

City of Fircrest

## Park, Recreation & Open Space Plan



## Vital Mission

### **Vision**

The vision of the City of Fircrest is to protect and enhance our identity and quality of life and promote open and honest communication that builds a trusting environment. We will inspire a stronger community by working together toward excellence.

### **Mission**

To enhance the quality of life where we live, work, and play, the City of Fircrest provides its citizens with efficient, courteous, professional services.



# **City of Fircrest Park, Recreation and Open Space Plan**

2014

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## **Introduction**

The City of Fircrest and the Parks and Recreation Department commissioned Robert W. Droll, Landscape Architect, PS to solicit public input regarding the city's parks, recreation facilities and programs and to prepare this Parks Recreation and Open Space Plan. The PROS Plan provides specific guidelines for the recreational needs for a changing population, and makes recommendations concerning property and facility improvements necessary to provide recreational opportunities in the future.

The City of Fircrest Administration, Parks and Recreation staff, City Council, and the consultant team, working together with community leaders and the general public, prepared this PROS Plan to serve as the strategic planning tool for making parks, open space, facility and recreational program decisions over the next six to twenty years. The PROS Plan identifies the actions vital for the city to implement to satisfy the expectations of the community. It includes recommendations that give guidance for making land acquisitions and protecting open spaces, improving and establishing new facilities and instituting continuous improvement processes. Through these processes, the department will constantly and consistently review community input and proactively make the necessary changes that will help create an attractive and livable city.

### **The process used to shape this PROS Plan included the following tasks:**

- Evaluating current services and operations of the Parks and Recreation Department
- Evaluating current and future needs for parks, recreation services, recreation facilities, open space and trails
- Developing implementation strategies based on a preferred future for the community
- Developing plans that will provide the greatest benefits to the residents

### **The PROS Plan is divided into five chapters:**

- Vision, Goals & Objectives
- Existing Parks, Facilities & Program Resources
- Public Involvement
- Needs Assessment
- Capital Facilities Plan & Implementation Measures

## **Conclusion**

The City of Fircrest's Parks and Recreation Department is striving to meet the needs of the City's population. Citizen input obtained as part of the process used to prepare this PROS Plan clearly identified the need for updating and focusing on the City's community center. Other important needs included the renovation of the City's parks, sports fields, and playgrounds. Implementation of the plan's recommendations will ensure that the residents of Fircrest will enjoy parks and recreation opportunities for generations to come.

## City Profile

In 1907, financiers from San Francisco, including Major Edward J. Bowes of the "Original Amateur Hour" fame, had a vision of a 'residential park, an enchanting spot to enjoy life and raise a family.' With that in mind, they purchased a parcel of land to the west of Tacoma and named the subdivision Regents Park. Their influence is reflected in the streets named after their California background and their value of higher education.

With its curved, aesthetically designed streets, sidewalks, and sewers, Regents Park offered quiet living with a strong sense of community. The first store was established in 1919 on Farallone Avenue. The Fircrest Golf Club was incorporated in 1923.

In September 1925, Regents Park and its 306 residents incorporated as the Town of Fircrest in an effort to start new and reenergize the community. Incorporation gave them the financial stability and control to repair and develop the infrastructure and services.

In 1960, Fircrest retook ownership of its parks and constructed the Community Center, followed by the construction of the swimming pool and the dedication of Masko Park. Fircrest continues to rival any city in Washington for resources and facilities dedicated to recreational purposes. The Annual Strawberry Feed began in 1976.

The first woman councilmember was elected in 1973. Many changes occurred in 1988, including the change to a Council-Manager form of government. In 1990, the town that had started as a subdivision became the City of Fircrest, having grown in size and population. During the decade, surrounding properties were annexed to even out the boundaries and provide financial stability.

The Public Safety Building was completed in 1979. The 1990s saw the end of the volunteer fire department's 52 years, and a contract was signed with the Tacoma Fire Department for emergency services. The present City Hall building was built in 1999.

Today, Fircrest, with a population of 6696 as of 2013, has lived up to the dream of a residential park. Fircrest as a "city within a city", enjoys a convenient location as it is surrounded by University Place and Tacoma. Fircrest continues to work hard to keep its reputation of a quiet, quality residential town with great recreational facilities while continuing to set the standard for community oriented policing.

The majority of Fircrest is located in Tacoma School District No. 10, although portions in the south are served by the University Place School District No. 83. Kindergarten - 5th graders are served by Whittier Elementary School (777 Elm Tree Lane) located in Fircrest and DeLong Elementary (4901 S. 14th St) in Tacoma. Most Fircrest 6th, 7th and 8th grade students attend Hunt Middle School, which is currently closed for reconstruction with a projected reopening of September 2014. Students have been reassigned to Truman, Mason, and Gray. Most Fircrest senior high school students attend Henry Foss High School (2112 South Mason) or Woodrow Wilson High School (1202 North Orchard Street).

