



CITY OF BAINBRIDGE ISLAND

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City Selects Communications Team for Winslow Way Reconstruction

BAINBRIDGE ISLAND, WA, Feb. 22, 2011 – After reviewing proposals from several qualified teams, the City selected the partnership of Sarah Wen and ReadWagoner to assist in developing and implementing the Winslow Way Reconstruction Project communications plan. Contract negotiations with the team, whose proposal included branding the communications efforts as STREET SMARTS, will begin later this week.

The Wen/ReadWagoner partnership contains many of the qualifications that the city needs to address critical communications during the project. Wen has a marketing background and is also the former owner of Kennedy and Kate, a women's clothing boutique once located on Winslow Way. Her relationships with other businesses owners on the street and participation on the Bainbridge Island Downtown Association Board give her a unique perspective that will be valuable to the project.

Michael Read, of ReadWagoner, has extensive experience developing and creating communications materials for complex projects, and will help both the city and the local businesses craft a positive and effective message that resonates with the larger community.

“Although the Winslow Way Reconstruction seems like a big-city project, we have to remember that Winslow still functions very much like a small town,” said Chris Wierzbicki, project administrator for the reconstruction. “In small towns, what matters most during disruptions like this is building trusting relationships between people, and making sure that communications are a two-way street (no pun intended). Sarah and Michael are the right people to help us build that trust.”

The city has applied for another \$50,000 through the USRDA Rural Business Enterprise Grant program. “Our intent for the city's funds is to get the communications plan started, and build some tools for the project team to use throughout construction. If it turns out that additional funds are available, we'll look at adding services such as enhancing our direct outreach to businesses during construction, or setting up businesses with financial planning assistance,” said Wierzbicki. The city will find out in late March if they are to receive additional grant funds.

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