

# City of Fircrest

## COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

January 4, 2016



City of Fircrest  
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Amended: December 18, 2018

# **CITY OF FIRCREST COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

## ***ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS***

This Comprehensive Plan is the product of the effort, consideration, and advice of many. Some of the principal participants are listed below; the ideas and comments of many others have also guided the development of the plan. Thank you to all who have participated in charting course for the future of Fircrest.

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## CHAPTER 1

# INTRODUCTION





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## ABOUT FIRCREST

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 this in mind, the Narrows Land Company purchased a parcel of land to the west of Tacoma and named the subdivision they platted *Regents Park*. The influence of the developers is reflected in the streets named after their California backgrounds 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 1908 on the corner of University Street (now Columbia Avenue) and Berkeley Avenue. The Fircrest Golf Club was incorporated in 1923.

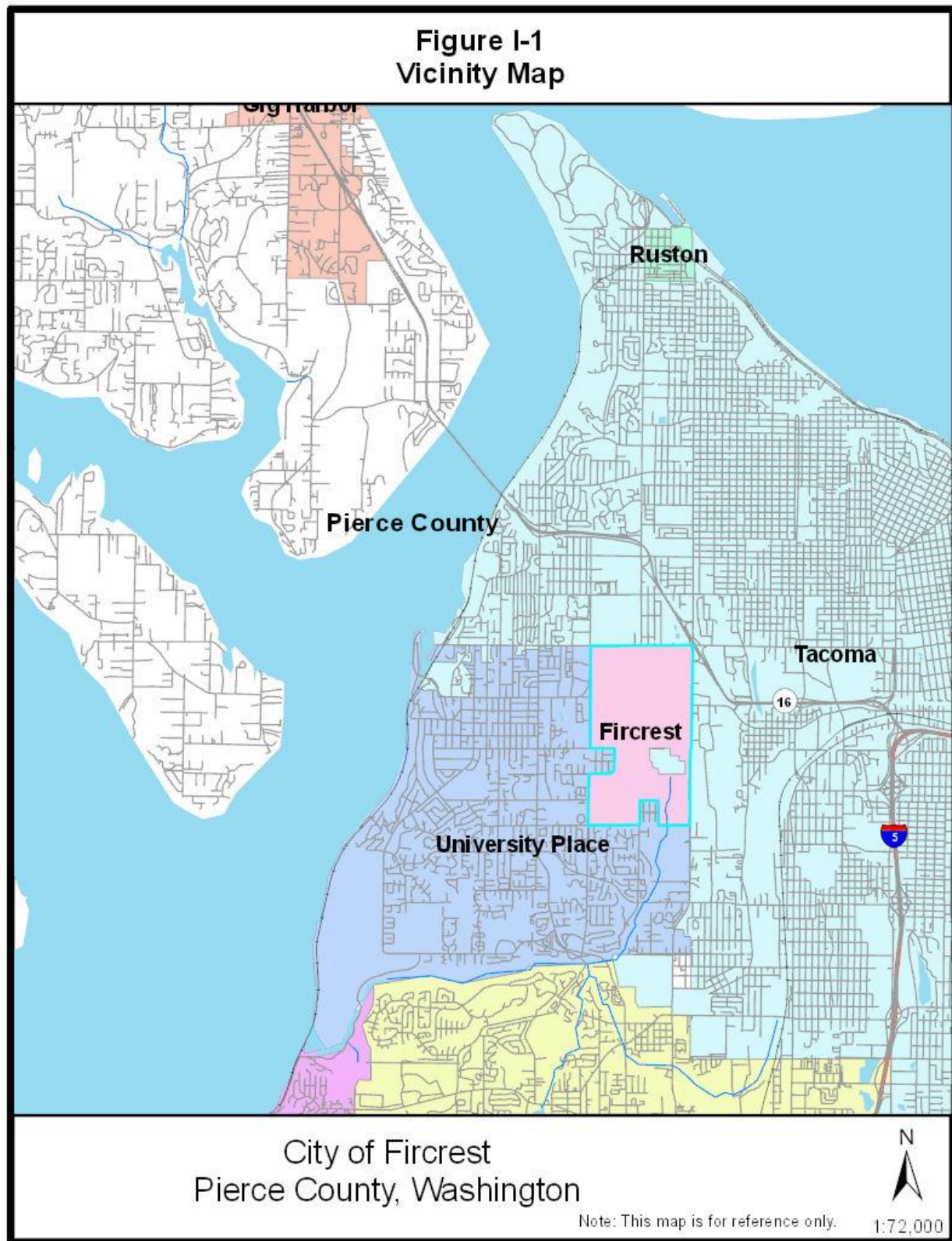
In September 1925, Regents Park and its 306 residents incorporated as the Town of Fircrest in an effort to jumpstart the development and reenergize the community. Incorporation gave them the financial stability and control to repair and develop needed infrastructure and services.

Beginning in the 1950s, the community grew through numerous annexations and experienced much more rapid residential development. In 1960, Fircrest constructed the Community Center, which was followed by the construction of the community's swimming pool at Fircrest Park and the dedication of Masko Park. Fircrest continues to provide exceptional recreational resources, facilities and programs and is home to the Fircrest Golf Club.

Fircrest constructed its Public Safety Building in 1979. In 1988, Fircrest changed to a Council-Manager form of government, and in 1990, the town that had started as an early example of a planned development became the City of Fircrest, having grown in size and population. The 1990s saw the end of the volunteer fire department's 52 years of service to the community, and a contract was signed with the Tacoma Fire Department for emergency services. Fircrest constructed its Public Works Facility in 1993 and built a new City Hall in 1999.

Today, Fircrest, with a population of 6,710 (in 2018), has lived up to the dream of a residential park. Fircrest continues to work hard to keep its reputation of a quiet, residential community with attractive, livable neighborhoods and fine recreational facilities. Looking to the future, Fircrest will be supportive of carefully planned economic development that provides a foundation for continued prosperity for the community. **Figure I-1** shows Fircrest's location within the southern Puget Sound region.





## MISSION STATEMENT

*This Comprehensive Plan exists to ensure that Fircrest remains a predominantly residential community with vibrant commercial mixed-use centers that:*

- *Remains an attractive and distinctive place to live*
- *Maintains a land use balance that serves residents' needs*
- *Ensures that the basic needs for nutritional food, adequate shelter, and community-centered recreation that provides outlets for physical activity are met for all of Fircrest's residents*
- *Has a sound economic base that ensures basic utilities and urban services are available as needed*
- *Provides a safe, healthy environment in which to live, work, and play*
- *Has complete streets that are designed for the safety and ease of pedestrians, transit patrons and bicyclists as well as motorists*
- *Encourages the increased availability and integration of housing and transportation to support flexibility, mobility, independent living, and services for all age groups and those with special needs*
- *Considers the needs of future citizens as well as current citizens*
- *Provides ample opportunities for all citizens to become involved with community life and participatory government.*

## PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

The Comprehensive Plan is a broad statement of the community's vision for the future and contains policies primarily to guide the physical development of the city, as well as certain aspects of its social and economic character. The Plan steers regulations, implementation actions and services in a direction that supports the vision. The Plan reflects the long-term values and aspirations of the community as a whole and shows how various aspects, such as land use, housing, transportation, capital facilities and services work together to achieve the desired vision.

While the Comprehensive Plan is meant to provide a strong and constant vision for the future, it is also a living document that must be able to accommodate change, such as a new technology, an unforeseen impact or an innovative method of achieving a component of the vision. It is therefore regularly updated to account for changing issues or opportunities facing Fircrest, while still maintaining the core values of the community. Fircrest's Comprehensive Plan considers mandatory elements of the Growth Management Act (GMA), PSRC's VISION 2040 Regional Growth Strategy, Pierce County County-Wide Planning Policies, factors affecting land use, assumptions about future trends, and public opinion.

Fircrest's Comprehensive Plan was initially developed and then updated through a public involvement process conducted by the Planning Commission. The Plan reflects a community vision of how Fircrest should grow and develop over a 20-year planning horizon. The Plan aims to protect residents' high quality of life and equitably share the public and private costs and benefits of growth. The Plan establishes overall direction for residential, commercial and industrial growth in a pattern that maintains and enhances the character of existing neighborhoods.

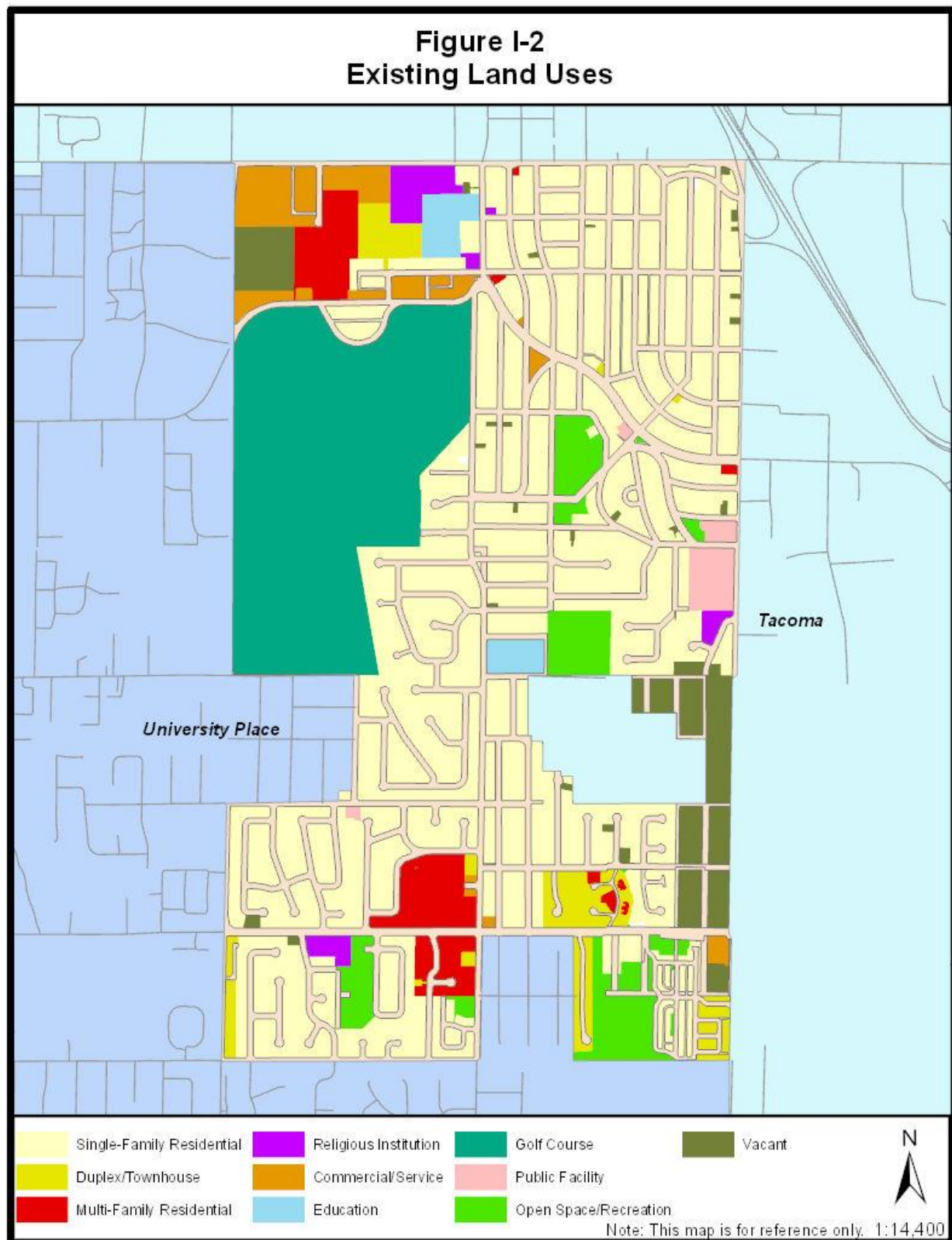
The Plan comprehensively integrates "health and well-being" into its goals and policies. It protects public health and safety, while enhancing community character, natural beauty, environmental quality and economic vitality. The Plan guides Fircrest's efforts to achieve these ends by indicating where new housing, services, and commercial mixed-use development should be encouraged and where open space should be protected. It emphasizes growth where adequate public facilities and services can be provided in a timely and cost-effective manner. Finally, the Plan conserves open space, protects wildlife habitat and sensitive areas, maintains and improves the quality of air, water, and land resources.

## FIRCREST'S PLANNING AREA

This Plan includes planning information for incorporated Fircrest. The GMA requires that counties designate urban growth areas (UGAs) within which urban levels of development shall be encouraged. Outside of these UGAs, development can occur only if it is rural in nature.

The Pierce County *Countywide Planning Policies* elaborate on GMA requirements concerning the provision of urban services. In addition, the *Comprehensive Plan* for *Pierce County, Washington* may specify for municipalities a potential annexation area (PAA), formerly known as an urban service area. The PAA represents the geographic area within which the city may anticipate providing urban services in the future, either prior to or subsequent to annexation. Delineation of each city's PAA is based on input from the municipalities and on evidence that the city is capable of providing urban services to the area. The City of Fircrest annexed its PAA in 2018 as outlined in the *Countywide Planning Policies* and the *Fircrest Comprehensive Plan*.

Existing land uses within the community are shown in **Figure I-2**.



**Table I-1  
PROFILE OF FIRCREST**

<b>Population</b>	
2010 Population*	6,497
2018 Population Estimate**	6,710
Median Age*	41.2 years
Population Under 20*	25.4%
Population 55 and Older*	29.6%
Population 65 and Older***	17.3%
Sex Female***	53.9%
Sex Male***	46.1%
<b>Race / Ethnicity*</b>	
White	78.9%
Black/African-American	7.0%
American Indian and Alaska Native	0.7%
Asian	5.1%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0.5%
Other	0.8%
Other – Two or More	7.0%
Hispanic or Latino of Any Race	4.6%
<b>Income***</b>	
Median Household Income****	\$63,750
Median Family Income*****	\$79,375
<b>Housing Characteristics***</b>	
Number of Dwelling Units	2,847
Single Family Units (attached and detached)	80.6%
Multifamily Units	19.0%
Mobile Homes	0.4%
Owner Occupied Units	67.5%
Renter Occupied Units	32.5%
Average Household Size****	2.39 persons
Average Family Size*****	2.93 persons
Median Home Value	\$309,400
Median Rent	\$1,165
<b>Geography</b>	
Land Area in Square Miles	1.58

\* U.S. Census 2010

\*\* Washington State Office of Financial Management

\*\*\* U.S. Census American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates 2008-2012

\*\*\*\* A household consists of all people who occupy a housing unit regardless of relationship. A household may consist of a person living alone or multiple unrelated individuals or families living together.

\*\*\*\*\* A family consists of two or more people (one of whom is the householder) related by birth, marriage, or adoption residing in the same housing unit.



## STATE PLANNING CONTEXT

### ***GROWTH MANAGEMENT ACT***

In 1990 Washington's Legislature passed the Growth Management Act (GMA), which established 13 planning goals and a system of planning for cities and counties that have experienced rapid growth. A 14th goal, shorelines of the state, was subsequently added. These goals, which guide development of the City's Comprehensive Plan, are listed below:

- Urban Growth - Encourage development in urban areas where adequate public facilities and services exist or can be provided in an efficient manner.
- Reduce Sprawl - Reduce the inappropriate conversion of undeveloped land into sprawling, low-density development.
- Transportation - Encourage efficient multimodal transportation systems that are based on regional priorities and coordinated with county and city comprehensive plans.
- Housing - Encourage the availability of affordable housing to all economic segments of the population of this state, promote a variety of residential densities and housing types, and encourage preservation of existing housing stock.
- Economic Development - Encourage economic development throughout the state that is consistent with adopted comprehensive plans, promote economic opportunity for all citizens of this state, especially for unemployed and for disadvantaged persons, and encourage growth in areas experiencing insufficient economic growth, all within the capabilities of the state's natural resources, public services, and public facilities.
- Property Rights - Private property shall not be taken for public use without just compensation having been made. The property rights of landowners shall be protected from arbitrary and discriminatory actions.
- Permits - Applications for both state and local governmental permits should be processed in a timely and fair manner to ensure predictability.
- Natural Resource Industries - Maintain and enhance natural resource-based industries, including productive timber, agricultural, and fisheries industries. Encourage the conservation of productive forestlands and productive agricultural lands, and discourage incompatible uses.
- Open Space and Recreation - Encourage the retention of open space and development of recreational opportunities, conserve fish and wildlife habitat, increase access to natural resource lands and water, and develop parks.
- Environment - Protect the environment and enhance the state's high quality of life, including air and water quality, and the availability of water.
- Citizen Participation and Coordination - Encourage the involvement of citizens in the planning process and ensure coordination between communities and jurisdictions to reconcile conflicts.
- Public Facilities and Services - Ensure that those public facilities and services necessary to support development shall be adequate to serve the development, at the time the development is available for occupancy and use, without decreasing current service levels below locally established minimum standards.

- Historic Preservation - Identify and encourage the preservation of lands, sites, and structures that have historical or archaeological significance.
- Shorelines of the State. The goals and policies of the Shoreline Management Act as set forth in RCW 98.58.020.

### ***PERIODIC UPDATE***

Cities and counties are required to periodically update their plans to comply with updates in regional and state requirements, as well as changes in local conditions. The Fircrest Comprehensive Plan satisfies the 2015 GMA Periodic Update requirement and addresses planning issues throughout a 20-year planning horizon ending in 2035. This Comprehensive Plan ensures compliance with Washington State, regional, and Pierce County requirements for comprehensive planning. Minor amendments have occurred each subsequent year.

## **REGIONAL PLANNING CONTEXT**

### ***VISION 2040 MULTICOUNTY PLANNING POLICIES (MPPs)***

The Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) is the designated forum for collaborative work on regional growth management and transportation planning in Pierce, King, Kitsap, and Snohomish counties. *VISION 2040*, adopted in 2008 by the PSRC, promotes an environmentally friendly growth pattern that will contain the expansion of urban growth areas, conserve farm and forest lands, support compact communities where people may both live and work, and focus new employment and housing in vibrant urban centers.

*VISION 2040* includes a set of multicounty planning policies that provide an integrated framework for addressing land use, economic development, transportation, public facilities, and environmental issues. Under the GMA, consistency between regional transportation plans, countywide planning policies and the transportation elements of local comprehensive plans is required. MPPs serve as the regional guidelines and principles used for the Regional Council's consistency certification of policies and plans within the four-county area.

*VISION 2040* provides clear and specific guidance for the distribution of population and employment growth into types of places defined as "regional geographies." Fircrest is assigned to the small cities geography, which obligates the City to accommodate an assigned share of regional growth envisioned for this particular geography. Population, housing and employment targets for individual cities within each geography are set by Pierce County in consultation with municipalities.

### ***PIERCE COUNTY COUNTYWIDE PLANNING POLICIES (CPPs)***

In accordance with the GMA, Pierce County adopted, and the cities within the county endorsed, the Pierce County Countywide Planning Policies (CPP). The CPP addresses issues that transcend city boundaries, such as setting Urban Growth Areas, accommodating housing and job demand, supporting health and wellness, and addressing capital facilities that are regional in nature. The CPP provides a framework

to promote consistency among a multitude of municipal comprehensive plans within Pierce County.

## CITIZEN INVOLVEMENT -- WHO PLANS AND HOW?

City of Fircrest residents, business owners, employees of businesses located in Fircrest, owners of property in Fircrest, or just about anyone who is affected by the Plan are invited to help develop and update the Comprehensive Plan. Generally, planning begins with identification of the issues and of the stakeholders. Planning may be focused on refining the overall vision of the city, or for neighborhoods, or may be related to particular subjects such as parks, recreation and open space -- or community character. Participants may vary depending upon the scope of the particular issue.

The Planning Commission is charged with the responsibility for initially developing, and then reviewing proposed changes to the Comprehensive Plan – taking into account the community vision. The Commission meets regularly and addresses planning issues on an ongoing basis. It is the Planning Commission’s job to hold public hearings, discuss updates and make recommendations to the City Council. At times, Council has established ad hoc advisory committees to focus on specific topics within a limited scope or time frame. These temporary committees may provide recommendations on planning matters to the Planning Commission.

Over the years, the City has used a number of methods to encourage community participation in planning. These methods have included community meetings for citywide visioning, neighborhood meetings for smaller planning areas, and stakeholder meetings for topical interests. Community forums, open houses and design charrettes have been, or may be, held to present ideas and to discover new ones. The Fircrest *Town Topics* newsletter, surveys and questionnaires have been used to reach those who may not be able to make meetings.

Fircrest’s website and a variety of communication technologies will increasingly provide, a way to advertise meetings and also to seek ideas on planning questions. Ultimately, all major planning decisions fall to the City Council, which is responsible for establishing regulations, programs and planning policies, and also for adopting the City budget.

Major planning highlights for the community are summarized in **Table I-2**.



**Table I-2  
Planning for Fircrest – Major Highlights**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Highlight</b>
1907	Regents Park Plat I and II Recorded
1925	Incorporation of City of Fircrest
1957	This is Fircrest 1907-1957 -- First Comprehensive Population Survey
1975	Adoption of Comprehensive Bikeway Plan
1988	Adoption of Town of Fircrest Comprehensive Plan 1987 to 1997
1992	Adoption of Interim Critical Area Regulations
1993	Adoption of Interim Design Guidelines
1995	Publication of Draft Environmental Impact Statement for Comprehensive Plan
1996	Publication of Final Environmental Impact Statement for Comprehensive Plan
1996	Adoption of GMA Comprehensive Plan
2000	Adoption of unified Land Development Code (Zoning, Subdivision, Design Guidelines, Permit Processing, Critical Area, and other regulations)
2005	Adoption of Critical Area Amendments incorporating Best Available Science
2014-2015	Adoption of GMA Periodic Update Amendments to Comprehensive Plan
2015	Adoption of GMA Periodic Update Amendments to Development Regulations
2018	Annexation of Potential Annexation Area

## PLAN SUMMARY

The Comprehensive Plan contains an introduction chapter and seven elements -- community character, land use, housing, transportation, utilities, capital facilities, and park, recreation and open space.

Each element typically contains goals, policies, explanatory text and, in some cases, charts, tables and maps. The goals and policies are the guiding principles – the heart of the Plan; however, they are often preceded by explanatory text that describes the context of the goal or policy, or the reasoning behind it. Each element presents part of the picture for managing change and guiding Fircrest's growth. The Land Use Element provides the overall community vision and interconnections among the other elements. Certain planning objectives, such as health and well-being, are addressed in the goals and policies of multiple elements. Elements typically include the components listed in **Table I-2**, subject to variation as appropriate:

**Table I-3  
ELEMENT COMPONENTS**

<b>Components</b>	<b>Intent and Purpose</b>
<b>Introduction</b>	Provides a local planning context for major planning issues and challenges
<b>State Planning Context</b>	Provides an overview of GMA goals and objectives as they relate to planning issues and challenges
<b>Regional Planning Context</b>	Provides an overview of PSRC and PCRC goals, policies and objectives as they relate to planning issues and challenges
<b>Local Planning Context</b>	Looking ahead 20 years, illustrates a vision of where the community would like to be positioned in responding to major planning issues and challenges
<b>Goals</b>	Define what the community wishes to achieve over a 20-year planning horizon
<b>Policies</b>	Provide guidance for creating and implementing development regulations and taking other actions to achieve the goals
<b>Discussion</b>	Clarifies the intent of the goals and policies and provides policy-specific context and explanation
<b>Background Information</b>	Provides factual data that help inform the statements, goals and policies

## **HOW THE PLAN WILL BE IMPLEMENTED AND AMENDED**

The Comprehensive Plan documents Fircrest's vision for the future and provides goals and policies that will facilitate achieving that vision. Goals and policies must be implemented in the city's regulatory documents and operational procedures. Plan implementation involves a variety of activities. New controls may be placed on development or land use activities through revisions or additions to municipal code. More detailed plans may be developed for specific areas. Decisions about the allocation of funds to various projects and programs must be tested against plan goals and policies to ensure consistency.

## **ANNUAL REVIEW AND AMENDMENTS**

Amendments to the Comprehensive Plan are necessary, from time to time, to respond to changing conditions and needs of Fircrest citizens. The Growth Management Act requires that amendments to a comprehensive plan be considered no more frequently than once per year. Proposed amendments to the Comprehensive Plan shall be considered concurrently so that the cumulative effect of various proposals can be ascertained. In considering proposed amendments to the Comprehensive Plan, proposals will be evaluated for the extent to which they support the public interest, their intent and consistency with the Comprehensive Plan, the need for particular land uses, and the availability of land for specific uses. Amendments to the plan are reviewed by the Planning Commission, which makes recommendations to the City Council.

Implementation is monitored through an annual review process during which the success of implementation is evaluated, changes to implementation strategies are developed as necessary, and proposed amendments to the plan are reviewed and potentially adopted. The annual update cycle for addressing amendments to this plan ordinarily will coincide with the City's budget process in the fall of each year. More frequent amendments may be made only under emergency conditions. Any emergency amendment shall be made in addition to, and shall not count as, the annual review and amendment process.

Procedures for amending the plan will be in accord with Fircrest Municipal Code as it may be revised to conform to the goals and policies of this plan. Amendments and procedures will be consistent with the requirements of the GMA, *VISION 2040*, CPP, and applicable environmental laws.

## **EMERGENCY AMENDMENT TYPES AND PROCEDURES**

There are two types of emergency amendments, *disaster response amendment* and *noncompliance response amendment*. Emergency amendments are in addition to, and do not replace, the annual review and amendment process.

### **Disaster Response Amendment**

When a disaster as defined in an adopted disaster recovery plan occurs, the Comprehensive Plan may be temporarily amended to enable the City to conduct disaster management and recovery procedures specified in the adopted disaster recovery plan. If a disaster recovery plan has not been adopted when a disaster occurs or if the plan's provisions are inadequate to respond to the disaster appropriately, procedures may be specified through a resolution adopted by the City Council.

### **Noncompliance Response Amendment**

The City Manager may request by staff report that the Planning Commission and City Council consider an emergency amendment if noncompliance of the Comprehensive Plan with the GMA, *VISION 2040*, or CPP occurs. This request may result from a noncompliance issue that was not detected at the time of adoption of the Comprehensive Plan and subsequent amendments, or it may be a result of amendments to the GMA, CPP, or *VISION 2040*. Under most circumstances, the annual

review and amendment process will be sufficient to handle these situations. However, the City Manager may determine that the need for an amendment is urgent. The City Manager must explicitly identify the noncompliance issue, amendment contents, and reason for urgency in the staff report.

### **Emergency Amendment Procedures**

An emergency Comprehensive Plan amendment procedure shall be incorporated into Fircrest Municipal Code. This procedure shall enable a timely response to disasters and urgent noncompliance issues and shall, as much as possible, allow for public input to the emergency amendment process. Emergency amendments shall be considered temporary and shall be revoked after the urgency of the emergency situation declines. Emergency amendment procedures shall identify the conditions under which emergency amendments will be revoked. Authorities for initiating, adopting, and revoking emergency amendments shall be identified in the emergency amendment procedure. If appropriate, temporary emergency amendments may be proposed as standard amendments during the next annual review process.

## **CONSISTENCY AND COORDINATION**

The GMA requires that each comprehensive plan be consistent and coordinated with comprehensive plans adopted by neighboring jurisdictions. To ensure this consistency and coordination, Fircrest:

- Drafted goals, policies, and land use designations consistent with the goals and policies of the GMA;
- Consulted the regional growth strategy documented in *VISION 2040*; and
- Ratified the Pierce County CPP on July 28, 1992 and subsequent amendments thereto, and considered the policies of the CPPs during the development of, and updates to, this plan

Conformance to the GMA, CPPs, and *VISION 2040* facilitates the consistency and coordination of Fircrest's Comprehensive Plan with plans of other jurisdictions. In addition, Fircrest's plan identifies those areas for which interlocal planning and cooperation are desirable or essential during plan implementation. Fircrest has laid the foundation for interlocal planning within the context of the GMA through its participation in the Pierce County Growth Management Coordinating Committee (GMCC), a staff level committee that provides technical assistance to the Pierce County Regional Council (PCRC).

## CHAPTER 2

# COMMUNITY CHARACTER





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## INTRODUCTION

Thirty years after the establishment of the Northern Pacific transcontinental railroad terminus in Tacoma in 1873, and following the depression associated with the Panic of 1893, optimism for future development within the Tacoma area was revived. A land speculator named Major Edward J. Bowes (of Major Bowes' Original Amateur Hour fame) and his partner W.A. Irwin of California saw tremendous opportunities for growth in Tacoma. After buying property, then called Regents Park, Bowes and Irwin hired Civil Engineer M.R. (Roy) Thompson to design a subdivision layout and plat the land.

Many of the ideas credited to Thompson in the design of what are now the original plats for Fircrest, Regents Park I and II, were likely fostered by Fredrick Law Olmsted. The similarities between Thompson's plan for Regents Park and the Olmsted plan of 1873 for downtown Tacoma were striking. The concept of open space and abundant park lands was Olmsted's, as were his ideas for taking full advantage of topography in designing streets and other improvements. According to James Osness in his book "Of Lions and Dreams, of Men and Realities", Regents Park was declared to be one of the earliest developments in the United States to eschew straight streets and rectangular blocks, in favor of curved streets and correspondingly aesthetically designed blocks.

The community has since grown well beyond its roots, and today, Fircrest is planning for additional growth in the future that will continue to shape the character of the community. As growth occurs, there are characteristics that residents would like to retain, such as Fircrest's green character; a safe, friendly and sustainable community; and some physical remnants of the past as reminders of its early history.

The Community Character Element provides a design framework for new development and redevelopment and addresses natural features and historic character preservation. The Element is meant to address the goals of retaining Fircrest's distinct character and creating gathering places and cultural opportunities for people of diverse backgrounds. It addresses Fircrest's desire to maintain and enhance a successful business climate and to foster innovative thinking. It addresses the vision of respect for the natural environment. It is also intended to help carry out the vision of keeping Fircrest a safe, healthy, friendly and attractive city in the future.

This Element is complementary to other elements of the Comprehensive Plan where specific aspects of community character are addressed. For example, Fircrest's locations for various uses are addressed primarily in the Land Use Element. The Community Character Element focuses more closely on design goals and historic resource opportunities and challenges for the community over a 20-year planning horizon. It considers the following aspects of Community Character:

- People and Public Places
- Events and Community Building
- View Corridors, Entrances and Landmarks
- Buildings and Site Design
- Street and Pathway Linkages
- Urban Forest Management
- Streetscape Landscaping
- Residential Character
- Historic Resources
- Community Life

## **COMMUNITY CHARACTER VISION**

### ***Looking ahead 20 years...***

#### ***Fircrest has maintained its distinctive character.***

*The quality design of new development is a reflection of the value Fircrest's community members place on the community's appearance. Care has been taken to create distinctive streets and pathways and to enhance the comfort, safety and usability of public places. Public view corridors and entryways have been preserved and enhanced. The city's historic roots are still apparent through preservation of special sites, structures and buildings. Interpretive signage has also been used to enhance the community's sense of its heritage.*

#### ***Community gathering places are found throughout the city.***

*Spaces for parks have been acquired and improved by the City, and plazas have been incorporated into new developments. Both public and private investment into place-making creates and maintains spaces where informal social gatherings and community building occur. The City and private partners continue to sponsor a wide variety of community events in an array of public places. Fircrest Park provides an especially unique venue for such events and is recognized for its historical significance to the community. Community members also enjoy community gardens, other parks and plazas with walkable and bikeable neighborhoods that support healthy lifestyles and a sustainable future.*

#### ***Care has been given to preserve elements of the natural environment.***

*Landscaping regulations have ensured preservation of special natural areas and significant trees that help define the character of the city. New landscaping has incorporated native plants and low-impact development design elements. Areas of open space and forested groves adjoining Leach Creek, the Tacoma Holding Basin, Wainwright and Whittier schools, and in other locations have been preserved where possible through public/private collaboration. Through creative design, such as in combination with neighborhood entryways, public and private projects have incorporated natural features and enhanced natural systems. Fircrest continues to promote the value of the natural environment by inventorying and monitoring the elements that define its green character, including forested parks and open space.*

## GOALS AND POLICIES

This Element contains the community character goals and policies for the City of Fircrest. The following goals represent the general direction of the City related to community character, while the policies provide more detail about the steps needed to meet the intent of each goal. Discussions provide background information, may offer typical examples, and clarify intent.

### **PEOPLE AND PUBLIC PLACES**

Community cohesiveness develops in many ways. It can come from a shared vision for the community. It can be developed through the use of public places for interaction. Successful public places have the following qualities: accessibility, comfort or image, activity, a welcoming feeling and sociability. Accessibility means having good links from surrounding areas, by foot, bike, transit or other means. It also means visual accessibility. The comfort and image come from several characteristics, including a perception of safety, cleanliness and availability of seating, both formal and informal. Identifying features, such as a fountain, artwork or a unique building, may also enhance image. Activity may be a natural outcome from a collection of uses or may be programmed through music presentations, performing arts or other endeavors.

People typically feel welcome at public places that provide basic features, such as lighting, shelter and play areas for children, along with spaces for meetings or other gatherings. Sociability is when a space becomes a place sensitive to diverse cultural context for people to go or to meet, usually because it has elements of the first four qualities.

### **GOAL CC1**

**Facilitate the success of public places that foster community cohesiveness by ensuring well-designed spaces that support activity and community interaction.**

#### **Policy CC1.1**

Continue to provide community gathering places in recreation facilities and park sites throughout the city and encourage development of new community gathering places, especially in underserved areas of the community.

