Lacey Police Department 2019-2020 Biennial Report

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Message from the Chief

It is my pleasure to present the Lacey Police Department biennial report, "2019 – 2020, Two Years in Review." For many years this report has been produced annually. We have moved to a two-year format for this edition to better address the transition that the Police Department has experienced over this time frame.

This report provides a small sampling of information and statistics on a wide range of topics including, crime, traffic, staffing and budget, and recent changes to our organization. In addition to providing information regarding changes in crime over time, this biennial report provides a two-year snapshot of the Lacey Police Department. While we focus on statistics in an effort to quantify what it means for Lacey to be a safe city to live, work, and play; it only takes a stroll in one of our many parks, or in any of our unique neighborhoods and business districts, or a visit to the Community Center, or the beach at Long Lake to feel the sense of security and pride which exist in our community.

Our core mission is the prevention and reduction of crime and the fear of crime and disorder. We also have a companion obligation to focus on traffic collision reduction and pedestrian safety. Because we have a proven track record of implementing effective public safety strategies, our community continues to enjoy a low crime rate and a high-resolution rate of reported crimes. We proudly acknowledge that our Police Department is successful because of our deep connection and partnership with our community. The biggest compliment paid to the Lacey Police Department is "Lacey Police Officers are just members of the community that just happen to be wearing a uniform."

An effective police department is only successful when it partners with others. The Lacey Police Department is honored to work in partnership with the entire Lacey Municipal Government and gratefully acknowledges their assistance, collaboration, and support. The Lacey Police Department is also honored to work in strong partnership with our local

Message from the Chief

and regional law enforcement, fire, and medical service providers. These strong professional relationships create a rich and robust public safety network.

As the 8th Chief of Police to lead the Lacey Police Department, I was honored to be appointed in July of 2021, after serving as Interim Chief of Police since May of 2020. I was appointed Interim Chief of Police following the medical retirement of Chief Ken Semko in April of 2020. As a result of the stewardship and leadership of Chief Semko, I found the Lacey Police Department well prepared and positioned to enter the next phase of its public safety evolution. We thank Chief Semko for his dedicated service and wish him well in his retirement.

The Lacey Police Department exists to serve. Accordingly, we will never sacrifice service quality when it comes to community safety. Even as we implement new legislative initiatives, service efficiencies, and sound fiscal and business practices, we will embrace the new challenges associated with providing public safety for one of the fastest-growing cities in the state of Washington. We look forward to building new community relationships and nurturing old ones, reaffirming our commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion, and building on our culture of service before self. I am proud and energized to lead the men and women of the Lacey Police Department as we redefine the future of law enforcement and public safety services in our community. I trust you will find interesting and valuable information as you review our biennial report.

Thank you for your ongoing support,

ROBERT E. ALMADA | Chief of Police





Divisions

Patrol

Uniformed patrol is currently comprised of a commander, six sergeants, six corporals and thirty patrol officers who are responsible for responding to all 9-1-1 as well as non-emergency calls 24 hours a day.

They write reports, enforce traffic laws, investigate collisions, and enforce criminal laws within the Lacey City limits through a pro-active problem solving approach to crime.
 Total Cases

 6,292
 5,502

 2019
 2020

Total Arrests

1,973 | 1,514 2019 | 2020

Total Tickets

2,314 1,202 2019 2020

Total Backgrounds

15 25 2019 2020

Polygraphs

18 | 10 2019 | 2020

Detectives

The Detective Unit investigates major crimes, special victim crimes, financial crimes, and crimes which require a degree of specialization or a centralized investigative approach. Their objective is to aggressively and pro-actively identify and investigate criminal activity so that crimes are solved and offenders are held accountable.

Currently, the unit was comprised of a commander, one sergeant, and five detectives. The team is often called upon to assist with complex crimes and follow up on felony investigations. They also act as a liaison with the Thurston County Courts, Crime Stoppers, and other law enforcement investigative units.

Community Resource Unit

The Community Resource Unit is comprised of two officers, a department assistant, and an outreach coordinator. It is the goal of the Community Resource Unit to be the department's community liaison officers, who will provide pro-active, flexible, focused enforcement services to reduce person and property crimes and reduce the fear of crime in our community. This unit also heads up the department's social media channels. They actively get information out to and engage with the community on-line.

