



## City of Edmonds Media Release

Economic Development ~ 121 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue North, Edmonds

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**To:** Media

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### **Edmonds First Washington City to Sign On To Sustainable Cities Partnership**

***Joint Endeavor of Edmonds, Western Washington University and Association of Washington  
Cities Will Help Edmonds with Wide Array of Projects***

**(Edmonds, WA)** - The City of Edmonds will receive a helping hand from Western Washington University students and faculty on a range of projects over the next academic year – from developing a mobile app for downtown visitors to helping reduce storm water impacts to the Edmonds Marsh – thanks to the first interlocal agreement of its kind in our state between Edmonds, Western, and the Association of Washington Cities (AWC).

Tuesday evening the Edmonds City Council authorized the Mayor to execute the interlocal agreement with Western to become the first city in the state of Washington to participate in the Sustainable Cities Partnership, a joint endeavor between Edmonds, Western, and AWC to focus student energy and ideas on a variety of city issues and challenges oriented toward sustainability.

“When I learned about this possibility, it just sounded like a terrific program to match ideas coming out of Western with our city’s needs,” said Edmonds Mayor Dave Earling. “I am especially interested in a public relations project that will help the city promote a downtown cultural/arts corridor to further enhance our robust arts community.”

The City of Edmonds has embraced environmental stewardship for a number of years, and is committed to sustainability as an overall framework in all of its plans and operations.

“The opportunity to partner with WWU and AWC on a number of local projects will be an exciting way to advance these goals in a concrete way,” says City of Edmonds Planning Manager Rob Chave,

The partnership also advances Western’s institutional goal of applying its academic expertise in ways that strengthen communities beyond the campus.

“Western’s mission is to give our students the best education possible and to serve the needs of the state. Programs such as this that help cities meet their goals and give students the chance to solve real problems help us fulfill that mission,” said Brian Burton, associate vice president for Academic Affairs at Western.

AWC and Western launched the Sustainable Cities Partnership based on a successful model pioneered at the University of Oregon seven years ago, now replicated in dozens of sites around the country. The partnership pairs students and faculty together with cities to work on city-defined projects.

“Cities throughout Washington strive to improve sustainability and resiliency in their communities,” said AWC CEO Peter B. King. “This partnership is a great step forward in providing cities with tools to help plan for the future.”

Edmonds was selected as the inaugural partner after a competitive process. During the 2016-2017 academic year, students and faculty will tackle 11 projects that include:

- Reduction of stormwater impacts upon the Edmonds Marsh;
- Help develop the fledgling “Green Business Pledge” program in Edmonds;
- Development of a mobile app to make visitors aware of amenities in downtown Edmonds;
- Evaluating available methods of dealing with construction waste and food waste;
- Analyzing the likely impacts of sea-level rise upon the Edmonds shoreline.

The full range of courses and projects can be seen at [the Sustainable Cities Partnership website](#).

Mayor Earling also noted one of the most challenging projects will use GIS to modernize management of the Edmonds Memorial Cemetery. “I think it will be really interesting to see the approach and the end results.”

Both AWC and Western see a solid future for the Sustainable Cities Partnership as additional cities participate.

“We are pleased to partner with Western and Edmonds on this project. The partnership is a strong building block for communities that want to make sustainable futures a reality,” added King.

The Association of Washington Cities is a private, nonprofit, nonpartisan corporation that serves its members through advocacy, education and services. Founded in 1933, AWC represents Washington's cities and towns before the state legislature, the state executive branch and with regulatory agencies. AWC also provides training, data and resources, and programs such as Employee Benefit Trust, Risk Management Service Agency, Workers' Compensation Retrospective Rating Program, and Drug & Alcohol Consortium.

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