# CHAPTER 1

## Vision, Goals & Objectives

### Background

The Washington State Legislature prescribed land use planning guidelines for select cities and counties with the adoption of the Growth Management Act in 1990. This included the City of Fircrest. Thirteen goals were adopted to guide the development and adoption of comprehensive plans codified in Chapter 36.70A.040 of the Revised Code of Washington. Three of these goals directly affect the development and implementation of this plan, which are:

RCW 36.70A.040(9) guides recreation, parks and open space:

*“Retain open space, enhance recreational opportunities, conserve fish and wildlife habitat, increase access to natural resource lands and water, and develop parks and recreation facilities.”*

RCW 36.70A.040(10) covers the environment:

*“Protect the environment and enhance the state’s high quality of life, including air and water quality, and the availability of water.”*

RCW 36.70A.040(13) historic preservation:

*“Identify and encourage the preservation of lands, sites, and structures that have historical or archaeological significance.”*



## Goals and Objectives

The goals of the Park, Recreation and Open Space Plan are to provide specific guidelines for the continued evaluation and development of current facilities and programs, to determine recreational needs for a changing population, and to make recommendations concerning property and facility improvements necessary to provide recreation opportunities in the future.

### Goals (followed by Objectives)

1. **Goal: Enhance a high quality, diversified system of parks, recreation facilities, and open spaces that are attractive, safe, functional, and available to all segments of the population**

- Provide parks with activities for all age groups and abilities.
- Develop athletic facilities that meet the highest quality competitive playing standards and requirements for all age groups, skill levels, and recreational interests.
- Develop new or improve existing multi-use facilities to increase flexibility of use for new activities, or other new trends, as there is a demonstrated need in the community.
- Re-develop indoor community spaces that provide arts and crafts, music, video, classroom instruction, meeting facilities and other spaces for all age groups on a year-round basis.
- Provide a blend of passive and active parks and open spaces which fulfill the recreational needs of the city's residents.
- Design and manage park and recreational trails and facilities offering universal accessibility of residents of all physical capabilities, skill levels, and age, income, and activity interests.
- Plan for the future so adequate open space, historical elements, recreation facilities and programs are provided for future generations.

2. **Goal: Provide adequate recreational opportunities to meet the leisure needs for all age and interest groups that engage a broad cross-section of the community.**

- Evaluate present use and demand of existing parks and facilities
- Initiate joint planning and operating programs with other public and private agencies to provide for special activities like basketball, baseball, and soccer.
- Provide programs, special events and facilities that promote a sense of community and stimulate socialization for the individual and family.
- Ensure a broad range of programs to stimulate good health and physical development for all ages.
- Support the development of athletic facilities that meet quality playing standards and requirements for all age groups and recreational interests, concentrating on field and court activities, which provide for the largest number of participants.
- Offer programs at a range of costs and implement strategies to ensure program affordability, while meeting financial goals.
- Evaluate opportunities to produce revenues in excess of expenditures in appropriate areas to help fund other programs.
- Continue to be innovative in offering and providing a broad and varied program of leisure activities, recreation programs and services relevant to the needs, interests and abilities of all citizens.

**3. Goal: Provide a park, recreation and open space system that is efficient to administer and maintain.**

- Develop parks and recreational facilities only when adequate maintenance and operation funding are available to maximize maintenance efficiency, safety and public enjoyment.
- Prepare master plans for parks and facilities prior to development, major improvement or renovation to promote cohesive, quality designs and ensure consistency with community needs.
- Incorporate sustainable standards and best management practices into planning and design of new parks and rehabilitation of existing facilities.
- Preserve and protect significant environmental features for parkland open space use, including unique wetlands, open spaces, and woodlands, which reflect Fircrest's natural heritage.

**4. Goal: Develop, staff, train and support a professional Parks and Recreation Department that effectively serves the community in the realization of the above listed goals and objectives.**

- Employ a diverse, well-trained work force that is knowledgeable, productive, courteous, responsive and motivated to achieve department and citywide goals.
- Where appropriate, provide staff with education, training, and modern equipment and supplies to increase personal productivity, efficiency, and pride.
- Monitor workload and staffing needs to maintain an adequate and efficient work force.



## CHAPTER 2

# Existing Parks, Facilities and Program Resources

### Introduction:

The City of Fircrest benefits from an array of public park and recreation facilities that provide a variety of recreation experiences for the people who live in the community. The inventory summarizes the standards and identifies the definitions for the existing parks and facilities and outlines the current recreation programming. Though there are different providers locally present, this inventory focuses on sites and facilities located in the City of Fircrest park system. To manage the most effective and efficient park system, the existing inventory is defined by different types of parks, with each designed to provide a specific type of recreation experience and opportunity. Classification of types of parks includes pocket parks, neighborhood parks, community parks, natural open spaces, special use areas and trails.

