville		
18th	Beaux Arts	Des Moines	Federal Way	Maple Valley		
17th	Black Diamond	Sea-Tac	Tukwila	Kenmore		
16th	Tukwila	Auburn	Milton	Bothell		
15th	Des Moines	Kenmore	Pacific	Enumclaw		
14th	Covington	Milton	Maple Valley	Carnation		
13th	Maple Valley	Covington	North Bend	Duvall		
12th	BURDEN	Pacific	Covington	Renton		
11th	Woodenville	BURDEN	Lake Forest Pk	Auburn		
10th	Seattle	Clyde Hill	Sea-Tac	Des Moines		
9th	Enumclaw	Kirkland	Kent	Sea-Tac		
8th	Milton	Bothell	Carnation	Tukwila		46 / 6th
7th	Kent	Federal Way	Black Diamond	Federal Way		38 / 3rd
6th	Federal Way	Beaux Arts	BURDEN	Lake Forest Pk		34 / Bottom *
5th	Snoqualmie	Tukwila	Yarrow Point	BURDEN		
4th	Shoreline	Normandy Park	Medina	Pacific		34 / 2nd *
3rd	Pacific	Kent	Hunts Point	Algona		
2nd	Algona	New Castle	Beaux Arts	Covington		41 / 5th
Bottom	Renton	Skykomish	Clyde Hill	Kirkland		

\* Both Burien and Pacific have the same cumulative score. Pacific's performance has some upward tendencies whereas Burien does not. Pacific is awarded the higher performance position.

### A Tale of Two Cities

Two divergent anomalies appear in the full King County graph above:

1. Burien is at the bottom and is trending downward.
2. Sammamish is above average and is trending upward steadily.

I believe the quality of the management to be the deciding factor between these two Cities' performance. In many ways Burien had everything going for it; yet failed to take advantage of its core strengths:

- Good location. It has easy access to all the major freeways in the Puget Sound region. A connection via downtown Burien to the Puget Sound network of the Light Rail is under active study. Commuting for work and pleasure will become progressively easier, and cheaper by 2020.

These two transportation systems appeal to both the urban lifestyle and the outdoor enthusiasts. Urbanites enjoy Seattle and Sea-Tac Airport's close proximity to the arts, entertainment and travel. The recreational lifestyle enjoys the closeness to the

mountains, the ocean, and the desert via the freeways for year round activities.

- Great views. Burien is built upon a forested glacial moraine with large green belts. Spectacular views: the Olympic Mountains form a backdrop to Puget Sound with its numerous islands to the west; Mt. Rainier to south; Cascades to the east; Mt Baker to the north are all common sights throughout Burien.
- Diverse and affordable housing inventory. The housing inventory spans a hundred years. Large lots are common. It was last logged over a 100 years ago. Second growth Douglas Fir trees approaching 100 feet are common. Housing prices are some of the most affordable in King County.

### **Conclusion**

Showing the unvarnished truth from the Assessor's Office to the Community and the Council is the first step towards a better tomorrow. This kind of presentation calls into question the City Manager's performance.

Three weeks after this presentation, the Banks were actively cleaning up their abandoned REO's throughout Burien.

# The Bully Pulpit

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## Code

Municipal Code forms a contract between the City and the Residents on how the City is to be run. An enforceable contract requires: an offer, an agreement, and consideration:

1. The offer is from the City; to make the Community a more desirable and safe place to live. The specifics of this offer are defined in the Municipal Code.
2. The agreement is where both the Residents and City agree to a dollar amount for that purpose. Generally, this is defined by dollars per thousand in assessed value. .
3. The consideration is the City collecting property taxes through consent by ballot for taxes to implement the Municipal Code.

In Cities where Code is poorly enforced, Code violations tend to be more prevalent. A general decline in the quality of life and property values also occurs.

Using Code in your presentations names the problem. Adding references to State Law will create inertia towards resolution. Essentially in my presentations I was declaring the City in default of its contract with the Residents.

State Law requires a good faith effort on the part of the City Manager to implement Code. (See Law Tab) If this is not happening in your City; a coherent case for change in policies is the easiest remedy. The City Manager is a policy decision, and the Podium is the perfect place to articulate: Code issues and State Law; and the consequences of inaction.

## TERMS

I am introducing the basic terms covered in Code that you are likely to need for your campaign. Understanding what these terms mean and how they work will allow you to make a case for change in the way your City operates.

I will be using Burien's Municipal Code (BMC) for illustrative purposes. Your City's Municipal Code maybe worded slightly differently, but I believe you will find the intent is the same.

