



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, UNITED STATES ARMY FIRES CENTER OF EXCELLENCE AND FORT SILL
OFFICE OF THE STAFF JUDGE ADVOCATE
462 HAMILTON ROAD, SUITE 307
FORT SILL, OKLAHOMA 73503

ATZR-JA

3 June 2022

MEMORANDUM FOR

Deputy to the Commanding General, Fires Center of Excellence and Fort Sill, McNair Hall, Fort Sill, OK 73503
Commander, United States Army Garrison Fort Sill, 462 Hamilton Road, Fort Sill, OK 73503
City Administrator, City of Sedro-Woolley, City Hall, 325 Metcalf Street, Sedro-Woolley, WA 98284
Functional Community Manager (Installation Management), Installations Career Field, Army Civilian Career Management Activity (ACCMA), Bldg. 1465, 6010 6th Street, Fort Belvoir, VA 22065

SUBJECT: After Action Review (AAR), Site Visit to Sedro-Woolley, Washington, 9–13 May 2022, City Management Senior Fellowship Program (CMSFP)

1. Purpose. The City Management Senior Fellowship Program (CMSFP) is a joint effort by International City Management Association (ICMA) and the US Army. A 12-month program, it aims to facilitate an exchange of information, ideas, tools, and general public administration best practices between City Management in the public sector and Installation Management in the federal sector. Three major components of the CMSFP are an orientation visit to Washington, D.C., an on-site visit by the fellow at the partner city, and attendance at the national ICMA conference at the end of the year. As a core component of the 2022 CMSFP, I attended a one-week on-site professional development visit to Sedro-Woolley, Washington, 9–13 May 2022.



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2. Sedro-Woolley. Sedro-Woolley, located on the western edge of the majestic Cascade Mountain Range in northwest Washington State, is known as the "Gateway to the North Cascades." It is situated north of Seattle, Washington and south of Bellingham, Washington on Highway 20, along the banks of the Skagit River. Sedro-Woolley has a population of approximately 11,690.

3. Visit Goal and Objectives: The five-day visit facilitated a focused and productive information exchange with City Administrator, Mr. Charlie Bush, key city management staff and the governing body of the Mayor and Councilmembers. My professional development objectives were to observe and gain understanding of how and why Sedro-Woolley and Mr. Bush achieved success in these specific areas:

- a. Intergovernmental support agreements or collaborations with other municipalities, government agencies, or other entities to gain efficiencies or purchasing power.
- b. The role of the local government in managing growth and developing ways to strengthen local economies.
- c. Policies to provide a better quality of life and build on local assets.

4. Visit Itinerary and Contacts. Mr. Bush and his team hosted a brilliant visit to Sedro-Woolley, WA. I felt welcomed from the start. Charlie created a wide-ranging and diverse schedule of leadership office calls, senior manager briefings, community engagements and hands-on activities. He spent much of the week directly with me in either side-by-side attendance at events or engaging in discussions after specific meetings. His leadership made this an exceptional experience. The pride and love of community was evident with every engagement, both internal to the city organization and external with the public. At the end of the week, I was amazed and humbled by the expertise and experience the city leadership and management teams shared with me. Each person I spent time with was open and enthusiastic about what they were doing and where they were going as a team.



- a. City Management Staff Office Calls and Meetings

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- Mayor, Ms. Julia Johnson
- Police Chief Lin Tucker
- Assistant Fire Chief Jerry Gardner
- Ms. Julie Rosario, Engineering, Directorate of Public Works
- Mr. Mark Freiberger, Director, Public Works
- Mr. Bill Chambers, Director, IT
- Mr. John Coleman, Director, Planning & Building

b. Community Leaders

- Ms. Deannie Martin, Court Administrator, Skagit County District Court
- Ms. Trisha Logue, Skagit County Administrator
- Judge Jenifer Howson, Skagit County
- Dr. Miriam Miralles Mickelson, Sedro-Woolley School District Superintendent
- Ms. Jeanne Williams, Director, Sedro-Woolley Library
- Mr. Chris Phillips, Development Services Director, City of Mount Vernon