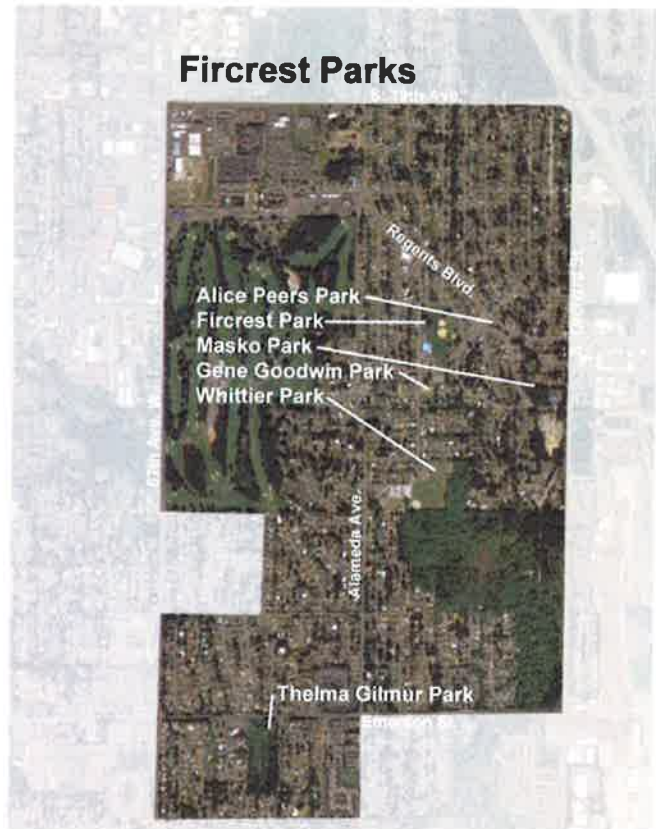


## CITY OF FIRCREST PARKS, FACILITIES, RECREATION AND CITY RESOURCES

### 1. CITY PARKLAND

Park types and classifications are defined and provided through a number of state and national sources. The Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO), through its Statewide Conservation and Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP), and the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA), define general classification park types depending on size, service area and public use. Throughout Washington State and the Pacific Northwest, historic and traditional classifications of park types are used by cities to identify and classify each park type. The most commonly used classifications are the NRPA park classification/definitions, which will be used in this plan to define the City of Fircrest Parks system.

The City of Fircrest Parks and Recreation Department operates and maintains 27.1 acres of land providing a range of active and passive recreational opportunities at the six park sites listed in the following table:



**Table 2.1**

**Summary of Existing Parks**

**City of Fircrest Parks & Recreation**

<b>Park Site</b>	<b>Classification</b>	<b>Acres</b>
Alice Peers: 601 San Juan Avenue	Pocket Park	0.2
Gene Goodwin Tot Lot : 611 Contra Costa	Neighborhood Park	1.4
Fircrest Park: 555 Contra Costa Avenue	Community Park	7.8
Whittier Park: 921 Contra Costa Avenue	Community Park	10.0
Thelma Gilmur: 1404 Evergreen Drive	Natural Open Space	6.5
Masko Park: 805 San Juan Avenue	Special Use Area	1.2
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>27.1</b>

**Inventory Methodology**

Inventory data was gathered from field assessments completed in early 2013. Additional facility data and site narratives were extracted from inventory efforts completed by the Ad Hoc Committee (Committee) for the Fircrest Park, Recreation and Open Space Plan. Management issues and recommendations are the result of site assessments, previous inventory efforts, Ad Hoc Committee member's recommendations, staff input, existing records and public comments. Other area recreation providers in the vicinity are also summarized.

**DEFINITIONS & STANDARDS**

Fircrest has four basic park and open space types as well as special use areas and trails, which are:

- ◆ Pocket Parks
- ◆ Neighborhood Parks
- ◆ Community Parks
- ◆ Natural Open Space
- ◆ Special Use Areas
- ◆ Trails

**POCKET PARKS & NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS**

**Pocket Parks**

Pocket parks are also defined as Mini Parks and typically are located on ½ acre size small lots. They primarily serve the immediate residents who live within a ¼-mile walking distance and provide minimal basic recreation amenities like picnic tables and landscaping.

**Neighborhood Parks**

Neighborhood parks serve citizens close to home, are small in size and are intended to serve residential areas within walking distance (1/3 to ½ mile radius). Typically a neighborhood park includes amenities such as pedestrian paths, trails, picnic tables, a children's playground, restrooms, picnic facilities, sports courts, landscaping and irrigation.

**Table 2.2**

<b>Pocket Parks &amp; Neighborhood Parks</b>		<b>Acreage</b>
Alice Peers	Pocket Park	0.2
Gene Goodwin Tot Lot	Neighborhood Park	1.4
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>1.6</b>

**COMMUNITY PARKS & NATURAL AREAS**

### Community Parks

Community Parks are large urban parks designed to serve as a focal point for community-wide activities and as such are intended to provide facilities that the entire community enjoy. Community Parks allow for an intensity of activities where noise, lighting and vehicular traffic are appropriate for the surrounding neighborhood. These parks are suited for intense recreational facilities, such as athletic complexes and swimming pools, and provide access to areas of diverse outdoor recreation, such as walking, wildlife viewing, sitting and picnicking, all of which are appealing to varied user groups. Developed parks typically include amenities such as picnic shelters and tables, tennis courts, covered activity areas, soccer and baseball fields, bike and pedestrian trails, restrooms, landscaping, irrigation and parking lots. Swimming pools and recreation centers may be located on these sites. Community parks may be jointly developed in association with schools to complement and expand on the services provided by the combined city and school grounds.

### Natural Areas

Natural areas can vary in function and size, and are defined as land or water left primarily in its natural state. They are generally undeveloped but managed for their natural value as well as recreation uses as a secondary objective. Natural areas may or may not be improved, but generally provide amenities for passive recreation such as trails, benches and environmental interpretive panels.

