

City of Fircrest August 2018

Town Topics



CITY COUNCIL

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Mayor's Message



When people ask you what it's like to live in Fircrest, what do you tell them? Can you define what it is that makes Fircrest feel so special?

The seven members of the Fircrest City Council joined with the City's department heads in a half-day workshop in June to talk about our collective mission, vision and goals. A mission statement should define the city's objectives and approach. In other words, it reflects who we are. The vision statement should reflect who we want to be in the future. We started our workshop by talking about the current mission and vision statements, which were written years ago:

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.

Vision: 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.

Personally, I feel those statements are accurate, but too generic. They could be written for lots of nice cities and towns. As our workshop discussion revealed, there were words, phrases and descriptions that speak in greater detail to who we want to be. In response to the question of what should Fircrest look like 10 to 20 years from now, here is some of what I heard that day:

Fircrest is family friendly. Our neighborhoods are safe, healthy, accessible, and connected. We remain true to the historic designs when the city was founded. Remodels and infill projects fit within the scale and character of neighborhoods. Neighbors look out for each other. Residents volunteer their time and talent to support the city, and they give constructive feedback to local leaders to help boost pride in living here.

The pool and community center are beloved sources of pride, and our efforts to update them reflect the needs of the community. We love our parks, trees and landscapes. The city works to protect and nurture our beautiful natural environment. Our commercial areas are an important asset to the community and offer goods and services that our residents desire. Our infrastructure — the backbone of the community — is sound and regularly maintained. Fircrest continues to feel like a small town even as it engages in the larger metropolitan area.

That last line is a key one, in my opinion. There's a feeling people get when they enter Fircrest, and it's a challenge to capture that feeling in the dry language of municipal codes that regulate development. We will never stop trying to figure out how to write codes that nurture the city's character in a rapidly changing world.

What do you think? Did we miss anything? Feel free to send me your thoughts and I will share them with the City Council and staff. You can reach me at hgeorge@cityoffircrest.net or 115 Ramsdell Street, Fircrest, WA 98466.

Residential Condominium Development Project

By now you've noticed all the work going on along Regents Boulevard and Arondale Drive. OakRidge Homes is planning to build 34 condos on the northern edge of the Fircrest Golf Club property along Regents Boulevard. Of those 34 dwellings, four will be single-family, and the rest will be duplexes. Additionally, a new 20-foot access road will be constructed off of Arondale Drive. The developers will replant deciduous and pine trees as well as revitalizing the green belt area in the northwest quadrant of Regents Boulevard and Arondale Drive.

Oakridge Homes is working on all the site development work such as clearing, grading, installing utilities and constructing the street and sidewalks. As final design, landscaping, and building plans are approved, the construction of the actual units will begin. As permits are issued, the City will try to keep the website updated at:

www.cityoffircrest.net/updates



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City Manager's Corner



Hello Fircrest residents,

For this edition of Town Topics, I want to share some information and thoughts regarding perceptions of our Police Department and Municipal Court. My aim is not necessarily to change your view (well, maybe a little) but to provide some context to those perceptions.

First, we are not alone. Everywhere I have been — from West Virginia to the five cities I have worked for in the Pacific Northwest — the community has a reputation as a speed trap. But that's what happens when you enforce the law, right? When I was in Stanfield, OR, the speed trap perception there was stronger than it is in Fircrest. People in Stanfield told me the greatest stories about getting a citation for driving 2 mph over the speed limit, but in looking through the record, that was never true. What Stanfield had, though, was a lower speed limit through the middle of town on a 5-lane highway. This is where I believe the speed trap perception comes from more so than from actual chincy citations. An area with a wide-open road generally feels to some drivers like the allowed speed should be higher.

That's likely the case on Fircrest's wide residential roads like Regents and Electron, or long roads without breaks like Alameda, where you might naturally want to go faster than 25 mph. While the perception is that Fircrest officers write harsh citations, the

reality is the Fircrest Police Department has not written a citation for going 2 mph over the speed limit for quite some time. Of course, the benefit of a speed trap reputation is most people slow down when driving through Fircrest, which makes it safer for everyone.

There is also a general perception that municipal courts are a cash cow for local governments. The reality of these perceptions depends on the local government, but in my experience municipal courts generally operate in the red, meaning that court revenues are less than court costs. This is true in Fircrest as well. We rely on general government revenue along with court revenue to fund our court functions. And that's OK. Our police officers and judge are focused on compliance and public safety. I encourage you to come observe our court on Wednesdays and see how our judge and staff work with people to try and get them in compliance with the law, especially those who are caught driving with a suspended license. Admittedly, one of my responsibilities is to worry about revenues versus expenditures, and I probably make the Chief worry about it a bit as well, but that is certainly not the focus of our officers or municipal judge.

I hope this helps put some context to the perceptions. Have a safe and fun summer and drive safely!

Scott Pingel
City Manager

How to Contact Fircrest Police

Fircrest Police Department address: **302 Regents Boulevard**
Business Office Hours: **Monday through Friday 8 am – 5 pm**
Business Office Phone Number: **253-565-1198***

This is not the number you call to report a crime

To report a crime, please see below.