c. City Management Targeted Discussions, Community Meetings and Engagements

- Legal Programs and potential collaboration to gain economic advantage and sustain safe and secure community while meeting legal requirements
- Economic development across the community
- Municipal budget and finance
- Personnel management, recruitment, retention, and potential growth
- Public works engineering efforts to improve community infrastructure
- Redistricting
- Pre-meeting calls with the City Council
- Meeting of the City Council Parks & Recreation Committee
- City Council meeting
- Meeting of the Senior Leadership
- Rotary Club
- City Public Works Equipment Day

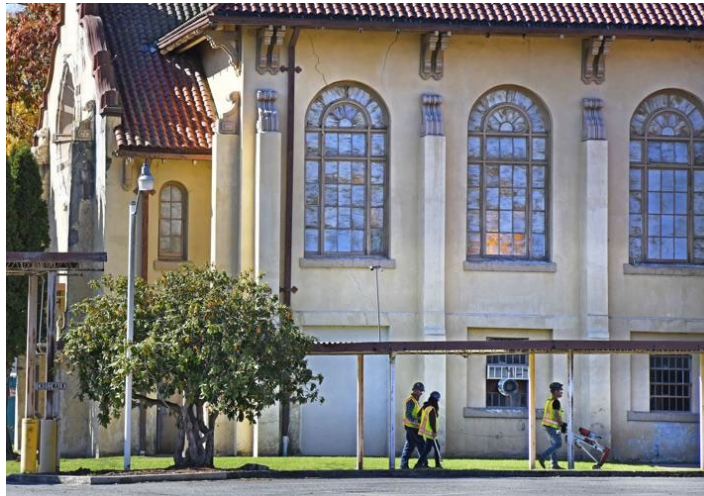
5. Agreements or Collaborations with Other Municipalities, or Government

Agencies. Sedro-Woolley's agreements/collaborations with other municipalities or government agencies demonstrate deliberate, focused commitments that promote cost savings/cost avoidance, gain efficiencies, improve services and the quality of life, and strengthen Sedro-Woolley's relationships throughout Skagit County. In some cases, it required an investment of time to achieve these agreements. The itinerary planned by Mr. Bush highlighted many of Sedro-Woolley's successful collaborations.

- a. SWIFT Center / Port of Skagit / Skagit County Parks / City of Sedro-Woolley.

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The City of Sedro-Woolley, Skagit County, and the Port of Skagit are partnering to position the old Northern State Hospital property for redevelopment. The site is now the “Sedro-Woolley Innovation For Tomorrow” (SWIFT) Center. The local governments have entered into an Interlocal Agreement. The Port of Skagit operates the SWIFT Center and the Cascades Job Corps Center. Skagit County Parks runs the recreation area; and the City of Sedro-Woolley is responsible for the cemetery, and parkland. The goals for the redevelopment of the property are to:

- Encourage the private sector to create and sustain jobs at the SWIFT Center benefitting all of Skagit County and its citizens;
- Promote public recreational use of the property;
- Protect the environmentally sensitive areas of the property;
- Protect the historic significance of Northern State Hospital; and
- Respect the neighboring Upper Skagit Indian Tribal Nation's interests in the property.

b. The Sedro-Woolley Library.