Table 2.3

Community Parks & Natural Areas		Acreage
Fircrest Park	Community Park	7.8
Whittier Park	Community Park	10.0
Thelma Gilmur Park	Natural Area Park	6.5
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>24.3</b>



## SPECIAL USE AREAS & TRAILS

### Special Use Areas

Special use areas are public recreation facilities used for a special purpose such as cultural activities. They can reflect or display historic features, educational activities or special gardens that provide a specialized experience for residents and visitors.

### Trails

Hiking, walking and cycling trails are in strong demand by residents of most communities. A trail may exist within a publicly acquired open space corridor or right-of-way or utility corridors defined by drainage areas, topographical changes, wooded areas or vegetation patterns. These sites can link schools, libraries or commercial areas with parks. Trails should be sufficiently wide to accommodate the intended type of trail use, preserve the features through which the trail is traversing and buffer adjacent land use activities.

Table 2.4

Special Use Areas & Trails		Acres/Length
Masko Park	Special Use	1.2 acres
Landscape Areas:		
Veterans Memorial Garden (Masko Park)		
Rhododendron Garden (Masko Park)		
Seabrook Specialty Garden (Masko Park)		
Rose Garden (Alice Peers Park)		
Whittier Park Nature	Trail	.11 mile
Thelma Gilmur Nature	Trail	.09 mile



### Modification of Park System Classification from 1994 Plan:

The 1994 Adopted Comprehensive Park and Recreation Plan included the 44<sup>th</sup> Street Park, which the City subsequently declared “surplus” and sold to a developer to construct single family residences to help meet local demand for housing. The City did retain Neighborhood Park benefits for the community in the playground and play areas provided within the single family development, however, which provides play value for citizens in the southern end of the City.

The City has also acquired two private properties for additional park and recreation use. One lot is located adjacent to Fircrest Park on Spring Street and the second lot is located at the corner of Contra Costa and Electron Way adjacent to the Tot Lot and tennis courts. A third property identified for acquisition, the Columbia Street Mini-Park, was not secured and has since been developed for single family residential use.

Additionally, Emerson Park was renamed to honor Thelma Gilmur. Thelma Gilmur, who was raised on a farm in Alder, Washington, graduated from Pacific Lutheran University and passed on her love of nature as a Girl Scout leader and teacher at Lister Elementary School in Tacoma. As a champion of urban green spaces, she helped save Swan Creek from plans to turn it into a landfill site and lead the effort to create the China Lake Nature Area in honor of the historic Chinese encampments in the area. Gilmur helped preserve Tacoma’s Snake Lake, Adriana Hess Wetland Park in University Place, Morse Wildlife Preserve in Graham, and the pond and woods that now bear her name as **Thelma Gilmur Park** in Fircrest. She has been active in groups including the

Tahoma Audubon Society, Sierra Club, National Wildlife Federation, The Nature Conservancy, and the Washington Environmental Council.

## 2. CITY RECREATION FACILITIES:

The City of Fircrest offers a variety of recreation, sport and community events within its parks that add recreational opportunities and experiences for its citizens. The major facilities provided include outdoor and indoor basketball courts, meeting rooms, swimming pool, wading pool, playgrounds, ball fields for T-ball, soccer, baseball/softball and lacrosse, disc golf, picnic shelters, tables and benches, tennis courts, interpretive garden, bocce court, and trails.

**Table 2.5: Facility Inventory Summary**

Facility/Structure	Number City-Wide	Alice Peers	Fircrest	Masko	Thelma Gilmur	Tot Lot	Whittie
<b>Recreation Facilities</b>							
Basketball Hoops/Courts	2		1				1
Community Recreation Center	1		1				
Gymnasium	1		1				
Horseshoe Pits	3		2				1
Playgrounds	2		1			1	
Soccer Fields [full size]	2						2
Soccer Fields [modified U-5 to U-12]	6		6				
Softball Fields	2		2				
Sport Court Area (tennis practice/handball/racquetball)	1		1				
Swing Set	1					1	
Swimming Pool (25 yard/6 lane)	1		1				
Tennis Courts	6					3	3
Wading Pool (zero depth)	1		1				
<b>Park Structures</b>							
Park Benches	15	1	6	1	4	2	1
Performance Pavilion	1		1				
Picnic Shelters (group/rental)	1		1				1
Picnic Tables	21		3	2		6	10
Restrooms	2					1	1
Restrooms/indoor with showers	1		1				
Recreation/Community Building	1		1				
<b>Site Features &amp; Amenities</b>							
Asphalt Play Area/Pad	5		1			3	1
Backstops	4		3				1
Bike Rack	2		2				
Bleachers (sets)	5		4				1
Bocce Court	1						1
9 hole Disc Golf Course (poles; no baskets)	1		1				

Facility/Structure	Amount City-Wide	Alice Peers	Fircrest	Masoko	Thelma Gilmour	Tot Lot	Whittier
Drinking Fountain	4		1	1		1	1
Flag Pole	2	1	1				
Historic Monuments/Displays (permanent)	1			1			
Holiday Tree (Lighting)	1	1					
Interpretive Signage	3				2		1
Kiosk	1		1				
Lighting Park & Security	10		8			1	1
Lighting Sport Field	3		1				2
Observation Deck	2				2		
Reader Board	1	1					
Parking Areas	4	2		1			1
Wildlife Viewing	2				2		

### Key Facilities

**Fircrest Community Pool:** The swimming pool is a 25-yard, 6-lane seasonal community facility. An adjacent zero-depth wading pool is enjoyed by pre-school children. Locker rooms and restroom facilities are within the attached Community Center. Every year on Memorial Day weekend the pool is opened for the summer season, which typically ends Labor Day. The summer swim program includes weekday and weekend open swim hours as well as Family Swim on Tuesdays and Thursdays throughout the summer. Public swimming lessons are offered in two week, half-hour sessions on weekday mornings with a resident and non-resident fee structure.