**Discussion:** Fircrest Park, Whittier Park, the Gene Goodwin Tot Lot and other city parks represent examples of publicly-owned and managed community gathering places. Future redevelopment of Fircrest's neighborhood commercial and commercial mixed use areas, especially those located on Regents Boulevard or within the 19th Street and Mildred Street corridors, should explore opportunities for establishing new gathering places.

#### **Policy CC1.2**

Preserve, develop and enhance informal community gathering places, such as plazas, mixed use centers that include local cafes and coffee shops with comfortable outdoor seating, and spaces within parks. This can be accomplished by:

- Requiring/providing seating opportunities with multi-seasonal amenities, such as canopies or other cover from the elements and heating during periods of cooler temperatures;
- Encouraging installation of art or water features;
- Installing outdoor plantings and other landscape features
- Providing visual access to sites;
- Providing for active uses in the space; and
- Promoting partnerships and implementing incentives where appropriate to create public places, such as plazas in combination with outdoor cafes.

**Discussion:** Future planning, especially for areas located on Regents Boulevard or within the 19th Street and Mildred Street corridors, should explore opportunities for establishing new informal gathering places. Adoption of development standards and incentives in support of such gathering places should be considered.

### **Policy CC1.3**

Ensure that public places are designed and managed to encourage high levels of activity by including:

- Multiple entrances;
- Flexible spaces;
- Linear urban parks;
- Focal points that create activity throughout the space;
- A signature attraction that provides a compelling identity;
- Multi-seasonal attractions; and
- Active management of space and activities.

### **Policy CC1.4**

Design and build Fircrest's public buildings and indoor/outdoor facilities to enhance their function as community gathering places.

**Discussion:** The Recreation Center at Fircrest Park is an example of a public facility designed to be a community gathering place. Redevelopment or replacement of this structure in the future should ensure its continuing function for this purpose.

### **Policy CC1.5**

Incorporate and provide opportunities for art in and around public buildings and facilities. Encourage additional opportunities throughout the city for art as design elements or features of new development, as well as placement of significant art.

**Discussion:** The Pacific Northwest has an international reputation for displaying works of art in public settings. The City can contribute to this regional legacy by incorporating art in public projects and encouraging developers to incorporate art into their projects. Many items in the public environment – lighting, railings, walls, benches, etc. can be made more visually interesting through the participation of artists.

## **EVENTS AND COMMUNITY BUILDING**

Community cohesiveness can also be nurtured by community events. Community events provide an opportunity to help foster people's interest in getting to know the diverse cultures of the community and their neighbors and form friendships and collaborative networks. These events can also enhance awareness of diversity, cultural traditions, and Fircrest's heritage throughout the community. By providing or supporting community events, such as Fircrest Fun Days, the community Tree Lighting Ceremony, Derby Days and Car Show, as well as a variety of other public activities, the City serves as a conduit supporting these interactions and possible community building outcomes that can support a myriad of other objectives from disaster preparedness to economic vitality.

### **GOAL CC2**

**Promote activities and events that enliven public spaces, build community, and enrich the lives of Fircrest citizens.**

#### **Policy CC2.1**

Provide links to public places to encourage their use through such means as:

- Providing safe and convenient pedestrian walkways;
- Providing bikeways;
- Developing nearby transit stops and other transit-supportive facilities; and
- Designing for visual access to and from the site.

**Discussion:** The redevelopment of arterials into complete streets will support access to public spaces.

#### **Policy CC2.2**

Encourage and support a wide variety of community festivals or events, such as Fircrest Fun Days, the community Tree Lighting Ceremony, and Derby Days, reflecting the diversity, heritage and cultural traditions of the Fircrest community.

#### **Policy CC2.3**

Facilitate the continued development and support of a diverse set of inter-generational recreational and cultural programs and organizations that celebrate Fircrest's heritage and cultural diversity, such as visual and performing arts, and an active parks and recreation program.

#### **Policy CC2.4**

Facilitate the development of a farmers' market, community gardens and school gardens that increase residents' access to fresh produce and other healthy food, support local and regional agriculture, and increase community interaction.

## **ENTRANCES AND LANDMARKS**

People orient themselves by remembering certain features that include unique public views, defined entries and landmarks. These features also can set apart one community

from another and are part of what defines the unique character of a place. Preserving key features and creating new ones can help define Fircrest and its neighborhoods.

## **GOAL CC3**

**Preserve and enhance key features and create new ones that can help define Fircrest and its neighborhoods.**

### **Policy CC3.1**

Identify and establish distinctive gateways or entryways into the city, support neighborhood efforts to identify and maintain unique neighborhood entryways, and emphasize these locations with design elements, such as landscaping, signage, art or monuments.

**Discussion:** Key entry points to the community are the intersections of Regents Boulevard and Orchard Street, Regents Boulevard and Mildred Street, Emerson Street and Orchard Street, Emerson Street and 67<sup>th</sup> Avenue West, 19<sup>th</sup> Street and Mildred Street, 19<sup>th</sup> Street and Alameda Avenue, and 19<sup>th</sup> Street and Orchard. Continued development and enhancement of gateway features at these locations will help to define the sense of arrival for those entering Fircrest.

### **Policy CC3.2**

Encourage schools, religious facilities and other public or semi-public buildings to locate and design unique facilities to serve as community landmarks and to foster a sense of place.

### **Policy CC3.3**

Prohibit new billboards and other large signs, and use design review for new signage to avoid visual clutter and ensure design standards are met.

### **Policy CC3.4**

Encourage and require, when practicable, underground installation of utility distribution lines.

**Discussion:** Numerous above-ground utility lines and cables lining streets produce a cluttered effect and detract from territorial views of the community -- as well as more focused views of buildings, landscaping and open space areas. Use of underground lines should be required, when practicable, in accordance with rate, tariffs, and franchise agreements and/or regulations applicable to the serving utility. The City should work with utility providers, citizens and developers to find ways of funding the undergrounding of existing utilities.

## ***BUILDINGS AND SITE DESIGN***

There is a high expectation for quality design in Fircrest, and design standards and guidelines provide local guidance. Commercial, multifamily, mixed use, civic, and traditional residential design projects receive a higher level of scrutiny than detached single-family homes. Generally, these projects are reviewed at an administrative level using the City's adopted design standards and guidelines, which may apply to specific locations or to types of uses.

## **GOAL CC4**

**Adopt and implement design standards and guidelines that will achieve design excellence, desired urban form, and community character goals consistent with citizens' preferred design parameters.**

### **Policy CC4.1**

Adopt new design standards and guidelines that will guide new development and redevelopment within Neighborhood Commercial areas on Regents Boulevard, Commercial Mixed Use areas within the Mildred and 19<sup>th</sup> Street corridors, and the City's multifamily areas in order to achieve unique, high quality built environments in each area. Consider the introduction of additional form-based zoning within the Neighborhood Commercial and Commercial Mixed Use areas.

**Discussion:** The City has previously adopted generalized design standards and guidelines that apply to commercial and other types of development. These design standards and guidelines are not fully consistent with the community's community character goals nor will they achieve design excellence or the preferred urban form. The City anticipates modifying these provisions to achieve planning and design goals and objectives for future neighborhood commercial, commercial mixed use, and multifamily development.

### **Policy CC4.2**

Apply design standards and guidelines through an administrative design review process to help achieve or accomplish the following:

- A human-scale character that creates a pleasant walking environment for all ages and abilities. Buildings should provide "eyes-on-the-street";
- Elements of design, proportion, rhythm and massing that are desirable and appropriate for proposed structures and the site;
- Places and structures in the city that reflect the uniqueness of the community and provide meanings to its residents;
- Building scale and orientation that are appropriate to the site;
- The use of high-quality and durable materials, as well as innovative building techniques and designs;
- The use of environmentally friendly design and building techniques, such as LEED, for the construction or rehabilitation of structures;
- Minimization of negative impacts, such as glare or unsightly views of parking;
- Incorporation of historic features whenever possible; and
- A design that fits with the context of the site, one that is sensitive to its surroundings and reflective of natural features and existing character.

### **Policy CC4.3**

Design and build Fircrest's civic buildings in a superior way and with high-quality materials to serve as innovative and sustainable models to the community.

### **Policy CC4.4**

Ensure safe environments by strongly encouraging the use of building and site design techniques consistent with CPTED guidelines to:



- Distinguish between publicly accessible open space and private open space;
- Provide vandal-resistant construction;
- Provide opportunities for residents and workers to view spaces and observe activities nearby; and
- Reduce or eliminate “unclaimed” areas, such as unmaintained easements between fence lines and street or trail right-of-way.

**Discussion:** The National Crime Prevention Institute endorses a set of guidelines called Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED). These guidelines illustrate how design can affect the safety of a site or building. Clearly distinguishing between public and private spaces makes it easier to identify intruders. The ability to easily observe activities helps parents and caregivers keep sight of children and helps neighbors or workers identify activities that should not be occurring. Areas with little or no use are typically not cared for and can offer areas for unwanted activities.

#### **Policy CC4.5**

Foster the natural environment and maintain and enhance the green character of the city, while integrating healthy built environments through techniques such as:

- Encouraging design that minimizes impact on natural systems;
- Using innovations in public projects that improve natural systems;
- Preserving key areas of open space; and
- Requiring the preservation, maintenance and installation of new street trees and other vegetation in accordance with the City’s design standards and guidelines, and landscaping requirements.

**Discussion:** Members of the Fircrest community have expressed that stewardship of the natural environment is important to them. Although Fircrest continues to urbanize, many features of the natural environment can be preserved, enhanced and restored. Design of landscaping and the built environment can reduce the impacts to natural systems. At the same time, well-thought-out landscape design can enhance a site and create unique character.

#### **Policy CC4.6**

Encourage design and installation of landscaping that:

- Creates character and a sense of place;
- Retains and enhances existing green character;
- Preserves and utilizes native trees and plants;
- Enhances water and air quality;
- Minimizes water consumption;
- Provides aesthetic value;
- Creates spaces for recreation;
- Unifies site design;
- Softens or disguises less aesthetically pleasing features of a site; and
- Provides buffers for transitions between uses or helps protect natural features.



## **STREET AND PATHWAY LINKAGES**

Streets can be more than just a means of getting from one point to another. They can define how the city is viewed as one passes through it and create a sense of unique character. Elements of street design, such as width, provisions for transit or bikes, pavement treatments, and street-side vegetation, affect the quality of a traveler's trip and the sense of place. These design elements also can affect the behavior of motorists, such as their speed, their decisions to yield or take the right-of-way, and the degree of attention that is paid to pedestrians, bicycles and other vehicles.

Linear urban parks that incorporate pathways and complement the street system can create a park-like setting for the community.

### **GOAL CC5**

**Pay special attention to street design in order to create a sense of unique character that distinguishes Fircrest from neighboring communities.**

#### **Policy CC5.1**

Promote the conversion of arterial streets originally designed primarily to move motor vehicles quickly to *complete streets* that support safe and convenient access for all users within uniquely designed corridors that are visually differentiated from arterial streets in adjacent cities. Coordinate with Tacoma and University Place in redesigning arterials shared with Fircrest when opportunities arise for *complete street* conversions.

**Discussion:** The City's arterials should be redeveloped to enable pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and transit riders of all ages and abilities to safely move along and across these *complete streets*. The design for these streets should be unique and respond to its community context. *Complete streets* in Fircrest may include a mix of design elements including sidewalks, bike lanes, special bus lanes, comfortable and accessible public transportation stops, frequent and safe crossing opportunities, median islands, accessible pedestrian signals, curb extensions, narrower travel lanes, and other traffic calming elements.

#### **Policy CC5.2**

Ensure that *complete street* designs result in active urban streets, accessible public spaces, and safe and convenient linkages for all users, especially within the Mildred Street and 19<sup>th</sup> Street corridors and along Regents Boulevard.

**Discussion:** *Complete streets* will help create a more walkable community leading to increased street life, community vibrancy, and the development and preservation of a unique community character.

#### **Policy CC5.3**

Use distinctive design elements to create unique identities for Neighborhood Commercial and Commercial Mixed Use areas, such as:

- Specially designed landscape;
- Unique crosswalk treatments and frequent crosswalks;
- Sidewalk design that allows and encourages activities such as outdoor café service;
- Character-defining materials and accessories, such as seating and wayfinding elements;
- Art elements; and
- Pedestrian-scale lighting.

**Discussion:** The Mildred Street and 19<sup>th</sup> Street corridors and Regents Boulevard are unique geographic areas. The introduction of distinctive design elements to each area can be used to foster unique neighborhood character.

#### **Policy CC5.4**

Design and create trails, urban linear parks, sidewalks, bikeways and paths to increase physical activity and connectivity for people by providing safe, direct or convenient links between the following:

- Residential neighborhoods;
- Schools;
- Parks, open spaces, greenbelts and recreation facilities;
- Employment centers;
- Shopping and service destinations; and
- Civic buildings and spaces.

### ***URBAN FOREST MANAGEMENT***

An urban forest refers to the natural and planted vegetation in an urban area -- both public and private. A community's urban forest is comprised not just of trees and other vegetation in parks but also trees and other landscaping that line the roadways and vegetation on private property. A well-managed, healthy urban forest:

- Provides opportunities to develop neighborhood and community partnerships that benefit the participants physically, sociologically and psychologically;
- Can lessen the impacts of drought, tree diseases, insect pests, construction, storm damage and stormwater runoff;
- Benefits the entire community economically, aesthetically, and ecologically;
- Supports the conservation, protection and enhancement of Fircrest's watershed and the Puget Sound, and promotes the health of fish habitat; and
- Has a positive effect on surrounding businesses and residences and people's sense of well-being.

Trees and other vegetation within the urban forest provide a unique green infrastructure that if maintained and cared for will continue to give back to the community. Trees also have great potential to shape the character of a community. A worthwhile challenge is to find ways to increase the tree canopy and enhance the health, properly maintain and diversify the urban forest while achieving, over time, the community character desired by Fircrest citizens.

**GOAL CC6**

**Promote the planning, management and preservation of a safe and healthy urban forest that reflects community character goals by establishing effective programs, practices, landscaping standards, and guidelines.**

**Policy CC6.1**

Require landscaping with a drought-tolerant native plant component (trees, shrubs and groundcovers) to be installed when significant development activities take place.

**Discussion:** Generally, landscaping requirements should apply to new construction and substantial alterations of existing structures, parking areas, streets and sidewalks. The use of native, drought-tolerant plants within landscaping can provide for an attractive urban setting; support the urban citywide tree canopy and wildlife; buffer the visual impacts of development; help reduce storm water runoff; and, contribute to the planting, maintenance, and preservation of a stable and sustainable urban forest.

**Policy CC6.2**

Landscaping should comply with applicable City standards and guidelines for plant retention, selection, installation and maintenance. These standards are intended to maintain existing trees when practicable, better ensure that plants survive and thrive, minimize conflicts with infrastructure, and in some cases provide a substantial visual screen or buffer.

**Discussion:** The City should periodically review the effectiveness of its landscaping and tree retention requirements and amend them as necessary to ensure they will achieve desired urban forest goals and objectives.

***STREETSCAPE LANDSCAPING***

Street trees and other landscaping treatments are essential for creating beauty and improving the quality of life within neighborhood commercial and commercial mixed use centers, residential neighborhood settings and other areas of a community. Benefits include: providing shade and cooling effects; providing a sense of enclosure; providing definition and scale to the street; protection from wind; separation from vehicular traffic; and reducing airborne dust and pollutants.

Many opportunities exist for street tree planting and other landscaping treatments in existing neighborhoods and areas undergoing redevelopment in Fircrest. The most favorable locations in terms of making a positive visual and functional impact are within sidewalks and planting strips to enhance the streetscape environment -- and within traffic medians to reinforce traffic calming measures.

**GOAL CC7**

**Achieve community character and urban design goals through the preservation, installation and maintenance of street trees and other landscaping in accordance with the City's adopted street tree list, landscape regulations, and applicable design standards and guidelines.**

**Policy CC7.1**

Periodically review and update, as needed, the City's adopted street tree list and associated landscape design standards and guidelines to ensure that they reflect current science as to tree selection, installation and maintenance.

**Discussion:** Proper management of the urban forest requires attention be paid to diversity of plantings, the arrival of insect pests and disease to an area that may affect existing trees and future selections, and the long-term performance of trees previously identified as being suitable for specific applications. As new selections are identified as being good candidates for street tree plantings in Fircrest, or as other trees on the current list are identified as being ones to avoid in the future, the list of approved street trees should be updated to reflect this new information.

***RESIDENTIAL CHARACTER***

Much of the City's projected housing unit and population growth over the next couple of decades may be accommodated through construction of higher density housing in commercial mixed use areas and redevelopment of existing multifamily neighborhoods. Additional growth will occur in the form of infill development in established single-family residential neighborhoods.

Today, factors such as an aging population, changes in family size and composition, and shifting generational preferences for different housing types and neighborhood designs and functions are contributing to changes in the social and economic factors relating to housing choices. These factors have the potential to influence greatly the character of the community. As such, it is important that the City guide future residential development in a manner that will be compatible with surrounding areas and build upon the positive aspects and character of the neighborhood.

**GOAL CC8**

**Support residential infill development and redevelopment that responds to local preference and demand for innovative, high quality housing, that is sensitive to surrounding residential areas, and that supports community character goals and objectives.**

**Policy CC8.1**

Periodically review and update design standards and guidelines and other zoning provisions that apply to commercial-residential mixed use development, multifamily redevelopment, and single-family infill housing to assess their effectiveness in

accomplishing design objectives and community character goals, and to assess the extent to which they successfully respond to neighborhood compatibility issues and concerns.

**Discussion:** In response to changing needs and preferences for housing in the community and the likely increase in the type and number of housing units being constructed within existing neighborhoods, the City should adopt design standards and guidelines that apply to new cottage housing, small lot and multi-family development to better ensure design excellence and neighborhood compatibility. In addition, the City should refine existing design standards and guidelines to provide more beneficial and effective design direction for commercial mixed use development that may be constructed along the Mildred Street and 19<sup>th</sup> Street corridors.

## ***HISTORIC RESOURCES***

Historic resources offer a way to connect with the city's past and provide a sense of continuity and permanence. Those resources represent development patterns and places associated with Fircrest's notable persons and community events. The historic fabric, together with unique qualities of new development patterns, defines the character of a community. It is essential to preserve some historic resources to maintain the character of Fircrest and to continue to honor its past. Adaptive reuse of historic structures also helps reduce the need to obtain additional resources for new building construction.

Fircrest has a rich history but very few "surviving" historic structures and identified cultural and archaeological sites. Nonetheless, the community takes pride in its shared heritage and history. The City of Fircrest has maintained photographs and other historic records that date back to the beginnings of the community in 1907, well before its incorporation in 1925. Public projects can help foster this connection and build community awareness by incorporating elements of Fircrest's history into design features.

## **GOAL CC9**

**Support the preservation and active use of cultural and historic resources to enhance Fircrest's quality of life, economic vibrancy and environmental stewardship.**

### **Policy CC9.1**

Encourage preservation, restoration, and appropriate adaptive reuse of historic properties to serve as tangible reminders of the area's history and cultural roots.

### **Policy CC9.2**

Incorporate features, such as interpretive signage and other elements reflecting original historic designs into park projects, transportation projects and buildings on historic sites, when feasible, as a means of commemorating past events, persons of note and city history.

**Policy CC9.3**

Establish an ongoing process of identification, documentation, and evaluation of historic properties. Maintain and update the historic property inventory as new information arises to guide planning and decision making, as well as to provide reference and research material for use by the community.

**Discussion:** Identification of historic properties and archaeological sites is an essential step towards preservation. This includes evaluation of the historic and cultural significance of a property and the extent to which it has maintained its integrity. Property evaluation forms, deed documents, news articles and other information may all be used to evaluate a property. Knowing the history and significance of properties can foster stewardship by owners and the public.

**Policy CC9.4**

Encourage nomination of historic resources that appear to meet Historic Landmark criteria by individuals, community groups and public officials.

**Discussion:** A Historic Landmark designation is the most common method to identify which historic and cultural resources to protect. Designation of a property can occur at four levels: local, county, state or national. Pierce County, the State of Washington and the United States -- through the United States National Park Service (Secretary of the Interior) -- all maintain registers of Historic Landmarks. The City of Fircrest has not established a local historic landmark register.

**Policy CC9.5**

Emphasize the preservation of historic properties through methods such as adaptive reuse for promoting economic development and /or public use.

**Discussion:** Without special code provisions for historic or cultural sites, adaptive reuse (placing new uses in a building once intended for another use) or even modification of a building to make it more functional or economically competitive may trigger a requirement to bring the structure up to existing codes. The economics of bringing older construction types up to modern ones can be prohibitive to the point that the owners often choose not to make alterations. The resulting effect may be that owners allow the building to deteriorate because of its inability to draw sufficient income to cover adequate maintenance. Alternatively, the property owner may be inclined to tear down and replace the structure.

**Policy CC9.6**

Encourage restoration and maintenance of historic properties through code flexibility, fee reductions, and other regulatory and financial incentives.

**Discussion:** Historic resources reflect a use of certain materials, an architectural style, or an attention to detail. Improper alterations or additions can eliminate the very reason that the structure gave character to the area. Incentives actively encourage both preservation of existing structures and restoration of structures to more closely resemble the original style and setting.

**Policy CC9.7**

Protect Historic Landmarks from demolition or inappropriate modification.

**Policy CC9.8**

Protect Historic Landmarks and significant archaeological resources from the adverse impacts of development.

**Policy CC9.9**

Mitigate adverse impacts to the following by methods such as documentation of the original site or structure, interpretive signage, or other appropriate techniques:

- Landmark or archaeological sites; and
- Properties proposed to be demolished or significantly altered that are eligible for landmark designation, or are of sufficient age and meet a portion of the other criteria for landmark designation.

**Discussion:** There may be instances where alteration or demolition of a Historic Landmark is reasonable or necessary. In these cases it is valuable for later researchers to have records of the modifications or past use. New land uses and development can have adverse effects on historic resources. Sensitive design of new development can allow new growth, while retaining community character.

**Policy CC9.10**

Share survey and inventory information with Pierce County, the State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, federal agencies, the public, historical societies, museums and other appropriate entities. Use technical assistance from other agencies as appropriate.

**Policy CC9.11**

Support efforts by residents, property owners, cultural organizations, public agencies and school districts to support the development of a more active historic preservation program, including:

- Brochures and plaques;
- Online information; and
- Educational efforts to foster public awareness of Fircrest's history.

**Discussion:** Survey and evaluation work is time intensive. It is not efficient to duplicate such efforts, and opportunities such as grants to foster preservation should be explored. There are financial or other limits to maintaining or contracting personnel with technical knowledge of preservation. It is important to maintain some resources to preserve the historic character of Fircrest and, through cooperation knowledge can be preserved and shared.

**COMMUNITY LIFE**

Community character can be influenced over time by how well a community supports its residents – in terms of supporting educational opportunities, the provision of care facilities, public participation, and sensitive pricing of fees and charges for services offered to those who may have limited physical, mental, or financial abilities.

**Goal CC10**

**Fircrest shall encourage programs and practices that foster a sense of community and enrich citizens' lives.**

**Policy CC10.1**

The City should cooperate with Tacoma and University Place School Districts and Tacoma Community College to ensure that Fircrest residents are provided high quality, diverse, and satisfying educational opportunities. Continuing education programs for adults should be encouraged as well as educational programs for college students and children.

**Policy CC10.2**

To ensure locally focused essential services are available for working householders, Fircrest should encourage the establishment of high quality child and adult care facilities. To increase safety of children attending after school care, childcare facilities offering after school care shall be most encouraged in the vicinity of schools.

**Policy CC10.3**

City programs should encourage and facilitate the sharing of the talents, skills, and abilities of Fircrest's citizens with other members of the Fircrest community.

**Policy CC10.4**

The City should encourage new residents to participate in Fircrest's community life and to fully integrate with the community.

**Policy CC10.5**

The special requirements of small children, the elderly, disabled persons, and other potentially disadvantaged persons should be considered when making decisions concerning utility fees and rates, licensing fees, park and recreation programs and fees, facility projects, City programs, development projects, and other matters that may affect the quality of life in Fircrest for those who may have limited physical, mental, or financial ability.



## ***CHAPTER 3***

# ***LAND USE ELEMENT***





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## INTRODUCTION

The Land Use Element is designed to help Fircrest achieve its vision for a city that has gracefully accommodated growth and change, while ensuring that the community's high quality of life, cherished natural features, distinct places and character are retained. The Land Use Element provides the basis for planning for anticipated growth, including needs for transportation, parks and open space, and other public facilities and services to serve future growth. The pattern of uses that make up Fircrest helps support the community's long-term vision and goals by describing locations where development is appropriate and what the desired intensity and general character should be. The Land Use Element is intended to ensure the land use pattern in Fircrest meets the following Fircrest objectives:

- Takes into account the land's characteristics and directs development away from environmentally sensitive areas and important natural resources;
- Provides for attractive, affordable, high-quality and stable residential neighborhoods that include a variety of housing choices;
- Supports a healthy community by encouraging physical activity, promoting social and mental wellness, and maintaining and enhancing its reputation as a destination for recreation, and special community events and festivals;
- Encourages redevelopment of properties that are underutilized or being used in a way that is inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan designation;
- Focuses and promotes employment growth and retail, office and housing development along the Mildred and 19<sup>th</sup> Street corridors;
- Enhances the economic vibrancy of historic neighborhood-serving commercial areas centered on Regents Boulevard;
- Supports creation and enhancement of community gathering places, including public parks and recreation facilities that accommodate special events, and privately developed venues.
- Provides opportunities to meet daily shopping or service needs close to residences and work places;
- Maintains and enhances an extensive system of parks, trails and open space that meets local residents' needs; and
- Advances best management practices, multimodal travel, a high-quality natural environment, and sustainable development.

### ***ORGANIZATION OF THE LAND USE ELEMENT***

The Land Use Element is divided into ten sections. The Introduction section summarizes the intent of the Element and its organization. The second and third sections describe the state and regional planning contexts, respectively. The fourth section provides a local planning context and articulates a land use vision statement for a 20-year planning horizon. The fifth section lists goals and policies that shape how the Fircrest community lives on the land and how Fircrest's citizens and government officials will manage the processes of making land use decisions. The goals and policies also respond to the requirements, goals, and planning principles of the GMA

while providing for the protection and enhancement of Fircrest's community character. The sixth section of the Element identifies and defines land use designations and contains required information such as population density and building intensity. Information concerning lands useful for public purposes is provided in the seventh section. The eighth section summarizes mandated population, housing unit and employment targets and the provisions of the buildable lands program that are used to demonstrate Comprehensive Plan consistency with these targets. Information concerning critical areas and natural resource lands is covered in the ninth section. The final section examines planned land use in adjacent jurisdictions to ensure consistency.

## **STATE PLANNING CONTEXT**

### ***GROWTH MANAGEMENT ACT***

The Washington State Growth Management Act identifies that for cities such as Fircrest that are required to plan under RCW 36.70A.070, a comprehensive plan must include a map or maps, and descriptive text covering objectives, principles, and standards used to develop the comprehensive plan. The plan shall be an internally consistent document and all elements shall be consistent with the future land use map. Each comprehensive plan shall include:

"A land use element designating the proposed general distribution and general location and extent of the uses of land, where appropriate, for agriculture, timber production, housing, commerce, industry, recreation, open spaces, public utilities, public facilities, and other land uses. The land use element shall include population densities, building intensities, and estimates of future population growth. The land use element shall provide for protection of the quality and quantity of ground water used for public water supplies. Where applicable, the land use element shall review drainage, flooding, and storm water runoff in the area and nearby jurisdictions and provide guidance for corrective actions to mitigate or cleanse those discharges that pollute waters of the state, including Puget Sound or waters entering Puget Sound."

## **REGIONAL PLANNING CONTEXT**

### ***VISION 2040 MULTICOUNTY PLANNING POLICIES (MPPs)***

Under the Growth Management Act, multicounty planning policies provide a common region-wide framework for countywide and local planning in the central Puget Sound region, particularly in the area of transportation planning and its relationship to land use. The unified structure established by the MPPs has both practical and substantive effects on the development and implementation of comprehensive plans, including land use elements.

The MPPs provide guidance for implementing Puget Sound Regional Council's *VISION 2040* Regional Growth Strategy. This strategy is a preferred pattern for accommodating

a significant share of the region's residential and employment growth within a number of regional centers. It is designed to minimize environmental impacts, support economic prosperity, improve mobility, and make efficient use of existing infrastructure. The strategy promotes infill and redevelopment within urban areas to create more compact, walkable, and transit-friendly communities.

### ***PIERCE COUNTY COUNTYWIDE PLANNING POLICIES (CPPs)***

The Pierce County Countywide Planning Policies is a written policy statement that establishes a countywide framework from which county and municipal comprehensive plans are developed and adopted. The framework is intended to ensure that municipal and county comprehensive plans are consistent.

The CPPs are intended to provide the guiding goals, objectives, policies and strategies for the subsequent adoption of comprehensive plans. CPPs that offer guidance for development of the Land Use Element include ones that address *Buildable Lands, Community and Urban Design, Economic Development and Employment, Health and Well-Being, Urban Growth Areas, and Promotion of Contiguous and Orderly Development and Provision of Urban Services.*

## **LOCAL PLANNING CONTEXT**

### ***LAND USE VISION***

***Looking ahead 20 years...***

In the 2030s, Fircrest is treasured for its character, natural assets, friendly and welcoming atmosphere, diversity, safety and quiet settings.

*Fircrest includes a broad choice of housing types at a range of prices, including affordable homes. During the past 20 years, there has been more variety in the types and prices of newly constructed homes, including more cottages, accessory dwelling units, attached homes, live-work units and other smaller single-family homes. New homes blend with existing homes and the natural environment, retaining valued characteristics of neighborhoods as they continue to evolve. While single-family neighborhoods have remained stable, the number and variety of multifamily housing choices, including units oriented towards seniors, have increased significantly, especially within mixed-use developments along Mildred Street and 19<sup>th</sup> Street. Through careful planning and community involvement, changes and innovation in housing styles and development have been embraced by the community. Residents enjoy a feeling of connection to their neighborhoods and to the community as a whole.*

Fircrest has acted to create and maintain a strong economy and a more diverse employment base.

*Fircrest is the home to many small, medium-size and locally owned businesses and services. Businesses are proud to be partners in the community. The city provides a*

*positive business climate that supports innovation and attracts sustainable development, while retaining existing businesses.*

*Fircrest's commercial Mixed-Use neighborhoods fronting on Mildred and 19<sup>th</sup> Streets are thriving centers of commercial activity supported by a mix of newly constructed housing. Historic neighborhood commercial centers on Regents Boulevard are outstanding places, at a smaller scale, to work, shop, live and recreate. Attractive offices, stores, services and residential developments have contributed to a new level of vibrancy in the community, while retaining a comfortable, connected feel that appeals to residents, business and visitors.*

*During the past 20 years, redevelopment of the Mildred and 19<sup>th</sup> Street corridors has brought retail storefronts closer to the street and improvements to streetscapes to reflect the green character of Fircrest, making the area more hospitable to transit, pedestrians and bicyclists. This portion of Fircrest has also become much more distinct in character, featuring a variety of housing choices, small-scale shopping and services to serve employees and residents, and connections to a network of parks, sidewalks, and transit services.*

Fircrest in the 2030s has enhanced and maintained a very green character.

*Citizens benefit from its livability, which contributes to the general quality of life. An abundance of trees continues to define Fircrest's physical appearance, including those within the Fircrest Golf Club and the forested hillsides above Leach Creek and the Tacoma Holding Basin. A system of interconnected open spaces provides habitat for a variety of wildlife. The city prides itself for its environmental stewardship, including an emphasis on sustainable land use and development patterns, landscaping that requires little watering, and other techniques to protect and conserve the natural environment, while flourishing as a successful small, yet urban, community. Fircrest maintains an extraordinary park, recreation and open space system that serves all age groups and a wide variety of interests.*

## **GOALS AND POLICIES**

This Element contains the land use goals and policies for the City of Fircrest. The following goals establish broad direction for land use, while the policies provide more detail about the outline steps needed to meet the intent of each goal. Goals may be preceded by an initial statement that provides an intent or purpose for the goal. Discussion text may follow policies to provide background information, offer typical examples and help clarify intent.

The land use goals contained in this Comprehensive Plan are:

- Growth management
- Land use compatibility
- Community facilities and services
- Land use designations



- Residential uses
- Commercial uses
- Essential public facilities and other public facilities
- Industrial uses
- Centers of local importance
- Environmental quality
- Water resources
- Development regulations and permit processing
- Interjurisdictional planning

## ***GROWTH MANAGEMENT***

The goals that are the foundation of Washington's Growth Management Act are consistent with the hopes for the community expressed by people who live or work in Fircrest. These goals include encouraging efficient development in urban areas to retain open space, providing a variety of housing types and sustainable economic growth, focusing population and employment growth in cities, ensuring that public facilities and services are adequate, and investing in transportation to support planned land use and to provide travel choices.

*VISION 2040* calls for compact communities and centers with densities that support transit service and walking. It also calls for each city to identify one or more central places for compact, mixed-use development that will reinforce effective use of urban land.

## **GOAL LU1**

**Provide sufficient land area and densities to meet Fircrest's projected needs for housing, employment and public facilities while focusing growth in appropriate locations.**

### **Policy LU1.1**

The city should ensure that development regulations, including the allowed density, uses and site requirements, provide for achievement of Fircrest's preferred land use pattern.