In these past two years, the unit has focused on homeless outreach in the community. From enforcing ordinances to contacting individuals to assist them in procuring social services, the unit it working hard to reduce the homelessness in Lacey.

School Resource Officers

The School Resource Officer team is comprised of three officers and are supervised by a sergeant. These officers maintain the partnership and commitment to the North Thurston Public Schools, the students, and the parents of our community.

In addition to pro-actively patrolling the schools, the School Resource Officers provide counseling, education and demonstrations on personal safety, traffic safety and law and justice. For many of the students, these officers are the first contact they have with law enforcement and the positive presence the officers provide can leave a lasting impression.

North Thurston High School 1,477 enrolled **River Ridge High School** 1,433 enrolled **Timberline High School** 1,462 enrolled

Records

The Records Unit is comprised of the customer service supervisor and four department assistants. They are the first point of contact in the Lacey Police Department business office and are responsible for records maintenance, data entry, processing warrants and court orders, fingerprint and notary services, and all front desk and phone customer service.

They not only assist citizens, but also serve as support staff for police officers, administrative staff, detectives, community resource unit, and the Lacey City Attorney.

Fingerprints

1,016 501 2019 2020

Warrants Entered

992 586 2019 2020

Public Disclosure Requests

2,265 | 1,716 2019 | 2020

CPLs Issued

813 785 2019 2020

Items	Logged				
2,727	1,817				
2019	2020				
	eleased 2,291 2020				
Total Evidence On Hand					
9,637	8,636				
2019	2020				

Evidence

The Evidence Unit is comprised of one full time technician and one back-up technician. The evidence unit logs and releases numerous items a year. When items are "released" they are returned to the owner, destroyed, or auctioned.

Evidence is also in charge of the prescription drop box where citizens can dispose of their unwanted medication. Evidence also coordinates the donation of unclaimed bicycles to veterans and kids in Africa. The donation of bicycles provide better mobility to veterans and the African children and greatly enhances their quality of life and economic opportunities.

Community Service Officers

Community Service Officers (CSO) are unarmed, non-commissioned civilian personnel. Each of the four CSOs work on a full-time shift based schedule. The position allows them to gain knowledge of a law enforcement career and opens a greater range of opportunity should they desire to become a commissioned police officer. They augment the patrol division and support services division.

They have many duties which include: transporting prisoners, assisting with traffic control at accidents and crime scenes, tag/tow improperly parked or abandoned vehicles, complete found property reports, and log evidence. Each Community Service Officer and the assistance they provide to the citizens of Lacey and the police department is essential in achieving our mission.

Management Analyst

The Lacey Police Department's Management Analyst has one of the most technically demanding positions in the department. The Management Analyst handles all the crime data, crime cases, mapping, financial data, operational data, and performance data. The Management Analyst is assisted by a Lacey Resource Unit volunteer and at times an intern who help compile all the data. Among the many duties the analyst has they identify crime patterns, compiles statistical graphs, charts, and analysis of data for presentations. The Management Analyst is an integral part of the department and its investigations.

Lacey Resource Unit

The Lacey Resource Unit (LRU) consists of 15 volunteers who are over the age of 45 and volunteer a minimum of 4 hours each week. It is a uniformed position in the Lacey Resource Unit.

LRU members are able to issue warnings for handicap parking violations and they patrol the portions of the Chehalis Western Trail within the Lacey City limits as well as many streets and the City of Lacey parking lots.

The Lacey Resource Unit offers Vacation House Checks, a free service which allows the citizens of Lacey to request their homes be checked while out of town. They also provided support and increased patrol for several community events including The Polar Bear Plunge, Lacey Fun Fair, Halloween Stop and Treat, Kids Day at Huntamer Park, National Night Out, multiple Crime Stoppers events, and the City of Lacey 3rd of July Celebration.

Hours Volunteered

6,207	5,019
2019	2020

House Checks

9,625	6,674
2019	2020

Police Explorers

The Lacey Police Explorer Post is comprised of youth between the ages of 151/2 and 21.

They coordinated parking and provided crowd control for numerous community events including the Polar Bear Plunge, Lacey Food and Wine Festival, Lacey Fun Fair, Mushroom Festival, Family Fish In, and seven high school graduations.