**Roy H. Murphy Community Center:** Programming at the Community Center includes indoor recreation classes, fitness, gym space, community meetings, administrative offices, events, sports, restrooms and the pool shower/locker room. Rules and regulations for the recreation building are provided in the City Municipal Code under Title 10.08. The Community Center is the hub of recreational activity for Fircrest: it provides the space and facilities for meetings, facility rentals, classes, activities, and fitness programs, as well as programmed open gym for citizens to enjoy. In the summer the Community Center and the Community Pool serve together as a focal point of programs at the site, pool and the adjacent Fircrest Community Park.



### **3. RECREATION PROGRAMS & EVENTS:**

The City of Fircrest Parks and Recreation Department provides a wide-range of recreational activities and programs throughout the year. Additionally the Department provides and assists in a number of planned city-wide community events. To meet the need and demand, programs are offered for all ages, with substantial involvement from citizens throughout the community. The Parks and Recreation Department provides a quarterly brochure and an interactive web-page, which serves as the primary source of program information for the community. Recreation participation occurs on an annual basis in the following major recreation program categories:

- Aquatics
- Community Events
- General Recreation
  - Youth/Teen Sports, Programs & Camps
  - Adult Activities & Classes
  - Senior Activities (55+)

#### **Aquatics**

The City of Fircrest swimming pool is a family oriented facility that offers activities for swimmers of all ages and abilities. Rules and regulations are listed in Chapter 10.20 of the Fircrest Municipal Code. From Memorial Day until Labor Day the Fircrest Community Swimming pool is open for lessons and family swim times. For young children there is an adjoining wading pool. Both City residents and non-City residents can purchase a season swimming pass. The annual attendance is 8,000 for open swimming and 2,000 for special events, passes and lessons.

#### **Community Events**

The Department and the City support and host a number of special events which include: Daddy Daughter Dance, Fish N Fun, Mother and Son Fun Night, Community Garage Sale, Strawberry Feed, Derby Days, Car Show, Fircrest Fun Days, Haunted Trails, Pumpkin Patch, Holiday Bazaar, Watch your Speed 5K, Family Movie nights and annual Tree Lighting Ceremony.

#### **General Recreation**

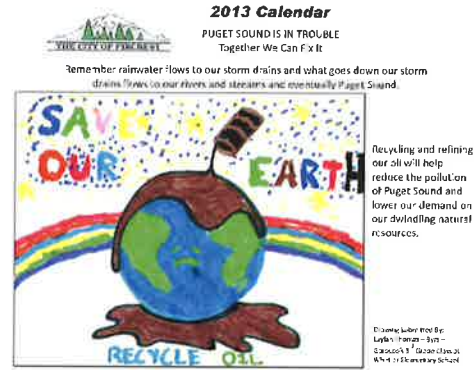
- Youth/Teen Sports, Programs & Camps: Annually over 2,000 youth attend various camps sponsored by the department or through partnerships contracts. Camps during summer range from day camps to sports camps. These include Kids Love Soccer, Top Cat Tennis, and Sky Hawks sports camps as well as a traditional Summer Day Camp with arts and crafts, gym games, lunch time, field games and educational activities.

Sports programs include flag football, K-5 youth basketball, pee wee soccer, T-ball leagues and youth baseball. The Fircrest After-School program involves specific leader-lead activities for ages 8-14, which are held at the Community Center. The program provides help with homework, arts and crafts, video game challenges, gym games, ping pong, foosball and other fun activities.

Monthly Teen Nights provide activities and events for the area teenagers. Special events are annually scheduled for parents and youth, including the annual Daddy Daughter Dance and the Mother and Son Fun Night.

■ Adult Activities & Classes: Adults are involved in the spring Adult Slow-Pitch League which consists of 15 or more teams and is part of a cooperative program with the City of University Place. Table 2.6 lists the broad range of adult recreation programs.

■ Senior Activities: The Fircrest Parks and Recreation Department provides the Senior Citizen Trips Program, which organizes and schedules a variety of trips to local area destinations. These include museums, shopping, historic cultural sites and even an opportunity to enjoy a casino and buffet lunch. To update and inform the seniors of activities and events, the department provides a Senior Newsletter.



The major programs and events are listed below in Table 2.6 along with the approximate number of annual participants. The Fircrest pool provides over 10,000 users the opportunity to enjoy the swim activities. Nearly 16,000 users are estimated to enjoy the community events. Over 2,000 youth are estimated to be active in program offerings. Over 4,000 adults and seniors attend and are involved in classes and activities annually.