Emergency number 911:

911 is for emergency use only. An emergency is defined as "an immediate threat to life or property, or any crime in progress." If a speedy response will solve a problem and prevent further injury or damage, call 911.

(24 hour) Non-emergency number: 253-798-4722

Report any other issue, concern or suspicious circumstance by dialing the 24 hour non-emergency number. This number may ring for several minutes if there is a high volume of emergency 911 calls.

We are proud to serve you and realize that you have entrusted us with the safety and protection of your families and the community. We will continue to work hard as we strive to keep Fircrest the wonderful place it is to live, work and play. If you have any concerns, comments, or suggestions that may assist us in enhancing the quality of your service, please do not hesitate to contact us at 253-565-1198.

Respectfully,

John Cheesman
Chief of Police

Fircrest Fall Clean Up

Fircrest Fall Clean Up, sponsored by Westside Disposal, will be held Saturday, October 6th and the following Saturday, October 13th. Items can be dropped off at Westside, located at 2815 Rochester West in University Place, between the hours of 8am and 4pm.

This is an opportunity to dispose and/or recycle some unwanted items and yard waste **free**. Each Fircrest resident is allowed one load per day.

Visit www.westsidedisposal.com for more information.

New Planning Commission Members

The City would like to introduce the following two new members of the Planning Commission:

Sarah Hamel is an 11-year resident of the City of Fircrest, a civil engineer and is the current project manager for the Pacific Seas Aquarium at the Point Defiance Zoo. She resides in The Commons and is Treasurer for their homeowner association.

Karissa Carpenter is a newer member of the Fircrest Community and has great enthusiasm to help maintain its "unique and friendly atmosphere." She is a Pacific Lutheran University graduate and works for Concrete Technology Corporation at the Port of Tacoma.

Both of their experiences and community volunteer spirit will be great assets to the Planning Commission. We wish to thank outgoing Planning Commission members, Kenneth Halgren and Arne Michaelsen, for their service to the community.



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Pool & Community Center Design Update

Progress can be seen in the preliminary designs for the Pool and Community Center. ARC Architects are leading the City through the schematic design process for both facilities and the public outreach has been overwhelming. We are preparing for two important upcoming meetings and hope to see you there:

**Pool & Community Center
Public Meeting**
August 13th, 6pm
555 Contra Costa Ave.

**Pool & Community Center Presentation
City Council Meeting**
August 28th, 7pm
115 Ramsdell St.

For more information, please visit:

www.cityoffircrest.net/community-center-pool-project

Fircrest Park Playground

The Fircrest Park play structure will be replaced near the end of August. This project was made possible through donations from the Friends for Fircrest Golf Tournament, \$60,000 allocated by the City Council, and proceeds from the 2018 Rod Run and Picnic in the Park (Car Show). The golf tournament fielded 9 foursomes for a 4-person scramble, which led to a silent auction and a wonderful dinner donated and prepared by Bryce Kalland and Scott Cameron. Fircrest Park welcomed 398 cars on July 8th for the 31st anniversary of the Car Show.



Join Us On Facebook



In July 2016, the City launched its official presence on Facebook. Over the last two years, changes and refinements have been made to make the Facebook page not only more user friendly but your "go to" place for City information. Look to it for events, notices, and other interesting facts about the City of Fircrest. Also, it is important to know it is not monitored 24/7. Please call 911 for emergencies. Call the City directly at 253-564-8901 for any other time sensitive inquiries. There is a link to our social media guidelines on the website at www.cityoffircrest.net.

How to find us? From your Facebook page, search for City of Fircrest and select the one with the logo and the P. You have found the official City of Fircrest page.

Helpful Hint: If you want to keep the City of Fircrest posts a priority in your feed, hover over the "Liked" button and select "See First".



Who You Gonna Call?

Do you have a question, but are not sure which department to call? From street sweepers to pool hours, fence permits to alarm permits, there is a City Staff person who would be happy to speak with you. To help point you in the right direction, we have listed each department, with some of their most frequently asked about topics.

City Hall 253-564-8901
City Council meeting dates, City Manager, Public Records, Finance

Municipal Court 253-564-8922
Tickets, court dates, passports

Public Works 253-564-8900
Water, sewer, streets, utility billing, sidewalks

Planning and Building 253-564-8902
Remodels, additions, repair, fences, nuisances, trees, land use

Parks and Recreation 253-564-8177
Hours, activities, sign-up, park concerns

Police Department Emergency 911
Active crime, suspicious activity, any other emergency

To Report a Crime NOT in Progress 253-798-4722

Police Department non-emergency 253-565-1198
Alarm permits, parking concerns, follow-up

Don't see your issue?
Call City Hall at 253-564-8901 and we will be happy to direct you to the right person.

Roofs and AC and Remodels, Oh My!

If you plan on doing any repairs or improvements to your home, there is a good chance a permit is required. What does a permit get you? With each permit, the City:

- Verifies that your contractor is licensed, bonded and in good standing with WA Labor & Industries
- Conducts one or multiple inspections to ensure the minimum construction standards were met
- Proof of what and when the work was done

Discussions are always free, so feel free to call, email, or stop in for a visit. For more information and forms, please visit: www.cityoffircrest.net/government/planning-and-building-department/permit-center



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