The Explorer Post helps youth gain insight into a variety of programs that offer hands-on career activities. For young men and women who are interested in law enforcement, this program offers experiential learning with lots of fun-filled, hands-on activities that promote the growth and development of adolescent youth.

Hours Volunteered

2,469	563
2019	2020

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Crime Stats

By the Numbers

	2018	2019	2020
Homicide	4	0	0
Forcible Sex Offenses	64	74	59
Robbery	17	17	16
Aggravated Assault	63	62	48
Burglary	195	197	161
Larceny	1106	1155	1150
Motor Vehicle Theft	103	120	130
Arson	3	3	5
Total	1555	1628	1569
		4.7% +	3.6% -

	2018	2019	2020
Simple Assault	275	280	247
Kidnapping	6	11	8
Counterfeit/Forgery	80	53	27
Fraud	237	268	238
Drug Offenses	155	177	73
Total	753	789	593
		4.8% +	24.8% -

**Please note 2020 numbers are subject to change until verified by WASPC in June 2021.



Accountability



#8CantWait

- 1. Ban choke holds and strangle holds
- 2. Require De-escalation
- 3. Require warning before shooting
- 4. Exhaust all other means before shooting
- 5. Duty to intervene
- 6. Ban shooting at moving vehicles
- 7. Require use of force continuum
- 8. Require comprehensive reporting

Our polices and procedures reflect the #8CantWait. We do not train our employees to use neck restraint techniques. Our employees attend de-escalation training and always consider deadly force the last option. Every time one of our employees uses force, it is documented and reviewed.

Accountability Measures

1. We hire people rooted in and connected to the community.

2. We have met strict regulations to be an accredited agency.

3. Employees are required to adhere to rigid policies and procedures regarding de-escalation whenever possible, as well as minimal use of force.

4. Employees are provided training on interacting with individuals experiencing mental health crisis, medical emergencies, and de-escalating potentially violent encounters.

5. Employees actively participate in implicit bias training.

Diversity & Community Involvment

1. The Lacey Police Department is sensitive to the interconnected issues of racial diversity, social justice, and public safety. We attend trainings regularly to help us be the best we can be, and continue to learn and listen to ways we can do better.

2. We are continuing to strive for diversity within our department.

3. When quality of life concerns in the community were raised, we created the Community Resource Unit to address homelessness in the community and provide resources for people in need.

4. Connecting with our community is important to us. We make it a priority to participate and/or host events like Shop with a Cop, Cops, Cars, N' Kids, Coffee with a Cop, Boys & Girls Club events, and National Night Out.

Department Training

The Lacey Police Department is a progressive law enforcement agency dedicated to embracing all six pillars of 21st Century Policing:

- 1. Building Trust and Legitimacy
- 2. Policy and Oversight
- 3. Technology and Social Media
- 4. Community Policing and Crime Reduction
- 5. Training and Education
- 6. Officer Wellness and Safety

Training Topics

The 5th pillar, Training and Education, is an important component of our Accountability Measures. Per Washington State Law, police officers are required to complete at least 24 hours of training each year. Over the past 5 years, Lacey Police officers have completed nearly 4,000 hours of training in the following topics:

- Crisis Intervention Training (Identifying persons experiencing mental health crisis, reducing the potential for violent encounters, and exploring alternatives to jail for those in crisis)
- Critical Incident Response (Reducing risk for injury or loss of life)
- De-escalation of Conflicts and Potentially Violent Encounters
- Diversity Training and Fair and Impartial Policing Training
- Excited Delirium (Identification of persons in medical crisis and coordination of emergency medical response)
- First Aid, CPR, AED, and Traumatic Wound Care
- Harassment (Identification and prevention)
- Implicit Bias, Recognition and Response
- Less-Lethal Tools and Tactics (reducing the frequency and amount of force applied)
- Use of Force Training, Defensive Tactics, Legal Requirements, Documentation

2019 Use of Force

We conducted a review of our enforcement activities in 2019 to ensure our actions are consistent with the values of our Lacey community and that our policies and trainings are effective in minimizing the use of force by our officers.