**Table 2.6**  
**Annual Number of Participants for Major Recreation/Programs & Events**

	# per year		# per year
<b>AQUATICS</b>		<b>GENERAL RECREATION</b>	
Family Swim Night	500	<i><b>Youth/Teen Sports &amp; Programs</b></i>	
Go Hawaiian Pool Party	400	After School Program	800
Open Swimming	8,000	Baseball Programs	205
Seasonal Passes/Admissions/Rentals	200	Basketball	195
Swimming Lessons	800	Creative Movement	24
Swim Team	100	Pee Wee Soccer League	75
<b>COMMUNITY EVENTS</b>		Summer Day Camp	180
Car Show	2,000	Summer Sports Camps	100
Community Garage Sale	150	T-Ball	75
Daddy Daughter Dance	220	Toddler Sports Time	300
Derby Days	240	Youth Night	160
Easter Egg Hunt	4,000	<i><b>Adult Activities &amp; Classes</b></i>	
Fircrest Fun Days	4,000	Basketball League	280
Fish N Fun	125	Belly Dancing	30
Haunted Trails	450	Bridge & Pinochle	500
Holiday Bazaar	500	Canasta	400
Mother and Son Bowling Night	50	Clubs & Meetings (e.g. rock, railroad, painting clubs)	800
Picnic and Movie in the Park	1,200	Karate	315
Pumpkin Patch	455	Softball Leagues	330
Strawberry Feed	400	Table Tennis	700
Tree Lighting Ceremony	300	Volunteer Program	60

Watch Your Speed 5K	300	Zumba Fitness	45
<b>Senior Citizens</b>			
Let's Go Senior Trips	375		
Senior Foot Care	400		
Zumba Gold for Seniors	180		

#### 4. CITY RESOURCES:

##### **Administration, Recreation Services, Park Maintenance and Budget**

The City of Fircrest Parks and Recreation Department was created through City of Fircrest Ordinance 551 in 1966 and codified in Title 10 of the Fircrest Municipal Code (FMC). The FMC provides Community Center rules and regulations regarding Parks and Playground rules, Tennis Court rules, restrictions and etiquette, and rules and regulations for the Swimming Pool.

**Administration:** Fircrest has been a non-charter code city operating under a Council-Manager form of government since 1990. The City Manager, appointed by the Council, carries out Council policies and administers the day-to-day operations of the City. The seven members of the Council are the policy-making body of the City. The duties of the Council include enacting legislation, establishing basic policy for the City, and adopting the annual budget.

The Mayor is chosen biennially by Councilmember's at the first meeting of the new Council and is the Presiding Officer at meetings. The Mayor continues to have all rights, privileges and immunities of a Councilmember.

Ordinance 551 established the position of Recreation Director. The Director is responsible for the administrative responsibilities, community coordination and budget management. The Department provides two areas of responsibility, which are recreation programs and services as well as the maintenance responsibilities for park sites, the community public facilities and community swimming pool. The Director serves as liaison to the Community Center Advisory Committee (CCAC), which was established by the City of Fircrest Council on March 11, 2008. The CCAC advises the City Council on volunteerism, park development, and recreation programs. The purpose of the committee is to act as an advisory group representing citizens, staff and non-citizens (park users) on matters relating to parks and recreation and the associated facilities.

**Recreation Services:** The Parks and Recreation Director and program staff promote and provide social, physical and personal recreation activities for all ages. Approximately 30,000 people benefit from the recreation services, including park and recreation users from neighboring communities. The Recreation Department produces a seasonal activity guide as notification to the public for involvement in a variety of recreation program and events in the community. Recreation services provide year round sports programs for all ages, summer swimming and playground programs as well as an After School program, the Youth Summer Program and the Senior Citizens activities. Many partnerships, grants and donations are secured to effectively provide the recreational services throughout the year. The Director and recreation staff prepares annual programming statistics in the preparation of the recreation portion of the annual department budget.

### **Park Maintenance:**

The Parks and Recreation Department develops and maintains the City park system through progressive and efficient management. The parks system of 27.1 acres includes two multi-use parks with tennis courts, ball fields and sports courts, soccer fields, Bocce courts and playgrounds. The community swimming pool and wading pool, as well as the 13,000 square foot Community Center with gym, meeting rooms, restroom and offices, are the Division's management responsibility. Parks staff also facilitate the setting up and taking down of major community special events. They maintain all parks and roadside landscape improvements. Fircrest has one Park Supervisor and two seasonal temporary staff to maintain the parks' grounds and prepare the facilities for recreational play and use.