I have provided a synopsis in black at the beginning of each term to help you understand the meaning of the Code. The actual text from the BMC are in red. I have highlighted the specific portions I referenced in my presentations.

The Business License section is not highlighted. I have thoughts and concerns that I will share called "A Pound of Flesh" when you reach that section.

[The Action Tunnel](#)  
[Clean Up Burien](#)  
[Assessor](#)  
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**Nuisances** cover a variety of acts that degrade. All Codes provide a detailed list of nuisances. They can be visual, sanitary, noise or any other quality of life degradations. I have included the full text from the nuisance section:

**BMC 8.45(5) “Nuisance”** (also referred to herein as “violation” or “nuisance violation”) means:

- a. A violation of any city of Burien ordinance;
- b. Doing an act, omitting to perform any act or duty, or permitting or allowing any act or omission, which annoys, injures, or endangers the comfort, repose, health or safety of others, is unreasonably offensive to the senses, or which obstructs or interferes with the free use of property so as to interfere with or disrupt the free use of that property by any lawful owner or occupant; or
- c. The existence, without limitation, of any of the following conditions:
  - i. **Trash Covered Premises.** Any premises containing trash or abandoned materials, except that kept in garbage cans or containers maintained for regular collection;
  - ii. **Dangerous Structures.** Any dangerous, decaying, unkempt, falling or damaged dwelling, fence, or other structure;
  - iii. **Potential Vermin Habitat or Fire Hazard.** Any accumulation of material on a property including, but not limited to, animal matter, ashes, bottles, boxes, broken stone, building materials which are not properly stored or neatly piled, cans, cement, crates, empty barrels, dead animals or animal waste, glass, litter, mattresses or bedding, old appliances or equipment or any parts thereof, furniture, iron or other scrap metal, packing cases, packing material, plaster, plastic, rags, wire, yard waste or debris or other objects which endanger property or public safety, or constitute a fire hazard or vermin habitat; provided, that nothing herein shall prevent the temporary retention of waste in approved, covered receptacles;
  - iv. **Junk Vehicles.** Any wrecked, inoperable, abandoned or disassembled trailer, house trailer, boat, tractor, automobile or other vehicle, or any parts thereof. A junk vehicle includes apparently inoperable, immobile, disassembled or extensively damaged vehicles. Evidence of inoperability and damage includes, but is not limited to, a buildup of debris that obstructs use, a broken window or windshield, a missing wheel, a flat tire, a nonfunctional motor or transmission, missing bumpers, or missing license plates; provided nothing herein shall prevent the keeping or storage of any vehicle on private property which is screened from view;

- v. Attractive Nuisances. Any attractive nuisance which may prove detrimental to children, whether in or on a building, on the premises of a building, or upon an unoccupied lot, which is left in any place exposed or accessible to children. This includes unused or abandoned refrigerators, freezers, or other large appliances or equipment or any parts thereof; abandoned motor vehicles; any structurally unsound or unsafe fence or edifice; any unsecured or abandoned excavation, pit, well, cistern, storage tank or shaft; and any lumber, trash, debris or vegetation which may prove a hazard for minors;
- vi. Obstructions to the Public Right-of-Way. Use of property abutting a public street or sidewalk or use of a public street or sidewalk which causes any obstruction to traffic or to open access to the streets or sidewalks; provided, that this subsection shall not apply to events, parades, or the use of the streets or public rights-of-way when authorized by the city. This section includes the existence of drainage onto or over any sidewalk, street or public right-of-way, and the existence of any debris or plant growth on sidewalks adjacent to any property;
- vii. Vegetation. Any noxious or toxic weed or uncultivated plant, weeds or tall grass which may be a fire hazard, or any tree which is in danger of falling and creates a substantial risk of damage or injury;
- viii. Illegal Dumping. Dumping of any type by any person on public or private property not registered as a legal dump site; and
- ix. Dumping in Waterways. Dumping, depositing, placing or leaving of any garbage, ashes, debris, gravel, earth, rock, stone or other material upon the banks, channels, beds or bars of any navigable water; or the felling of any tree or trees, so that the same shall in whole or in part project within the high water bank of any navigable watercourse; or the casting, placing, depositing or leaving of any logs, roots, snags, stumps or brush upon the banks or in the bed or channel of any navigable watercourse.

**Abatement** is the act of cleaning up nuisances. This can either be done by the property owner or by the City. BMC 1.15.210 (1) Abatement by City. The city may perform the abatement required upon noncompliance with the terms of an unappealed notice of violation, a voluntary correction agreement, or a final order of the hearing examiner. The city may utilize city employees or a private contractor under city direction to accomplish the abatement. The city, its employees and agents using lawful means are expressly authorized to enter upon the property of the violator for such purposes. Nothing in this chapter shall prohibit the city from pursuing abatement of a violation pursuant to any other laws of the state of Washington or the city.