### **Policy LU1.2**

The city should manage growth so that delivery of public facilities and services will occur in a fiscally responsible manner to support development and redevelopment. Allow new development only where adequate public facilities and services can be provided.

### **Policy LU1.3**

The city should encourage development of both public and private lands in Fircrest that provides long-term benefit to the community through the use of techniques, such as green building and green infrastructure.

**Policy LU1.4**

The city should provide an appropriate level of flexibility through development regulations to promote efficient use of buildable land. Balance this flexibility with other community goals and the need for predictability in decision making. Achieve this through measures such as clustering that preserve open space and administrative variances for minor variations.

**Policy LU1.5**

The city should encourage infill development on suitable vacant parcels and redevelopment of underutilized parcels. Ensure that the height, bulk and design of infill and redevelopment projects are compatible with their surroundings.

**Policy LU1.6**

The city should support opportunities for shops, services, recreation and access to healthy food sources within walking or bicycling distance of homes, work places and other gathering places.

**Policy LU1.7**

The city should encourage project designs to encourage access by modes of travel other than driving alone, such as walking, bicycling and transit, and to provide connections to the nonmotorized system.

***LAND USE COMPATIBILITY***

Retaining and enhancing Fircrest's high quality of life and special character is very important to Fircrest citizens. A variety of mechanisms is used to protect and enhance the city's quality of life and character as the community continues to grow. For example, height and bulk regulations are used to ensure that buildings within various areas of the city fit those locations and are compatible in scale with adjacent structures. Intensity or density regulations control the amount of a particular use that is allowed and are used to achieve compatibility between uses, protect environmentally sensitive areas, and ensure that public facilities are not overloaded. Performance standards limit and often prohibit pollution discharges to the environment, stormwater drainage and sanitary sewers to ensure that uses are compatible and safe and that Fircrest's commercial Mixed-Use and neighborhood commercial areas remain desirable places for business.

Fircrest's preferred land use pattern recognizes that many uses can be good neighbors if designed and developed well. Some activities such as noise or fumes may create impacts which adversely affect other uses. Fircrest's overall policy is to minimize adverse impacts on sensitive, lower-intensity uses, such as residences.

**GOAL LU2**

**Ensure that future growth and development protect and enhance the City's quality of life and character, and are compatible with existing community fabric.**

**Policy LU2.1**

The city should refine and maintain development regulations to promote compatibility between uses; retain and enhance desired neighborhood character; ensure adequate light, air and open space; protect and improve environmental quality; and manage potential impacts on public facilities and services. Through these regulations address features, including but not limited to:

- Impervious surface area and lot coverage;
- Building height, bulk, placement and separation;
- Development intensity;
- Access and connections for walking and bicycling; and
- Landscaping.

**Policy LU2.2**

The city should apply design standards and guidelines for residential development to:

- Provide variety in building and site design and visually appealing streetscapes in residential developments of several dwellings or more;
- Minimize significant impacts, such as loss of light or privacy, from large residential infill buildings on adjacent residents;
- Promote compatibility with Fircrest's residential neighborhoods and avoid an appearance of overcrowding when rezones will increase residential development capacity or when density bonuses or flexibility in site standards are utilized; and
- Emphasize features typical of detached single detached dwellings, such as pitched roofs, single points of entry and substantial window trim, as part of residential structures containing two or more dwelling units.

**Policy LU2.3**

The City should promote compatibility between land uses and minimize land use conflicts when there is potential for adverse impacts on lower-intensity or more sensitive uses by:

- Ensuring that uses or structures meet performance standards that limit adverse impacts, such as noise, vibration, smoke and fumes; and
- Creating an effective transition between land uses through building and site design, use of buffers and landscaping, or other techniques.

**COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES**

A well-functioning community depends on the availability of and equitable access to a variety of community facilities and services. Schools, libraries and facilities for enjoying recreation and art are essential to the social and cultural vibrancy of the community. The health of the community depends on the availability of safe drinking water, adequate wastewater collection, sustainable stormwater management, a coordinated public safety system, access to healthy food, and opportunities for active living.

**GOAL LU3**

**Ensure the provision of community facilities and services commensurate with the needs of the community.**

**Policy LU3.1**

The city should encourage the provision of needed facilities that serve the general public, such as facilities for education, libraries, parks, culture and recreation, police and fire, transportation and utilities. Ensure that these facilities are located in a manner that is compatible with the City's preferred land use pattern. When facilities are not provided within the community, provide alternative means of support for their services.

**Policy LU3.2**

The city should incorporate consideration of physical health and well-being into local decision making by locating, designing and operating public facilities and services in a manner that:

- Uses building and development practices that provide long-term benefit to the community;
- Encourages walking and bicycling access to public facilities;
- Supports creation of community gardens on public open space in accessible locations throughout Fircrest; and
- Provides tools such as educational and demonstration programs that help foster a healthy environment, physical activity and well-being, and public safety.

***LAND USE DESIGNATIONS***

The Land Use Designation Map (**Figure LU-1**), also referred to as the Plan Map, graphically displays the City's preferred land use pattern. The different areas on the Plan Map are referred to as land use designations. These designations provide a framework for guiding development consistent with the City's vision, goals, objectives and policies. The Plan Map divides the city into areas where different types and intensities of land uses are allowed. The designations serve to protect areas from incompatible development, maintain property values and support development consistent with each designation. The purpose and intent of each designation, and the general types of uses allowed in each designation, are provided in the section of the Land Use Element following the goals and policies.

**GOAL LU4**

**Ensure that decisions on land use designations and zoning are consistent with the City's vision, goals, objectives and policies as articulated in the Comprehensive Plan and take into account GMA goals regarding urban growth, sprawl, property rights, permits, economic development, and open space and recreation.**

**Policy LU4.1**

The city should consider the following when making decisions on land use designations and zoning:

- Land use and community character objectives;
- Whether development will be directed away from environmentally sensitive areas and other important natural resources and in a way that minimizes impacts on natural resources;
- The adequacy of the existing and planned transportation system and other public facilities and services;
- Projected need and demand for housing types and commercial space;
- The balance between the amount and type of employment in Fircrest and the amount and type of housing in Fircrest;
- Suitability of an area for the proposed designation or zone; and
- Opportunities to separate potentially incompatible uses by topography, buffers, zoning transitions or other techniques.

#### **Policy LU4.2**

The city should apply zone classifications and overlays consistent with the Plan Map land use designations, as shown in **Table LU-1**.

**Table LU-1**

<b>Plan Map Land Use Designation</b>	<b>Consistent Zone Classifications and Overlays</b>
Low Density Residential	Residential-4; Residential-6;
Low Density Residential – Conservation	Residential-4-C
Medium Density Residential	Residential-8
Medium Density Residential – Traditional Community Design	Residential-10-TCD
High Density Residential	Residential-20; Residential-30
Parks, Recreation and Open Space	Park, Recreation and Open Space; Golf Course
Neighborhood Commercial	Neighborhood Commercial; Neighborhood Office
Commercial Mixed-Use	Commercial Mixed-Use
Public and Quasi Public Facilities	All districts

### ***RESIDENTIAL LAND USE***

Fircrest residents treasure their neighborhoods. Each neighborhood has characteristics that are unique and make it special. There are also qualities that many residents throughout Fircrest Place frequently cite as ones they value about their neighborhoods. These qualities include safety, quiet, friendliness, attractiveness and a feeling of connection to their neighborhoods and to the community as a whole.

Residents also value being near to open space, parks, trees and other greenery, and having good transportation connections that enable easy access to stores and services. They are appreciative of the importance of having a diverse range of housing choices in Fircrest. There is recognition of the value of having a community in which people of a wide range of ages and needs can live and be able to remain in Fircrest through changes in age or household size. Housing types that can help address current and future needs include additional smaller starter homes, cottages, accessory dwelling units, live-work units, attached homes, senior housing, and housing for families. In thinking about the future, citizens also emphasize that new development needs to be well designed and fit well with the surrounding area.

The following residential policies in the Land Use Element provide general guidance for development in residential areas, including density, allowed uses and development standards. This Element is complementary to the Housing Element and Community Character Element. The Housing Element addresses a range of housing topics, including neighborhood preservation, housing choice, housing affordability and special needs housing. The Community Character Element addresses residential neighborhood compatibility issues and concerns.

## **GOAL LU5**

**Achieve a mix of housing types and densities, maintain attractive and healthy residential neighborhoods, and guide new housing development into appropriate areas.**

### **Policy LU5.1**

Development regulations should accommodate and encourage a wide range of housing types to meet the needs of residents through various life stages. Housing choice should be expanded to enable residents to remain living in the community as their housing needs or preferences change over time, and to attract new residents to the community.

### **Policy LU5.2**

The mix of housing within the community should include detached and attached single-family dwellings, cottage housing, live-work units, multi-family dwellings, including townhomes and units located within vertical Mixed-Use buildings, accessory dwelling units, residential care facilities for those who are unable to maintain independent living arrangements, and other innovative housing that is compatible with the type, scale and character of surrounding residential development.

### **Policy LU5.3**

Manufactured homes shall be allowed in low density residential areas, subject to applicable federal and state siting requirements and local health and safety regulations.

**Policy LU5.4**

A range of residential densities shall be provided for based on existing development patterns, community needs and values, proximity to facilities and services, immediate surrounding densities, and protection of natural environmental features.

**Policy LU5.5**

Innovation in site and building design shall be encouraged in and adjacent to critical areas in accord with Comprehensive Plan goals and policies. For example, clustering of units outside of critical areas and associated buffers may be permitted provided that *overall* density of a site does not exceed the maximum allowable dwelling units per acre. Appropriate buffering, design features, and amenities must be included in all innovative designs.

**Policy LU5.6**

The character of existing single-family residential neighborhoods should be preserved and enhanced.

**Discussion:** Established residential neighborhoods are the foundation of the community. They provide a sense of well-being for local residents and enhance the stability of the entire City. Single family neighborhoods should be protected from negative impacts of conflicting or inappropriate nearby land uses.

**Policy LU5.7**

Greater residential density and building height should be allowed in existing commercial Mixed-Use and multifamily areas along or close to major arterial and transit routes, for example 19<sup>th</sup> Street and Mildred Street, to accommodate expected population and employment growth.

**Discussion:** Puget Sound Regional Council projections anticipate a significant amount of growth occurring through Fircrest's 2035 planning horizon, and the Pierce County Regional Council has allocated a comparable amount of population and housing growth for 2030. To protect the character of existing single-family neighborhoods from increased, and incompatible, infill development, to provide greater housing choice, and to encourage the use of alternative transportation modes, housing units needed to accommodate the allocated growth targets should be located primarily in the Mildred and 19<sup>th</sup> Street areas where multi-family housing is already established and allowed to expand and where Mixed-Use development will be encouraged.

**Policy LU5.8**

Residential infill development shall be compatible with surrounding development in terms of scale, form, relationship to the street and other design elements.

**Discussion:** Residential uses in multifamily and commercial mixed-use zones should be designed to provide a harmonious transition into nearby single-family neighborhoods. Buffers, landscaping, and building design and placement that blend with the neighboring community enhance the transition between different densities and land uses. Multifamily design standards and guidelines should be adopted to support this objective.

**Policy LU5.9**

To expand local economic opportunities for Fircrest's residents, home occupations that are compatible with the surrounding residential area shall be encouraged.

**COMMERCIAL LAND USE**

Commercial areas provide for the development and operation of retail and service businesses in support of community needs. The design and location of commercial areas are important to residents and businesses. Well-designed and -located commercial developments enable people to walk to a nearby restaurant or to park once and shop at several businesses. Good design and location are also important to providing transit service, avoiding conflicts with nearby uses, reducing traffic problems, and providing for easy delivery and pickup of goods. Allowing small-scale commercial areas near homes can reduce the distance people have to travel for frequently purchased goods and services. Neighborhood commercial areas also help provide for small-scale gathering places that are accessible from neighborhoods, help promote walkability and bikeability, and support many aspects of Fircrest's long-term vision and goals, including economic vitality.

**GOAL LU6**

**Achieve a mix of commercial land uses that serve the needs of the City's residents, businesses and visitors while protecting and enhancing the unique character of Fircrest's residential neighborhoods.**

**Policy LU6.1**

New and redeveloped commercial and Mixed-Use buildings should be designed to achieve community goals for attractive streets, public spaces, and pedestrian amenities.

**Discussion:** Most of the City's development in commercial Mixed-Use areas occurred prior to annexation to Fircrest, without the guidance of a plan that was consistent with GMA goals. Many land uses are auto-oriented, and building design and site planning are generally uncoordinated. Additionally, building orientation and parking lot locations vary considerably, with parking often being a highly visible component. Similarly, most development that has occurred in the City's neighborhood commercial areas predates adoption of this Comprehensive Plan and the City's land development code. Improved functionality and appearance of commercial Mixed-Use and neighborhood commercial areas could attract new business to the City and enhance the quality of life for Fircrest residents.

Encouraging an appropriate mix of land uses, and adopting and implementing design standards and guidelines for new construction and redevelopment will achieve economic development goals while supporting the protection of nearby residential neighborhoods from incompatible commercial use.

**Policy LU6.2**

Fircrest should encourage development of new businesses and expansion of existing businesses to help meet the retail and service needs of Fircrest's residents. New businesses should be recruited to the City to expand and diversify the City's employment base.



**Policy LU6.3**

Environmentally clean, non-polluting businesses shall be encouraged in Fircrest through the implementation of performance standards that mitigate potential impacts. Commercial uses that have minimal impact on adjacent areas shall be preferred over higher-impact uses when located immediately adjacent to residential land uses.

**Policy LU6.4**

The expansion of linear commercial “strips” should be discouraged and pedestrian-oriented development should be supported.

**Discussion:** Buildings and off-street parking should be sited so that the streetscape is enhanced and pedestrian orientation encouraged. Parking should be located to the rear or side of buildings. Buildings should have an obvious pedestrian entrance, pedestrian-level windows, weather protection, and architectural details and pedestrian-scale signage on the street.

**Policy LU6.5**

Additional automobile-oriented businesses such as restaurants with drive-up windows should be prohibited in neighborhood commercial areas. Businesses providing delivery services may be permitted in these areas subject to compliance with performance standards that ensure there will be no negative impact on the surrounding neighborhood and streets.

**Policy LU6.6**

Automobile-oriented businesses such as restaurants with drive-up windows may be permitted in commercial Mixed-Use areas subject to compliance with screening and other site development standards intended to minimize impacts on neighboring properties. Site design for such businesses should ensure safe and convenient pedestrian access separate from drive-up access and that does not require the pedestrian to cross drive-up facilities to reach the pedestrian entry. Site design shall consider the safety of motorists, bicyclists, and pedestrians on the streets, shoulders, and sidewalks adjacent to the business driveways.

**Policy LU6.7**

The visual appearance of commercial areas should be improved through public and private measures for beautification, implementation of design strategies, maintenance, and streetscape improvements. Commercial and Mixed-Use buildings should conform to design guidelines to ensure architectural compatibility with surrounding neighborhoods. Where commercial rehabilitation, development, or redevelopment occurs in an area with historic significance, it should be sensitive to the historic fabric of the area. New commercial and Mixed-Use development should incorporate landscaping, seating, and other pedestrian-supportive amenities to provide pleasant and comfortable resting, socializing, and picnicking areas for employees and shoppers.

**Policy LU6.8**

Commercial and Mixed-Use development should include high quality, safe, and contiguous facilities for pedestrians, bicyclists, disabled persons, and users of the public transit services. Fircrest should work with public transit providers to improve transit service to commercial Mixed-Use and neighborhood commercial areas. Commercial and Mixed-Use development should be designed to take into consideration the connections, both vehicular and pedestrian, to adjoining sites to reduce personal automobile trips. Sidewalks and internal pathways should be incorporated to enhance pedestrian circulation.

**Policy LU6.9**

Maximum automobile parking standards should be implemented for various types of commercial development. Shared parking facilities should be encouraged. Parking areas shall include plantings of vegetation that reduce its visual impact through effective screening and the establishment of a substantial tree canopy. Design standards that strongly encourage the placement of parking to the side or rear of buildings should be implemented. Parking facilities should conform to the parking-related policies of the Transportation Element.

**Policy LU6.10**

Commercial uses should be concentrated in locations that best serve the community, complement stable residential areas, and are attractive to private investment.

**Discussion:** The City's commercial base is expected to grow, but little undeveloped land remains. To accommodate future growth, an adequate supply of land must be preserved in areas where future redevelopment will not be detrimental to residential neighborhoods and other sensitive land uses. Growth should be encouraged in areas where adequate public facilities exist or can be efficiently provided.

**Policy LU6.11**

A mix of retail, office, service, and residential uses should be encouraged in commercial Mixed-Use and neighborhood commercial areas.

**Discussion:** Traditional zoning typically segregates various land uses, such as commercial and residential, into different locations. In some locations, however, it may be more beneficial and appropriate for land uses to be "mixed" together. A vertical "mixed-use" building provides different uses within a structure or site – typically, retail uses on the first floor with office and/or residential on the upper floors. This type of development may promote a more economically vibrant and pedestrian-friendly environment. Mixed-Use zoning may also accommodate a variety of uses within a site but in separate buildings. For example, sites on Mildred Street with deep dimensions when measured from the street may be developed with retail uses near the front of the site and residential or office uses toward the rear. Where Mixed-Use development succeeds it is often due to its attraction to residents who want to be within easy walking distance of shops, restaurants and other services – and its attraction to businesses that benefit from a relatively large number of nearby residents with disposable income.

**Policy LU6.12**

Redevelopment of vacant and underutilized sites should be encouraged.

**Discussion:** A number of properties in the City's commercial Mixed-Use and neighborhood commercial areas are vacant or underutilized. The City should encourage and assist the landowners of these properties to develop or redevelop their properties to the highest and best use allowed under the City's plan policies and development regulations.

The limited amount of land zoned to accommodate commercial uses dictates that maximum utility should be derived from what is available. Efficient use of commercial Mixed-Use properties should be achieved by redeveloping and consolidating existing underdeveloped commercial properties. Infill development and expansion of existing facilities is of prime importance.

**Policy LU6.13**

Culturally enriching uses such as libraries, bookstores, galleries, museums, and theaters, should be encouraged in commercial and Mixed-Use areas.

**Policy LU6.14**

Residential areas and public gathering places such as parks, schools and churches, and neighborhood commercial areas shall be protected from the negative impacts of "adult" business and entertainment establishments.

**Discussion:** Cities may regulate adult entertainment businesses as long as a "reasonable opportunity" is provided to operate such a business within the municipal boundaries. To limit the negative impacts of these establishments in the City, adult entertainment businesses shall be regulated in a manner that protects residential, public, and other business uses from the negative impacts of these businesses.

***ESSENTIAL PUBLIC FACILITIES***

Essential public facilities of a local, statewide, or regional nature may range from schools and fire stations to jails, work release facilities, state prisons, airports, and sewage treatment facilities. Some public facilities are controversial and difficult to site because of real and/or perceived impacts. The GMA requires that local comprehensive plans include a process for identifying and siting essential public facilities.

**GOAL 7**

**Essential public facilities shall be allowed in locations appropriate for the services provided and the people served. Essential public facilities shall harmonize with the surrounding development and with the natural features of the surrounding land and vegetation.**

**Policy LU7.1**

The city shall administer a process to site essential public facilities that is consistent with the Growth Management Act and Countywide Planning Policies and that adequately considers impacts of specific uses.

**Policy LU7.2**

Small public facilities intended to serve a few neighborhoods may be located within a neighborhood. Examples of these facilities include neighborhood parks, drainage facilities, and electrical transformer boxes.

**Policy LU7.3**

Public facilities intended to serve the entire city should be located to provide convenient access for residents who must frequent them. Examples of such facilities include community parks, schools, government offices, and similar facilities. Large facilities that serve the entire city and are not frequented by citizens should be located where they will not disrupt the urban landscape or disturb residential and commercial areas with noise, glare, dust, or other pollution. Examples of such facilities include power substations, water wells, and sewer lift stations.

**Policy LU7.4**

Public facilities that have service areas extending substantially beyond the city boundaries should be sited at a location appropriate to meet the transportation needs of the users of the facilities. Facilities that generate a significant amount of truck, automobile, or foot traffic should be located along arterial streets and convenient to public transit facilities. School facilities should be given flexibility to locate on non-arterial streets. Developers of these facilities should be required to make infrastructure improvements to support the facilities. These improvements may include, but are not limited to, street construction, signage, sidewalks, streetlights, bus shelters, benches, parking, bicycle racks, utility lines, and similar improvements.

**Policy LU7.5**

The city recognizes that some federal, state, regional, and county facilities may impose detrimental effects on the Fircrest community if located within the city. Such facilities shall be packaged with accompanying facilities or programs having clear benefits for the community. The city shall seek mitigation of disproportionate financial burdens resulting from the siting of essential public facilities in Fircrest.

**Policy LU7.6**

Siting proposals by federal, state, regional, and county agencies shall include clear justification for the need for the facility and for its location within Fircrest. Alternate sites not in Fircrest shall be explored through a cooperative interjurisdictional approach. If the final site selected is within Fircrest, the site shall be consistent with the provisions of all of Fircrest's Comprehensive Plan elements.

**Policy LU7.7**

All public facilities should be sited, designed, and buffered to fit in harmoniously with the surrounding neighborhood. Facility design and buffering should conform to the provisions of the urban landscaping and environmental goals and policies of this Comprehensive Plan. In addition, special attention should be given to minimizing the noise, light, glare, dust, and traffic associated with essential public facilities.

**Policy LU7.8**

Proposals for public facilities that are not difficult to site should be processed using the minimum permitting procedures required to ensure the facilities conform with the goals and policies of this Comprehensive Plan while providing adequate opportunity for public input.

**LIGHT INDUSTRIAL LAND USE**

Light industrial businesses can supply employment opportunities and services for the greater Fircrest community and region. Historically, few properties in Fircrest have supported industrial uses, with the notable exceptions being two sites that hosted industrial activities on Mildred Street. Today, few if any opportunities exist to accommodate light industrial uses on a moderate- to large-scale.

On a smaller scale, however, opportunities exist within Fircrest to support the *maker movement*, an umbrella term for independent inventors, designers and tinkerers. Typical interests enjoyed by individuals who consider themselves to be part of the maker culture include engineering-oriented pursuits such as electronics, robotics, 3-D printing, and the use of computer numerical control (CNC) tools, as well as more traditional activities such as metalworking, woodworking, and traditional arts and crafts. The movement stresses new and unique applications of technologies, and encourages invention and prototyping. Some of these examples, which may not be highly visible to or have any measurable impact on surrounding land uses, may be integrated into the community in live-work units and other appropriate locations. Small-scale production, where individuals are making items in limited quantities for retail or wholesale markets, can be a key to a stronger local economy.

**GOAL LU8**

**Provide for limited light industrial land uses within appropriate locations.**

**Policy LU8.1**

The city should support incubator or start-up small-scale light industrial uses in appropriate locations within the Commercial Mixed-Use areas. Support activities pursued by individuals that fit under the *maker movement* umbrella in appropriate locations while ensuring that sensitive land uses located in close proximity to such businesses are protected from potential impacts.

**Policy LU8.2**

The city should prohibit heavy manufacturing uses, which generally require large parcels of land and separation from sensitive land uses such as parks, schools and housing.

**Policy LU8.3**

The city should separate manufacturing uses that create impacts from incompatible uses through techniques, such as creation of buffers or zoning that enables transitions from more intensive to less intensive uses. Take into account during site

plan review potential adverse impacts on nearby uses due to manufacturing operations.

### ***CENTERS OF LOCAL IMPORTANCE (CoLI)***

The northwest corner of Fircrest contains the community's most intensively developed concentration of land uses, including commercial retail, office, service and restaurant uses, multifamily neighborhoods, and a public intermediate school. The city's largest undeveloped tract of land planned and zoned for commercial Mixed-Use development is located within this center, as is the Fircrest Golf Club. The Northwest Fircrest CoLI is bordered by three arterial streets – 19<sup>th</sup> Street West, Mildred Street West, and Alameda Avenue. The center is bisected by Regents Boulevard, Fircrest's historic arterial, which provides access to the city's neighborhood business districts. The center is immediately south of Tacoma Community College, east of the Narrows Plaza, which is part of University Place's Regional Growth Center, and southeast of James Center, a Tacoma Mixed-Use center. The Northwest Fircrest CoLI will complement these neighboring activity centers and accommodate much of the community's planned commercial and residential growth over the next 20 years.

### **GOAL LU9**

**Designate Northwest Fircrest as a Center of Local Importance under *VISION 2040* and the Pierce County Countywide Planning Policies.**

#### **Policy LU9.1**

Ensure that development standards, design guidelines, level of service standards, public facility plans and funding strategies support focused development within the Northwest Fircrest CoLI.

#### **Policy LU9.2**

Recognize the Northwest Fircrest CoLI in all relevant local, regional policy, planning and programming forums.

#### **Policy LU9.3**

Leverage local, regional, state and federal agency funding for needed public facilities and services within the Northwest Fircrest CoLI. Give priority to this center for multimodal transportation projects that will increase mobility to, from and within this center.

### ***ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY***

Sensitive management of land uses and development and redevelopment projects is essential for preserving and improving the natural, as well as built, environment.

### **GOAL LU10**

Land uses and development and redevelopment projects shall be managed to preserve and improve the natural environment as well as the built environment.

**Policy LU10.1**

The city should support development of green infrastructure in order to improve the capacity of, and complement the services provided by, the city's natural systems as future land use becomes more intense to accommodate growth. Recognize green infrastructure as a capital/public asset. Support efforts to preserve, enhance and expand the community's inventory of green infrastructure, including but not limited to:

- Natural areas, such as critical areas and portions of public lands that are monitored and maintained by citizen stewards;
- Community gardens;
- Rain gardens and other natural stormwater management facilities; and
- Native habitat areas.

**Discussion:** Green infrastructure refers to services that natural systems provide Fircrest, including:

- Cleaning the water in streams, wetlands and ponds;
- Reducing flooding;
- Improving air quality; and
- Providing wildlife habitat.

In addition, green infrastructure provides benefits to Fircrest, such as:

- Making the city more beautiful;
- Providing peaceful, restful places;
- Increasing recreational opportunities; and
- Improving the health of members of the community.

Many elements of green infrastructure are natural places within Fircrest -- places such as forests, parks, protected open spaces, streams and wetlands. Fircrest should, when possible, build or support the building of facilities that mimic natural systems to improve the capacity of, and complement the services provided by, the city's natural systems.

These facilities can also be considered green infrastructure and include such structures as constructed wetlands, rain gardens and green roofs. The city and the community may support green infrastructure through a combination of green development techniques and preserving environmental assets into the future as land use becomes more intense to accommodate growth.

**Policy LU10.2**

The city shall enforce standards that will achieve environmentally sensitive development when it occurs within and adjoining critical areas, natural buffers, and areas designated as open space.

**Policy LU10.3**

Wetlands shall be sized and categorized with respect to their natural features rather than with respect to city boundaries. Wetlands that are contiguous across

jurisdictional boundaries shall be treated according to their total size and characteristics.

**Policy LU10.4**

To allow reasonable use of property while protecting the environment, reduction or variation of residential lot sizes, density bonuses, planned developments, clustering of housing, and innovative development techniques shall be considered when designed to preserve open space, protect critical areas, or provide vegetative buffers.

**Policy LU10.5**

Performance standards shall be considered as a regulatory alternative to fixed zoning regulations in and around environmentally sensitive areas.

**Policy LU10.6**

City facility projects, maintenance and operating procedures, and programs should be structured to minimize and mitigate environmental damage, restore and improve the environment if possible, and increase the environmental education and awareness of city employees and citizens.

**Policy LU10.7**

To minimize maintenance costs, conserve water, and provide vegetation with the maximum usefulness as wildlife habitat, urban landscaping should emphasize the use of indigenous plants that are drought tolerant during the summer months. Landscaping may also include non-native plant species that are well adapted to growing and providing wildlife habitat with minimal human intervention in the local climate and soils.

**Policy LU10.8**

The city should seek to protect wildlife habitat resources by preventing the indiscriminate and unnecessary removal of native trees, shrubs, and ground covers; by promoting the protection of areas that provide food, cover, resting, and nesting areas for wildlife; and by protecting and enhancing the quality of Leach Creek waters.

**Policy LU10.9**

The city should preserve, protect and, where possible, restore natural habitat critical for the conservation of salmonid species listed under the Federal Endangered Species Act. Aquatic ecosystems, associated habitats and aquifers should be protected and maintained or restored through the use of management zones, development regulations, incentives for voluntary efforts of private landowners and developers, land use designations, habitat acquisition programs or habitat restoration projects. The city should support efforts to remove invasive species and re-plant cleared areas with native plants.



**Policy LU10.10**

The city should protect the natural habitat critical for the conservation of salmonid species listed under the federal Endangered Species Act, through the use of planning activities or study techniques that are capable of determining changes in stream hydrology and water quality under different land use scenarios at full build-out of designated land use classifications.

**Policy LU10.11**

In the event that a species listed under the federal Endangered Species Act is determined to be located within Fircrest, the city should establish a monitoring and evaluation method that is designed to determine the effectiveness of enhancement and recovery strategies for the species. The methodology should be developed with technical assistance from appropriate state or federal resource agencies.

**Policy LU10.12**

The city recognizes that the best available science to address listed species recovery issues is evolving. The city should apply an adaptive management strategy to determine how well the objectives of listed species recovery and critical habitat preservation/restoration are being achieved. The city should incorporate the results of pilot developments into land use regulations, zoning, and technical standards.

**Policy LU10.13**

The city should ensure that there is “no net loss” of wetlands by function and values.

**Policy LU10.14**

The city shall ensure that development is properly located and constructed with respect to the limitations of the underlying soils, geological hazards, and areas subject to flooding.

**Policy LU10.15**

City facilities, services, programs, and procedures should be designed and managed to conserve resources and to reduce demand for facilities with significant environmental impacts. Similarly, procedures, programs, and rate structures should encourage citizens to conserve resources and to minimize the negative environmental impacts of their use of facilities and services.

**Policy LU10.16**

Development activities and land uses within the city should be managed to minimize noise; light and glare; and water, soil, and air pollution. The city shall work with adjacent jurisdictions and property owners to minimize transmission of pollutants from development activities and industrial, commercial, and public facility land uses near the city's boundary.

**Policy LU10.17**

Fircrest should consider the adoption of new development controls and guidelines designed to avoid or mitigate adverse cumulative air quality impacts prior to project approval. Fircrest should require air quality impact analyses for major new

developments that could adversely impact the air quality levels in the vicinity. Such analyses should address the policies listed in Transportation Goal 3 that are intended to promote the reduction of criteria pollutants for mobile sources (WAC 173-420-080). In Fircrest, criteria pollutants include ozone (HC and NO<sub>x</sub>) and carbon monoxide (CO).

## ***WATER RESOURCES***

### **GOAL LU11**

**Surface, ground, storm, waste, and creek waters shall be managed in an ecologically responsible manner and as interconnected components of the region's watershed.**

#### **Policy LU11.1**

Private and public development and redevelopment projects should be conducted in a way that preserves or improves the viability of each component of the water ecosystem and of the entire ecosystem.

#### **Policy LU11.2**

The quality of stormwater runoff should be improved, flooding due to stormwater runoff should be minimized, and the erosion of land by stormwater runoff should be minimized, in order to maintain natural aquatic communities and beneficial uses. Development regulations shall be enforced to minimize stormwater runoff as a result of development projects by limiting grading and clearing of a development site only to the extent reasonably needed to accommodate the development project, minimizing roadways and other impervious surfaces in the completed project, and encouraging the use of natural vegetation and ground covers during development and in the completed project.

#### **Policy LU11.3**

Where removal of trees or other vegetation may result in runoff and erosion, the city should require effective erosion control during and after the tree or vegetation removal. Where extensive removal of trees or other vegetation occurs, the city may require restoration and replanting consistent with urban landscaping guidelines and significant tree retention and protection standards.

#### **Policy LU11.4**

All new development and redevelopment shall be required to use the sanitary sewer system. Development currently using septic systems shall be required to convert to sanitary sewer when any portion of the on-site system fails, functions improperly, or needs replacement, or whenever a community or neighborhood sewer system is extended by local improvement methods or becomes reasonably available by other means. Where property is adjacent to presently existing accessible sewer mains, connections shall be made within a specified time period established by city ordinance.

**Policy LU11.5**

City procedures and programs should be structured to minimize pollutants entering storm, surface, ground, and creek waters from city-owned and city-maintained properties. City procedures and programs should encourage the city's citizens to minimize non-point pollutants contributed from buildings, landscapes, automobiles, and similar sources.

**Policy LU11.6**

The quality of ground water shall be monitored closely and protective measures maintained or increased to ensure an uncontaminated water supply. Regulations should be implemented with regard to installation, inspection, maintenance, and removal of above ground and below ground tanks designed to store potentially contaminating materials such as heating oil and industrial chemicals. Regulations should be developed and implemented as necessary to ensure management of potentially contaminating wastes from commercial and industrial operations. Other protective regulations should be developed as appropriate to protect ground water.

**Policy LU11.7**

City procedures, programs, and water rates should be structured to minimize the city's consumption of water and to improve the water conservation habits of Fircrest's citizens.

**Policy LU11.8**

In accordance with EPA Phase II Western Washington Municipal Stormwater Permit directives, the city shall require Low Impact Development (LID) in areas where soils and geology support it.

**Discussion:** The goal of low impact development is to mimic the predevelopment hydrology of a site using a combination of site planning and structural design strategies to control runoff rate and volumes. Achieving this goal will help to prevent physical, chemical and biological degradation to streams, lakes, wetlands and other natural aquatic systems from commercial, residential or industrial development sites.