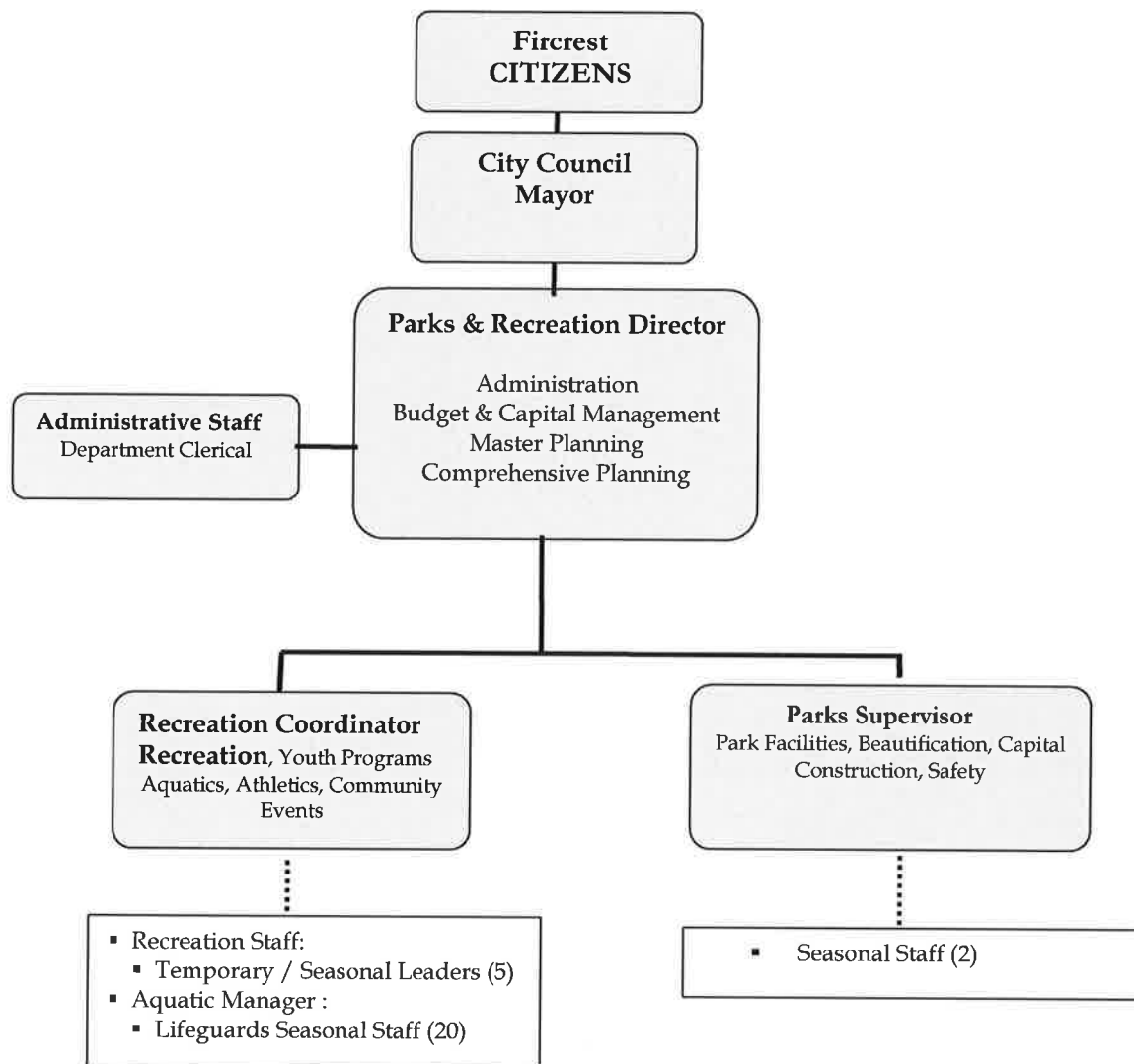
The Parks and Recreation and Facilities Departments maintain all Parks and Recreation facilities, which includes cleaning of the recreation buildings. Parks and Recreation and Facilities staff coordinate with Community Center staff on assignments and tasks. The Parks and Recreation Department also funds park structures' supplies as well as the repair and maintenance of the park storage garage, the Pavilion, Tot Lot restrooms, the Whittier restrooms and the picnic shelter structure.

### **2014 Annual Budget:**

The City of Fircrest Parks and Recreation budget includes revenue and expenditures identified in the general fund category. The annual budget provides the resources for the annual operation of the services provided by the Department. Additionally, the annual budget provides special fund accounts for capital projects. The Parks and Recreation budget accounts for 14% of the General Fund Operating budget.

**Organizational Chart:** The following chart presents the current Fircrest Parks and Recreation Department organizational chart. The Department is responsible for the administration of parks and recreation services. It provides current services and operations as well as the long range planning for meeting the community's needs and services into the future. The organizational chart provides for the coordination of the Department by the Director and displays the links to the Community Center Advisory Committee, the City Council, Mayor, City Manager and the Fircrest citizens.





## 5. COUNTY, STATE & PRIVATE RESOURCES NEAR THE CITY OF FIRCREST

Within the City of Fircrest there are private and public lands and facilities that provide park, recreation and open space opportunities. The Tacoma School District, the Pierce County Public Works and the Fircrest Golf Club are examples of the major entities that provide recreational opportunities.

Whittier Elementary School, which is located adjacent to Whittier Park, provides partnership opportunities for the community with the use of the school playground coordinated with park use for special events and activities for the students during the annual school year.

Currently there are a number of Off-Leash Dog Park areas within close proximity to the City of Fircrest. Some of those include the Metro Parks Tacoma Rogers Off-Leash Park on east L Street, McKinley Park Off-Leash in the upper park site area, Wapato Park at south Sheridan as well as the Off-Leash demonstration area at Point Defiance Park. Other local Off-Leash areas in Pierce County include the 22-acre site at Fort Steilacoom managed by the City of Lakewood and the Chambers Bay Golf Course Off-Leash area in the central meadow managed by Pierce County.