**Summary Abatement** is when the City cleans up a nuisance when the owner refuses to do so or when impending harm to the community is imminent without immediate action. [BMC 1.15.210 \(2\) Summary Abatement](#). Whenever any violation causes a condition the continued existence of which constitutes an immediate threat to the public health, safety or welfare or to the environment, the city may summarily and without prior notice abate the condition. Notice of such abatement, including the reason for it, shall be given to the person responsible for the violation as soon as reasonably possible after the abatement. No right of action shall lie against the city or its agents, officers, or employees for actions reasonably taken to prevent or cure any such immediate threats, but neither shall the city be entitled to recover any costs incurred for summary abatement, prior to the time that notice thereof is served on the person responsible for the violation as set forth in [BMC 1.15.070](#).

**Recovery of Costs** includes: staff time, attorney expenses, and abatement action. These are detailed in the Municipal Code. [BMC 1.15.200 \(2\) Recovery of Costs](#). The city shall bill its costs, including incidental expenses, of pursuing code compliance and/or of abating a violation to the person responsible for the violation and/or against the subject property. Such costs shall become due and payable 30 days after the date of the bill. The term “incidental expenses” shall include, but not be limited to, personnel costs, both direct and indirect, including attorneys’ fees incurred by the city; costs incurred in documenting the violation; the actual expenses and costs to the city in the preparation of notices, specifications and contracts, and in inspecting the work; hauling, storage and disposal expenses; the cost of any required printing and mailing; and interest. The city manager or designee, or the hearing examiner, may in his or her discretion waive in whole or part the assessment of any costs upon a showing that abatement has occurred or is no longer necessary or that the costs would cause a significant financial hardship for the responsible party. Any challenge to the amount of the abatement costs must be made within 14 days of issuance of the bill and shall be heard by the city manager in an informal hearing. The city manager shall make a written determination as to whether or not the city’s costs were accurate and necessary for accomplishing the abatement.

**Liens** are the involuntary method Cities use to collect monies owed in abatement action. They cannot be discharged through either bankruptcy or foreclosure. They carry a significant interest penalty. [BMC 1.15.200 \(4\) Assessment Lien](#). If penalties or costs assessed against a property are not paid within 30 days, the city clerk shall certify to the county treasurer the confirmed amount for assessment on the tax rolls. The county treasurer shall enter the amount of such assessment upon the tax rolls against the property for the current year and the same shall become a part of the general taxes for that year to be collected at the same time and with interest at such rates as provided in [RCW 84.56.020](#), as now or hereafter amended, for delinquent taxes, and when collected to be deposited to the credit of the general fund of the city. The lien shall be of equal rank with the state, county and municipal taxes. The validity of any assessment made under the provisions of this chapter shall not be contested in any action or proceeding unless the same is commenced within 15 calendar days after the assessment is placed upon the assessment roll. The city

attorney may also file a lien for such costs against the real property.

**Parking** regulations detail: how many vehicles may be parked at a given residence; where they must park; and that they must be operable and licensed. **BMC10.11.010** The primary purpose of yards on residential property is to provide access to light and air and to provide circulation, recreation, and landscaping around the primary dwelling building(s). The presence of such yards on residential property is beneficial to the general health and welfare of the community. The purpose of this chapter is to restrict the number of motor vehicles that may be parked on residential property by declaring the parking of motor vehicles in violation of this chapter to be a public nuisance.

BMC 10.11.020 (2) “Operable vehicle” is a motor vehicle which is capable of being operated legally on a public highway, as defined by RCW [46.04.197](#), and has, in fact, been operated on a public highway in the previous 30 days.

BMC 10.11.030 No more than four motor vehicles shall be parked on a residential lot. Each motor vehicle must be currently licensed and operable. [Ord. 492 § 1, 2008]

BMC 19.20.10. B. All vehicle parking and storage must be in a garage, carport or on an approved impervious surface. Any impervious surface used for vehicle parking or storage must have direct and unobstructed driveway access. [Parking spaces](#) for a [single detached dwelling unit](#) shall be adequately sized and located to accommodate a standard-sized vehicle without the vehicle extending into the public right-of-way or [vehicular access easement or tract](#).

**Responsible Party** is the person or entity that is financially liable for the nuisance. BMC 1.15.20 “Person” means any individual, firm, business, association, partnership, corporation, or other legal entity, public or private, however organized. Because “person” shall include both human beings and organizational entities, any of the following pronouns may be used to describe a person: he, she, or it.