Low impact development can provide many environmental and economic benefits:

- **Improved Water Quality.** Stormwater runoff can pick up pollutants such as oil, bacteria, sediments, metals, hydrocarbons and some nutrients from impervious surfaces and discharge these to surface waters. Using LID practices will reduce pollutant-laden stormwater reaching local waters. Better water quality increases property values and lowers government clean-up costs;
- **Reduced Number of Costly Flooding Events.** In communities that rely on ditches and drains to divert runoff to local waterways, flooding can occur when large volumes of stormwater enter surface waters very quickly. Incorporating LID practices reduces the volume and speed of stormwater runoff and decreases costly flooding and property damage;
- **Restored Aquatic Habitat.** Rapidly moving stormwater erodes stream banks and scours stream channels, obliterating habitat for fish and other aquatic life. Using LID practices

reduces the amount of stormwater reaching a surface water system and helps to maintain natural stream channel functions and habitat;

- Improved Groundwater Recharge. Runoff that is quickly shunted through ditches and drains into surface waters cannot soak into the ground. LID practices retain more rainfall on-site, allowing it to enter the ground and be filtered by soil as it seeps down to the water table; and
- Enhanced Neighborhood Beauty. Traditional stormwater management infrastructure may include unsightly pipes, outfalls, concrete channels and fenced basins. Using LID broadly can increase property values and enhance communities by making them more beautiful, sustainable and wildlife friendly.

To more fully support the use of LID where feasible, the city should review and revise its development policies and regulations, as warranted, to improve their effectiveness. The city should consider adoption of the Low Impact Development Technical Guidance Manual for Puget Sound. This manual was prepared by the Washington State University Extension and Puget Sound Partnership with the participation and support of a broad range of stakeholders.

#### **Policy LU11.9**

The city should promote use of techniques, such as current use taxation programs, stormwater utility funds, conservation easements, sensitive site planning, best land management practices and flexible regulations, to help retain and protect open space, environmentally sensitive areas, and unique natural features.

#### **Policy LU11.10**

The city should adopt and implement the latest version of the Department of Ecology Stormwater Management Manual for Western Washington.

### ***DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS AND PERMIT PROCESSING***

#### **GOAL LU12**

**Fircrest should continue to refine its permit process for development and other local government approvals, as needed, to ensure that it is timely and fair to all affected parties.**

#### **Policy LU12.1**

Development regulations shall be periodically reviewed and revised to ensure that they are consistent with and relate directly to implementation of the Comprehensive Plan and other state and federal mandates. Duplicate and unnecessary regulations should be eliminated.

#### **Policy LU12.2**

In the event of conflict between development regulations and this Comprehensive Plan, the provisions of this Comprehensive Plan take precedence. This policy applies immediately upon adoption of this Comprehensive Plan and amendments

thereto. Development regulations that are significantly inconsistent with this Comprehensive Plan shall be given high priority for rapid revision.

**Policy LU12.3**

Procedures for processing permits shall be periodically reviewed and modified to improve interdepartmental coordination, ensure uniform processing for all permit applications, enhance communication with applicants, combine and simplify processing steps, and minimize processing time.

**Policy LU12.4**

Inputs from developers, business proprietors, residents, and other interested parties should be solicited concerning updates to regulations and permit processing procedures.

**Policy LU12.5**

Permit applications for minor projects of a routine nature should be processed at the staff level and should not require public hearings. However, the streamlining of permit processing procedures should not be done at the expense of public input concerning permit applications of a non-routine, major, or controversial nature. The public should be given ample opportunity to review and comment on major, non-routine, or controversial development permit applications.

**Policy LU12.6**

The city should maintain adequate staff and equipment to ensure meaningful revision and enforcement of development regulations and timely processing of permits.

**Policy LU12.7**

The city should consider the impact of land use ordinances and policies on the rights of private property owners. The city should take steps to ensure the rights of private property owners are protected through a cost effective and timely appeal process.

**Policy LU12.8**

The city should support local community groups in critical habitat restoration and enhancement efforts through reduced or waiver of permit fees and streamlined permitting procedures.

***INTERJURISDICTIONAL PLANNING*****GOAL LU13**

**The city should take steps to ensure that decisions, policies, and activities of other governmental and advisory agencies that may affect Fircrest are consistent with the goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan. Fircrest shall encourage cooperative, coordinated inter-jurisdictional efforts consistent with this goal.**

**Policy LU13.1**

The city shall participate in various county and regional organizations concerned with the implementation of the Growth Management Act and the planning and funding of transportation projects.

**Policy LU13.2**

The city shall support the development of interjurisdictional programs that address regional problems and issues that affect the city and the Puget Sound region. Examples of regional issues include affordable housing, transportation, health care, open space corridors, and economic growth.

**Policy LU13.3**

The city shall seek to develop and adopt interlocal agreements to address concerns relating to land use, new development, and redevelopment. The city shall attempt to reach agreements with adjacent jurisdictions to ensure that land uses adjacent to Fircrest are compatible with Fircrest land uses. The city shall also seek agreements with adjacent jurisdictions to minimize and mitigate the negative impacts to Fircrest of land uses and development in adjacent jurisdictions.

**Policy LU13.4**

The city shall work with adjacent jurisdictions to identify and protect natural habitat networks that cross jurisdictional boundaries. Networks should link large, protected, or significant blocks of fish and wildlife habitats within and between jurisdictions to achieve a continuous county-wide network. The city should establish informational sharing workshops or present information at established coordinating committees. Whenever possible, the city should utilize watershed boundaries instead of jurisdictional boundaries for plans and studies.

**Policy LU13.5**

The city shall work with adjacent jurisdictions to coordinate watershed/aquatic restoration planning and implementation activities within a watershed.

***ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT***

Fircrest and the surrounding region will have a prospering and sustainable regional economy by supporting businesses and job creation, investing in all people, sustaining environmental quality, and creating great central places, diverse communities, and high quality of life.

**GOAL LU14**

Support small and locally owned businesses, recognizing their importance in both job growth and promoting sustainable economic development. Support key employment sectors in the region including established and emerging industry clusters that create wealth by selling products or services to outside markets, industries involved in trade-related activities, startups, and new businesses that provide family-wage jobs.

**Policy LU14.1**

Foster a supportive environment for business startups, small businesses, and locally owned businesses to help them continue to prosper.

**Policy LU14.2**

Encourage the private, public, and non-profit sectors to incorporate environmental and social responsibility into their practices.

**Policy LU14.3**

Promote economic activity and employment growth that creates widely shared prosperity and sustains a diversity of family wage jobs for Fircrest's residents.

**Policy LU14.4**

Sustain and enhance arts and cultural institutions to foster an active and vibrant community life.

**Policy LU14.5**

Ensure that economic development sustains and respects Fircrest's environmental quality.

**Policy LU14.6**

Utilize urban design strategies and approaches to ensure that changes to the built environment preserve and enhance Fircrest's unique attributes and distinctive identity in recognition of the economic value of sense of place.

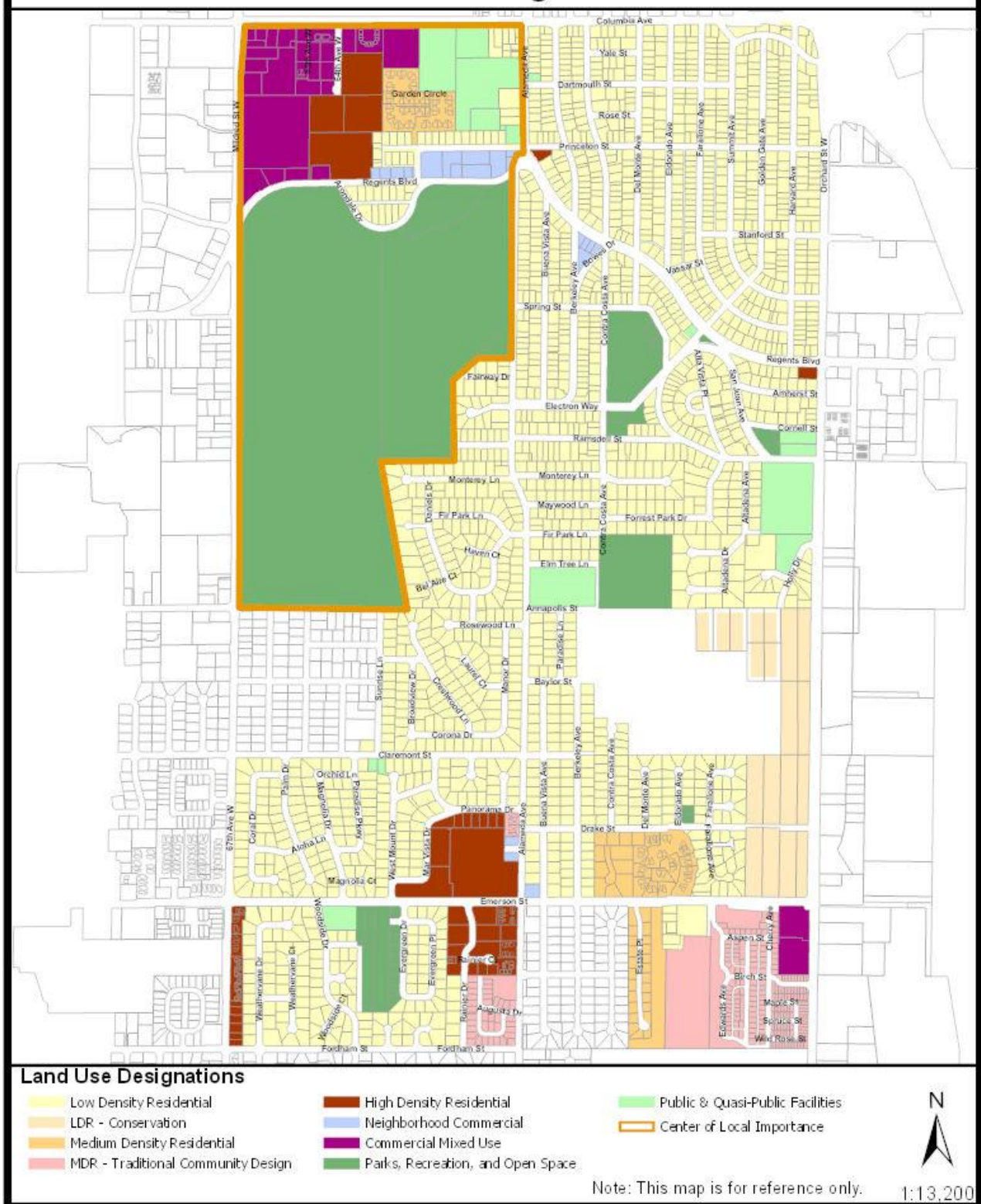
**Policy LU14.7**

Concentrate economic growth in Fircrest's Commercial Mixed-Use District in a manner that is coordinated with economic growth and infrastructure development within the adjacent University Place Regional Growth Center, Tacoma's James Center Mixed-Use Center and Tacoma Community College in order to strengthen the local and regional economy and promote economic opportunity.

## **LAND USE DESIGNATIONS**

Land use designations for this Comprehensive Plan have been determined largely by existing land uses and development opportunity. Fircrest is extensively developed and provides limited infill development opportunities. Much of the development in Fircrest is recent enough that redevelopment opportunities are also limited. Thus, goals and policies, while addressing infill development and redevelopment, also focus on the ongoing maintenance, refinement, and improvement of the existing community. This Comprehensive Plan emphasizes maintaining and enhancing Fircrest's unique community character through land use designations and goals and policies that cultivate the presence of desirable features in existing neighborhoods and through development and redevelopment.

**Figure LU-1  
Land Use Designations**





**Figure LU-1** shows Fircrest's land use designations, which include:

- Low Density Residential
- Low Density Residential - Conservation
- Medium Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential - Traditional Community Design
- High Density Residential
- Parks, Recreation, and Open Space
- Neighborhood Commercial
- Commercial Mixed-Use
- Public and Quasi-Public Facilities

The remainder of this section defines each land use designation for Fircrest.

## ***LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL***

### **Allowable Uses**

The Low Density Residential designation generally applies to areas of the community that were platted and developed for single family dwellings prior to 2000. These areas may include the following housing types:

- Single family dwelling units
- Attached and detached accessory dwelling units
- Group family homes, including adult family homes
- Assisted living facilities, congregate care facilities, convalescent homes, hospice care centers, residential care facilities and residential treatment facilities in accord with the applicable goals and policies of this Comprehensive Plan
- *Existing* duplex or multifamily dwelling units, which may be renovated or redeveloped as duplex or multifamily dwelling units in accord with the applicable goals and policies of this Comprehensive Plan

Additional uses in Low Density Residential areas include public facilities that support residential neighborhoods. For example, streets, sidewalks and other pedestrian facilities, bike paths and associated facilities, transit facilities including stops, shelters and benches, neighborhood parks, and utilities will be allowed. Infrastructure for utilities may include, but is not limited to, storm drainage, power, water, sewer, natural gas, and telecommunications facilities. In addition, other small public facilities compatible with the surrounding neighborhood will be allowed. Home occupations that are compatible with the surrounding neighborhood will be allowed.

### **Building Intensity**

A building intensity of four to six dwelling units per acre may be achieved in Low Density Residential areas, depending on the zoning classification and development pattern. Allowable building intensity is limited by bulk regulations, impervious surface coverage limits, and other provisions specified in the city's Land Development Code (Title 22 FMC).

## ***LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL -- CONSERVATION***

### **Allowable Uses**

The Low Density Residential – Conservation designation generally applies to undeveloped environmentally-sensitive tracts of land. These areas may include the following housing types:

- Single family dwelling units, including cottage housing and small lot developments
- Attached and detached accessory dwelling units
- Group family homes, including adult family homes
- Assisted living facilities, including congregate care facilities, convalescent homes, hospice care centers, residential care facilities, and residential treatment facilities in accord with the applicable goals and policies of this Comprehensive Plan

Additional uses in Low Density Residential -- Conservation areas include public facilities that support residential neighborhoods. For example, streets, sidewalks and other pedestrian facilities, bike paths and associated facilities, transit facilities including stops, shelters and benches, neighborhood parks, and utilities will be allowed. Infrastructure for utilities may include, but is not limited to, storm drainage, power, water, sewer, natural gas, and telecommunications facilities. In addition, other small public facilities compatible with the surrounding neighborhood will be allowed. Home occupations that are compatible with the surrounding neighborhood will be allowed.

### **Building Intensity**

Low Density Residential -- Conservation areas contain significant physical constraints, which place practical limitations on building intensity. Physical constraints include wetlands, frequently flooded areas and steep slopes. Properties located within these areas are subject to the city's critical area regulations, which may further limit building intensities. New development in these areas shall be clustered to: provide for the retention of substantial portions of the properties as undeveloped open space; avoid critical areas; and generally, avoid steep slopes. In consideration of these physical site constraints and regulatory constraints, a base density of four dwelling units per acre may be achieved in Low Density Residential -- Conservation areas. This density may be increased to a maximum of five to eight dwelling units per acre when innovative designs, including small lot development or cottage housing, are used.

Allowable building intensity is limited by bulk regulations, impervious surface coverage limits, and other provisions specified in the city's Land Development Code (Title 22 FMC). Innovation in site and building design will be encouraged in accord with Comprehensive Plan goals and policies; appropriate buffering, design features, and amenities must be provided.

## ***MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL***

### **Allowable Uses**

The Medium Density Residential designation generally applies to areas previously developed for single family attached and duplex housing. These areas may include the following housing types:

- Single family attached dwelling units
- Attached and detached accessory dwelling units
- Group family homes, including adult family homes
- Duplex dwelling units
- Assisted living facilities, including congregate care facilities, convalescent homes, hospice care centers, residential care facilities and residential treatment facilities in accord with the applicable goals and policies of this Comprehensive Plan
- *Existing* multifamily dwelling units, which may be renovated or redeveloped as multifamily dwelling units in accord with the applicable goals and policies of this Comprehensive Plan
- *New* multifamily dwelling units in tracts containing critical areas or significant open space, when clustered to avoid critical areas or to retain significant open space, and provided that overall density does not exceed ten dwelling units per acre. In such cases, innovation in site and building design will be encouraged in accord with Comprehensive Plan goals and policies; appropriate buffering, design features, and amenities must be provided; and no more than four dwelling units per building will be allowed.

Additional uses in Medium Density Residential areas include public facilities that support residential neighborhoods. For example, streets, sidewalks and other pedestrian facilities, bike paths and associated facilities, transit facilities including stops, shelters and benches, neighborhood parks, and utilities will be allowed. Infrastructure for utilities may include, but is not limited to, storm drainage, power, water, sewer, natural gas, and telecommunications facilities. In addition, other small public facilities compatible with the surrounding neighborhood will be allowed. Home occupations that are compatible with the surrounding neighborhood will be allowed.

### **Building Intensity**

A maximum building intensity of eight dwelling units per acre may be achieved in Medium Density Residential areas. Allowable building intensity is limited by bulk regulations impervious surface limits, and other provisions specified in the city's Land Development Code (Title 22 FMC).

## ***MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL - TRADITIONAL COMMUNITY DESIGN***

### **Allowable Uses**

Medium Density Residential -- Traditional Community Design designations apply to The Commons and Fircrest Greens neighborhoods and other smaller sites. These areas may include the following housing types:

- Single family attached and detached dwelling units, including cottage housing and small lot developments
- Attached and detached accessory dwelling units
- Group family homes, including adult family homes
- Duplex dwelling units
- Assisted living facilities including congregate care facilities, convalescent homes, hospice care centers, residential care facilities, and residential treatment facilities in accord with the applicable goals and policies of this Comprehensive Plan
- Multifamily dwelling units within a structure containing no more than eight dwelling units, when clustered to avoid critical areas or to retain significant open space

Additional uses in Medium Density Residential -- Traditional Community Design areas include public facilities that support residential neighborhoods. For example, streets, sidewalks and other pedestrian facilities, bike paths and associated facilities, transit facilities including stops, shelters and benches, and utilities will be allowed.

Infrastructure for utilities may include, but is not limited to, storm drainage, power, water, sewer, natural gas, and telecommunications facilities. In addition, other small public facilities compatible with the surrounding neighborhood will be allowed. Home occupations that are compatible with the surrounding neighborhood will be allowed.

### **Building Intensity**

Medium Density Residential -- Traditional Community Design areas may contain physical constraints, such as wetlands, which place practical limitations on building intensity within portions of an area. Property located within such areas is subject to the city's critical area regulations, which may further limit building intensities. In consideration of these physical site constraints and regulatory constraints, a maximum building intensity of ten dwelling units per acre may be achieved in Medium Density Residential -- Traditional Community Design areas. Allowable building intensity is limited by bulk regulations, impervious surface limits and other provisions specified in the city's Land Development Code (Title 22 FMC).

### **Development Guidelines**

Development and redevelopment of Medium Density Residential -- Traditional Community Design areas shall be designed to incorporate, at a minimum, the following elements:

- Alleys, sidewalks, street trees and human-scaled architectural design elements
- Housing types designed to maintain the look of conventional single-family neighborhoods in terms of scale, orientation to street, style and appearance
- Dwelling units that face the street and sidewalk or common open space areas with entries, balconies, porches, and other architectural features, which create a safe, pleasant walking environment
- Residential building setbacks from public streets that are minimized while maintaining privacy
- Building facades that are varied and articulated to provide visual interest to pedestrians
- Building intensities, orientation, and massing which support transit and reinforce public open spaces
- Parking which is placed to the rear of building where feasible with access from alleys
- A variety of architectural building styles and architectural features such as dormers, gables, porches, bay windows, and other detailing
- A mix of housing types, including single family residences, cottage housing, duplexes, row homes, townhomes, and multi-family designs to help meet the community's demand for a variety of affordable housing types. Multi-family dwellings are limited to no more than 50% of the total number of units in these areas to ensure compatibility with the surrounding neighborhood.

## ***HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL***

### **Allowable Uses**

High Density Residential designations generally apply to areas developed primarily for multifamily housing, and to a lesser extent duplex housing. These areas may include the following housing types:

- Duplex dwelling units
- Group family homes, including adult family homes
- Multifamily dwelling units
- Assisted living facilities, including congregate care facilities, convalescent homes, hospice care centers, residential care facilities and residential treatment facilities in accord with the applicable goals and policies of this Comprehensive Plan

Additional uses in High Density Residential areas include public facilities that support residential neighborhoods. For example, streets, sidewalks and other pedestrian facilities, bike paths and associated facilities, transit facilities including stops, shelters and benches, neighborhood parks, and utilities will be allowed. Infrastructure for utilities may include, but is not limited to, storm drainage, power, water, sewer, natural gas, and telecommunications facilities. In addition, other public facilities compatible with the surrounding neighborhood will be allowed. Home occupations that are compatible with the surrounding neighborhood will be allowed.

## **Building Intensity**

A building intensity of 20 to 30 dwelling units per acre may be achieved in High Density Residential areas, depending on the zoning classification and development pattern. Rehabilitation or redevelopment of existing development will be in accord with the goals and policies of this Comprehensive Plan and applicable design standards and guidelines. Allowable building intensity is limited by bulk regulations impervious surface limits and other provisions specified in the city's Land Development Code (Title 22 FMC).

## ***PARKS, RECREATION, AND OPEN SPACE***

### **Allowable Uses**

Lands designated as Parks, Recreation, and Open Space include tracts that are publicly and privately owned. Allowed uses in Parks, Recreation and Open Space areas, subject to restrictions of the critical areas ordinance where applicable, include:

- Neighborhood parks designed to meet the needs of residents and employees in the immediate area
- Community parks designed to meet the needs of the entire Fircrest community
- Recreational buildings including facilities such as gymnasiums, basketball courts, community kitchens, banquet halls, indoor stages, meeting rooms, etc.
- Outdoor recreational facilities such as swings, climbing toys, picnic areas, swimming pools, golf courses, disc golf courses, baseball diamonds, volleyball courts, bocce ball courts, lawn bowling lanes, outdoor stages, etc.
- Trails and paths for pedestrians and bicyclists
- Transit facilities including stops, shelters and benches which serve the park, recreation facility, open space site or adjacent uses
- Preserved natural areas characterized by native vegetation and wildlife
- Residences may be developed on private property that is designated as park, recreation or open space but that has not been permanently dedicated as park, recreation, or open space, provided significant tracts are permanently dedicated for parks, recreation, or open space at the time of development approval

### **Building Intensity**

Building intensity for Parks, Recreation, and Open Space areas will vary widely. There will be no building intensity in preserved natural areas. For other park and recreation facilities, building intensity will be determined by the purpose of the facility. Because park and recreation facilities may occur in conjunction with other land uses, any park or recreation facility that is proposed must harmonize with surrounding development and must not exceed the building intensity of the surrounding area. Ideally, park and recreation facilities will provide visual relief in the urban landscape by having a significantly lower building intensity than the surrounding development.

## ***NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL***

### **Allowable Uses**

Neighborhood commercial areas will allow retail businesses and offices for which the primary clientele will most likely be Fircrest residents and local employees. Examples of such businesses include appropriately sized grocery stores, health care and other professional offices, pharmacies, gift shops, delicatessens, small bakeries, clothiers, beauty shops, coffee shops, small restaurants, small financial institutions, etc. Businesses and organizations that are culturally enriching will also be allowed. Examples of such businesses and organizations include art galleries, bookstores, dance studios, museums, live theaters, etc. Additional automobile-oriented businesses such as restaurants with drive-up windows are prohibited in Neighborhood Commercial areas. Businesses providing delivery services may be permitted provided they are compatible with the goals and policies of this Comprehensive Plan.

In addition, residential uses may be allowed on upper floors of vertical Mixed-Use buildings subject to compliance with design guidelines. Residential uses must complement commercial uses and avoid impacting the commercial viability or functional operation of the commercial area. Public facilities, including transit facilities such as stops, shelters and benches that support development in the commercial areas, will be allowed, as will quasi-public facilities that are compatible with the surrounding development. Commercial uses must continue to be the predominant use in Neighborhood Commercial areas. Any noncommercial development should not cause a practical restriction on continued commercial use of the area.

### **Building Intensity**

Allowable building intensity for new development, rehabilitation, and redevelopment in neighborhood Commercial areas is limited by bulk regulations, impervious surface limits and other provisions specified in the city's Land Development Code (Title 22 FMC).

## ***COMMERCIAL MIXED-USE***

### **Allowable Uses**

Commercial Mixed-Use areas will allow the same types of retail businesses, offices, and organizations that are allowed in neighborhood commercial areas. In addition, community commercial areas may include businesses that serve a clientele that will most likely be drawn equally from the Fircrest community and the surrounding University Place and Tacoma area. Examples of such businesses include large grocery stores and other retail outlets, consolidated medical and professional centers, major financial institutions, movie theaters, etc. Automobile-oriented businesses such as restaurants with drive-up windows and businesses providing delivery services may only be permitted when they are compatible with the goals and policies of this Comprehensive Plan.

Residential uses are allowed on upper floors of vertical Mixed-Use buildings. In addition, stand-alone residential buildings may be permitted when located toward the rear of a

site when separated from a public street by one or more intervening commercial or Mixed-Use buildings. In such instances, the development plan should achieve a predominantly commercial orientation at the ground floor level in areas located between the stand-alone residential building(s) and the street. Any noncommercial development should not cause a practical restriction on continued commercial activities within a commercial Mixed-Use area.

Public facilities, including transit facilities such as stops, shelters and benches that support development in the commercial areas, will be allowed, as will quasi-public facilities that are compatible with the surrounding development.

### **Building Intensity**

Allowable building intensity for new development, rehabilitation, and redevelopment in commercial Mixed-Use areas is limited by bulk regulations, impervious surface limits and other provisions specified in the city's Land Development Code (Title 22 FMC).

## ***PUBLIC AND QUASI-PUBLIC FACILITIES***

### **Allowable Uses**

Areas designated for Public and Quasi-Public Facilities are now used for, or could be used for, public facilities such as schools, libraries, parks, major utilities and other government-owned facilities. Designated areas are also suitable for quasi-public facilities such as privately-owned utility facilities, religious institutions, private recreational facilities, and private organizations offering services complementing or supplementing services typically offered by government agencies.

To improve visual clarity on the land use map, public facilities that occur throughout the city, such as paths and utilities, are not shown on the land use map. Such facilities are discussed in the Transportation, Utilities, and Capital Facilities Elements of this Comprehensive Plan.

### **Building Intensity**

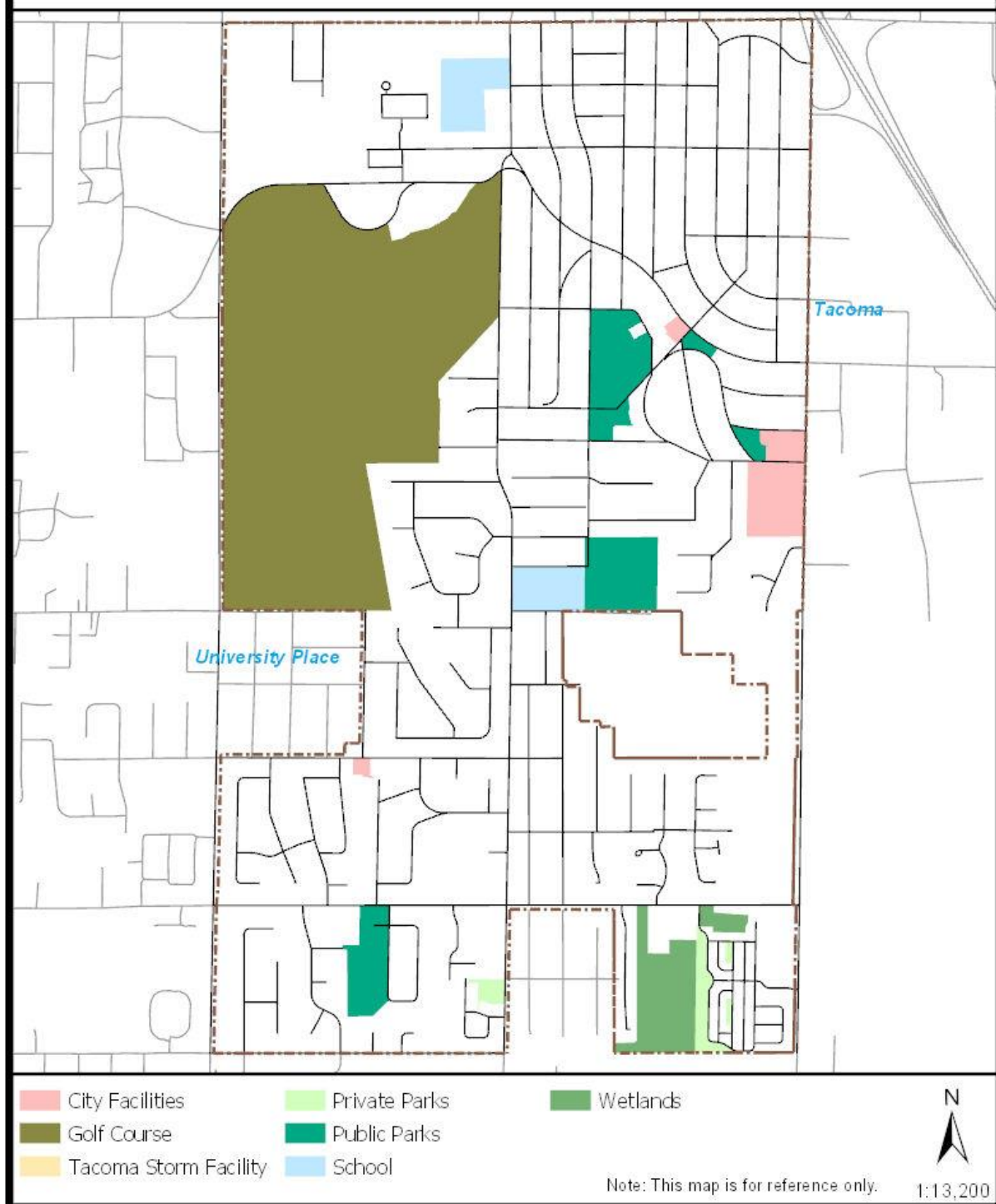
Building intensity for a public or quasi-public facility depends upon the purpose of the facility. Because public facilities may occur in conjunction with other land uses, any public facility that is proposed must harmonize with surrounding development and must not exceed the building intensity of the surrounding area.

## **LANDS USEFUL FOR PUBLIC PURPOSES**

**Figure LU-2** indicates lands useful for public purposes. Lands useful for parks, recreation, and open space are, by definition, useful for public purposes. In addition, lands that may be useful for public purposes include those designated Public and Quasi-Public Facilities, Commercial Mixed-Use, and Neighborhood Commercial. These designations are shown in **Figure LU-1**. Public or quasi-public facilities are considered a secondary use in commercial areas and must be compatible with surrounding development. All public and quasi-public facilities must be appropriately sited and buffered in accord with the goals and policies of this Comprehensive Plan.



**Figure LU-2  
Lands Useful for Public Purposes**



## POPULATION, HOUSING UNIT AND EMPLOYMENT TARGETS

The Growth Management Act requires Pierce County to designate urban growth areas based upon the urban growth management population projection made for the County by the Office of Financial Management. Counties have the authority, as regional governments, to allocate population and employment to the cities within their boundaries. In addition, *VISION 2040* requires Pierce County and its cities and towns to adopt housing unit and employment targets, taking into account PSRC's Regional Growth Strategy regional geographies and their respective growth shares for population and employment.

Fircrest must plan for a 20-year planning horizon under the GMA and therefore must show it can accommodate projected growth for a 20-year period – 2015 through 2035. Pursuant to Pierce County Ordinance No. 2011-36s, however, the Pierce County Council has established population, housing unit, and employment targets for 2030 -- rather than for 2035. In recognition that the Pierce County 2030 targets represent a build-out condition for Fircrest, no additional growth is anticipated, or will need to be accommodated, for 2035. The adopted Pierce County targets for Fircrest and 2035 projections are summarized in **Table LU-2**.

**Table LU-2**

GMA Population, Housing Unit and Employment Estimates, Targets and Needs				
<b>Population</b>	Estimated 2008 Population (OFM)	2030 Total Population Target	2008-2030 Population Growth	2035 Population Projection
	6,315	6,950	635	6,950
<b>Housing Units</b>	2010 Housing Units (US Census)	2030 Total Housing Unit Target	2030 Additional Housing Units Needed	2035 Housing Units Projection
	2,847	3,351	544	3,351
<b>Employment</b>	2010 Total Employment Estimate	2030 Total Employment Target	2030 Additional Employment Needs	2035 Employment Projection
	1,369	1,544	206	1,544

The Pierce County Buildable Lands Report (July 2014) identifies the extent to which Fircrest can achieve the adopted targets identified in **Table LU-2**. Pierce County has assigned Fircrest a housing target of 3,351 units for 2030. According to the US Census Bureau, the city had a total of 2,847 housing units in 2010. The difference between

existing units and the 2030 target represents 504 additional units over a two-decade period. The Buildable Lands report identifies that an additional 40 displaced units need to be factored in to recognize that some of the city's underutilized parcels will be unavailable for redevelopment due to site-specific circumstances. As a result, the report states that Fircrest's 2030 housing need is 544 additional units.

The Buildable Lands Report also states that current residential land capacity is 254 units. This capacity is 290 fewer units than needed to meet the 2030 housing target. Therefore, the city will need to apply a variety of approaches that can, collectively, increase its residential development capacity by at least 290 units.