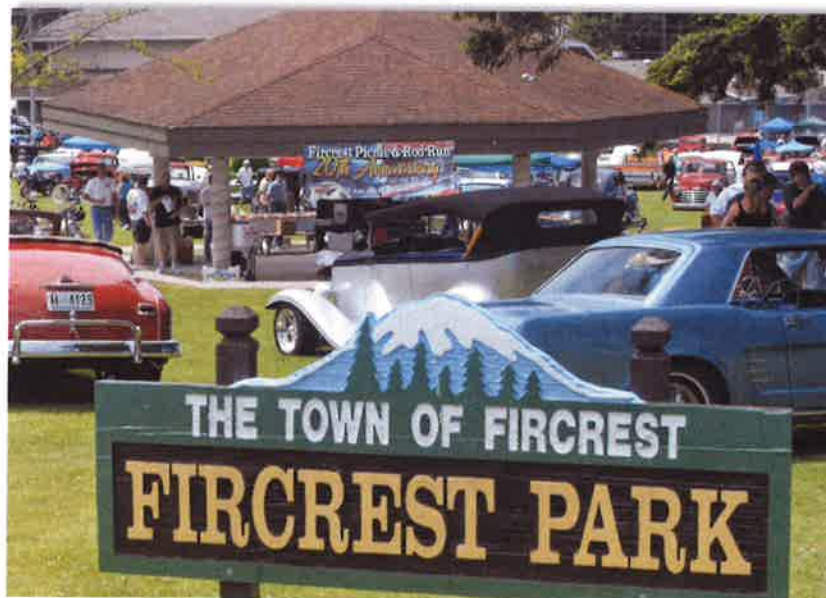
The Metro Parks of Tacoma Park District provides an array of parks, open space and program services. Key facilities located near the City of Fircrest include Point Defiance Park, Zoo and Aquarium as well as the Tacoma Nature Center at Snake Lake. Metro Parks has year-round and seasonal swimming pools, wading pools and spray grounds and a variety of parks, playgrounds and open space sites available to Fircrest citizens.

The City of University Place, adjacent to and west of the City of Fircrest, has 17 parks and conservation areas. Morrison Park, an undeveloped natural area, and Homestead Park, with walking trails and a rhododendron collection, are just west of Fircrest. Centrally located within the City of University Place is Cirque/Bridgeport Park with ball fields, soccer field, trails, skate park, tot lot and picnic shelter. Sunset Terrace Park, adjacent to Tacoma at the north edge of University Place, features a children's playground, ball field and picnic shelter.

The City of Lakewood is located south of Fircrest and has nearly 20 parks, water access sites and facilities managed by its Parks and Recreation Department. Lakewood has a number of water access sites for boating and swimming, with the largest being American Lake located in the southern portion of the City.

Chambers Creek Regional Park, owned and operated by Pierce County, is an open space site that follows the natural flow of Chambers Creek to the Puget Sound.

During September 2012, Pierce Conservation District (PCD) worked with gardeners to oversee general operations at 66 public community gardens throughout Pierce County. Approximately half of these community gardens are located in Tacoma, which abuts Fircrest to the north and east.



## Chapter 3

### Public Involvement

To assist with developing an understanding of the park and recreation needs and preferences of the citizens of the City of Fircrest, the Fircrest City Council appointed a Parks, Recreation and Open Space (PROS) Plan Ad Hoc Committee. The Committee included twelve citizens and three City Council representatives. Over the course of the planning process a series of updates was provided through news and city-wide publications as well as through the Parks and Recreation Department web site. Citizens were informed of the current process and provided details of input coming in through the public meetings.

**Community Based Ad Hoc Committee:** Parks and Recreation staff, the City Manager and appointments to the Ad Hoc Committee (hereinafter, Committee) met over the course of the planning process and provided history, technical knowledge and guidance to the planning process. The Committee was also vital in providing the community vision and rendering key decisions that formed the Park Schematic Master Plans and the basic framework of this Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan.



**Public Workshops & Opinion:** Community workshops were held on April 24 and June 19, 2013. The two workshops presented a series of maps and Schematic Master Plans for each park. The Schematic Master Plans identify and describe what was/is currently needed, as well as capital improvements needs into the future. The first meeting provided the initial look at the parks to allow citizens to focus on critical needs and create a vision into the future for the community. The second workshop provided a more thorough presentation from the initial citizen input on Schematic Master Plans possibilities for the parks over the next six to twenty years.

The input from the citizens stressed that the most important consideration was meeting the continued need for youth and family activities through programs or facilities at the existing parks. Of primary focus, with overall support from citizens and Committee members, were improvements to the City's critically important recreation facility -- the Roy H. Murphy Community Center and adjacent seasonal swimming pool. Many were observant to point out that limited funding and a changing economy will play a role in the next steps to planning the future of the Community Center, but also noted the continual demand for positive opportunities that are vital from the perspective of most residents.

The workshop conversations centered on outdoor activities that ranged from sports fields' renovation at Whittier and Fircrest parks, to support facilities like added parking for the Gene Goodwin Tot Lot and restroom/concession facilities at Fircrest Park. Looking to the future, the citizens and committee members prioritized and identified capital improvement needs at all six of the city-owned park sites. Prioritization involved reviewing those items of most importance when reflecting future costs and budgets to most effectively and economically accomplish the identified park capital improvements.