- In 2019, we responded to 45,576 incidents.
- Of those, 1,973 resulted in arrests.
- Of those arrests, only 57 involved any use of force.
- This means that our officers were able to de-escalate 97% of all arrests, with only 3% involving use of force.
- Significant force (taser, punches, kicks, pointing firearms, actual firearm discharge), was only used in 15 incidents that involved actively resisting, combative, armed and/or dangerous felony suspects.
- No suspect or officer suffered a significant injury as the result of a use of force in 2019.

2020 Use of Force

We conducted a review of our enforcement activities in 2020 to ensure our actions are consistent with the values of our Lacey community and that our policies and trainings are effective in minimizing the use of force by our officers.

- In 2020, we responded to 38,786 incidents.
- Of those, 1,514 resulted in arrests.
- Of those arrests, only 48 involved any use of force.
- This means that our officers were able to de-escalate 97% of all arrests, with only 3% involving use of force.
- Significant force (taser, punches, kicks, pointing firearms, actual firearm discharge), was only used in 11 incidents that involved actively resisting, combative, armed and/or dangerous feeling suspects.
- No suspect or officer suffered a significant injury as the result of a use of force in 2020.



Recognition



Employee of the Year



Officer David MacLurg 2019



Detective Michael Caranto 2020

Awards

2019

Chief's Award Officer Alex Ficek LRU Joe Escobar

Exceptional Service Sergeant Shannon Barnes

Top Gun Officer Alex Ficek

Inspirational Partner

Sergeant Terence Brimmer

2020

Chief's Award

Lacie Sablan LRU Alan De Bakcsy

Exceptional Service

Officer Alexxi Timmons Officer Jimmy Williams Officer Justin Beltran Sergeant Dave Campbell Emily Liening

> Top Gun Corporal Alex Ficek

Inspirational Partner Officer Hunter Heim

Life Saving Award Corporal Al Stanford

Notable Calls

On April 10, 2019, Lacey Police received a call about an individual trying to purchase a firearm from a local pawn shop that was determined to be stolen. During the investigation it was found that the firearm was stolen in 1989 from the then Secretary of State's Legislative Office. It was the first of one thousand Washington State Centennial Commemorative revolvers produced. The individual who pawned it stated her late husband purchased the firearm in 1990 or 1991 and it is unknown who he purchased it from. The owner was contacted and the firearm was returned to him after 30 years of being gone.

On the morning of June 10, 2019, an officer was finishing up his shift when he noticed a stray pig walking along Pacific Ave and Carpenter Rd. Using an apple he had, he was able to coax the pig towards the patrol car and secure her until she was dropped off at Animal Services. Through the wonder of social media, the pig was reunited with her family who said she had pushed down a fence to make her great escape.

In September of 2019, Lacey Police received a report of suspected child molestation of a juvenile by the mother's boyfriend. The suspect was registered sex offender and under DOC supervision in King County. When the suspect failed to report in to DOC, it was discovered he had removed his GPS ankle bracelet and fled. A nationwide extraditable warrant was issued for his arrest. The story was aired on Washington's Most Wanted and tips came in about the suspect's whereabouts. Detectives attempted to contact the suspect in Tumwater, Washington and Hillsboro, Oregon. Assistance was obtained from the US Marshal Service to apprehend the suspect. Ultimately, the suspect was traced to Reno, Nevada where he was arrested and extradited back to Washington State and booked on two counts of Child Molestation in the 1st degree.

On October 29, 2019, Lacey units were dispatched to a hit and run collision on College Street. Two vehicles were stopped in the turn lane; one with significant damage. One driver explained he was exiting the freeway when a truck attempted to merge in front on him. He did not let the driver in so the vehicle went behind him. On the off ramp, the vehicle then passed him on the shoulder which forced him out of his lane. He eventually passed the truck when they were off the freeway and the truck began tailgating him. Due to traffic, the driver had to slam on the brakes resulting in the truck rear ending him and pushing him into the other vehicle. The truck then took off. While still at the scene, another hit and run call came out involving a similar truck. The victim in that collision stated the truck failed to negotiate the turn and struck her vehicle. Pieces of the truck were left behind at the scene. One such piece was a license plate frame with the name of the business where the truck had been sold. Officers contacted the business and they were able to identify the vehicle by the pieces left behind. The suspect was contacted and ultimately booked for reckless driving and two counts of hit and run.

