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**Alumni ask for deeper look at equity**

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**Anacortes median home price is \$540,478**

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## AFFORDABLE HOUSING

### Sales tax measure takes effect July 1

BY RICHARD WALKER  
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The sales tax for affordable housing, which takes effect next month, will continue to fuel affordable housing construction beyond the initial projects it will fund.

The funding will ensure five townhouses and up to 45 apartments built by the Anacortes Housing Authority and the Anacortes Family Center will have low or no debt when they are completed. That means rents can be invested in additional affordable housing construction, rather than used to pay off loans.

“If you’re able to build with low or no debt service, those rents can be rolled into the next project,” Anacortes Housing Authority Executive Director Brian Clark said. “It becomes a funding engine.”

A housing authority in New Smyrna Beach, Florida, which Clark directed before moving to Anacortes in 2017, did something similar.

“In just three years, they’ve built 12 more houses from it,” he said.

The sales tax of 1/10th of 1%, combined with a portion of the state’s share of local sales tax revenue, is expected to generate a little more than \$13 million over 20 years for affordable housing construction. Voters approved the tax in February.

The first fruits of that

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COURTESY / ANACORTES HOUSING AUTHORITY

The look of affordable housing: An architect’s rendering of the 19th Street townhouses proposed by the Anacortes Housing Authority.

#### Projects at a glance

**Anacortes Family Center**

- 20 apartments at 1019 26th St.
- Project cost: \$4 million to \$4.5 million (\$3 million supported by the sales tax measure).
- Construction: Expected to begin late 2020.

**Anacortes Housing Authority**

- Five three-story townhouses on 19th Street between O and Commercial avenues.

- Project cost: \$1.5 million to \$1.65 million.
- Construction: Expected to begin in fall.

**Anacortes Housing Authority**

- Olson Building restoration, corner of Third Street and Commercial Avenue.
- 15-20 apartments on second floor.
- Project cost: \$3.5 million to \$4 million.
- Construction/restoration: Expected to begin in summer 2021.



SCREENSHOTS / YOUTUBE.COM

Above: Mackenzie Foster poses with her diploma during the pre-recorded graduation ceremony for Cap Sante High School. The event aired on YouTube Monday. Below: Scott Geer was one of three student speakers at the graduation. He urged his fellow graduates to go out and spread kindness in the world.

## Eyes toward future for Cap Sante High grads

BY BRIANA ALZOLA  
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Sporting silver masks with green “Class of 2020” lettering (representing the school colors), a series of Cap Sante High School students showed up for their graduation taping earlier this month.

This was the biggest class of graduating seniors Cap Sante has ever had, but they didn’t get to receive their diplomas all at once. Instead, they arrived at their scheduled time, they each received their diplomas and a few selected speakers stood behind a podium and shared a few words. On Monday, they were able to watch an edited video presentation



on the AHSLive YouTube page.

In his introduction of the graduates to the School Board, Superintendent Mark Wenzel talked about how he couldn’t see the “32 seniors standing in living rooms across Ana-

cortes” but that he could imagine them watching the ceremony. He said he hoped they looked at themselves and their loved ones and took time to celebrate the moment that they officially

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## Teens lead silent march to support Black Lives Matter

BY RICHARD WALKER  
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A steady rain fell Friday, June 12, but the demonstrators at 12th Street and Commercial Avenue were undeterred.

More than 50 young people participated in the protest for racial justice organized by Anacortes High School junior Allie Perez. The demonstration, capped by a silent march down Commercial Avenue to Old Town, coincided with the statewide Silent March and General Strike organized by Black Lives Matter Seattle-King County.

Among the signs they carried: “No Freedom Until We Are All Equal”; “Together We Can Heal the World”; “No Justice, No Peace”. One sign spoke of the recognition America owes to the many cultures on whose backs the United States was built: “Land Stolen



RICHARD WALKER / ANACORTES AMERICAN

Anacortes High School junior Allie Perez, right, leads a silent march through downtown Friday, June 12, as part of a statewide movement for racial justice.

From Natives, Built By Slaves, Kept Beautiful by Latinos.”

It was the third demonstration in as many weeks in Anacortes, and

local activists say more are expected.

“I think we’ve definitely seen a lot of change across the country,” said Isabel Shainin,

an AHS sophomore. “These demonstrations (in Anacortes) are mostly in solidarity to show that people in Anacortes also care about this issue and

want to see change.”

As she spoke:

- Four Minneapolis police officers are charged in the death of George Floyd, a black man whose death while in police custody sparked protests across the U.S. and around the world.
- Police departments across the country — among them Boston, Massachusetts; Portland, Maine; and Reno, Nevada — are reevaluating their use-of-force policies.
- There have been renewed calls for the end to systemic racism that keeps people, based on the color of their skin, from getting home loans, from getting equal access to health care, from getting the education that leads to better economic opportunity.
- And on June 10, Anacortes Mayor Laurie Gere said on local Channel 10 that the city condemns racism and “is

committed to (being) a welcoming, safe and just community for everyone.”

