

Call for Nominations

Network Board Elections in May

If you are interested in helping shape the future of downtown Bellingham or know someone who is, the Network Board of Directors is currently soliciting nominations for Board members. Contact Kirsten at 527-8710 or Kirsten@DowntownBellingham.com. Nominations must be received by March 1.

Waterfront Design Concepts Unveiled

The Port and City unveiled four potential waterfront design concepts on January 24. The designs provide the public with an opportunity to assess possible design elements from all four concepts and mix and match elements to formulate recommendations for a final design. The four designs are currently available for review on the newwhatcom.org website. A Joint City Council/Port Commission Work Session on the New Whatcom Design Concepts will occur on March 7 at noon in the City Council Chambers. Comments, directed to either the City or the Port, should be submitted before this date. The Network has invited Port officials to discuss these designs and other waterfront redevelopment issues with the Network membership during our February membership meeting on Feb. 22.

Membership Meeting February 22

When: Wednesday, Feb. 22, 6-8pm
Location: Bay Street Coffee Company

Join us to connect with neighbors, learn about important issues, and discuss plans for upcoming events and promotions. The meeting agenda will include:

- Downtown Landscape Plan
- Waterfront Discussion with Port Representatives
- Merchant/Promotion Committee Progress
- Cascade Vocational Services
- Procession of Species

Merchants/Promotion Committee

The Downtown Renaissance Network convened a Merchants/Promotion committee to focus on merchant issues and plan for promotions downtown. The committee will function as a monthly forum in which business owners can exchange information, network with peers, and plan cooperative promotions. The first committee meeting took place in January and included a brainstorming session for 2006 activities as well as useful discussions on downtown events. Join us for the next meeting: Friday, February 10 from 8-10am at the Network office (1306 Commercial St.).

Flowers Downtown!



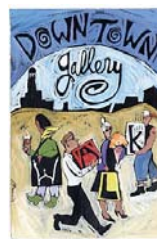
New this year, the Downtown Renaissance Network entered into a contract with the City of Bellingham to add landscaping to our current maintenance services. The Network hired Austin Heaton Landscape, Inc. to develop a landscape plan that will breathe new life and color into existing planting beds and planters. In addition, new planters and hanging baskets will become part of the streetscape. The plan, available for review at the Network membership meeting February 22 and at the Network office will be implemented over the next three years. Merchants who are interested in becoming more involved with the downtown landscaping program are encouraged to contact the Network.

Gallery Walks 2006

The 2006 Gallery Walk season is upon us, with the first walk occurring on March 17. This year, we will host a total of five walks including the Children's Gallery Walk. All walks will take place on Fridays from 7-10pm with the exception of the Children's Walk, which will run from 6-9pm.

The 2006 schedule follows.

- March 17, 7-10pm
- May 5 (Children's Walk), 6-9pm
- July 7, 7-10pm
- October 6, 7-10pm
- December 1, 7-10pm



Important note: This year, Gallery Walk participants must pay in advance of the walk or they will not be included in event promotions. If you are interested in participating in Gallery Walk, please contact Kirsten at 527-8710 at least one month before the event.

Welcome New Members!

Wendy Bohlke • The Bagelry • Champion Street Center • Crown Plaza • Everything in Sight Optical • Frontier Bank • GeoEngineers, Inc. • Georgie Girls • Kendrick's Billiards • LD Forest, Inc. • Little Cheerful Café • Metcalf Hodges • People's Bank • Port of Bellingham • Skagit State Bank • Taco Lobo • West Coast Marine Services • Whidbey Island Bank

Thank you for helping us create an effective, dynamic voice for Downtown Bellingham!

Cascade Vocational Services

Employment opportunities & assistance for businesses

Cascade Vocational Services offers opportunities that will promote the goals of their clients while assisting downtown businesses. The organization provides assistance to people with disabilities who are seeking employment.