Since adoption of its first GMA Comprehensive Plan in 1996 and Land Development Code in 2000, Fircrest's development policies and regulations have reflected the community's strong preference to maintain existing housing character and densities within its single-family residential neighborhoods. In order to accommodate additional growth consistent with the city's 2030 population and housing targets – without significantly increasing densities and changing housing types in these single-family neighborhoods, Fircrest has taken the following reasonable measures:

- Increased the maximum density from 20 units per acre to 30 units per acre for a portion of the High Density Residential designation area
- Rezoned R-20 zoned properties located in the Northwest Fircrest CoLI to an R-30 zoning classification that will accommodate a higher 30 units per acre density;
- Increased the maximum density in the Commercial Mixed-Use designation (formerly Community Commercial) from a range of 6 to 10 units per acre to 35 units per acre;
- Increased the maximum density in the Commercial Mixed-Use zone (formerly Community Commercial) from 10 units per acre to 35 units per acre;
- Rezoned Community Office zoned properties (6 units per acre) to Commercial Mixed-Use (35 units per acre);
- Increased the maximum density for the Low Density Residential – Conservation designation and R-4C zoned properties from 4 units per acre to a range of 5 to 8 units per acre for innovative housing designs.

The combination of these amendments will increase Fircrest's residential land capacity by an estimated 303 units, thereby satisfying the housing (and population) growth targets.

In terms of employment capacity, Fircrest has been assigned a 2030 employment target of 1,544. The Buildable Lands Report estimates Fircrest's 2010 employment to be 1,369 – implying the City would need to accommodate employment growth of 175. Technical adjustments summarized in the report, however, result in additional employment needs of 206. Employment capacity based on Fircrest zoning in effect at the time of buildable lands analysis was 222, which exceeds by 16 the minimum additional capacity needed to meet the 2030 target. Therefore, the City is not required to increase employment capacity for this purpose.

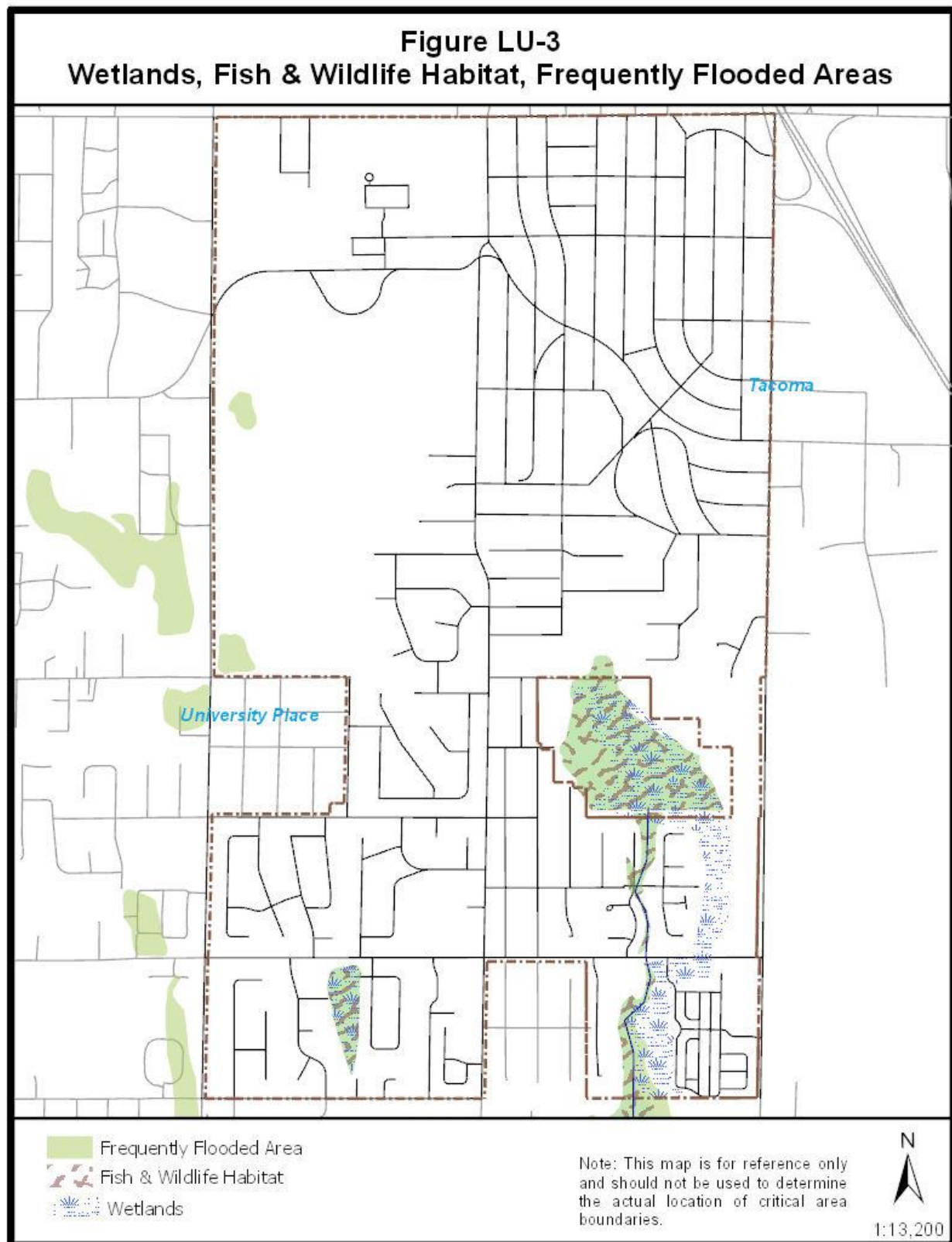
## CRITICAL AREAS AND NATURAL RESOURCE LANDS

The GMA includes a requirement to designate, classify, and enact development standards for critical areas. Critical areas are defined as the following areas and ecosystems: wetlands, areas with a critical recharging effect on aquifers used for potable water, fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas, frequently flooded areas, and geologically hazardous areas.

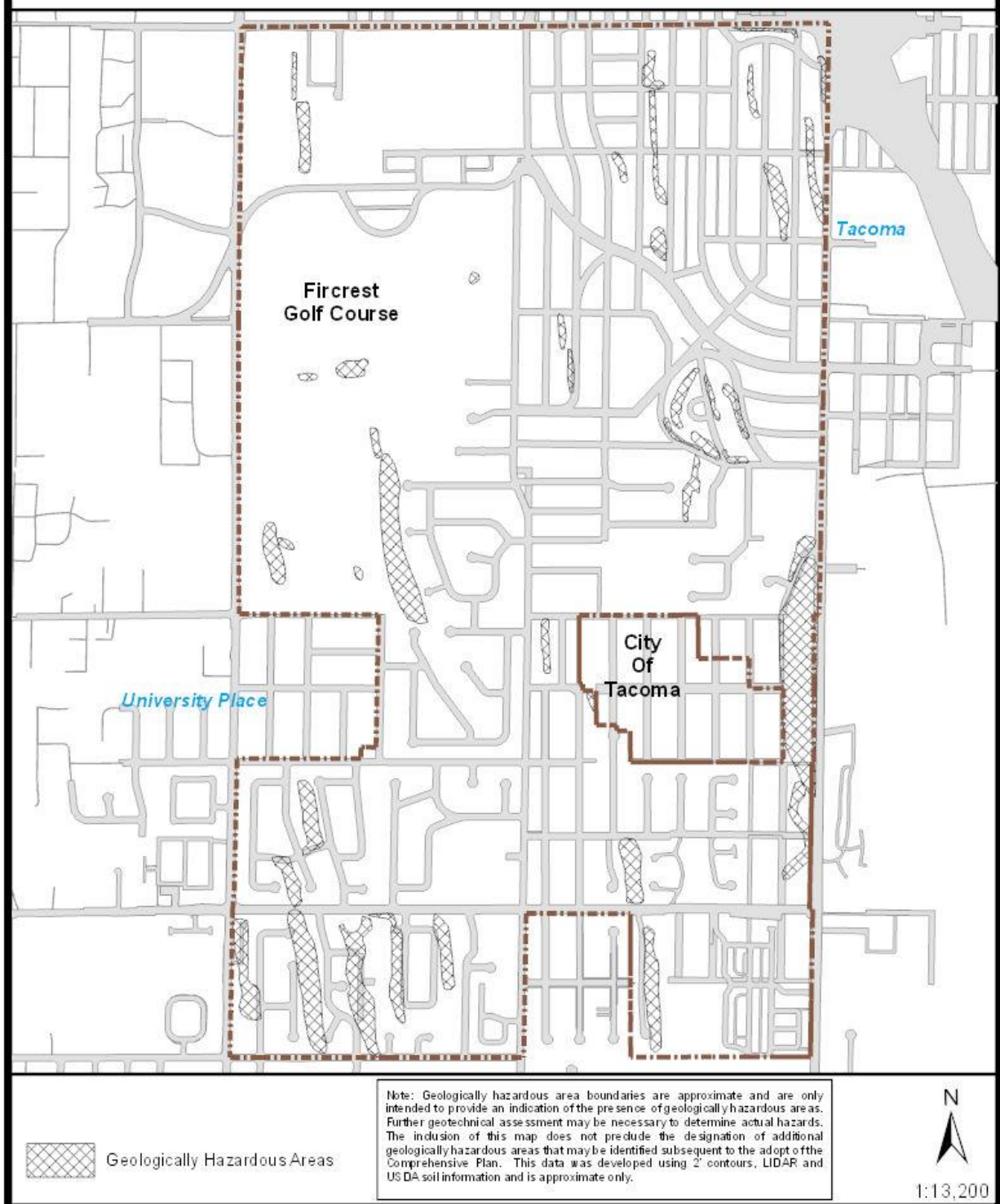
**Figure LU-3** identifies lands for which the presence of wetlands, fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas, and frequently flooded areas is indicated. **Figure LU-4** identifies lands for which the presence of geologically hazardous areas is indicated. Areas with a critical recharging effect on aquifers used for potable water are not illustrated because the entire city is within the Clover-Chambers Creek Groundwater Management Area, which has a critical recharging effect on the Tacoma and Clover-Chambers Creek Aquifers. The inclusion of these maps in the Land Use Element does not preclude the designation of additional critical areas that may be identified subsequent to the adoption of this plan.

The City of Fircrest adopted interim development regulations for critical areas in February 1993. These regulations were updated in 2005 to incorporate the best available science and special consideration for anadromous fisheries as required by RCW 36.70A.172. The city subsequently updated these regulations in 2015 to ensure consistency with state law as part of the mandatory GMA Update for comprehensive plans and development regulations.

The GMA also requires the designation of natural resource lands of long-term commercial significance. These areas include forest, agriculture, and mineral resource lands. Natural resource lands are not found within the City of.



**Figure LU-4  
Geologically Hazardous Areas**





## PLANNED LAND USE IN ADJACENT JURISDICTIONS

**Figure LU-5** shows planned land use in areas adjacent to Fircrest. Future land use designations for adjacent lands west and south of Fircrest are based on those indicated in the *Pierce County Comprehensive Plan* and the *University Place Comprehensive Plan*. Designations for the areas east and north of Fircrest are based on the *City of Tacoma Generalized Land Use Plan*.

Adjacent land use designations are summarized in this Comprehensive Plan to identify potential inconsistencies and incompatibilities with Fircrest land uses. Fircrest will coordinate with other jurisdictions as appropriate to address consistency and compatibility issues.

### MAJOR CHARACTERISTICS -- ADJACENT LAND USE DESIGNATIONS

**Table LU-3** summarizes the primary permitted uses for each land use designation shown on **Figure LU-5** and identifies the most similar land use designation in Fircrest.

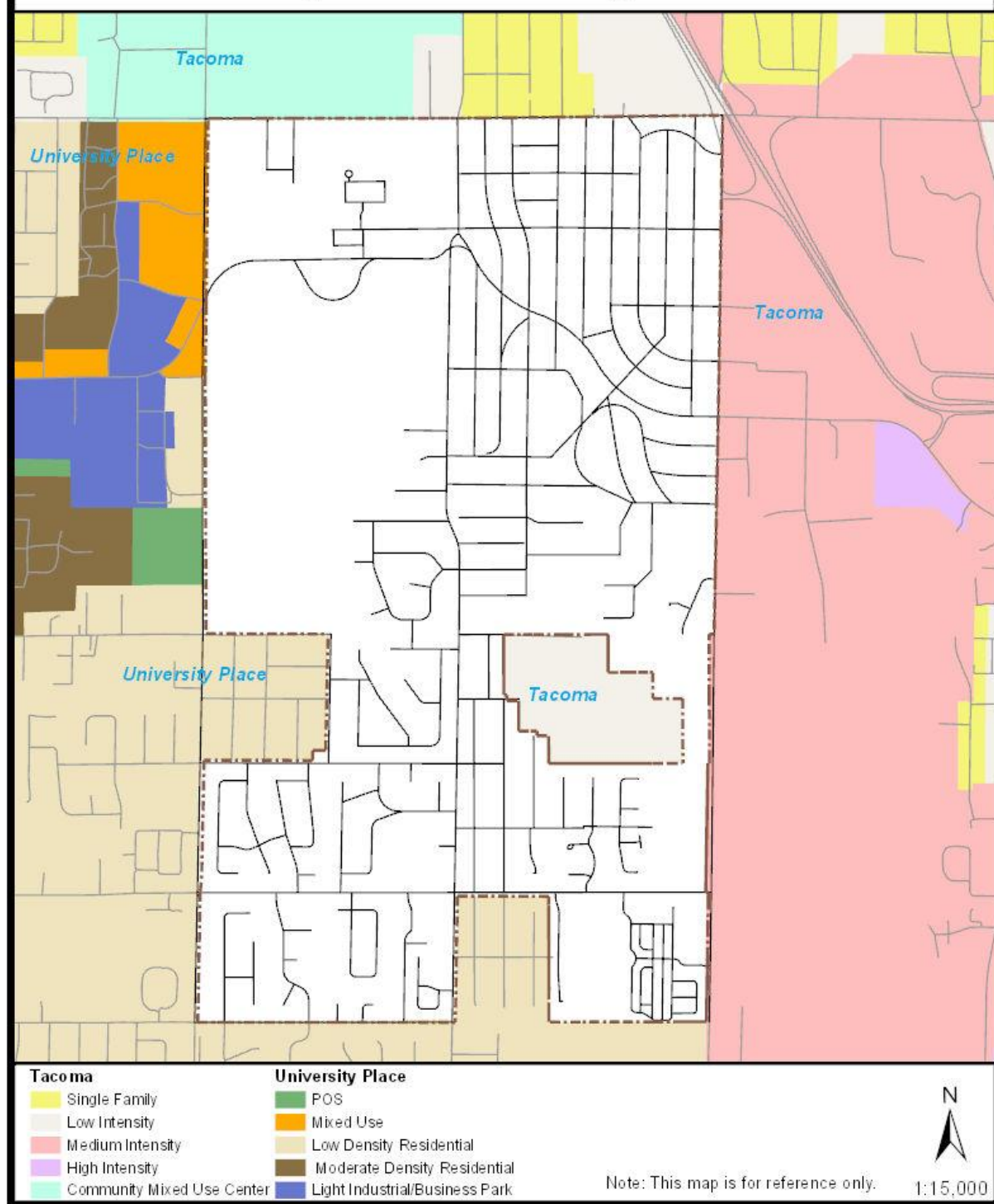
**Table LU-3**

Permitted by Pierce County and City of University Place (UP) Designations	Permitted by City of Tacoma Designations	Permitted by City of Fircrest Designations
Pierce County Moderate Density Single Family: -- Single family dwellings, accessory dwelling units, and duplexes -- up to 4 dwelling units/acre in areas without sewer, up to 6 dwelling units/acre in areas with sewer UP Low Density Residential: -- Base density of 4 to 6 single-family dwelling units/acre, with range of 6 to 9 dwelling units/acre allowed through small lot development process	Single Family Detached Housing Areas: -- Single family dwellings; accessory dwelling units and limited duplex, triplex, or small-scale multifamily with a maximum density of 8 dwelling units/acre Low Intensity: -- Same uses as above with a maximum density of 15 dwellings/acre	Low Density Residential: -- Single family dwellings, accessory dwelling units, and existing duplexes and multifamily – 4 to 6 dwelling units/acre depending on zoning classification  Medium Density Residential: -- Single family dwellings, accessory dwelling units, duplexes, and multifamily – 8 to 10 dwelling units/acre depending on zoning classification
UP Moderate Density Residential: -- Base density of 35-55 multifamily dwelling units/acre -- Density bonus to 40-60 dwelling units/acre with affordable housing component	Medium Intensity: -- Multifamily dwellings with a maximum density of 45 dwelling units/acre	High Density Residential: -- Multifamily dwellings – 20 to 30 dwelling units/acre depending on zoning classification

Permitted by Pierce County and City of University Place (UP) Designations	Permitted by City of Tacoma Designations	Permitted by City of Fircrest Designations
UP Mixed-Use, Mixed-Use Office, Neighborhood Commercial, Community Commercial, and Town Center: -- Mix of retail, office, service and multifamily residential uses	Community Center: -- Concentration of commercial and/or institutional development that serves many neighborhoods and includes a unique attraction that draws people from throughout the city. -- Not directly equivalent in that it is intended to accommodate Tacoma Community College.	Commercial Mixed-Use: -- Mix of retail, office, service and multifamily residential uses  Neighborhood Commercial: -- Mix of neighborhood-scale retail, office, service and multifamily residential uses
	Low Intensity: -- Neighborhood-serving public and quasi-public facilities such as parks, schools, fire stations, libraries, and churches plus open spaces such as the Tacoma Holding Basin	Public and quasi-public facility: -- Neighborhood- and community-serving public and quasi-public facilities such as parks, schools, government buildings, and churches permitted if compatible with surrounding development
UP Light Industrial – Business Park: -- Light and clean industries, storage and warehousing, auto repair, limited retail, offices, and entertainment uses	Medium Intensity: -- Commercial and industrial uses	Commercial Mixed-Use: -- small-scale light industrial uses within Mixed-Use development



**Figure LU-5  
Adjacent Land Use Designations**



## **CHAPTER 4**

# ***HOUSING ELEMENT***





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## INTRODUCTION

Housing conditions have a direct impact on Fircrest's quality of life. Residents place a high value on having a safe and comfortable place to live -- a home that is affordable and located within a neighborhood that is attractive and conveniently located. These factors must be taken into consideration when planning for housing needs to ensure that Fircrest's high quality of life is maintained. Today, factors such as an aging population, changes in family size and composition, and shifting generational preferences for different housing types and neighborhood designs and functions are contributing to changes in the social and economic factors relating to housing choices. This Element addresses the major housing issues facing the City of Fircrest over a 20-year planning horizon, 2015-2035. These issues include:

- Preserving and enhancing the special qualities of existing residential neighborhoods;
- Encouraging the availability of housing that is affordable for all economic segments of the community;
- Increasing the range of housing choices that are reflective of rapidly changing demographics, preferences and needs; and
- Accommodating an increase in population and housing units consistent with Pierce County GMA population and housing targets for 2030 and the PSRC VISION 2040 Regional Growth Strategy, through support of innovative, high quality design that is functional -- as well as livable.

## STATE AND REGIONAL PLANNING CONTEXT

Fircrest's efforts to plan for its housing needs must fit within the planning framework established through the enactment of state, regional and county laws, directives, goals and policies.

At the state level, the Growth Management Act requires local jurisdictions to adopt housing elements that are consistent with statewide goals and objectives.

At the regional level, the Puget Sound Regional Council has established multi-county housing policies in VISION 2040 that encourage local jurisdictions to adopt best housing practices and innovative techniques to advance the provision of affordable, healthy and safe housing for all the Puget Sound region's residents.

At the county level, the Pierce County Countywide Planning Policy establishes a countywide framework to ensure that municipal and county comprehensive plans are consistent.

Fircrest must comply with GMA requirements and consider the guidelines and policies of the other documents that have already been endorsed or accepted by the City Council. Consistency at all levels – state, regional and county – is required in order for the City to qualify for loans and grants for transportation and other infrastructure improvements.

### ***GROWTH MANAGEMENT ACT***

The Washington State Growth Management Act Housing Goal mandates that counties and cities encourage the availability of affordable housing to all economic segments of the population, promote a variety of residential densities and housing types, and encourage preservation of the existing housing stock. [RCW 36.70A.020(4)]

The GMA also identifies mandatory and optional plan elements. [RCW 36.70A.070 and .080]. A Housing Element is a mandatory plan element that must, at a minimum, include the following [RCW 36.70A.070(2)]:

- An inventory and analysis of existing and projected housing needs that identifies the number of housing units necessary to manage projected growth;
- A statement of goals, policies and objectives, and mandatory provisions for the preservation, improvement and development of housing, including single-family residences;
- Identification of sufficient land for housing, including, but not limited to, government assisted housing, housing for low income families, manufactured housing, multi-family housing, group homes, and foster care facilities; and
- Adequate provisions for existing and projected housing needs of all economic segments of the community.

Since the Comprehensive Plan must be an internally consistent document [RCW 36.70A.070] and all Plan Elements must be consistent with the future land use map prepared as part of the required Land Use Element [RCW 36.70A.070], these other Plan Elements dictate, to a great extent, what is in the Housing Element.

Thus, the Land Use Element, relying upon estimates of future population, growth, average numbers of persons per household, and land use densities, indicates how much (and where) land needs to be made available to accommodate the identified housing needs. The Capital Facilities, Transportation and Utilities Elements indicate when and how public facilities will be provided to accommodate the projected housing, by type, density and location. And, the Community Character Element contains policies that support infill development and redevelopment that will be sensitive to surrounding residential areas and help enhance the quality of neighborhoods – consistent with Housing Element policies. A full understanding of Fircrest's housing policies and plans should include an examination of these other Elements of the Comprehensive Plan.

### ***VISION 2040 MULTICOUNTY PLANNING POLICIES (MPPs)***

The overarching goal of *VISION 2040*'s housing policies is for the Puget Sound region to “preserve, improve, and expand its housing stock to provide a range of affordable,

healthy, and safe housing choices to every resident. The region will continue to promote fair and equal access to housing for all people.”

*VISION 2040*’s housing policies respond to changing demographics and the need to diversify the region’s housing supply. The policies address housing diversity and affordability, achieving a jobs-housing balance, focusing housing in centers, and innovations in housing.

*VISION 2040* policies place an emphasis on preserving and expanding housing affordability, incorporating quality and environmentally responsible design in homebuilding, and offering healthy and safe home choices for all the region’s residents. Goals and policies in the Land Use, Housing and Community Character Elements of this Plan address these topics.

### **PIERCE COUNTY COUNTYWIDE PLANNING POLICIES (CPPs)**

Pierce County Countywide Planning Policies is a written policy statement that establishes a countywide framework from which county and municipal comprehensive plans are developed and adopted. The framework is intended to ensure that municipal and county comprehensive plans are consistent.

The GMA’s housing affordability requirements are expounded upon in greater detail in Pierce County’s *Countywide Planning Policy* on the “*Need for Affordable Housing for All Economic Segments of The Population and Parameters for its Distribution*”.

This Countywide Planning Policy provides goals, objectives, policies, and strategies relating to:

- Determining the extent of the need for housing for all economic segments of the population, both existing and projected, over the planning period.
- Exploring and identifying opportunities to reutilize and redevelop existing parcels where rehabilitation of the buildings is not cost-effective.
- Encouraging the availability of housing affordable to all economic segments of the population.
- Supporting efforts by the County and each municipality in the County to establish a countywide program by an organization capable of long-term consistent coordination of regional housing planning, design, development, funding, and housing management.
- Meeting the City’s affordable and moderate-income housing needs goal by utilizing a range of strategies that will result in the preservation of existing, and production of new, affordable and moderate-income housing that is safe and healthy.
- Working with the County, and each municipality in the County, to cooperatively maximize available local, state, and federal funding opportunities and private resources in the development of affordable housing for households.
- Exploring and identifying opportunities to reduce land costs for non-profit and for-profit developers to build affordable housing.
- Periodically monitoring and assessing the City’s success in meeting the housing needs to accommodate its 20-year population allocation.



## LOCAL PLANNING CONTEXT

### **HOUSING VISION**

#### ***Looking ahead 20 years...***

Fircrest is treasured for its character, natural assets, friendly and welcoming atmosphere, diversity, safety and quiet settings.

*Fircrest includes a broad choice of housing types at a range of prices, including affordable homes. During the past 20 years, there has been much more variety in the types and prices of newly constructed homes, including more cottages, accessory dwelling units, attached homes, live-work units and other smaller single-family homes. New homes blend with existing homes and the natural environment, retaining valued characteristics of neighborhoods as they continue to evolve.*

*While single-family neighborhoods have remained stable, the number and variety of multifamily housing choices have increased, especially in mixed-use developments along the Mildred and 19<sup>th</sup> Street corridors. More people live in close proximity to employment opportunities, small-scale shopping and services, connections to parks and trails, transit and other amenities.*

*Through careful planning and community involvement, changes and innovation in housing styles and development have been embraced by the whole community. Residents enjoy a feeling of connection to their neighborhoods and to the community as a whole.*

### **MAJOR HOUSING ISSUES**

One of the challenges facing Fircrest is that over the past few decades, the average size of single-family dwellings has increased dramatically at the same time that household size has decreased significantly. Meanwhile, it is estimated that 50-60% of the housing market today is comprised of singles, single parents, seniors and starter families.

The most common type of housing being constructed in Fircrest today, however, is a relatively large, detached single-family dwelling on an existing platted lot within an existing low-density neighborhood. While there is clearly a demand for this type of housing in the area, it does not meet the needs or match the preferences of a large portion of the market, namely the four housing market groups noted above. Many people who fall within these groups do not have any desire to live in a detached single-family dwelling on a moderate to large lot, even if they could afford to do so. However, the housing choices currently available to them and for some other segments of the market are quite limited.

Recent indications on the national level are that home sizes have begun declining somewhat in response to higher energy costs, more expensive construction materials, a slightly greener perspective toward consumption of resources, continued decreases in household size, and other factors. However, were this trend to continue or even

accelerate in the future, it would not begin to address the mismatch between what is being constructed, what is allowed by regulation, and what may be preferred by an increasingly large share of the market.

There is an affordability gap for both renters and homeowners in Fircrest. The affordability gap is especially pronounced for very low-income, low-income and moderate-income households. The people in the low- and moderate-income categories are vital members of the workforce. They include office clerks, security guards, bank tellers, teachers, legal secretaries, pharmacy technicians, and firefighters. Few homes are available at the prices that are affordable to low- and moderate-income families. Consequently, these families experience financial hardships because they are often forced to pay more than 30 percent of their monthly income on housing costs.

Because few large undeveloped tracts of land remain available for new residential development, the City will need to rely on the maintenance of existing housing stock, construction of new infill housing on smaller lots and underutilized properties, and redevelopment of existing properties to meet some of its housing needs.

Current residents' desires to maintain or enhance the existing character of single-family neighborhoods will need to be respected. A strong community preference exists to maintain current planned densities within these low density neighborhoods. However, development policies and regulations enacted to support PSRC's VISION 2040 goals and objectives -- by increasing residential densities in some High Density Residential and Community Commercial designation areas -- may lead to increased traffic volumes and associated noise, air quality, and safety impacts in nearby single-family residential areas. Potential impacts will need to be mitigated through careful planning, design and construction.

Residents are concerned about the incursion of commercial development into residential areas. The City should refine its regulatory tools as needed to more effectively minimize impacts that could result from additional commercial development in areas where a transition to more intensive use is supported by this Comprehensive Plan. As the City's population ages, the demand for housing for people with special needs will increase. The City will need to encourage fair and equal access to housing in accordance with state and federal law.

Finally, the City has been assigned population and housing targets by the Pierce County Council for 2030 consistent with the PSRC VISION 2040 Regional Growth Strategy. This action directs Fircrest to accommodate a population of 6,950 and a housing unit count of 3,351 in 2030. As the City had a population of 6,497 and 2,847 housing units in 2010, this would represent a population increase of about 7% and a housing unit increase of 6% over a two-decade period. Fircrest will need to be creative and comprehensive in its approaches to accommodating this increase while preserving the desirable character of existing single-family neighborhoods.

## GOALS AND POLICIES

This Element contains the housing goals and policies for the City of Fircrest. The following goals reflect the general direction of the City, while the policies provide more detail about the steps needed to meet the intent of each goal. Discussions provide background information, may offer typical examples, and clarify intent. References to specific Countywide Planning Policies relating to affordable housing (CPP AH) and summarized above are intended to document this Element's consistency with these provisions.

### ***NEIGHBORHOOD PRESERVATION***

The policy intent is to apply a number of community values in support of approaches that may be used to preserve and enhance existing residential neighborhoods.

#### **GOAL H1**

#### **Preserve and enhance existing residential neighborhoods.**

##### **Policy H1.1**

Effectively implement zoning regulations, including design standards and guidelines, to help support the stability of established residential neighborhoods.

**Discussion:** Zoning classifications protect areas from encroachment by dissimilar residential densities and commercial uses, which may create noise, traffic, and other impacts. By creating intermediate zones of activity, they enable a gradual transition between uses. Where Comprehensive Plan policies and zoning classifications support the introduction of a range of housing types into existing neighborhoods, the City should enforce design standards and guidelines to ensure that new development is well designed, integrated compatibly into the neighborhood context, and contributes to an enhanced community aesthetic.

##### **Policy H1.2**

Encourage repair and maintenance of existing housing.

**Discussion:** As housing ownership is transferred or if housing conditions deteriorate, existing affordable units may either be converted to more expensive homes or may gradually become unsuitable for occupation. As housing ages, the need for repair and maintenance becomes more common. Neglected housing can also negatively affect a neighborhood's property values. The City has a substantial stock of small to moderate-size bungalows, cottages, split level and rambler style homes built through the 1970s. This housing represents nearly 60 percent of the City's owner-occupied housing stock. Maintaining this existing housing in good condition can support neighborhood stability and be a cost-effective way of providing affordable housing opportunities within Fircrest.

The City should provide information to citizens about existing programs that offer maintenance and repair assistance. The City should work with entities such as Paint Tacoma-Pierce Beautiful to explore whether services might be expanded to include Fircrest. This program organizes volunteer crews to paint the exterior of homes of low-income, elderly and disabled homeowners. The City should enforce regulations that require

maintenance of housing in safe and sanitary conditions. The City should also support Block Watch activities to reduce crime in support of neighborhood stability.

### **Policy H1.3**

Promote home ownership opportunities for people at various income levels.

**Discussion:** The City's housing vision statement encourages housing choice including a mix of home ownership opportunities in the community. Home ownership helps foster stable neighborhoods and supports investments in the community as a whole. Maintaining existing older housing stock and encouraging the development of small lot attached and detached housing, townhouses, live/work units, cottage housing, multi-family condominium units within mixed use projects, and cluster housing can provide more opportunities for affordable home ownership – thereby supporting neighborhood stability.

### **Policy H1.4**

Encourage residential development in areas that are already adequately served by utilities and transportation.

**Discussion:** Opportunities exist for infill development on vacant lots in single-family, mixed-use and multifamily neighborhoods. Such development is generally desirable since the utilities, services, and street improvements are already in place and available. The cost of this housing is generally lower than in completely new subdivisions. Infill development may enhance the stability of existing neighborhoods if it is appropriately designed and well-constructed.

## ***HOUSING CHOICE***

The policy intent is to promote a wider range of housing choices to meet the needs of a diverse and changing population, especially housing types that help meet the needs for more affordable housing.

## **GOAL H2**

**Achieve a mix of housing types to meet the needs of diverse households at various income levels.**

### **Policy H2.1**

Support and encourage innovative and creative responses, through the use of appropriate incentives, to meet Fircrest's needs for housing affordability and diversity for a variety of household sizes, incomes, types and ages.

**Discussion:** Examples of innovative housing include, but are not limited to: cottage housing, small lot development, live/work units, condominiums in vertical mixed use buildings, cluster housing and attached units (two or three units per building) that are designed to fit the general character and bulk of other single-family homes in the neighborhood in which the new housing is located.

Increased housing choices, especially for smaller households, will help the overall housing supply better match the needs of an increasingly diverse population. Fircrest's development

regulations are intended to allow development of housing that will satisfy varied consumer preferences.

The City has already taken some initial strides in this area through allowing increased housing densities in traditional community design neighborhoods and a wider variety of housing, such as accessory dwelling units, in existing single-family neighborhoods. As new and different housing styles become available, consideration should be given to how they might fit within existing neighborhoods to provide increased affordability for low- and moderate-income families and increased options for seniors and small households. Having these choices will help maintain economic viability and community stability by providing housing choices for people of all ages and stages of life, which could allow changing households to remain in the same home or neighborhood.

### **Policy H2.2**

Encourage increased residential density in commercial mixed-use and multi-family zones, especially those located within the Mildred Street and 19<sup>th</sup> Street corridors, subject to compliance with appropriate development and design standards. Prohibit new detached single-family development in these areas to promote more intensive use of commercial mixed-use and multi-family properties.

**Discussion:** Residential development in commercial mixed-use zones provides a lifestyle that many people find desirable. Transportation costs and commuting time can be minimized, by residing in areas near employment and services. Businesses also benefit from consumers who live in the immediate vicinity and who may frequent the business establishment during the traditionally "off" evening hours. These same residences can absorb some of the City's anticipated future population growth. The result will be less pressure for higher density development in single-family zones.

### **Policy H2.3**

Permit accessory dwelling units in conjunction with single-family structures.

