

## Talking Points

Mayor Jennifer Gregerson

### Japanese Gulch Ribbon Cutting

- Thank you all so much for coming! What a wonderful turnout for this day of celebration!
- There's an old saying that reminds us that "Good things come to those who wait"
- Well we've waited a LONG time for today, and the result could not be better!
- As you can see from all the dignitaries that are here, this celebration could not have happened without a lot of help.
- The heart of this effort has always been a dedicated group of residents and Gulch users, who organized and mobilized and made this happen. I want to thank the Japanese Gulch Group.
- Special thanks to their President Arnie Hammerman, and a founding member and my friend, Richard Emery.
- The Gulch Group sought out our second partner in this work: Forterra. We are joined today by Chief Program Officer Tim Farrell, thank you for being here.
- Forterra's ability to forge a public-private partnership and negotiate a great deal for the city to buy this remaining land was invaluable. Thank you!
- Our very first funding partner in this work was the State of Washington, thanks to the leadership of our great 21<sup>st</sup> District delegation. Senator Paull Shin, Senator Marko Lias, Rep. Mary Helen Roberts, and Rep. Lillian Ortiz-Self: we are all so grateful for your help! (and those state dollars)

- Our biggest funding partner was Snohomish County. It didn't hurt that our county councilman is a former Mukilteo Mayor! Thank you Brian Sullivan for your years of leadership for the Gulch, and your decades of work for Mukilteo.
- But all of that work wouldn't have mattered if we had not had full buy in from our City's leadership and staff.
- I want to salute the work of my predecessor, Mayor Joe Marine, and our City Council in working tirelessly for so many years to make today possible.
- And to the excellent staff that were critical to making it happen, especially our Planning team, led by Heather McCartney and now by Patricia Love.
- So what's next?
- Well, first we'll cut a ribbon and do some cleanup work here today.
- But the real work ahead is the master planning process to create a long-term vision for the Gulch.
- We have over 100 acres here, so there are lots of opportunities!
- I hope you will participate in the planning process, and share your vision for what the Gulch should look like.
- We are celebrating a big milestone today, but I hope this is the first of many ribbon cuttings to come as we turn this beautiful place into something our whole community can enjoy and be proud of!