“Person responsible for the violation” or “violator” means any of the following: a person who has titled ownership or legal control of the property or structure that is subject to the regulation; an occupant or other person in control of the property or structure that is subject to the regulation; a developer, builder, business operator, or owner who is developing, building, or operating a business on the property or in a structure that is subject to the regulation; a mortgagee that has filed an action in foreclosure on the property that is subject to the regulation, based on breach or default of the mortgage agreement, until title to the property is transferred to a third party; a mortgagee of property that is subject to the regulation and has not been occupied by the owner, the owner’s tenant, or a person having the owner’s permission to occupy the premises for a period of at least 90 days; or any person who created, caused, participated in, or has allowed a violation to occur.

**Rental Property Regulation** is covered by Municipal Code. Its scope of coverage

varies by Municipality. Buriens coverage starts at 4 units per location. **BMC 5.62 (3) For purposes of this chapter, a "rental housing facility" means the operation of rental housing of four or more "dwelling units," as defined in BMC 19.10.115, at one location within the city.**

**Business License** regulations are specified in Municipal Code. They provide detailed fitness requirements to operate within the City limits. Most Cities have regulations similar to the BMC. **BMC 5.05.130 The city manager or designee may deny, suspend or revoke a business license, with cause. Cause for denial, suspension or revocation shall include, but not be limited to, the following:**

**(2) Any applicant who has suffered a civil judgment based upon fraud, misrepresentation, violation of the Washington Consumer Protection Act, or similar state or federal statutes, or any other judgment or cease and desist order, or consent decree, relating to business activities; provided, that the time elapsed between the entry of judgment and the date of application is less than two years.**

**BMC 5.05.140 (3) The licensee, or licensee's management personnel, has been convicted of a crime, or suffered civil judgment or consent decree which bears a direct relationship to the conduct of the business licensed pursuant to this chapter;**

## **A Pound of Flesh**

Making a case for the revocation of a Bank's business license will likely derail your campaign. There are many reasons for this. A few are:

- Courts are unlikely to side with the City where there is selective and unequal enforcement of Code. A City's will not bring action where it is unlikely to prevail.
- The City Manager has the sole discretion on revocation of a business license.
- Blaming the Banks allows the City to deflect its responsibility in allowing the matter to exist in the first place.

Alternatively, I propose that you keep the focus on resolution. Showing the costs to the Community and the City coffers puts the onus on the City Manager, the person who allowed the problem to happen. The City has the legal prerogatives under Code to address all blighting, or any other offense that degrades (see the first highlighted section under Nuisances) the community.

## Burien Today

The Council and new [City Manager](#) are actively seeking Community input on a variety of fronts. A few examples are: Council meetings have more public input. Each individual Business item is now open for Public Comment. Residents are responding and taking the time to speak. The City has also provided a means for the Public to provide input directly through its website.

## Neighborhoods

Home values are rising. Single and multifamily construction is quickly consuming the last undeveloped property. Sizable portions of Burien were recently rezoned for redevelopment. This will alleviate land scarcity and lead to increased home building and job creation.

The Puget Sound region is becoming “Pugetropolis” as people continue to move inward to the Cities from the suburbs. During the next decade, upwards of a thousand new Townhouse style residences will be built in Burien. This densification dovetails with redevelopment already underway in Seattle and the surrounding Cities.

The new homeowners will bring enormous amounts of disposable (85K+) income into the City's expanding business corridors. Commercial nodes have already been zoned into these redevelopment areas. The neighborhoods are now a symbiotic part of City's business development. Jobs and opportunities will be created in the process.

## Business

For the first time in 20 years, Burien hired a business development facilitator to get Community feedback. Many people showed up to this four hour meeting, and over half of them spoke. The facilitator asked many questions. A few of them were: what priorities did people want the Council to focus on?, what did they see as business impediments?, how to best retain existing businesses?, and what new types of new businesses did the Community want? Significant time was devoted to each topic. The [results](#) of the meeting were posted on the City website.

The Council is now assimilating the data into its strategic plan. The City will be hiring a business development manager to implement the directives.

## City Attorney / Interim City Manager Retires

He gave a candid [interview](#) that covered his tenure and his observations of the past, present and future of Burien. He was instrumental in cleaning up the blights in Burien and seeing to it that they did not return. I believe many of his actions laid the foundation for the transformation that is now occurring in Burien.

# The Bully Pulpit

## Contact Me

Changing the course of the Country starts with speaking at City Hall. Feel free to contact me with your questions, thoughts and suggestions on The Bully Pulpit.

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