**Discussion:** Accessory dwelling units (ADU's) are intended to increase the affordable housing options. They may provide supplementary income, offer semi-independent living for people with special needs, and provide for increased personal and home security. ADU's should be designed to maintain the single-family character of the property in which they are located. Modifications to the exterior of an existing home to accommodate an ADU should be architecturally consistent with the existing design. Detached ADUs should be designed to be architecturally compatible with the principal residence.

### **Policy H2.4**

Allow manufactured homes in all zones where detached single-family residential development is permitted.

**Discussion:** State law precludes local jurisdictions from regulating manufactured homes differently from site-built homes. Manufactured homes should comply with all Fircrest design standards applicable to all other homes within the neighborhood in which the manufactured home is to be located.

**Policy H2.5**

Prevent discrimination and encourage fair and equitable access to housing for all persons in accordance with state and federal law.

**Discussion:** The City has a diverse population and supports equal access to housing for everyone.

***HOUSING AFFORDABILITY***

The policy intent is to increase the supply of housing that is affordable to residents of the community in a manner generally consistent with Countywide Planning Policies on affordable housing.

**GOAL H3**

**Encourage the availability of housing affordable to all economic segments of the population.**

**Discussion:** A complex challenge facing the City is to provide appropriate housing opportunities for all economic segments of the community. The quality of any city is defined, in large part, by whether families and individuals are able to find the type and size of housing that fits their household needs at a price they can afford.

Communities that offer a range of housing types and affordability provide more opportunity for families and individuals to live where they choose. This allows workers to live near their jobs, older family members to continue to live in the communities where they raised their families, and younger adults to establish new households. When housing options are provided close to where people work, there are increased opportunities for people to participate in community and family activities.

**Policy H3.1**

Fircrest shall determine the extent of the need for housing for all economic segments of the population, both existing and projected for its jurisdiction over the planning period – consistent with CPP AH1.

**Discussion:** An analysis of the community's population, economic, social, housing and financial characteristics provides some of the basis for assessing housing needs. Cost-burdened households, or those households paying more than 30 percent of income for housing, represent a large share of the City's population. Nearly one-third of owner households, and two-fifths of renter households, are considered cost burdened.

The US Census Bureau classifies nearly 8 percent of the City's population as having a disability. Likewise, nearly one-quarter of the population age 65 and older – a substantial proportion – is classified as having a disability. Households with one or more individuals with disabilities may be further cost-burdened.

For the purpose of this and related housing policies, the following definitions apply:

- "Affordable housing" means housing affordable to households earning up to 80 percent of the countywide median income.

- “Low income households” means households earning 80 percent or less of the countywide median income.
- “Moderate income households” means households earning 80 to 120 percent of the countywide median income.
- “Special needs housing” means supportive housing opportunities for populations with specialized requirements, such as the physically and mentally disabled, the elderly, people with medical conditions, the homeless, victims of domestic violence, foster youth, refugees, and others.
- “Housing affordability” is a measure of household’s ability to afford housing, whether ownership or rental property, based on the percentage of gross monthly income that goes toward housing expenses, regardless of income level. For ownership housing, this percentage typically includes taxes, insurance and other related housing expenses. For rental housing, a utility allowance is included in the 30 percent figure. A household in which housing costs exceed 30 percent of gross monthly income is considered to be “cost burdened”; if costs exceed 50 percent of gross monthly income, the household is severely cost burdened. Another measure, the H+T Index, offers an expanded view of affordability -- one that combines housing and transportation costs and sets the benchmark at no more than 45 percent of household income.

**Policy H3.2**

Explore and identify opportunities to reutilize and redevelop existing parcels where rehabilitation of the buildings is not cost-effective – consistent with CPP AH2, provided the same is consistent with the countywide policy on historic, archaeological, and cultural preservation.

**Discussion:** The City, land owners and developers should continue to communicate on a regular basis regarding redevelopment opportunities. The Planning and Building Department’s pre-application review process may be used to facilitate initial review of potential projects with respect to opportunities, challenges and obstacles.

**Policy H3.3**

Encourage the availability of housing affordable to all economic segments of the population – consistent with CPP AH3.

**Policy H3.4**

Encourage the development of housing affordable to low-to-moderate income households in a manner that reflects Fircrest’s unique demographic characteristics, Comprehensive Plan vision and policies, development and infrastructure capacity, location and proximity to job centers, local workforce, and access to transportation -- consistent with CPP AH3.2.1.

**Discussion:** Success in achieving this directive will increase housing diversity and affordability, improve the City’s jobs-housing balance, support the creation of new or rehabilitation of existing housing along the Mildred and 19<sup>th</sup> Street corridors, and support innovations in housing.

Consistent with the community’s unique demographics, Comprehensive Plan vision and policies, existing and projected market forces, development and infrastructure capacity, local workforce characteristics, and access to transportation, the development of housing

affordable to low-to-moderate income households will mainly occur in areas of the community located outside of existing low density single-family neighborhoods.

**Policy H3.5**

Achieve a minimum of 25 percent of the Pierce County 2030 growth population allocation for Fircrest through affordable housing, consistent with CPP AH-3.3.

**Policy H3.6**

Support efforts by Pierce County and other municipalities in the County to establish a countywide program by an organization capable of long-term consistent coordination of regional housing planning, design, development, funding, and housing management – consistent with CPP AH4.

**Discussion:** Fircrest should be represented in directing the work program and priorities of the organization to the extent feasible.

**Policy H3.7**

Fircrest should plan to meet its affordable and moderate-income housing needs goal by utilizing a range of strategies that will result in the preservation of existing, and production of new, affordable and moderate-income housing that is safe and healthy -- consistent with CPP AH5.

**Discussion:** Techniques to preserve existing affordable and moderate-income housing stock may include repair, maintenance, and/or rehabilitation and redevelopment in order to extend the useful life of existing affordable housing units consistent with CPP AH5.1.

When feasible, the City should seek and secure state funds such as the Housing Trust Fund, and federal subsidy funds such as Community Development Block Grant, HOME Investment Partnership, and other sources to implement housing preservation programs consistent with CPP AH5.1.1. The City should promote the use of reasonable measures and innovative techniques (e.g., clustering, accessory dwelling units, cottage housing, small lot developments and mixed use) to stimulate new higher density affordable and moderate-income housing stock on mixed use- and residentially-zoned vacant and underutilized parcels consistent with CPP AH5.2, while ensuring compatibility with Fircrest's community character.

To promote affordable housing and ensure access to services and jobs, the City should consider the availability and proximity of public transportation, governmental and commercial services necessary to support residents' needs consistent with CPP AH5.3.

**Policy H3.8**

Provide incentives to developers and builders of affordable housing for moderate- and low-income households -- consistent with CPP AH5.4.

**Discussion:** Consistent with CPP AH5.4, the City should encourage property owners and housing developers and builders to take advantage of the opportunities provided by the City's innovative housing provisions and increased densities to build a variety of housing types that help meet the demand for more affordable, yet high quality, housing.



Alternative development regulations that reduce development cost in exchange for housing that is ensured to be affordable should be explored -- consistent with CPP AH5.4.1. The City may consider providing financial incentives -- consistent with CPP AH5.4.2, and technical assistance to affordable housing developers -- consistent with CPP AH5.4.3.

**Policy H3.9**

Consider inclusionary zoning measures or other creative regulatory measures, such as incentives and bonuses, as a condition of major rezones and development -- consistent with CPP AH5.5.

**Discussion:** As part of any rezone that increases residential capacity, the City should consider requiring a portion of units, up to 25% of the total number of units within future developments, to be affordable to low- to moderate-income households. Such units should be designed to have an exterior appearance comparable to that of market rate units.

**Policy H3.10**

Work with Pierce County and other municipalities and entities in the County to cooperatively maximize available local, state, and federal funding opportunities and private resources in the development of affordable housing for households -- consistent with CPP AH6.

**Discussion:** The City should jointly explore opportunities to develop a countywide funding mechanism and the potential for both voter-approved measures (bond or levy), and nonvoter approved sources of revenue to support the development of affordable housing consistent with CPP AH6.1.

State legislative changes to give local jurisdictions the authority to provide tax relief to developers of affordable housing should be supported consistent with CPP AH6.2.

The City should explore opportunities to dedicate revenues from sales of publicly owned properties, including tax title sales, to affordable housing consistent with CPP AH6.3.

The feasibility of applying additional resources to facilitate the development of affordable housing through an entity such as a new countywide organization (based on inter-local agreements), a county-wide land trust, the Pierce County Housing Authority, and expansion of existing nonprofit partnerships should be explored by the City consistent with CPP AH6.4.

**Policy H3.11**

Explore and identify opportunities to reduce land costs for non-profit and for-profit developers to build affordable housing -- consistent with CPP AH7.

**Discussion:** The City should explore options to dedicate or make available below market rate surplus land for affordable housing projects consistent with CPP AH7.1.

The City should also explore and identify opportunities to assemble, reutilize, and redevelop existing parcels consistent with CPP AH7.2.

Development standards and regulations should be periodically reviewed and streamlined if warranted to advance their public benefit, provide flexibility, and minimize costs to housing consistent with CPP AH7.3.

**Policy H3.12**

Periodically monitor and assess the City's success in meeting housing needs to accommodate its 20-year population allocation – consistent with CPP AH8.

**Discussion:** The City should utilize the available data and analyses provided by federal, state, and local sources to monitor its progress in meeting housing demand as part of any required GMA comprehensive plan update process consistent with CPP AH8.1.

The City should support countywide efforts to periodically monitor, evaluate and determine if countywide needs are being adequately met consistent with CPP AH8.2.

The quantity of affordable housing units created, preserved, or rehabilitated within Fircrest since the previous required update should be made available consistent with CPP AH8.3. The City should establish minimum densities for future subdivision development within its single-family districts to help ensure that such development is generally consistent with the density assumptions relied upon for the City's 20-year population and housing allocations.

**Policy H3.13**

Ensure that policies, codes and procedures do not create barriers to affordable housing opportunities.

**Discussion:** Regulatory barriers can increase housing costs anywhere from 10 to 35 percent and, in many cases, can even prevent its construction. Sometimes existing regulations, procedures or practices can increase the cost of housing without a corresponding public benefit, and sometimes these increased costs may not be recognized by a jurisdiction. The City should strive to increase benefits to the community while lowering housing costs by periodically reviewing, at a minimum, the following areas for possible revision or amendment:

- Comprehensive Plan policies
- Zoning and subdivision regulations
- Infrastructure requirements
- Development standards
- Building and fire codes
- Administrative procedures
- Processing times
- Fees and exactions
- Inspection procedures

**Policy H3.14**

Craft and implement regulations and procedures to provide a high degree of certainty and predictability to applicants and the community-at-large to minimize unnecessary time delays in the review of residential permit applications, while still maintaining opportunities for public involvement and review. Encourage the use of

innovative development review processes to promote sustainability, flexibility in development standards and affordability in housing construction.

**Discussion:** The City is responsible for establishing land use policies and development regulations that can encourage a variety of housing types and affordability levels. Through its zoning code and permitting procedures, Fircrest can directly and indirectly impact several housing cost components, such as land, fees, and time of development. The challenge for the City is to balance the provision of public needs (e.g., safe streets, environmental protection) and not unduly impact the cost of housing. Although City land use policies and site standard regulations can be used to affect the supply of housing affordable to all income levels, its effect will be most beneficial to moderate- and median-income households.

### **Policy H3.15**

Improve social, emotional and mental wellness by supporting residential stability and efforts to improve the ability of residents to live independently in affordable, accessible and service-enriched housing.

**Discussion:** Affordable housing may improve health outcomes by freeing up family resources for nutritious food and health care expenditures. By providing families with greater residential stability, affordable housing can reduce stress and related adverse health outcomes. Stable, affordable homeownership may positively impact mental health by increasing the control that homeowners have over their physical environment and minimizing the disruptions associated with frequent, unwanted moves. Well-constructed and managed affordable housing developments can reduce health problems associated with poor quality housing by limiting exposure to allergens, neurotoxins, and other dangers.

Stable, affordable housing may improve health outcomes for individuals with chronic illnesses and others by providing a stable and efficient platform for the ongoing delivery of health care and reducing the incidence of certain forms of risky behavior. By providing families with access to neighborhoods of opportunity, certain affordable housing strategies can reduce stress, increase access to amenities, and generate important health benefits. By alleviating crowding, affordable housing can reduce exposure to stressors and infectious disease, leading to improvements in physical and mental health. By allowing victims of domestic violence to escape abusive homes, affordable housing can lead to improvements in mental health and physical safety. Affordable and accessible housing linked to supportive services enables older adults and others with mobility limitations to remain in their homes.

## ***SPECIAL NEEDS HOUSING***

Special needs housing means supportive housing opportunities for populations with specialized requirements, such as the physically and mentally disabled, the elderly, people with medical conditions, the homeless, victims of domestic violence, foster youth, refugees, and others. The policy intent is to support cooperative efforts to help meet the needs of an increasing number of citizens who require such housing.

## **GOAL H4**

**Support opportunities for the provision of special needs housing, including group homes, assisted care facilities, nursing homes and other facilities.**

**Discussion:** Special needs citizens include those people who require some assistance in their day-to-day living, such as the mentally ill, people with developmental or physical disabilities, victims of domestic violence, substance abusers, people living with AIDS, youth at risk, veterans and the frail elderly. Over a half of the senior population is over 75, and this age group is more likely to be frail and need housing with services. In some cases, homeless persons, as well as pregnant and parenting youth or young adults, also require special needs housing. Family living situations, institutional settings, social service programs and assisted housing all serve a portion of those with special needs.

**Policy H4.1**

Work with agencies, private developers and nonprofit organizations to locate housing in Fircrest intended to serve Fircrest's special needs populations, particularly those with challenges related to age, health or disability.

**Policy H4.2**

Encourage and support the development of emergency, transitional and permanent housing with appropriate on-site services for persons with special needs.

**Policy H4.3**

Support actions to secure grants and loans tied to the provision of special needs housing by agencies, private developers and nonprofit organizations.

**Policy H4.4**

Encourage the provision of a sufficient supply of special needs housing – consistent with CPP AH3.4. Such housing should avoid the creation of significant impacts from inappropriate scale and design. Some clustering of special needs housing may be appropriate if proximity to public transportation, medical facilities or other essential services is necessary.

**Policy H4.5**

Ensure development regulations allow for and have suitable provisions to accommodate a sufficient supply of housing opportunities for special needs populations in Fircrest.

**Policy H4.6**

Encourage a range of housing types for seniors affordable at a variety of incomes, such as independent living, various degrees of assisted living and skilled nursing care facilities. Strive to increase opportunities for seniors to live in.

**Policy H4.7**

Encourage and support accessible design and housing strategies that provide seniors the opportunity to remain in their own neighborhood as their housing needs change.

**Policy H4.8**

Support the strategic plan contained in the Consolidated Plan for Pierce County to increase the level of support for meeting the region's demand for special needs housing, as well as other types of affordable housing.

**Discussion:** The Consolidated Plan for Pierce County fulfills the requirement that recipients of certain funds administered by the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) create a plan describing how these funds will be expended over a five-year period. These funds are Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), Home Investment Partnership Program (HOME) and Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG). Pierce County and 19 of its cities, including Fircrest, have formed a funding partnership (Urban County), which receives funds each year from the federal government for housing and community development activities. These funds are intended to meet priority needs locally.

**Policy H4.9**

Work with other jurisdictions and health and social service organizations to develop a coordinated, regional approach to homelessness.

## HOUSING INVENTORY

The GMA requires the Housing Element to include an inventory to “*identify sufficient land for housing, including government-assisted housing, housing for low-income families, manufactured housing, multifamily housing, and group homes and foster care facilities*”. (RCW 36.70A.070(2)(c)).

This section identifies how much land currently is available for residential development in Fircrest. It demonstrates how the City will meet the 2030 population and housing unit allocations assigned to Fircrest by the Pierce County Council for GMA planning purposes. And, it summarizes the wide range of housing types allowed by City regulations.

### RESIDENTIAL LAND CAPACITY

Pierce County Ordinance No. 2011-36s establishes GMA population, housing unit and employment targets for cities, towns and unincorporated areas of Pierce County for 2030. These targets are based on allocations contained in VISION 2040, Office of Financial Management projections, actual growth trends, and regional, county and city policies.

Pierce County has assigned Fircrest a housing target of 3,351 units for 2030. According to the US Census Bureau, the City had a total of 2,847 housing units in 2010. The difference between existing units and the 2030 target represents 504 additional units over a two-decade period. The Pierce County Buildable Lands report (July 2014) identifies that an additional 40 displaced units need to be factored in to recognize that some of the City's underutilized parcels will be unavailable for redevelopment due to site-specific circumstances. As a result, the report states that Fircrest's 2030 housing need is 544 additional units. The Buildable Lands Report also states that current residential land capacity is 254 units. This capacity is 290 fewer units than needed to

meet the 2030 housing target. Therefore, the City has adopted a variety of approaches to increase its residential development capacity by 303 units, slightly in excess of the needed 290 units. These approaches are identified in the Land Use Element.

Since adoption of its first GMA Comprehensive Plan in 1996 and Land Development Code in 2000, the City's development policies and regulations have reflected the community's strong preference to maintain existing housing character and densities within its single-family residential neighborhoods. In order to accommodate additional growth consistent with the City's 2030 population and housing targets – without significantly increasing densities and changing housing types in these single-family neighborhoods, Fircrest intends to accommodate a substantial share of this growth through increased densities in its multi-family and commercial mixed use Plan designations and zones.

### **HOUSING TYPES SUPPORTED BY POLICIES AND REGULATIONS**

This Element's *housing choice*, *housing affordability*, and *special needs* housing goals and policies direct the City to accommodate and support the development of a mix of housing types to meet the needs of the City's residents for housing that is affordable, fits desired lifestyles and satisfies a variety of special needs. The City will consider amending its development regulations to allow a wider range of housing types at higher densities to increase choice and affordability. **Table H-1** below summarizes the housing types allowed by zoning classifications that permit residential uses.

**Table H-1**  
**Housing Types Allowed by Zone**

Zone	Detached SFD / Duplex / Family Group Home / ADU / Mfg.	Attached SFD / Duplex / Family Group Home	Small Lot / Cottage / Carriage / Two-Three Unit Home	Multi-family	Live-Work	Unit above Ground Floor of Vertical Mixed Use Building	Assisted Living / Nursing Home
R-4	X						X
R-4-C	X		X				X
R-6	X						X
R-8		X		X			X
R-10-TCD	X	X		X			X
R-20		X		X			X
R-30		X		X			X
NO						X	
NC						X	
CMU				X	X	X	
GC	X	X	X	X			

## HOUSING PROFILE

The GMA requires the Housing Element to provide information pertaining to the adequate provision for existing and projected housing needs for *all economic segments of the community*. (RCW 36.70A.070(2)(d)). This section presents demographic and housing characteristics for Fircrest that strongly influence the ability of individuals and families to secure housing in the community that meets their needs and is affordable.

These characteristics are summarized in the following tables:

- Table H-2 Population Characteristics – Age and Race
- Table H-3 Economic Characteristics – Household Income
- Table H-4 Economic Characteristics – Income Below Poverty Level
- Table H-5 Social Characteristics -- Household by Type
- Table H-6 Social Characteristics – Disability Status
- Table H-7 Housing Characteristics -- Occupancy and Tenure
- Table H-8 Housing Characteristics – Units in Structure
- Table H-9 Housing Characteristics – Year Structure Built
- Table H-10 Housing Characteristics – Home Value Owner Occupied Units
- Table H-11 Financial Characteristics – Monthly Owner Costs
- Table H-12 Financial Characteristics – Cost-Burdened Households -- Monthly Owner Costs as a Percentage of Household Income
- Table H-13 Financial Characteristics – Gross Rent
- Table H-14 Financial Characteristics -- Cost-Burdened Households -- Gross Rent as a Percentage of Household Income
- Table H-15 Financial Characteristics – Cost-Burdened Households -- Households Paying More Than 30 Percent of Income for Housing
- Table H-16 Financial Characteristics – Cost-Burdened Households -- Households Paying More Than 45 Percent of Income for Housing and Transportation Costs Combined

**Table H-2**  
**Population Characteristics – Age and Race**

	<b>2000</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>Observation</b>
<b>Population</b>	5,868	6,497	10.7% increase over decade
<b>Population % under 20</b>	25.0%	25.4%	Stable younger share of population
<b>Population % 55 and over</b>	31.1%	29.6%	Stable senior share of population
<b>Median Age</b>	41.8	41.2	Stable median age
<b>Race – White</b>	87.5%	78.9%	Decreasing share of population
<b>Race – Black/African American</b>	5.2%	7.0%	Increasing share of population
<b>Race – American Indian and Alaska Native</b>	0.6%	0.7%	Stable share of population
<b>Race – Asian</b>	2.7%	5.1%	Rapidly increasing share of population
<b>Race – Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander</b>	0.5%	0.5%	Stable share of population
<b>Race – Other</b>	0.5%	0.8%	Increasing share of population
<b>Race – Two or more</b>	3.1%	7.0%	Rapidly increasing share of population
<b>Hispanic or Latino of any race</b>	2.7%	4.6%	Rapidly increasing share of population
Source: U.S. Census 2000 and 2010			

Population grew at a moderate rate during 2000-2010. The age of the population, in terms of the younger (under age 20) cohort and senior (55 years and over) cohort remained stable. The population grew increasingly diverse, with the percentage of white population declining while the percentage of Black/African American, Asian, multi-race and Hispanic populations increased significantly.



**Table H-3  
Economic Characteristics – Household Income**

Household Income	1999	Percentage 1999	2012	Percentage 2012
Less than \$10,000	99	4.0%	89	3.4%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	112	4.5%	54	2.1%
\$15,000 to \$24,999	215	8.6%	194	7.5%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	285	11.4%	232	8.9%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	428	17.1%	318	12.2%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	612	24.5%	626	24.1%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	394	15.8%	380	14.6%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	305	12.2%	490	18.8%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	33	1.3%	140	5.4%
\$200,000 or more	16	0.6%	79	3.0%
	Median Household Income \$54,912		Median Household Income \$63,750	
	Median Family Income \$61,611		Median Family Income \$79,375	
	80% of Median Household Income \$43,930		80% of Median Household Income \$51,000	
Source: U.S. Census 2000 and U.S. Census American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates 2008-2012				

Household and family income increased substantially during 1999-2012. Median household income increased over 16 percent, and median family income increased nearly 29 percent.

**Table H-4  
Economic Characteristics – Income below Poverty Level**

	1999	2012
<b>All Families</b>	4.6%	2.2%
With related children under 18 years	7.6%	4.2%
With related children under 5 years	10.6%	X
With related children under 5 years <i>only</i>	X	0%
<b>Married-couple families</b>	X	1.3%
With related children under 18 years	X	2.8%
With related children under 5 years <i>only</i>	X	0%
<b>Families with female householder (no husband present)</b>	15.5%	6.2%
With related children under 18 years	19.6%	4.6%
With related children under 5 years	12.1%	X
With related children under 5 years <i>only</i>	X	0%
<b>All People / Individuals</b>	5.9%	4.3%
Under 18 years	X	4.6%
Related children under 18 years	10.2%	4.6%
Related children under 5 years	X	0%
Related children 5 to 17 years	9.7%	6.7%
18 years and over	4.7%	4.2%
18 to 64 years	X	5.0%
65 years and over	2.7%	1.5%
<b>Unrelated individuals 15 years and over</b>	7.3%	14.6%
Source: U.S. Census 2000 and U.S. Census American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates 2008-2012		
x = data not available		

The percentage of population below poverty level significantly increased between 1999 and 2012 for one general category – *unrelated individuals 15 years and over*. The lack of consistent data for some similar categories makes comparison from one period to the other problematic. For example, sizable decreases in the *families with female householder* categories may be attributed to differing sampling methodologies and somewhat different category definitions used for the two periods. The poverty level for *all families* declined from 4.6 percent to 2.2 percent. For *all people / individuals*, the poverty level declined from 5.9 percent to 4.3 percent.

**Table H-5  
Social Characteristics -- Household by Type**

	<b>2000</b>	<b>2010</b>
<b>Total households</b>	2,505	2,705
<b>Family households (families)</b>	66.8%	65.5%
<b>With own children under 18 years</b>	28.3%	28.7%
<b>Married-couple family</b>	53.4%	48.2%
<b>With own children under 18 years</b>	20.8%	19.2%
<b>Male householder (no wife present) family</b>	X	4.0%
<b>With own children under 18 years</b>	X	7.4%
<b>Female householder (no husband present) family</b>	10.7%	13.3%
<b>With own children under 18 years</b>	6.1%	7.4%
<b>Non-family households</b>	33.2%	34.5%
<b>Householder living alone</b>	28.5%	28.7%
<b>Householder 65 years and over</b>	13.3%	13.6%
<b>Households with individuals under 18 years</b>	30.3%	31.2%
<b>Households with individuals 65 years and over</b>	33.8%	30.7%
<b>Average Household Size</b>	2.34	2.39
<b>Average Family Size</b>	2.85	2.93
Source: U.S. Census 2000 and 2010 x = data not available		

Total households increased by 8.0 percent while the proportion of family households to non-family households shifted slightly toward more non-family households. The largest percentage declines for household group size were for *married couple families* and *households with individuals 65 years and over*. The largest growth occurred in the percentage of *female householder (no husband present) family*, and *female householder (no husband present) family with own children under 18 years*. Average household and average family size increased slightly from 2000 to 2010.

**Table H-6  
Social Characteristics – Disability Status**

<b>Civilian Non-Institutionalized Population</b>	<b>Population 2000</b>	<b>Percentage of Age Group with a Disability 2000</b>	<b>Population 2012</b>	<b>Percentage of Age Group with a Disability 2012</b>
<b>Total Population 5 and over</b>	5,509		6,511	
<b>Population with a Disability</b>	1,029	18.7%	521	8.0%
<b>Population with a Disability under 18 years</b>	X	X	38	2.3%
<b>Population 5 to 20 years with a Disability</b>	96	8.2%	X	X
<b>Population with a Disability 18 to 64 years</b>	X	X	239	6.4%
<b>Population with a Disability 21 to 64 years</b>	609	19.2%	X	X
<b>Population with a Disability 65 years and older</b>	324	27.5%	244	22.3%
U.S. Census 2000 and U.S. Census American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates 2008-2012 Data based on self-reporting by respondents x = data not available				

The number of individuals classified by the Census Bureau as having a disability declined substantially between 2000 and 2012, especially for the adult populations less than 65 years of age. Eight percent of the population, a substantial proportion however, remains classified as having a disability in 2012. The decrease may be attributed to different reporting methods.

**Table H-7**  
**Housing Characteristics -- Occupancy and Tenure**

<b>Housing Occupancy</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2010</b>
<b>Total Housing Units</b>	2,573	2,847
<b>Occupied Housing Units</b>	2,505	2,705
<b>Vacant Housing Units</b>	68	147
<b>Homeowner Vacancy Rate</b>	0.7%	1.9%
<b>Rental Vacancy Rate</b>	2.9%	5.9%
<b>Housing Tenure</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2010</b>
<b>Owner Occupied Housing Units</b>	69.3%	67.5%
<b>Renter Occupied Housing Units</b>	30.7%	32.5%
<b>Average Household Size of Owner-Occupied Housing</b>	2.49	2.43
<b>Average Household Size of Renter Occupied Housing</b>	2.00	2.31
Source: U.S. Census 2000, U.S. Census 2010, and U.S. Census American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates 2008-2012		

Homeowner vacancy rates increased somewhat but remained low while rental vacancy rates increased significantly during the 2000-2010 period. Rental vacancy rates have fluctuated rapidly when compared with homeowner vacancy rates due in part to the greater mobility of renters and their responsiveness to rental market conditions that are quickly affected by both local and regional factors – including the fundamental balance between supply and demand.

**Table H-8**  
**Housing Characteristics – Units in Structure**

<b>Units in Structure</b>	<b>Number of Units 2000</b>	<b>Percentage 2000</b>	<b>Number of Units 2012</b>	<b>Percentage 2012</b>
<b>1 unit, detached</b>	1,760	68.6%	1,940	70.2%
<b>1 unit, attached</b>	199	7.8%	215	7.8%
<b>2 units</b>	50	2.0%	72	2.6%
<b>3 or 4 units</b>	166	6.5%	203	7.3%
<b>5 to 9 units</b>	152	5.9%	165	6.0%
<b>10 to 19 units</b>	86	3.4%	82	3.0%
<b>20 units or more</b>	145	5.7%	74	2.7%
<b>Mobile Home</b>	6	0.2%	12	0.4%
<b>Other</b>	0	0%	0	0%
<b>Total Housing Units</b>	2,564		2,763	
Source: U.S. Census 2000 and U.S. Census American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates 2008-2012				

The proportion of detached single-family homes increased slightly relative in terms of the share of the total units. Comparing the data from the 2000 Census with the estimates summarized in the 2008-2012 survey suggests that the number of units in the *20 units or more* category fluctuated rapidly during this period. However, the unit count fluctuation from the census to the survey more likely may be attributed to different reporting methods.

**Table H-9  
Housing Characteristics – Year Structure Built**

Year Structure Built	Total Housing Units (Occupied plus Unoccupied)		Owner-Occupied Housing Units		Renter-Occupied Housing Units	
2000 to 2009	326	12.5%	215	8.3%	111	4.3%
1990 to 1999	168	6.5%	106	4.1%	62	2.4%
1980 to 1999	178	6.8%	44	1.7%	134	5.1%
1970 to 1979	550	21.1%	258	9.9%	292	11.2%
1960 to 1969	427	16.4%	395	15.2%	32	1.2%
1950 to 1959	627	23.2%	433	15.7%	194	7.5%
1940 to 1949	228	8.8%	153	5.9%	75	2.9%
1939 or earlier	98	3.8%	70	2.7%	28	1.1%
All years	2602	100.0%	1,674	64.3%	928	35.7%
	Median year all structure built: 1968		Median year owner-occupied structure built: 1965		Median year renter-occupied structure built: 1975	
U.S. Census American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates 2008-2012						

Although the original Regents Park plats were recorded in 1907 and Fircrest incorporated in 1925, the City's housing stock of mostly smaller bungalows and cottages remained limited until the 1940s. Rapid growth occurred during the 1950s through the 1970s, when a relatively large number of modest-size split level and rambler style housing (62 percent of the total housing stock) was built. Apartment construction was especially strong during the 1970s. Construction of larger size detached single-family housing occurred during the 1980s and 1990s but in more limited numbers compared with the housing constructed in prior decades. With the construction of new subdivisions, including The Commons and Fircrest Greens in the 2000s, detached and attached single-family construction increased -- until the housing market crash of the late 2000s. In the current decade, Fircrest is seeing mostly infill single-family housing on individual lots being constructed.

**Table H-10**  
**Housing Characteristics – Home Value Owner Occupied Units**

Home Value	Number of Units 2000	Percentage 2000	Number of Units 2012	Percentage 2012
Owner-Occupied Units	1,615	100%	1,674	100%
Less than \$50,000	0	0%	30	1.8%
\$50,000 to \$99,999	69	4.3%	0	0%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	540	33.4%	76	4.5%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	642	39.8%	53	3.2%
\$200,000 to \$299,999	302	18.7%	620	37.0%
\$300,000 to \$499,999	54	3.3%	833	49.8%
\$500,000 to \$999,999	0	0%	62	3.7%
\$1,000,000 or more	8	0.5%	0	0%
	Median Value \$161,800		Median Value \$309,400	
U.S. Census 2000 and U.S. Census American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates 2008-2012				

The median value of owner-occupied housing increased by \$147,600 (91 percent) between 2000 and 2012. The proportion of homes valued between \$200,000 and \$499,999 increased from a combined total of 22 percent to nearly 87 percent of all owner-occupied housing stock.



**Table H-11**  
**Financial Characteristics – Monthly Owner Costs**

	Number of Units 1999	Percentage 1999	Number of Units 2012	Percentage 2012
Housing Units with a Mortgage	1,086		1,163	
Less than \$300	0	0%	0	0%
\$300 to \$499	0	0%	0	0%
\$500 to \$699	27	2.5%	0	0%
\$700 to \$999	203	18.7%	68	5.8%
\$1,000 to \$1,499	530	48.8%	162	13.9%
\$1,500 to \$1,999	218	20.05%	388	33.4%
\$2,000 or more	108	9.9%	545	46.9%
	Median Mortgage: \$1,297		Median Mortgage: \$1,951	
U.S. Census 2000 and U.S. Census American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates 2008-2012 Note: Percentage categories were revised for the 2008-2012 Estimates.				

As the value of housing increased (Table 2-10), the cost of mortgages increased considerably, as well, with the median mortgage increasing by 50 percent.

**Table H-12**  
**Financial Characteristics – Cost Burdened Households**  
**Monthly Owner Costs as a Percentage of Household Income**

	Number of Units 1999	Percentage 1999	Number of Units 2012	Percentage 2012
<b>Housing Units with a Mortgage</b>	1,086		1,163	
<b>Less than 15.0 percent (2000)</b>	581	36.0%	X	X
<b>15.0 to 19.9 percent (2000)</b>	300	18.6%	X	X
<b>Less than 20.0 percent (2012)</b>	X	X	328	28.2%
<b>20.0 to 24.9 percent</b>	170	10.5%	152	13.1%
<b>25.0 to 29.9 percent</b>	151	9.3%	203	17.5%
<b>30.0 to 34.9 percent</b>	88	5.4%	119	10.2%
<b>35.0 percent or more</b>	311	19.3%	361	31.0%
U.S. Census 2000 and U.S. Census American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates 2008-2012 Note: Percentage categories were revised for the 2008-2012 Estimates. Mortgage payment typically includes taxes, insurance and other related housing expenses x = data not available				

The number and percentage of cost-burdened households paying more than 30 percent of their income for owner-occupied housing increased from 399 (24.7 percent of the total units with a mortgage) to 480 units (41.2 percent of the total units with a mortgage). This represents a significant increase in cost burdened households. The number of households paying less than 20 percent of their income decreased from 54.6 percent to 28.2 percent.