“It definitely shows that if you care about something and are passionate about it, things are going to change,” AHS freshman Lily Perez said.

Micah Apple, a sophomore at AHS, has a sister who is African-American.

“I babysit my little brother, who is white, and my little sister, who is black; and I have to teach my little sister to do certain things I don’t have to teach my little brother to do — both as a woman and as a black girl,” Apple said of preparing her sister for life in the world. “I think that needs

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# Graduates

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became high school graduates.

This year is unlike any other, as all the speakers said to the students. The COVID-19 pandemic meant missing out on many high school traditions, including a typical graduation ceremony.

Cap Sante students are already used to facing adversity to become the best that they can be, Cap Sante High School

Principal Kecia Fox said in her address to the students.

"What they have accomplished in the past few months has been incredible," she said. "We need you and we believe you, Class of 2020. Go forth and make the world a better place for us all."

The three student speakers shared a similar message.

Scott Geer talked about how each person will face difficulties, but every detour and roadblock teaches the person what they can do.

He urged his fellow

graduates to go out and connect with people and to give to those who most need it.

"As everyone here knows, the world needs a lot of love right now, and there is nothing stopping us from being one of the people who provides it," he said. "Be proud of yourself, you did it. Now is the time to leave our mark on the planet. Class of 2020, we earned this."

Graduate Mary Switalski started at Cap Sante the second semester of her junior year.

"It was the best decision I ever made," she

said.

She was amazed by how many different classes she could take online and how varied her schoolwork could be. She could work with her fellow students even as each one studied something different.

"I learned skills I never thought I would learn," she said.

She plans to attend Skagit Valley College next year and wants to become an EMT, something that she once thought was impossible.

"This year has been an unusual year, but we

pushed through and did it," Switalski said. "Thank you guys, for making our last moments together memorable."

Paula Gunning said she was so thankful that her teachers and mentors didn't give up on her and pushed her to achieve everything she could.

She is planning to continue her schooling and hopes to become a manager and bartender at the Guemes store where she works.

"My journey does not stop here," she said.

The large graduating class is full of future nurs-

es, builders, marine biologists, lawyers, psychologists and more, community speaker Jean Lundgren said.

She gave a shoutout to Diele Harrold, who made the masks the graduates wore to keep themselves safe coming to and from the filming day, and to teacher Kim Stamper, who dedicates so much of herself with her students.

"You are strong. You are talented. You are sweet. And you are destined to do great things," Lundgren told the class.

# March

Continued from page A1

to stop. Black lives matter, and police brutality is a real thing."

Demonstrators said

the protests don't mean they are anti-police.

Isabella Butler, an AHS junior, carried an umbrella on which there were two signs: One, "Black Lives Matter"; two, "Defund the Police." But the goal isn't so much taking

away money from police departments as how it is spent, such as putting funds toward training in cultural competence and de-escalation, she said.

One demonstrator suggested that the funding for one set of riot gear can buy full per-

sonal protective equipment for 55 emergency responders.

Shainin said the U.S. has not come as far as it should since the Civil Rights movement of her

grandparents' generation. But her generation is willing to persevere to the finish line.

"Change is slow," she said. "We've definitely seen a lot of change

since the 1960s and further back. It takes a long time. We have to keep showing up and raising awareness until we get to where we need to go."

## Police Blotter



questioning; store employees could not identify the subject other than by the clothes he was wearing.

### Monday, June 8

Officers went to an apartment on 30th Street in the middle of the night to investigate the report of a woman who had been

choked and thrown to the ground by her boyfriend, a 39-year-old from Tacoma. The pair were yelling at each other in the parking lot when officers arrived and were quickly separated. The woman said she was driving with her boyfriend and he began yelling at her, then grabbed her forcefully by the neck. The two went back to the apartment and the man again grabbed her neck and threw her to the ground. There were several red marks on the woman's neck consistent with her account. The man was taken into custody for second-degree domestic violence assault and booked in jail.

See more at goanacortes.com

Here are some of the calls reported to the Anacortes Police Department June 6-11:

### Saturday, June 6

A 21-year-old Stanwood man was given a ticket for improper backing after his vehicle struck the rear side panel of a sedan. The driver told the responding officer that he was looking left toward the stop sign on Commercial Avenue when he backed into a sedan heading west on 28th Street.

### Sunday, June 7

A man left a downtown marine supply store wearing a hat, sunglasses and a lifejacket he reportedly didn't pay for. Responding officers were unable to find the man for



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