Notable Calls

On June 1, 2020, Lacey units were dispatched to a disturbance at the McDonald's on Pacific Ave. A man described as being very tall wearing a black jacket, gray shorts, and red shoes was violently assaulting the employees inside the restaurant. Upon arriving, the officer encountered a very agitated, six foot seven, three-hundred pound, African American man, and his mother. The individual was pacing and yelling at the employees and officers. While waiting for additional units to arrive, the officer was able to have the individual and his mother move to a safe distance away from the store. After additional Lacey units arrived, probable cause was established to arrest the individual. As the officer attempted to detain him, the individual became even more agitated and began yelling racially charged comments at the other officers. The individual then stated "I'll run. They won't catch me. I'll hurt them." The officer was able to build a rapport with the individual and de-escalate the very tense and dangerous situation. Ultimately, the suspect told the officer, "I trust you." He accepted her hand and she was able to escort the suspect to her patrol vehicle and detain him without incident.

On July 28, 2020, Lacey units were dispatched to a report of a mental disturbance in progress. The RP reported her husband was delusional, carrying a drill, and scaring everyone in the house. While en-route, dispatch notified that the individual was now in possession of a bow and arrow and could be heard saying "I'm ready for whoever comes" and "if someone comes that I don't recognize they're going to have an arrow in their face".

When officers arrived, the individual was in his front yard, wearing only his underwear, holding his bow and arrow. While officers began approaching the residence, the individual was yelling at them, wanting them to go away. One officer had developed a positive rapport with the individual on previous occasions and was able to converse with him. After an intense twenty minutes, the officer was able to convince the individual to drop the bow and arrow and move away from it. As conversations with the individual continued, the officer was able to get him to walk towards him and sit on the sidewalk. While the individual continued to speak with the officer, a designated crisis responder (DCR) and the VA hospital mental health service unit were contacted.

After the individual's conversation with DCR, it was determined that he would be transported to St. Peter's Hospital for an involuntary committal. The individual became upset at this and said he wasn't going to go anywhere against his will. The officer explained that the VA had been contacted and was aware of the situation. The officer also explained that he was not under arrest but handcuffs were department policy for transport to the hospital. The individual eventually was compliant and was taken to the hospital for further treatment.



Coming and Going



Office of the Chief of Police



Ken Semko was sworn in as Lacey Police Department's Chief of Police in February of 2019. Chief Semko is a 28 year law enforcement veteran, spending 27 of those years with the Santa Monica Police Department.

A few notable accomplishments during his short time at Lacey Police, Chief Semko expanded the staffing of the department, embedded an outreach coordinator, was the driving force behind the camping ordinance, and started the process of acquiring a new police facility.

Due to medical reasons, Chief Semko retired on April 30, 2020.



Interim Chief Robert Almada joined the Lacey Police Department as the Deputy Chief in October of 2019. Interim Chief Almada previously worked at the Santa Monica Police Department for over 29 years before moving to the Pacific Northwest.

On May 1, 2020, he was appointed as the Interim Chief of the Lacey Police Department. While no easy feat, Interim Chief Almada stepped in at a time when the pandemic was in full force and social justice protests occurring nationwide and kept the department running with the ever changing pandemic health protocols and recommendations.

Welcome

2019

Chief Ken Semko Deputy Chief Robert Almada Officer Hunter Heim Officer Aaron Pruneda Officer Matt Bin Officer Alexxi Timmons Officer Patrick Jo CSO Manuel Vilela

2020

Officer Aaron McBride Department Assistant Beth Basch Department Assistant Olivia Alberts Department Assistant Crystal Meyers Recruit Lane Tittle Recruit Sophal Heang Recruit Caelan Braniff Recruit Attpreet Walia Lateral Officer Anne Stribling Lateral Officer Hyun Kim Lateral Officer Marisa Rosas

Sorry to See You Go

2019

Department Assistant Cathey Rafferty CSO Christina Evans CSO Schae Freese CSO James Harden

2020

Chief Ken Semko - Retired Commander Chris Ward - Retired Officer Robert Wilson - Retired Officer Ken Lundquist - Retired Detective Heather Stetler Officer Matthew Berry CSO Kyler Hawkins







COVID Pandemic

In the early spring of 2020, COVID-19 took on the world shutting down businesses, schools, and putting a pause on life itself. While City Hall was closed to the public for some time, the officers and staff at the police department continued to work throughout the pandemic closures. We made adjustments to how we did things in order to keep up with the ever-changing mandates and requirements. As a result of the pandemic:

- Officers responded to more calls via phone in an effort to reduce close proximity contact.
- With more people at home, collisions and crimes like package theft, dropped.
- All in-person community engagements went on hold and creative, virtual options were created.
- Many forms and services normally offered in-person at the department were moved to electronic submission.