**Table H-13**  
**Financial Characteristics – Gross Rent**

Gross Rent Per Month	Number of Occupied Units Paying Rent 1999	Percentage 1999	Number of Occupied Units Paying Rent 2012	Percentage 2012
Occupied Units Paying Rent*	770		878	
Less than \$200	0	0%	0	0%
\$200 to \$299	0	0%	0	0%
\$300 to \$499	36	4.7%	0	0%
\$500 to \$749	414	53.8%	15	1.7%
\$750 to \$999	163	21.2%	298	33.9%
\$1,000 to \$1,499	91	11.8%	384	43.7%
\$1,500 or more	11	1.4%	181	20.6%
No cash rent	55	X	50	X
	Median Rent \$703		Median Rent \$1,165	
U.S. Census 2000 and U.S. Census American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates 2008-2012 x = data not available				

Median rent increased by more than 65 percent. The number of renters paying more than \$1000.00 per month increased from 102 (13.2 percent of all renters in 1999) to 565 (64.3 percent of all renters in 2012).

**Table H-14**  
**Financial Characteristics – Cost-Burdened Households**  
**Gross Rent as a Percentage of Household Income**

<b>Gross Rent as a Percentage of Household Income (GRAPI)</b>	<b>Number of Occupied Rental Units 1999</b>	<b>Percentage 1999</b>	<b>Number of Occupied Rental Units 2012</b>	<b>Percentage 2012</b>
<b>Occupied Units Paying Rent*</b>	707		864	
<b>Less than 15.0 percent</b>	160	20.8%	76	8.8%
<b>15.0 to 19.9 percent</b>	110	14.3%	43	5.0%
<b>20.0 to 24.9 percent</b>	88	11.4%	189	21.9%
<b>25.0 to 29.9 percent</b>	95	12.3%	55	6.4%
<b>30.0 to 34.9 percent</b>	74	9.6%	139	16.1%
<b>35.0 percent or more</b>	180	23.4%	362	41.9%
<b>Not computed</b>	63	8.2%		
*Excluding units where GRAPI cannot be calculated U.S. Census 2000 and U.S. Census American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates 2008-2012 Rent payments typically include a utility allowance				

The number of cost-burdened households paying more than 30 percent of their income for renter-occupied housing increased from 254 (33.0 percent of rental units) to 501 units (58.0% percent of renter units). This represents a significant increase (97.2 percent) during a relatively short thirteen-year period in the number of rental households considered to be cost-burdened. The number of households paying less than 20 percent of their income on rental housing decreased from 35.1 percent to 13.8 percent.

**Table H-15**  
**Financial Characteristics – Cost-Burdened Households**  
**Households Paying More Than 30 Percent of Income for Housing**

<b>Household Income</b>	<b>Number of Households Paying &gt; 30% 1999</b>	<b>Percentage of Households Paying &gt; 30% 1999</b>	<b>Number of Households Paying &gt; 30% 2012</b>	<b>Percentage of Households Paying &gt; 30% 2012</b>
<b>Owner Households</b>				
<b>Less than \$20,000</b>	101 of 107	94.4%	60 of 95	63.2%
<b>\$20,000 to \$34,999</b>	101 of 222	45.5%	79 of 146	54.1%
<b>\$35,000 to \$49,999</b>	84 of 275	30.5%	106 of 177	60.0%
<b>\$50,000 to \$74,999</b>	67 of 415	12.8%	146 of 350	41.7%
<b>\$75,000 or more</b>	46 of 596	7.7%	155 of 906	17.1%
<b>All Income Categories</b>	399 of 1615	24.7%	546 of 1,674	32.6%
<b>Renter Households</b>				
<b>Less than \$20,000</b>	148 of 199	74.4%	95 of 95	100.0%
<b>\$20,000 to \$34,999</b>	79 of 172	45.9%	194 of 219	88.6%
<b>\$35,000 to \$49,999</b>	27 of 147	18.4%	111 of 141	78.7%
<b>\$50,000 to \$74,999</b>	0 of 170	0.0%	74 of 276	26.8%
<b>\$75,000 or more</b>	0 of 82	0.0%	27 of 183	14.8%
<b>All Income Categories</b>	254 of 770	33.0%	501 of 928	54.0%
<b>Owner and Renter Households Combined</b>				
<b>All Income Categories</b>	653 of 2,385	27.4 %	1,047 of 2,602	40.2%
U.S. Census 2000 and U.S. Census American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates 2008-2012 Mortgage costs typically include taxes, insurance and other related housing expenses Rent payments typically include a utility allowance x = data not available				

Housing is generally considered to be affordable when housing costs total no more than 30 percent of a household's gross income. For owner households, the percentage paying more than 30 percent increased from 24.7 percent in 1999 to 32.6 percent in 2012. For renter households, the percentage paying more than 30 percent increased from 27.4 percent in 1999 to 40.2 percent in 2012. Nearly one-third of owner households, and two-fifths of renter households, are considered cost burdened.

**Table H-16**  
**Financial Characteristics – Cost-Burdened Households**  
**Households Paying More Than 45 Percent of Income for Housing and**  
**Transportation Costs Combined**

Percentage of Income Spent on Housing and Transportation Costs Combined	Number of Households*	Percentage
Less than 45 percent	826	34.3%
Cost Burdened Households Paying More than 45 percent	1,585	65.7%
Source: Center for Neighborhood Technology		
*Based on six Fircrest neighborhoods that correlate to US Census Bureau block groups		

The Center for Neighborhood Technology's Housing and Transportation (H+T®) Affordability Index provides a more comprehensive way of thinking about the cost of housing and true affordability. The Index examines transportation costs at a neighborhood level and shows that transportation costs vary between and within regions depending on neighborhood characteristics. People who live in location-efficient neighborhoods -- compact, mixed use, and with convenient access to jobs, services, transit, and amenities -- tend to have lower transportation costs. People who live in location-inefficient places that require automobiles for most trips are more likely to have high transportation costs.

The traditional measure of affordability recommends that housing cost no more than 30 percent of income. However, that benchmark ignores transportation costs, which are typically a household's second largest expenditure. The H+T Index offers an expanded view of affordability, one that combines housing and transportation costs and sets the benchmark at no more than 45 percent of household income.

The H+T Index analysis for Fircrest provides data for 6 neighborhoods, which correlate to US Census Bureau block groups. Of the City's 6 neighborhoods, 4 are considered cost-burdened -- based on combined housing and transportation costs exceeding the 45 percent threshold, on average. The City's average combined household housing and transportation cost is 46 percent, based on a regional average income of \$64,219. The most cost-burdened neighborhood has average combined costs of about 54 percent, well above the 45 percent threshold. And, over 65 percent of all households are cost-burdened based on combined housing and transportation costs, according to CNT.

## HOUSING NEEDS ASSESSMENT

The preceding Housing Profile section presents population, economic, social, housing and financial characteristics that strongly influence the ability of individuals and families to secure housing in Fircrest that is affordable and meets their needs. This Housing Needs section provides an assessment of “housing affordability” in Fircrest -- based in part on the profile information.

When speaking of housing affordability, the standard used by lending institutions, the real estate industry and government is that no more than 30 percent of a household’s gross monthly income goes toward housing expenses, regardless of income level. For ownership housing, this percentage typically includes taxes, insurance and other related housing expenses. For rental housing, a utility allowance is included in the 30 percent figure. A household in which housing costs exceed 30 percent of gross monthly income is considered to be “cost burdened”; if costs exceed 50 percent of gross monthly income, the household is severely cost burdened.

“Affordable housing” typically refers to housing that is affordable to households earning 80 percent or less of the Pierce County median income. Households earning 80 to 120 percent of the median income are referred to as “moderate-income” households. Those earning 80 percent or less are commonly referred to as “low-income” households, and those earning 30 percent or less are also known as “very low-income” households. While Pierce County affordable housing targets are only established for moderate- and low-income levels, there are many households who are very low-income, so it is important to create housing opportunities affordable to this income level.

Using the definition of housing affordability together with the 2012 median household income of \$59,105 for a four-person household, Table H17 represents the amount of money that Fircrest individuals and families earning median income or less can afford to pay for rental and ownership housing. All income groups are experiencing a gap between what they can afford to spend on housing and how much the market is demanding from them.

**Table H-17**  
**Affordable Rents and Prices**  
**Based on 2012 Pierce County Median Household Income**

<b>Income Group</b>	<b>2012 Annual Household Income</b>	<b>Maximum Affordable Monthly Rent/Utility*</b>	<b>Maximum Affordable House Price**</b>
<b>Very Low-Income (&lt; 30 percent)</b>	\$17,732	\$443	\$53,196
<b>Low-Income (30 to 80 percent)</b>	\$17,733 to \$47,284	\$444 to \$1,182	\$53,197 to \$141,854
<b>Moderate-Income (80 to 120 percent)</b>	\$47,285 to \$70,926	\$1,182 to \$1,773	\$141,855 to \$212,778
<b>Median-Income (100 percent)</b>	\$59,105***	\$1,478	\$177,315
* 30 percent of monthly income			
** Annual income multiplied by 3			
*** Fircrest 2012 Median Household Income is \$63,750			
U.S. Census American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates 2008-2012			

Based on a 2012 median household income for Pierce County of \$59,105, the maximum affordable home price for low-income households is \$53,197 to \$141,854. The affordable home price range for moderate-income households is \$141,855 to \$212,778. These figures are substantially below the 2012 median home price for Pierce County (\$251,400) and even further below the 2012 median home price for Fircrest (\$309,400). The Pierce County median price home would require an annual income of \$83,800, which exceeds the median household income by approximately 42 percent. The Fircrest median price home would require an annual income of \$103,333, which exceeds the Pierce County median household income by approximately 75 percent.

Low-income households could afford a monthly rent maximum of between \$444 and \$1,182, and moderate-income households could afford no more than \$1,773 per month. The 2012 median rent price in Fircrest is \$1,165, which would be affordable to a household earning \$46,600, approximately 73% of the City's median household income.

There is an affordability gap for both renters and homeowners in Fircrest. The affordability gap is especially pronounced for very low-income, low-income and moderate-income households. The people in the low- and moderate-income categories are vital members of the workforce. They include office clerks, security guards, bank tellers, teachers, legal secretaries, pharmacy technicians, and firefighters. Few homes are available at the prices that are affordable to low- and moderate-income families. Consequently, these families experience financial hardships because they are often forced to pay more than 30 percent of their monthly income on housing costs.



## ***CHAPTER 5***

# ***TRANSPORTATION ELEMENT***





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## INTRODUCTION

To achieve Fircrest's vision and goals, the Transportation Element is designed to guide development of the City's transportation system to serve the community as envisioned in this Plan. The transportation policies in this Element are designed to guide the actions of the City, public agencies and private decision-makers related to individual developments.

In accordance with the Comprehensive Plan, a limited amount of new residential and commercial mixed-use development, with associated population and employment growth, is forecasted. Fircrest's 2030 growth targets and 20-year projections through 2035 are contained in Table LU-2 in the Land Use Element. Land uses surrounding the city are assumed to develop in a pattern consistent with the regional strategies, including *VISION 2040* and *Transportation 2040*. Land use and transportation forecasts for surrounding areas are integrated into the assumptions underlying the transportation improvement identified in this Element.

In developing a transportation system that serves current and future needs, the policies in this Element support programs, projects and services with long term benefits to the community that address economic, social and environmental needs. Fircrest's transportation policies promote long term community benefits by:

- Developing a transportation system that supports a mix of uses, from low- to moderate-density single-family neighborhoods, to multifamily, neighborhood-serving commercial uses, a moderately intense mix of commercial and residential uses along the Mildred and 19<sup>th</sup> Street corridors, park and recreation facilities, schools, and public uses; and
- Offering multimodal travel choices and achieving *complete streets* that support safe and convenient access for all users.

In promoting such benefits, the City seeks to address the need for a better transportation system -- one that is accessible with connections between places, helps improve air quality through the use of alternative fuels that reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and is designed to encourage healthier lifestyles and independent living, particularly for vulnerable populations.

The overarching goals of the Element are to:

- Ensure that the transportation system, including all programs, projects and services, whether funded, built or operated privately or by a public sector agency, serve to achieve the preferred land use pattern contained in the Land Use Element.

- Ensure that the transportation system provides for the mobility and access needs of those who live, shop, visit, work and recreate in Fircrest; and
- Ensure the safe and environmentally sound use of the transportation system, and limit the loss of life due to fatality accidents.

## ***ORGANIZATION OF THE TRANSPORTATION ELEMENT***

This element contains the following sections:

- Introduction
- State planning context
- Regional planning context
- Local planning context
- Goals and policies
- Land use assumptions
- Inventory of facilities and services
- Levels of service
- Arterial and transit adequacy
- Recommended transportation improvements
- Transportation demand management
- Transportation systems management
- Funding capability and resources

The transportation improvement program is described in the Capital Facilities Element.

## **STATE PLANNING CONTEXT**

### ***GROWTH MANAGEMENT ACT***

The Washington State Growth Management Act (RCW 36.70A) requires the City to include a Transportation Element within its Comprehensive Plan. The Act identifies transportation facilities planning and, specifically, encouraging efficient multimodal transportation systems based on regional priorities coordinated with local comprehensive plans, as a planning goal to guide the development and adoption of comprehensive plans and development regulations. The Transportation Element must include: (a) land use assumptions used in estimating travel; (b) facilities and services needs; (c) finance; (d) intergovernmental coordination efforts, including an assessment of the impacts of the transportation plan and land use assumptions on the transportation systems of adjacent jurisdictions; and (e) demand management strategies.

### ***COMMUTE REDUCTION EFFICIENCY ACT***

The Commute Reduction Efficiency Act of 2006 (RCW 70.94.521-531) goal is to reduce congestion on the roadway network and help address the air pollution issues within the urban areas. This act requires local governments to work with their larger employers to develop and implement strategies for reducing their single occupant auto trips. Jurisdictions affected by the commute trip reduction (CTR) law are required to develop local CTR plans that include the documenting of local transportation settings of the

affected work sites and the strategies by which the rate of single occupant vehicle use may be reduced.

## REGIONAL PLANNING CONTEXT

### ***VISION 2040 MULTICOUNTY PLANNING POLICIES (MPPs)***

Puget Sound Regional Council's (PSRC) *VISION 2040* offers an integrated approach to addressing land use and transportation, along with the environment and economic development. It calls for a clean, sustainable transportation future that supports the regional growth strategy. Sustainable transportation involves the efficient and environmentally sensitive movement of people, information, goods and services – with attention to safety and health. Sustainable transportation minimizes the impacts of transportation activities on our air, water, and climate. It includes the design of walkable cities and bikeable neighborhoods, as well as using alternatives to driving alone. It relies on cleaner, renewable resources for energy.

The transportation-related multicounty planning policies in *VISION 2040* are presented in three groups. The first group of policies calls for maintaining, preserving, and operating the existing transportation system in a safer and more efficient way. They advance transportation that is less polluting. The second group of policies calls for developing the system to support regional growth centers, particularly travel within and between centers. Investments are to be prioritized to support pedestrian-oriented, mixed-use development. The policies address *complete streets* to serve all users, green streets that are better for the environment, and context sensitive design that guides the development of transportation facilities to better fit within the context of the communities in which they are located. Policies address nonmotorized transportation as well as freight. The final group of policies addresses greater transportation options, including alternatives to driving alone, mobility choices for people with special needs, and avoiding construction of new roads or capacity expansion in rural areas.

### ***PIERCE COUNTY COUNTYWIDE PLANNING POLICIES (CPPs)***

The GMA's transportation planning requirements and *VISION 2040* transportation planning policy directives are expounded upon in greater detail in Pierce County's Countywide Planning Policy on "*Transportation Facilities and Strategies*". This policy directs Fircrest, to the extent practicable, to:

- Promote a sustainable transportation system that assures the ability of future generations to provide transportation infrastructure and services in an effective, efficient, clean, and cost-effective manner. (CPP Tr-1)
- Improve safety in the transportation system by working toward the state's "zero death and disabling injury" target. (CPP Tr-2)
- Deem the following transportation services Countywide in nature (for the purpose of this Policy):

- state and federal highways;
  - major arterials;
  - transit facilities and services;
  - waterborne transportation (ferries, shipping);
  - airports (passenger or freight);
  - rail facilities (passenger or freight);
  - nonmotorized facilities. (CPP Tr-3)
- Include the following facilities and system components in the multi-modal network:
    - roads, including major highways, arterials and collectors;
    - public transit, including bus, rail, vanpool, paratransit, and park and ride lots and other emerging concepts;
    - nonmotorized facilities;
    - ferries;
    - airports;
    - parking facilities;
    - facilities related to transportation demand management. (CPP Tr-4)
  - Consider the impacts of its planning activities on neighboring jurisdictional (inclusive of WSDOT) roadway facilities when developing and administering its level of service standards.
    - Designate or adopt multimodal levels of service (LOS) per RCW 36.70A.108 such as:
      - for roadways and intersection; and
      - transit levels of service (e.g., hours of service, headways, pedestrian environment, accessibility, safety, rider comfort, reliability, transfer necessity, cost, and travel time).
    - Enter into interlocal agreements, where necessary, to establish uniform, coordinated service levels between jurisdictions for countywide facilities. (CPP Tr-5)
  - Establish an adopted LOS that may be:
    - set below existing levels (thereby allowing reserve capacity for growth and minimizing the need for new capital investment;
    - set above existing levels (thereby increasing comfort and convenience of travel, enhancing economic development and minimizing some environmental impacts;
    - set at existing levels (thereby allowing new development to mitigate full marginal impacts;
    - set at different levels of service in different zones;



- set at different levels of service based on facility classifications;
- set for multi-modal facilities;
- taken directly from standards developed by the Washington State Department of Transportation for Highways of Statewide Significance and directly from standards developed by the Puget Sound Regional Council for regionally significant state highways. (CPP Tr-6)
- Determine the adequacy of transportation facilities, including transit infrastructure, taking into account existing development, approved but unbuilt development, current and future roadway conditions, and multiple modes of transportation through utilization of
  - capacity-to-demand levels of service (LOS);
  - availability of capacity based on current and future demand including phased capacity;
  - appropriate standards of design across jurisdictional lines. (CPP Tr-7):
- Address substandard LOS for existing facilities by:
  - designating funding mechanisms;
  - prioritizing facility needs in capital improvement and transportation improvement programs to correct existing deficiencies;
  - using transportation demand management;
  - using transportation systems management to promote cost effective methods of moving people and goods;
  - promoting nonmotorized travel. (CPP Tr-8)
- In cooperation with the transit and transportation agencies, establish:
  - policies and/or regulations for park and ride facilities;
  - parking requirements for public facilities so as to encourage public transit use. (CPP Tr-9)
- Address concurrency through the following methods:
  - providing transportation facilities needed to accommodate new development within six years of development approval;
  - limiting new development to a level that can be accommodated by existing facilities and facilities planned for completion over the next six years;
  - encouraging new and existing development to implement measures to decrease congestion and enhance mobility through transportation demand and congestion management. (CPP Tr-10)

- Address compatibility between land use and transportation facilities by:
  - Requiring new transportation facilities and services in areas in which new growth is appropriate or desirable to be phased within a twenty-year time frame consistent with six-year capital improvement programs;
  - Discouraging the extension of new transportation facilities into areas not planned for growth (e.g., outside urban growth areas) and avoiding planning of major roads and capacity expansion in rural and resource areas;
  - Using development regulations to ensure that development does not create demands exceeding the capacity of the transportation system, including transit alternatives.
  - Using land use regulations to increase the modal split between automobiles and other forms of travel:
    - Designating high densities in transit and transportation corridors and designated Transit Oriented Development (TOD) sites;
    - Dedications and impact fees to provide public transit facilities;
    - Requiring pedestrian-oriented design;
    - Encouraging or requiring mixed-use development and TOD;
    - Facilitating ease of access for physically challenged individuals.
  - Developing plans or planning provisions, where appropriate, to protect the continued operation of general aviation airports by using adopted land compatibility standards such as those published by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) to discourage incompatible land uses and development on adjacent land. (CPP Tr-11)
- Plan and implement programs, as appropriate, for designing, constructing and operating transportation facilities for all users, including motorists, pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit users. (CPP Tr-12)
- Address environmental impacts of the transportation policies through:
  - programming capital improvements and transportation facilities designed to alleviate and mitigate impacts on land use, air quality and energy consumption such as high-occupancy vehicle lanes, public transit infrastructure, or bicycle/pedestrian facilities designed for home-to-work travel;
  - locating and constructing transportation improvements so as to discourage adverse impacts on water quality and other environmental resources. (CPP Tr-13)
- Use low-impact development practices or environmentally appropriate approaches for the design, construction and operation of transportation facilities

to reduce and mitigate environmental impacts, including, but not limited to, storm water runoff from streets and roadways. (CPP Tr-14)

- In cooperation with transit agencies, promote the facilities and services to encourage alternatives to automobile travel and/or to reduce the number of vehicle miles traveled (modal split, trip generation and trip length) including:
  - structural alternatives (public transit [such as grade separated guideways, for bus and rail applications]; construction of new high-occupant vehicle lanes; limitations on highway/roadway construction; carpool/vanpool facilities; non- recreational bicycle/pedestrian facilities);
  - non-structural/regulatory alternatives (growth management [concurrency; urban growth areas]; road/congestion pricing; auto-restricted zones; parking management; site design; ridesharing incentives, and transportation systems and demand management). (CPP Tr-15)
- Work with transit agencies to identify and preserve existing rights-of-way in order to preserve options for future transit alignments. (CPP Tr-16)
- Work in cooperation with WSDOT and Port authorities to plan and implement projects and programs to meet freight mobility and access needs, including the establishment of programs designed to maintain, preserve and expand freight rail capacity including planning for needed capital improvements. (CPP Tr-17)
- Consider a number of financing measures, including but not limited to:
  - general revenues;
  - fuel taxes;
  - toll roads and other user fees;
  - bonding;
  - congestion pricing;
  - public/private partnerships, and public/public partnerships;
  - assessment and improvement districts, facility benefit assessments, impact fees, dedication of right-of-way and voluntary funding agreements;
  - grants;
  - others, as may be appropriate. (CPP Tr-18)
- Protect the transportation investments and preservation of assets through the proper operations and maintenance. (CPP Tr-19)
- Protect the transportation system against disaster, develop prevention and recovery strategies, and plan for coordinated responses by using transportation-related preparedness, prevention, mitigation, response, and recovery strategies and procedures adopted in the emergency management plans and hazard mitigation plans of the County and cities, as well as the Washington State Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan. (CPP Tr-20)

## LOCAL PLANNING CONTEXT

### **TRANSPORTATION VISION**

#### ***Looking ahead 20 years...***

In the 2030s, Fircrest's transportation system offers people a variety of real choices for how they travel between where they live, work, shop and play. *Each year, more people walk, bicycle, carpool or use transit to travel within the city and to access the regional bus and light rail system. Land uses that reflect a vibrant community character have created a strong market demand for these options.*

*The City's transportation infrastructure reflects this by prioritizing more people-oriented travel that supports the community's land uses, manages its limited roadways most efficiently, provides a transportation system that embodies the City's long-term mobility goals, and achieves Fircrest's preferred land use pattern and vision.*

*The City has invested strategically and leveraged regional funds to ensure a safe, well-maintained system and improve transportation choices and mobility. Neighborhoods have increased access to commercial mixed-use areas located along Mildred and 19<sup>th</sup> Streets, neighboring cities and the region. Significant investments in SR16, I-5, and regional and local transit routes have improved mobility for people and goods. In Fircrest roadway projects have been built where needed to improve safety and operating efficiency or to create more accessible connections. The City continues to maintain an effective system of access and circulation for delivery and freight. Streetscapes include lighting, are attractive and well designed, and enhance environmental quality for various travel modes.*

*In responding to significant energy costs and new vehicles' fuel options and technologies, the City has developed alliances with other agencies and the private sector to create new opportunities and efficiencies. In turn, these alliances support easy access to electric vehicle charging stations and other alternative fueling infrastructures, as well as access to information about travel conditions, incidents, and transit arrival and departure times.*

## GOALS AND POLICIES

This Element contains the transportation goals and policies for the City of Fircrest. The following goals establish broad direction for transportation planning while the policies provide strategies for achieving the intent of each goal. Goals are preceded by an initial background statement that provides an intent or purpose for each goal.

### **A MULTIMODAL TRANSPORTATION NETWORK**

The automobile is expected to remain the dominant mode of transportation for the foreseeable future. However, there appears to be increasing demand for, or desire to

use, other forms of transportation. Mass transit, ride-sharing, biking, walking, as well as driving personal vehicles, are increasingly in the mix of choices being considered and used. In today's society, expanding the use of modes of transportation other than the privately-owned automobile will be important in reducing congestion on roadways, emissions, and fuel consumption. Improving circulation in the City for all modes of transportation will help promote the safe, convenient and reliable movement of people, goods and services.

A well-integrated multimodal transportation network will help support the City's other growth management goals and policies including those addressing economic vitality and livability. It will improve accessibility for all regardless of socioeconomic status or individual ability. It can be designed in such a way that it enhances the community around it and be compatible with natural systems. And, it can enhance Fircrest's role in the regional economy by supporting economic development within the City's center of local importance.

## **GOAL T1**

**Develop, maintain and operate a multimodal transportation system that provides for the safe, efficient and reliable movement of people, goods and services.**

### **Policy T1.1**

Create a transportation network that includes vehicle, pedestrian, bicycle and transit components located throughout the City -- and connecting to adjacent communities -  
- to provide for the safe, efficient, convenient and reliable movement of people, goods and services.

### **Policy T1.2**

Develop and implement *complete street* design standards to provide safe and convenient access for all modes of transportation, which will support pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users and motorists, thereby increasing capacity, increasing safety, and improving street aesthetics and walkability. Include amenities in street designs, including trees and other landscaping, street lights, benches and waste receptacles to add to the pedestrian experience and further calm traffic.

### **Policy T1.3**

Employ Context-Sensitive Design techniques in transportation projects that take into consideration aesthetics, historical and cultural elements, the environment, and other aspects of community character, while ensuring safety and accessibility.

### **Policy T1.4**

Classify streets and arterials to reflect their desired use and function consistent with state and regional classifications. Classification should be based on present and future traffic volumes and the type of land uses along the streets.

## **ACCESSIBILITY TO TRANSPORTATION**

Approximately one-third of the region's population does not drive or have access to an automobile. This group includes people who choose not to drive, people without licenses or with disabilities, people who are not able to afford a car, and young people under the driving age. These people rely on others to provide them private automobile mobility, public transit, walking and cycling. Providing facilities for all modes of transportation will help enable these individuals to meet their transportation needs and more fully participate in society.

### **GOAL T2**

**Transportation improvements within the City should ensure alternative transportation choices are available to underserved areas and provide mobility choices for people with special needs including persons with disabilities, the elderly, young and low-income populations.**

#### **Policy T2.1**

Ensure compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements by making all street sidewalk and curb ramp areas accessible to all pedestrians, including those with disabilities, by constructing new pedestrian facilities in compliance with the ADA (at a minimum), and upgrading existing facilities to remove barriers and improve accessibility. Improvements should include appropriate pavement markings and signalization and facilitate the use of transit.

#### **Policy T2.2**

Design and build *complete streets* with facilities for all modes of transportation. Connect residential neighborhoods to commercial mixed-use areas and public transit with sidewalks, paths and bike lanes to provide greater access to transportation choices for those who do not drive and those who have limited mobility resources.

## **TRANSPORTATION SAFETY**

Transportation safety is affected by how the transportation system is designed, constructed, operated and maintained. Traffic conditions on residential streets can greatly affect neighborhood livability and environment. When streets are safe and pleasant, the quality of life is enhanced. When high vehicle speeds or excessive volumes of through-traffic become a daily occurrence, residents' sense of community and personal well-being are threatened. These in turn can lead to related problems, such as collisions, conflicts with driveway access, and unreasonable safety risks for pedestrians and bicyclists. Generally, higher rates of speed equate to much higher fatality rates when vehicle-pedestrian accidents occur.

### **GOAL T3**

**Improve the safety of the transportation system, reduce speeds and protect the quality of life in residential neighborhoods.**

**Policy T3.1**

Establish speed limits that reflect street function, adjacent land uses, and physical condition of the roadway. Promote travel at a lower rate of speed, where appropriate, to improve safety, help achieve the State's goal of zero deaths and disabling injuries, and create a more comfortable environment for pedestrians and cyclists. Achieve lower vehicular travel speeds through traffic calming and effective enforcement of appropriate speed limits.

**Policy T3.2**

Protect the quality of life in residential neighborhoods by monitoring traffic volumes and developing comprehensive, integrated and cost-effective traffic, bicycle and pedestrian safety improvements in residential areas. Such improvements may include sidewalks and pathways to connect to schools, parks, and transit stops. Additional improvements may include signage, bicycle facility and street improvements that include traffic calming design elements.

**Policy T3.3**

Establish and assign truck routes to the City's major delivery destinations along major arterials to avoid impacts on secondary arterials, collectors, and neighborhood streets. Heavy truck use of these streets, which are not designed to accommodate significant amounts of truck traffic, may increase maintenance and decrease safety.

**Policy T3.4**

Require shared access driveways and cross-access between developments when planning for public rights-of-way improvements and private development in order to reduce turning movement conflicts and enhance pedestrian and vehicular traffic safety. When street improvements are implemented, consolidate private driveway access to properties along major, secondary, and collector arterials in order to reduce safety hazards and increase street capacity.

**Policy T3.5**

Encourage the use of existing major arterials for the movement of through-traffic and freight in order to reduce the need for new capital projects and support the reliable movement of people, goods and services. Employ traffic calming measures on residential streets to discourage or slow neighborhood through-traffic.

**Policy T3.6**

Use traffic circles, landscaped medians, pedestrian bump-outs and other traffic calming measures to reduce speeds and increase safety. Where appropriate, design these facilities to provide pedestrian refuge areas that reduce pedestrian crossing distances, reduce conflict points and enhance streetscape landscaping. Use other traffic calming measures that offer pedestrian protection such as on-street parking, or increase driver awareness of pedestrians through the use of textured pavement and signage.

**Policy T3.7**

Avoid the creation of excessively large blocks and long local access streets that are uninterrupted by intersections, mid-block neck-downs, or other traffic calming

elements in order to discourage higher motor vehicle speeds that reduce pedestrian and bicyclist safety.

**Policy T3.8**

Avoid the construction of sidewalks next to street curbs and provide physical separation between traffic lanes and sidewalks to enhance pedestrian safety, add to sidewalk users' comfort, and encourage higher pedestrian usage. Wherever possible, separate pedestrians from traffic lanes by installing landscaped planter strips that include street trees.

***VEHICULAR AND PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION***

Roadway, sidewalks, trails, designated bicycle areas, and other areas of public circulation should be designed to provide the highest level of safety for the protection of human life and to ensure that there are transportation choices for people of all ages and abilities. Pedestrian facilities must meet ADA accessibility requirements. Safe, convenient and interconnected transportation networks should be provided for all major modes of transportation. An integrated, safety-oriented pedestrian and bicycle system increases mobility choices, reduces reliance on single-occupant vehicles, provides convenient access to schools, commercial mixed-use centers, transit systems, parks and other recreation areas throughout the city, and encourages regular physical activity to enhance health and wellness.

**GOAL T4**

**Improve vehicular and pedestrian traffic circulation within the City to enhance the quality of life.**

**Policy T4.1**

Ensure that streets and sidewalks provide access between residential neighborhoods and areas that are common destinations, including commercial mixed-use areas, schools, and parks. Maintain and enhance continuity of the street and sidewalk pattern by avoiding dead-end and half-streets not having turnaround provisions and by requiring through-connections in new developments.

**Policy T4.2**

Seek opportunities to obtain private easements or use existing public rights-of-way or public easements to develop alternative routes or improved linkages between residential areas or from residential to parks and commercial mixed-use areas. Work with property owners to create well-lighted pedestrian paths in established areas with poor connections. New pathways should tie into a network of walking trails and help improve pedestrian facility connectivity, thereby encouraging physical activity and overall health and well-being.

**Policy T4.3**

Design and improve residential collector arterials to reduce speeds and accommodate neighborhood concerns about safety, aesthetics and noise.



## **TRANSIT**

Transit is a key element of Fircrest's multimodal infrastructure and plays an important role in providing connections, mobility and access both locally and regionally. PSRC's *VISION 2040* and *Transportation 2040* plans contain the regional growth and transportation strategies for the central Puget Sound region. These plans call for channeling future growth into regional growth centers and other centers of local importance – and linking these centers with transit. The Pierce Transit Tacoma Community College (TCC) Transit Center is located directly across 19<sup>th</sup> Street from the northwest corner of Fircrest. Investments that improve access to this center and support more frequent service will benefit the community by providing enhanced local and regional connections.

### **GOAL T5**

**Encourage use of public transportation to accommodate a larger proportion of the traveling public.**

#### **Policy T5.1**

Use transit as a way to provide for access, circulation and mobility needs in Fircrest. Work with Pierce Transit to support the provision of local transit service on Major, Secondary, and Collector Arterials providing feeder service to residential areas and connections to adjacent jurisdictions. Local transit service should be expanded to serve the entire community including underserved neighborhoods and those individuals with special needs.