Cascade is developing a variety of services for downtown business. Services include direct hires (may include tax breaks and government incentives), contracts with Cascade-paid, insured, and supervised workers, and custodial and document services such as envelope stuffing. Cascade is licensed to pay sub-minimum wages based on productivity.

Cascade clients are also available for small cash jobs such as picking up your mail and delivering it to the post office, jobs that are a big step in the right direction for their clients.

Finally, Cascade is hoping to provide weekly deliveries of cut flowers provided by their sister enterprise Cascade Gardens.

Bill Bradley, Employment Specialist at Cascade, states

"The biggest benefits of a relationship with our clients are intangible...our services are competitively priced and can be scaled to your specific needs. You can make a difference in some one's life in a way that is good for your business."

If you are interested in contracting with Cascade, the first step is a meeting with a Job Developer to assess ways Cascade can help. Cascade will discuss the best way to fill the need and negotiate a price that will work for you. Cascade states they will protect your proprietary information and will only recommend services if they truly feel they can fulfill a need. To set up a site tour or meet with a job developer, contact Cascade Vocational Services at 647-9087.

SBDC Roundtable Program Accepting New Members

Several of the Small Business Development Center's Business Roundtable Program groups are looking for new members this spring. The professionally-facilitated Roundtables meet monthly and offer a valuable opportunity for business owners and managers in the same industries to meet, support one another by exchanging ideas and solutions, and help one another solve business problems. If you own or manage a business in the retail, manufacturing, services or nonprofit sector and are interested in finding out more, contact Kate Clark at the SBDC by email at kate.clark@wwu.edu or by phoning 733-4014.



Summer Alley Concerts 2006

This summer, the Downtown Renaissance Network will partner with residents, community organizations, the City of Bellingham, and businesses to present the second year of Downtown Sounds, a summer music series for the entire Bellingham community. The first year of Downtown Sounds offered four Wednesday evenings (5:30-9 p.m.) of live music, food, and fun for the entire family. This year will provide six Wednesday evening concerts from July 12 – August 16 in the alley between Holly St and Bay/Champion St. The concert entrance will be changed to the Bay/Champion St. end of the alley. Sponsorship and marketing opportunities are available. For more information contact Kirsten or Kendle at the Network (527-8710) or visit our website: www.downtownbellingham.com.

Upcoming Events Downtown

For more info visit DowntownBellingham.com

Planning Commission Public Hearing, New Whatcom Design Concepts

February 9, 7pm, City Council Chambers

Sixth Annual Human Rights Film Festival

February 9-18, 7pm each evening

Planning Commission public hearing on City Center Design Review Code

February 16, 7pm, City Council Chambers

Network Quarterly Meeting

February 22, 6-8pm, Bay Street Coffee

Joint City Council/Port Commission Work Session, New Whatcom Design Concepts

March 7, Noon, City Council Chambers

Downtown Gallery Walk

March 17, 7-10pm

Joint City Council/Port Commission Action on Preferred New Whatcom Design Concept

March 21, 7pm

Open Session on Small Business Issues (SBDC)

Cornwall Branch of Washington Mutual

March 22, 3-5pm, free

Trade Week in Bellingham

Trade reps in town, contact SBDC for more info

March 24, all day

Farmer's Market Opens

April 1, 10am-3pm

Sustainable Connections' 3rd Annual Spring Business Conference

April 21, 8:30am-5pm

The 20th Annual Downtown Revitalization Training Institute

May 2-4, Port Townsend

Children's Gallery Walk

May 5, 6-9pm

Procession of Species

May 6

Bella Umbrella Contest

May 19

2006 Membership Meeting

Downtown Renaissance Network member quarterly meetings are a chance to visit with neighbors, discuss important downtown issues, and plan events and promotions. This year, the Network will host four meetings on Wednesdays from 6-8pm unless otherwise advertised. The meeting schedule follows:

February 22

May 17

September 13

November 15

Network Community Leaders & Patrons



Champion Street Center

— CHMELIK SITKIN & DAVIS P.S. —
ATTORNEYS AT LAW

Gateway Plaza

Thank you for your support!