Outreach & Social Media

The Lacey Police Department has an active social media presence on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. It is an easy way for us to connect with the citizens of Lacey and for them to interact with us. We post anything from road closures, to asking the public's help with a case, to showing our appreciation to our wonderful community. We also step out from behind the screen and attend multiple community outreach events. Several events we host and/or attend are Cops, Cars, N' Kids, Coffee with a Cop, Shop with a Cop, City of Lacey's 3rd of July, and Lacey Fun Fair. While the COVID pandemic put most of our public engagement events on hold, we did manage couple like the Drive Thru Coffee with a Cop and the kid's Keep Them Busy Challenge.















Lacey Police 🤣 @LaceyPolice · Sep 18

Thank you to everyone who came out to say hello 👏 to us today, & to @cutterspointcoffee Lacey Blvd for hosting us! 🐡 😝 We will be at Starbucks College & Pacific next Friday 9/25 from 10-12! Drop by! 🚔 🖤 #CoffeeWithACop #DriveThru #Coffee #LaceyUnited #LaceyPD





Lacey Police 🤣 @LaceyPolice · Jul 31

♦ Great job finding ways Officer Ficek could be practicing better #watersafety! ♥ Officer Beltran is here to remind us to wear a life jacket, NEVER swim alone & stay hydrated on hot days! ♦ ↓ ♥ #BeSafe #HaveFun #Summer #NeverSwimAlone #Hydrate #LaceyUnited #LaceyPD





Lacey Police

© LaceyPolice · Mar 19
ATTENTION PARENTS & KIDS we have a #keepthembusy challenge for all the kiddos that are looking for something to do since there is no school!
e comments for instructions! #stayhome #staysafe
#keepbeingcreative #neverstoplearning #covid19 #laceypd



Lacey Police ♥ @LaceyPolice · Jul 3, 2019 If Party rock'n in the park tonight If Just about an hour to go!! ♣■





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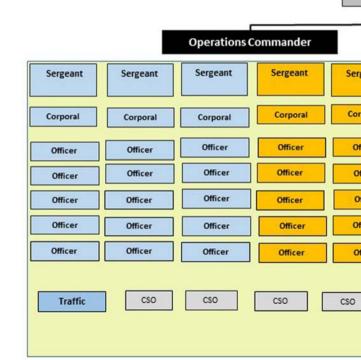


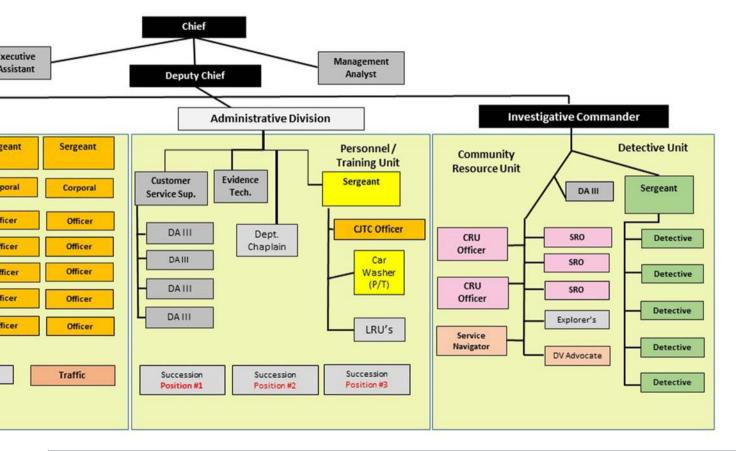
Going Forward

Looking Ahead

Looking to 2021, the Lacey Police Department will continue to actively hire qualified individuals to serve the community. With that, we will also be continuing the lengthy process to acquire a new facility to hold all of our employees.

We have missed seeing our citizens at our community events and hope the coming year will see a return to more normal ways. Until then, we will continue to find ways to connect with you and make Lacey a desirable place to live, learn, work, and play.







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