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The City of Sedro-Woolley and the Central Skagit Rural Partial County Library District entered into a long-term partnership to build, own and operate a new library together for at least the next 20 years. This process began in 2012 with the campaign to form the new Rural Library District and continued as the partners designed and built a new library that opened to the public in June 2021.

c. Sedro-Woolley YMCA. On 4 May 2022, the City of Sedro-Woolley and the YMCA reached an agreement wherein the YMCA leased the old Sedro-Woolley library building for five years. Sedro-Woolley and the YMCA negotiated the costs of utilities and interior and exterior maintenance. The YMCA will be providing needed programs for the community; one of the key programs is funded by a state grant secured by the city.

d. Exploring Municipal Court Options with Skagit County. Sedro-Woolley’s and Skagit County’s responsibilities to provide prosecution, defense and court services overlap. Sedro-Woolley has initiated conversations with Skagit County and the town of Burlington to determine whether there is a way to meet the communities legal needs and requirements while gain economic efficiencies by combining resources.

e. Sidewalk Replacement Partnership Program. Sedro-Woolley has a program of cost sharing that enables property owners to take an active role in the replacement of their damaged and unsafe sidewalks.



6. Shared Strategy. Sedro-Woolley’s Mayor, City Council, and the City Administrative Team has been engaged in an on-going deliberative assessment of their strategies with the objective of ensuring that their strategies strengthen municipal finances, improve neighborhoods, upgrade infrastructure in order to fulfil their mission: “to provide services and opportunities which create a Community where people choose to live, work and play.” They recognize that a clear, consistent strategy enables clarity in communications with the community, targeted resource allocations, well-defined community

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improvements, and managerial effectiveness. A clear, consistent strategy can be a call to action.

7. The Way Ahead. The CMSFP highlighted the fact that the Army environment is characterized by increasing complexity, to include highly networked organizations and more decentralized operations. Because of increased interaction with joint, interagency, intergovernmental, and multinational organizations, Service Members and DA Civilians interact with a diverse set of partners. The CMSFP classes at the Pentagon and the IMCA Headquarters, and the site visit at Sedro-Woolley, WA, provided information and experiences that can enable personnel to become more functionally proficient, and technically competent skilled leaders who are capable, adaptable, and totally committed to supporting the Army's mission. CMSFP enhanced my understanding of the command I support.

a. Implement Training Across Civil Law Section. The site visit emphasized that, although there are differences in governing structure and financial frameworks, there are many aspects of the day-to-day business that are similar. I brought back ideas that may help me and the Civil Law team provide better support for the Fires Center of Excellence and Fort Sill.

b. While the team at Sedro-Woolley excelled at many things, three were particularly notable and I intend to assess and adapt these practices for integration in the Civil Law Division:

(1) Identify, Adopt, and Adapt. The Sedro-Woolley Mayor, the City Management Team, and the City Council seemed to be actively looking at other communities within Skagit Valley and in WA at large to identify, adopt, and adapt successful ideas that could be employed in Sedro-Woolley to further their strategic objectives.

(2) Focus Strategic Priorities. The Sedro-Woolley Mayor, the City Management Team, and the City Council seemed to be thoughtfully incorporating specific focus in their planning process--identifying strategic priorities. Focusing in this manner will improve planning and enhance communication.

(3) Involve the Stakeholders. The Sedro-Woolley Mayor, the City Management Team, and the City Council seemed to be involving their stakeholders in a deliberate, open, and inclusive manner. This tactic will encourage collaboration and ensure we better understand our clients' expectations.

Using the CMSFP training and the experiences at Sedro-Woolley will broaden the collective knowledge base of the Civil Law Team; it will improve our ability to realistically assess current operations and improve efficiency, effectiveness and productivity.

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8. Summary. This site visit was an exceptional professional experience. Interacting with public sector government officials and public administrators to have leader-to-leader dialogue and discussions across a wide range of topics was powerful. The visit highlighted various tools and business models that could be assessed to determine whether they would be feasible in the military systems to increase effectiveness and efficiencies.

9. Point of Contact. The point of contact for this memorandum is the undersigned at (580) 442-5261 or lisa.r.bloom2.civ@army.mil.

LISA R. BLOOM
Chief, Civil Law
Office of the Staff Judge Advocate
Fires Center of Excellence and Fort Sill
Fort Sill, OK 73503