OP-ED
What's in Store for 2020
Mayor Barb Tolbert

As busy as 2019 was for the City of Arlington, it is hard to imagine that 2020 could be any busier. Yet, it looks like that is going to hold true. Here's a quick look at what's ahead for plans and projects in the new year.

This year could be considered the year of transportation improvements for the City, with eight separate projects either being designed or under construction in addition to our regular pavement preservation work. These projects include construction of roundabouts on SR-530 at Smokey Point Blvd (funding dependent) and at 204th Street NE and 77th Avenue NE; design and construction of a new traffic signal at 204th Street NE and 74th Avenue NE; design of a new traffic signal on SR-531 (172nd Street NE) at 40th Avenue NE; design of the SR-531 widening project; planning for the repaving of Smokey Point Blvd from 164th Street NE to 174th Street NE in 2021; designing the Smokey Point Blvd corridor from 174th Street NE to 200th Street NE to accommodate more than just vehicle traffic; and completing the design for 173rd Street NE to take pressure off of 172nd Street NE. The City will also be finishing the Complete Streets project on 59th Avenue NE and 188th Street NE to connect the Arlington Boys & Girls Club with adjacent parks, providing sidewalks, crosswalks and other amenities to improve safety. All of these projects are including in the city's adopted Transportation Improvement Plan, which takes a look at transportation needs for the next 20 years. This list is available on our website at www.arlingtonwa.gov/648/Transportation-Improvement-Plan. Many of these projects will be built thanks to significant state funding.

In economic development, work will continue on the Cascade Industrial Center (CIC) to attract family-wage manufacturing jobs in cooperation with the City of Marysville and our new partners, the Port of Everett. Transportation and utilities infrastructure in the CIC is a top priority for us and we will be working closely with Marysville to pursue funding. An important piece of growing the CIC is career-connected learning for our local residents. A new initiative with the Arlington School District has been established to connect incoming high school juniors and seniors with local businesses. Contact Arlington Public Schools at aci@asd.wednet.edu for more information about the Arlington Career Internships program, including how to sign up. The City's Innovation Center, on the corner of 4th and Olympic, will be opening after a remodel of the building. The Innovation Center will provide co-working and incubator space for entrepreneurs of all industries and will provide access to services and education resources. Finally, we are anticipating the completion of the sustainable Downtown Corridors Plan that we have been working on in partnership with students from Western Washington University. This plan will help guide the future of downtown Arlington over the next 10-20 years.

In Police, we will be transitioning our court and jail services from the City of Marysville to Snohomish County by March 1, 2020. This move is prompted by a lack of capacity in Marysville court and jail due to the growth in population in both cities. Arlington Fire will be focused on further conversations with North County Regional Fire Authority on additional partnerships. In addition, the City will be designing and breaking ground on a new Fire Station 48 on Airport Boulevard. Both departments will be focusing on planning for anticipated future growth, similar to the work we have done on transportation.

Our focus in Community Development this year will be on development of a Housing Action Plan with our community to address needs for affordable housing.

This is only a short list of the plans and programs that are anticipated to be worked on by your city staff in 2020. All of these plans and projects require input from our local community. I encourage you to get involved and stay involved. You can find more information on the city website at www.arlingtonwa.gov.