#### **Policy T5.2**

Coordinate with Pierce Transit and the Tacoma and University Place school districts to develop bus stops and shelters with seating to provide greater comfort for riders and encourage higher ridership.

#### **Policy T5.3**

Participate in Sound Transit's system planning process to help identify and evaluate potential options for system expansion. Work with Sound Transit and the community to determine long-term high capacity and express transit needs for the City and regional transportation partners. Consider Sound Transit's long-range plans to provide regional express bus service to the Tacoma Community College Transit Center during planning for the Mildred and 19<sup>th</sup> Street corridors. Work with citizens and other stakeholders to determine what regional high capacity transit modes and routes would best serve the community.

## **SIDEWALKS AND BICYCLE LANES**

The needs of bicyclists, pedestrians and transit users must be integrated in all roadway projects. Sidewalk networks should be well connected with opportunities for regular safe street crossings. The availability of bicycle facilities can encourage people to bike rather than drive for short- and moderate-distance trips. If a roadway is designed to discourage vehicular speeding, it can be comfortably used by pedestrians and bicyclists alike. Transit-friendly design should support a high level of transit activity and include

provisions for pedestrians safely crossing the street on their return trip. Walking and bicycling provide numerous individual and community benefits related to health, safety, the environment, transportation and quality of life. People who cannot or prefer not to drive should have safe and efficient transportation choices.

## **GOAL T6**

**Develop facilities for pedestrians and bicyclists to achieve a walkable community to support active and independent living, health, environmental quality and cost savings for travel.**

### **Policy T6.1**

Require sidewalk facilities on all new and substantially redeveloped public streets to enhance public safety. Ensure the provision of sidewalks in close proximity to schools to offer protection for children who walk to and from school. Assign high priority to projects that provide linkages to transit or complete planned pedestrian facilities or trails. Provide pedestrian facilities on non-arterial streets to supplement principal pedestrian facilities located on arterials. Ensure that crosswalks, signing, and pedestrian-activated signals conform to the *Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD)*.

### **Policy T6.2**

Develop a system of bicycle routes that connects neighborhoods and is coordinated with surrounding jurisdictions to allow people to conveniently travel between and within neighborhoods and local parks, commercial mixed-use areas and regional facilities. Consider the recommendations of the *Town of Fircrest Comprehensive Bikeway Plan* when updating bicycle route system facilities. Coordinate the planning, design, and construction of these facilities with adjacent jurisdictions to ensure consistency with regional plans. Base the design and type of bicycle facilities on the design standards for the functional classification of the roadway.

### **Policy T6.3**

Require that during the project review process for new development or redevelopment:

- Projects are consistent with applicable pedestrian and bicycle plans, master plans and development standards;
- Planned facilities include required frontage and crossing improvements consistent with applicable pedestrian and bicycle plans;
- On-site bicycle trails and pedestrian facilities have formal, direct and safe connections between buildings and subdivisions and the general circulation system;
- New subdivisions and short plats include, consistent with state law, the required pedestrian facilities (frontage and off-site improvements) that assure safe walking conditions for students who walk to and from school;

- Construction and implementation of other multi-use trails and trail crossings, as described in the Park, Recreation and Open Space Plan, are coordinated with project review; and
- Safety and security considerations for pedestrians and bicyclists are factored into the review of development proposals.

## **CONCURRENCY**

Transportation concurrency and level of service (LOS) standards are key requirements of the GMA. By policy and regulation, the City of Fircrest is required to ensure that transportation programs, projects and services needed to serve growth are in place either when growth occurs or within six years. Regulations implementing concurrency and LOS standards are contained in FMC Chapter 22.12 Concurrency Management.

## **GOAL T7**

**Maintain a consistent level of service on the arterial system that mitigates impacts of new growth and is adequate to serve adjoining land uses.**

### **Policy T7.1**

Except as otherwise designated, establish a capacity LOS standard D for intersections and roadways on major arterials, secondary arterials, and collector arterials and minor streets where they intersect with a major or secondary arterial street.

### **Policy T7.2**

Ensure transportation facilities and services are in place concurrent with or within a reasonable time period to support growth as it occurs consistent with the Growth Management Act, as restated in *VISION 2040* and the Pierce County Countywide Planning Policies. Make sure facilities and services do not drop below the adopted level of service and thereby cause negative impacts such as congestion, diminished safety, environmental and health impacts. Ensure concurrency by requiring payment of traffic impact fees to be used for capacity improvements, using SEPA to mitigate development-related impacts, or requiring developers to pay a proportionate share of traffic mitigation measures to maintain the adopted level of service.

### **Policy T7.3**

Ensure that Fircrest's transportation concurrency management responses to growth have the effect of expanding travel choices and achieve a multimodal travel environment. Programs, projects and services in response to existing and growth-related travel include those that improve access and connections, including motor vehicle operations, public transit service levels, the walking and bicycling environment, and transportation demand management.

## **TRANSPORTATION REVENUE AND FUNDING**

The Capital Facilities Element's Six-Year Capital Improvements Plan for transportation facilities contains details of transportation revenue sources that the City can reasonably expect to receive during the life of the transportation facilities plan. Revenue sources vary widely in terms of the amounts available and the types of projects for which they may be used. In most cases, individual transportation projects are funded by a combination of funding sources, reflecting the fact that transportation projects have multiple purposes and serve multiple beneficiaries.

### **GOAL T8**

**Develop an adequate and equitable funding program to make transportation improvements in a timely manner, as mandated by the Growth Management Act.**

#### **Policy T8.1**

Use regional, state, and federal funding sources for arterial street and other major improvements serving the City of Fircrest to ensure implementation of the City's transportation plan in an efficient, timely manner, concurrent with development. Ensure that the funding program recognizes and accommodates not only existing and future development in the City, but also regional traffic.

#### **Policy T8.2**

Supplement public funding sources with new revenue sources including, where appropriate, Local Improvement Districts (LIDs), traffic impact fees, a Transportation Benefit District and other funding sources. Ensure these new revenue sources are equitable and consistent with the benefits derived from improvements. Ensure that funding programs allow implementation of transportation improvements concurrently with development. Require new development to pay a fair share of the cost to serve it.

#### **Policy T8.3**

Secure grants available for sidewalk and bicycle lane improvements to implement alternative transportation action strategies and meet multimodal and *complete street* goals and objectives.

## **STREET MAINTENANCE AND MANAGEMENT**

The quality of life for many people is significantly affected by how well streets function for pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders and motorists. To serve Fircrest well, streets require cost effective maintenance, safety and efficiency improvements.

### **GOAL T9**

**Maintain the public street system to promote safety, comfort of travel, and cost-effective use of public funds.**

**Policy T9.1**

Administer a Pavement Management System (PMS) and comprehensive signage and markings program to address improvements for motorized and nonmotorized travel and the impacts of present and projected land uses. Implement the PMS in a manner that can reduce the need to build higher cost capital improvements by extending the useful life of existing facilities. The maintenance program should include provisions for vegetation removal to improve sight distances, installing adequate crosswalk markings and signage, and repairing sidewalks as needed.

**Policy T9.2**

Protect the public investment in the existing transportation system by administering an effective maintenance and preservation program that lowers the overall life cycle costs of the transportation infrastructure and reduces the need for new capital facility improvements.

**Policy T9.3**

Utilize Transportation System Management (TSM) strategies to make the existing roadways more efficient. Maximize the efficiency of the existing roadway system to reduce or delay the need for system improvements. Use a variety of methods, including: coordinating traffic signal timing; implementing a signal retiming and coordination program to reduce delay and congestion at the City's signalized intersections as major improvements are implemented; making intersection improvements to facilitate turning movements; and restricting access along principal roadways.

***DEMAND MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES***

Transportation Demand Management (TDM) encompasses the range of actions and strategies that offer alternatives to single-occupant vehicle (SOV) travel and help to more efficiently use the transportation system. TDM focuses on more effectively using existing and planned transportation capacity, ensures the compatible use of the transportation system consistent with planned uses, helps accommodate growth consistent with community character and land use objectives, and serves to mitigate impacts and to better meet mobility needs.

**GOAL T10**

**Implement TDM strategies to achieve efficient use of transportation infrastructure, increase the person-carrying capacity, accommodate and facilitate future growth, and achieve Fircrest's land use objectives.**

**Policy T10.1**

Utilize TDM strategies to reduce congestion, emissions, fuel consumption and the need for new transportation facilities – especially new roads and capacity improvements. Coordinate with Pierce Transit on service levels, frequency and route location, and actively pursue street improvements that include bike lanes, sidewalks and pedestrian crossings that provide a safe, convenient alternative to the use of the automobile. Consider developing vanpool and ride match programs in conjunction with Pierce

Transit, advancing other private and public rideshare programs and systems, and actively promoting commute trip reduction practices, including complying with the requirements of the State Commute Trip Reduction (CTR) Act, if applicable.

**Policy T10.2**

Require large employers to implement a CTR Program for employees, as mandated by the State Commute Trip Reduction Act.

**Policy T10.3**

Implement TDM strategies that emphasize incentives rather than disincentives and avoiding the imposition of disincentives to single-occupant vehicle travel when the City determines that there is an absence of reasonable transportation alternatives.

**Policy T10.4**

Provide physical features supportive of the use of alternative modes of travel and develop and maintain a list of acceptable TDM techniques and physical features.

**Policy T10.5**

Encourage large employers to participate in Transportation Management Associations to support trip reduction activities.

**Policy T10.6**

Support the development and implementation of TDM programs for both commute/ employer based, and non-commute/non-employer based sites including schools.

***CONSISTENCY WITH PLANS AND POLICIES***

One of the most important planning tenets expressed in the Growth Management Act is the *consistency* requirement. With respect to transportation planning, Fircrest must ensure its Transportation Element is consistent with the Land Use Element. This Element must be consistent with the City's Six-Year Capital Improvement Program. There must be consistency between the City's Comprehensive Plan, the Pierce County Comprehensive Plan, and the comprehensive plans of all municipalities within the County in accordance with the Pierce County Countywide Planning Policies. And, there must be consistency with the PSRC Multicounty Planning Policies.

**GOAL T11**

**Integrate land use and transportation planning to support active communities through the provision of a variety of travel choices, improve accessibility and mobility.**

**Policy T11.1**

Make transportation choices based on projected population and employment growth that support the distribution and intensity of land uses identified in the Land Use Element. Plan transportation facilities and services including roads, transit, pedestrian and bicycle keeping in mind the type and intensity of land uses -- including the location of high and low density housing, jobs, shopping, schools and parks.

**Policy T11.2**

Use mechanisms that encourage transit use including limiting off-street parking spaces, establishing maximum parking requirements, offering commute trip reduction programs, and implementing other TDM measures. Locate higher densities and intensities of use close to transit stops to create a core area to support transit and high occupancy vehicle use. Support development of transit centers, bus pullouts, and other transit facilities. Establish incentives for developers to provide transit and TDM-supportive amenities to further encourage transit use. Design and construct *complete streets*, bicycle-friendly facilities including bike-activated signals and secure bicycle racks or lockers, and pedestrian pathways.

**Policy T11.3**

Ensure comprehensive plan consistency with the Regional Transportation Plan, *Transportation 2040*, by supporting the development of a safe and efficient transportation network that supports a healthy environment and strong economy, encouraging increased utilization of clean and renewable energy and a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions, and promoting sustainable funding programs.

**Policy T11.4**

Coordinate with state, regional and local transportation efforts to develop a highly efficient multimodal system that supports the *VISION 2040* Regional Growth Strategy. Coordinate with the State Department of Transportation, PSRC, Sound Transit, the Pierce County Regional Council, Pierce Transit, BNSF, Pierce County and surrounding cities and towns to integrate transportation systems for easy and efficient mobility of people, freight and services.

**ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH**

The transportation system within Fircrest represents major public facilities whose quality of design, sensitivity to human needs, and integration with their surroundings can enhance an urban environment or erode it. The transportation system needs to be designed in a manner that contributes to the long-term benefit of the community and supports Fircrest's environmental health policies.

**GOAL T12**

**Reduce environmental impacts associated with transportation infrastructure and operations.**

**Policy T12.1**

Enhance strategies that improve air quality and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The City should build *complete streets* with sidewalks and bike lanes, coordinate with transit agencies, and build green streets to improve air and water quality. The City should support the development of infrastructure to encourage the use of electric and low emission vehicles by including electric vehicle charging stations in new and substantially redeveloped public facilities. As electric and low emission vehicle technology advances, the City should revise its regulations to encourage use of this technology.

**Policy T12.2**

Adopt design standards to improve water quality and create more appealing streetscapes. Emphasize the use of landscaping elements in street improvement projects that help curb stormwater runoff – bioswales, planters, rain gardens, and street trees – and that are mutually beneficial for mobility and ecology. Design these green elements to be deterrents of crashes and injuries and contribute to a more comfortable and visually interesting environment for all users. When designing *complete streets*, include trees and other plants to clean runoff and manage stormwater at the site. Use traffic-calming elements like traffic circles, chicanes, islands, and curb extensions to provide site opportunities for bioswales, street trees, and rain gardens.

**Policy T12.3**

Develop strategies to reduce solid waste including the use of recycled materials in street paving and other maintenance projects in order to lower costs and reduce landfill use, provided the strategies and materials meet cost and durability objectives.

**GOAL T13**

**Consider benefits and impacts to health in the design of transportation infrastructure by providing opportunities for exercise, and reducing exposure to air, water and noise pollution.**

**Policy T13.1**

Identify gaps in bike lanes and sidewalks and opportunities for pathway and trail connections between neighborhoods and to parks and schools to encourage greater pedestrian facility use and reduce reliance on automobiles. Support the construction of improvements to trail systems to provide connections between parks and neighborhoods for walkers and cyclists.

**Policy T13.2**

Design, build and maintain bike lanes, sidewalks, paths and trails to expand opportunities for walking and biking to improve individual and community health. Provide transportation facilities that are walkable and bicycle friendly to improve economic and living conditions so that businesses and skilled workers are attracted to the community.

**Policy T13.3**

Concentrate population and employment growth along the Mildred and 19<sup>th</sup> Street corridors and other areas served by transit routes to reduce environmental impacts associated with growth and the construction of additional infrastructure. Integrate transportation and land use planning to meet environmental goals by reducing the impacts of the transportation system such as contaminated storm water run-off, greenhouse gas emissions, noise pollution and energy consumption.



## ***DISASTER PLANNING***

Safety planning and mitigation, including strategies for protecting the transportation system from disasters, are multidisciplinary efforts that can significantly improve the livability of the community. Many opportunities exist to implement relatively low-cost but effective safety measures at the local level. The City is committed to protecting its transportation system and making it safe for users of all modes of travel.

### **GOAL T14**

**Protect the City's transportation system against disaster, and develop prevention and recovery strategies and coordinated responses.**

#### **Policy T14.1**

Work with partner organizations including the Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and Pierce County Emergency Management to prepare for disasters by developing prevention and recovery strategies. Participate in emergency management preparedness training opportunities for transportation facilities.

## ***CITIZEN INVOLVEMENT***

Transportation improvements may strongly influence community design and function and have direct impacts on residents, business owners and other stakeholders within a community. The designs for such improvements may benefit greatly from input received during public outreach in the early stages of project formulation and for some projects during the final stages of design work.

### **Goal T15**

**Facilitate the involvement of interested citizens in planning transportation system improvements.**

#### **Policy T15.1**

Where major improvements are planned, solicit input from interested citizens concerning the improvements early in the design process. Use some or all of the following techniques to encourage participation: may be used: citizen advisory committees, design charrettes, public open houses, workshops and hearings, and informational outreach through *Town Topics*, the city's website, social media, and other effective means. Where minor improvements will affect a specific neighborhood, provide neighborhood residents with an opportunity to provide their input and comment on designs. Review work done by citizens in the past such as the *Town of Fircrest Comprehensive Bikeway Plan*, and incorporate elements into future transportation improvement plans, as appropriate.

#### **Policy T15.2**

After a major transportation system improvement is approved by Council, initiate changes, including those to landscaping, lighting, and to utility locations and configurations, through a formal engineering change request and review procedure that ensures that potential impacts of the change are considered by all departments

that participated in developing the approved design. Disallow changes that negatively impact the proposed design's safety or level of service. Approve changes that do not significantly alter any element of the design at the staff level. Require Council approval for proposed design changes that significantly alter design elements.

## LAND USE ASSUMPTIONS

The land use assumptions used while developing this Transportation Element are summarized in **Table T-1** and described in detail in the documents listed.

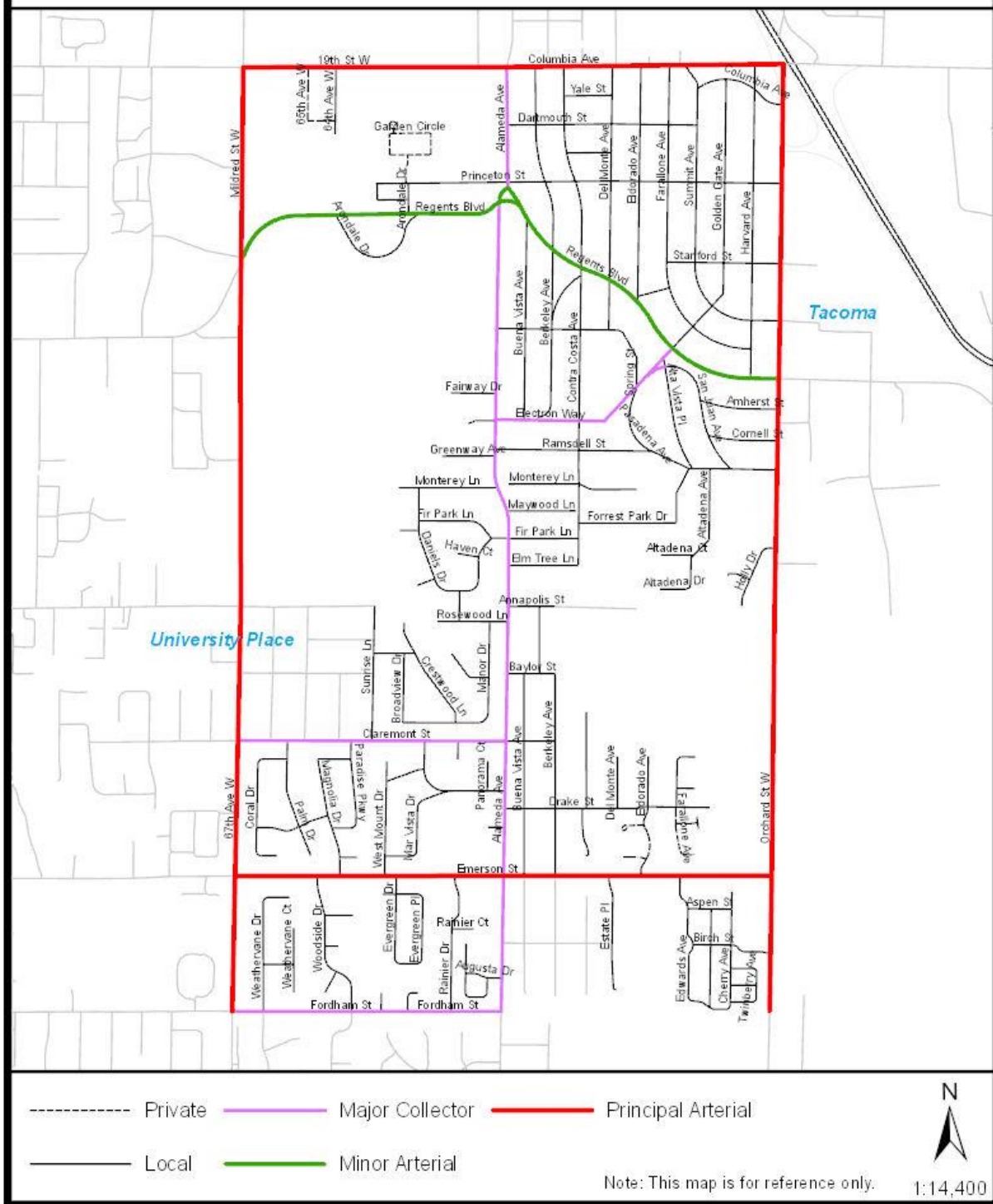
**Table T-1**

Area	Document
Within Fircrest	Future land use in low to moderate density residential neighborhoods will remain essentially unchanged except for the conversion of some undeveloped land in the southeast corner of the City to residential uses. Properties located along the Mildred and 19 <sup>th</sup> Street corridors will redevelop to include a more intensive mix of uses including retail, office, service and multifamily residential components. The Fircrest Golf Club property will remain largely devoted to the golf course and supportive uses. The Land Use Element provides details.
North and east of Fircrest	Future land use in areas adjacent to Fircrest is specified in the <i>City of Tacoma Land Use Management Plan</i> . Future land uses specified are essentially the same as those existing at the time this plan was updated.
South and west of Fircrest	The <i>Comprehensive Plan for Pierce County, Washington</i> and the <i>City of University Place Comprehensive Plan</i> specify that most land uses in developed areas adjacent to Fircrest will remain generally unchanged. Several tracts of vacant land west and south of Fircrest will be developed for low to moderate density residential use. A portion of the <i>University Place Regional Growth Center (RGC)</i> , provisionally designated by PSRC in December 2014, is located adjacent to the western border of Fircrest west of Mildred Street and south of 19 <sup>th</sup> Street West. The RGC will accommodate mixed-use development that is comparable in intensity and allowed uses to the Fircrest Commercial Mixed-use designation on the east side of Mildred and south side of 19 <sup>th</sup> Street.

## INVENTORY OF FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Because Fircrest is a geographically small, land-locked city with limited internal commercial activity, Fircrest does not contain many of the typical components of a multimodal transportation network. Fircrest has no water, air, or rail facilities. The city's transportation facilities are limited to streets and those transportation modes and services that use streets.

**Figure T-1  
Functional Classification**



## ***STREETS***

Improved streets and their classifications are illustrated in **Figure T-1**. Fircrest has two distinctly different street networks, one in the northern area of the city and one in the central and southern area of the city. The two networks are linked by Alameda Ave., which runs north-south through the approximate center of the city. The differences between these street networks can be traced to their surroundings when they were developed and the development standards that were used.

The most common paved width of local streets is 28 to 30 feet. A few streets in the older part of the city are 24 to 26 feet wide. Paved width is usually between 40 and 80 feet in streets that have been recognized in the past as collectors and arterials. Most streets provide automobile parking parallel to the curb.

A primary determinant of the functional classification is the present and anticipated traffic volumes to be carried by a street. Within a given classification the number of lanes can be varied to accommodate the anticipated volume. Roadway functional classifications are summarized below.

- *Local Streets*  
Local streets are typically low volume roadways that provide access to individual lots adjacent to them. A number of factors including multiple driveways accessing the roadway, on-street parking, and the potential presence of children playing and riding bicycles suggest that the design and width of local streets should encourage slower traffic speeds (i.e., 25 mph or less). An interconnected network of local streets disperses traffic and allows multiple access routes for emergency service vehicles.
- *Collector Streets*  
Collector streets gather traffic from local streets and direct it to arterial routes. Collectors provide both land access and traffic circulation within residential neighborhoods and commercial and industrial areas. Roadways should be of sufficient width to allow for on-street parking and yet facilitate efficient traffic flow at moderate speeds (i.e., 25 to 35 mph). It is desirable to have collector streets spaced at 1/4 to 1/2 mile intervals. With this frequency, access from neighborhoods can be achieved without circuitous, time consuming travel and without overburdening residential streets with through traffic.

### *Minor Arterial Streets*

Minor arterial streets interconnect with and augment arterial streets as the principle circulation routes within the community. Ease of traffic mobility and the length of trips may be somewhat less along minor arterials than principle arterials. Intercommunity travel is typically facilitated by minor arterials. In fully developed areas minor arterials are normally not more than one mile apart.

- **Principal Arterial Streets**

Principal Arterial Streets serve as the primary routes within and through the community. They may serve as the principle routes to and from freeway access points and other intercommunity connections. Frequently, intercity bus routes are located along principal arterials. Efficient traffic movement is of prime concern. Roadway width and intersection design should accommodate concentrated traffic volumes at moderate speeds (30 to 40 mph). Urban principal arterials may be as closely spaced as one mile apart in highly developed central business districts.

## **NONMOTORIZED FACILITIES**

**Figure T-2** illustrates the distribution and type of nonmotorized facilities in Fircrest. Sidewalks are almost always present along streets originally developed prior to 1940 in the northern part of the City. These sidewalks are generally separated from automobile travel lanes by curb and gutter and often include a narrow planting strip between the sidewalk and the curb. Sidewalks are present along most of Alameda Avenue. Fircrest has a limited number of off-street pedestrian facilities, including paved pathways in newer planned developments and a few short, unmaintained footpaths through vacant properties, school grounds, and open space.

## **PUBLIC TRANSIT**

### ***Pierce Transit***

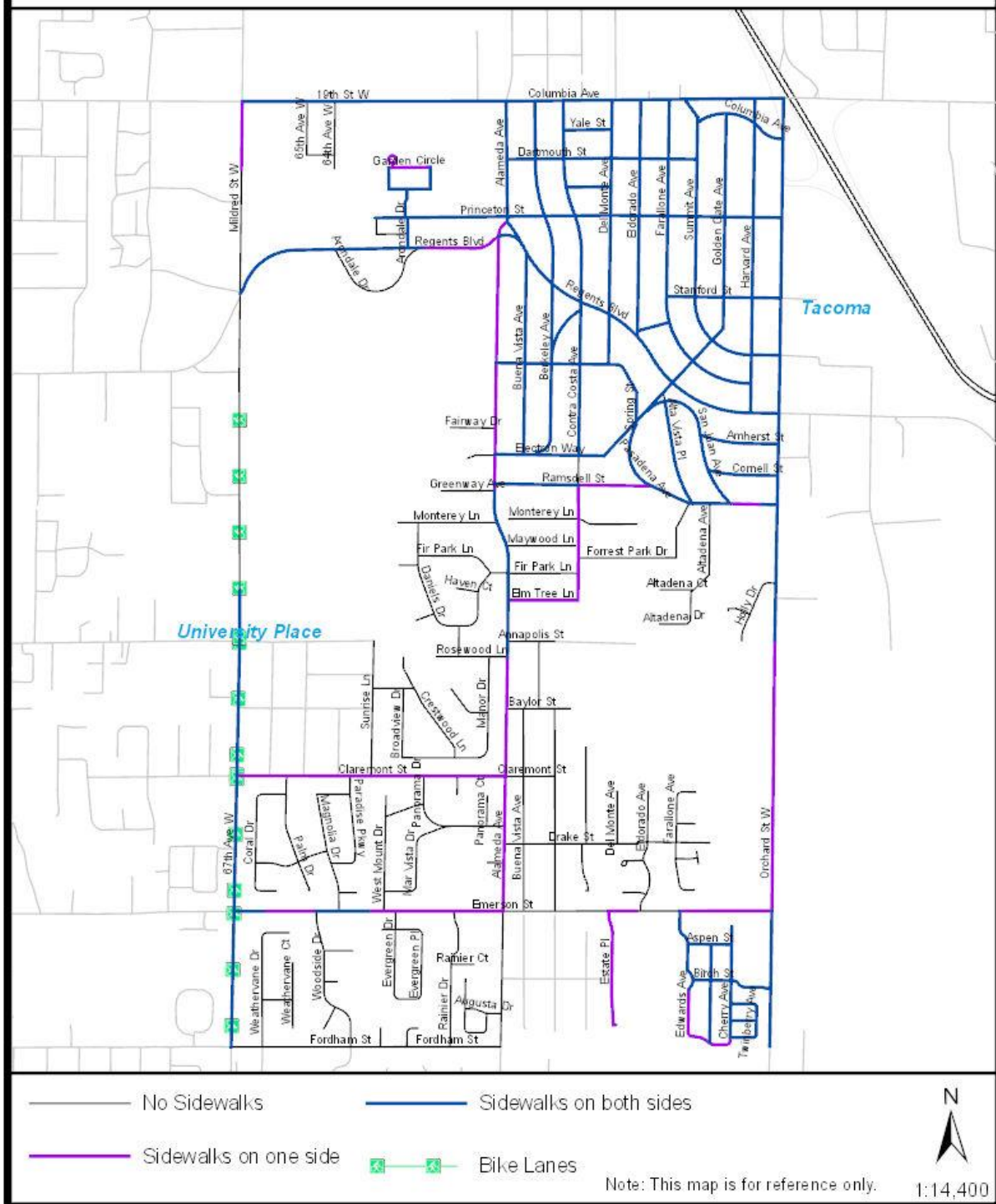
Public transportation service in the area is provided by the Pierce County Transportation Benefit Authority (or PTBA, commonly known as Pierce Transit). Pierce Transit is a municipal corporation formed under the authority of RCW Chapter 36.57 and is governed by a ten-member Board of Commissioners comprised of elected officials representing thirteen jurisdictions, unincorporated Pierce County, and one non-voting union representative within the benefit area.

Pierce Transit covers 292 square miles of Pierce County containing roughly 70% of the county population. It provides three types of service: fixed route, SHUTTLE (paratransit), and vanpools that help get passengers to jobs, schools and personal appointments.

Pierce Transit operates four fixed bus routes (2, 51, 52, and 53) that serve or stop in the City of Fircrest. These routes are shown in **Figure T-3**.

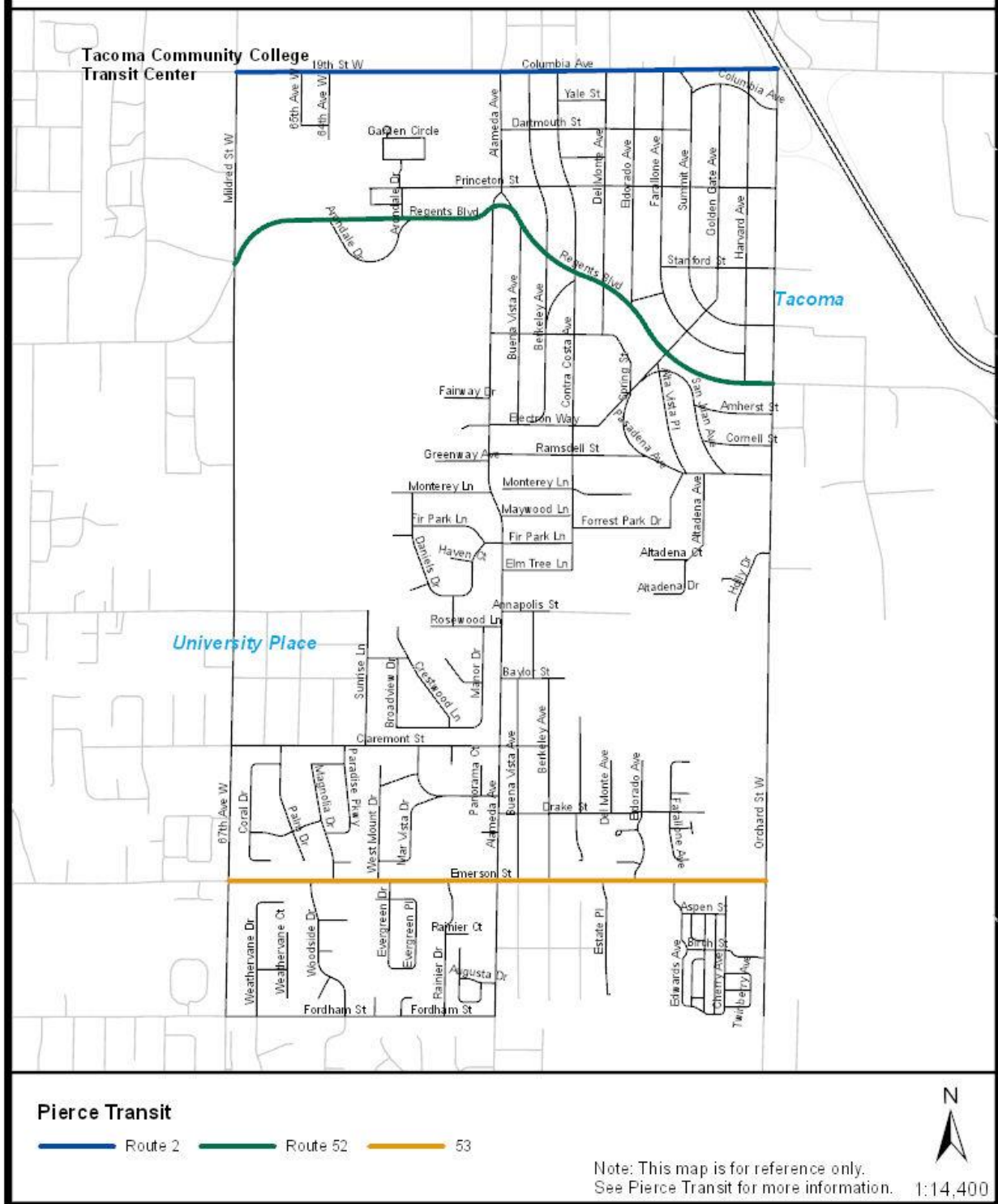
- Route 2 connects the community with the Tacoma Community College (TCC) Transit Center and the Lakewood Transit Center via South 19th Street and Bridgeport Way West.

**Figure T-2  
Nonmotorized Facilities**





### Figure T-3 Bus Routes



- Route 51 connects Fircrest to Tacoma's Proctor District and the Lakewood Sounder commuter rail station via South Orchard Street.

Route 52 links the community with the TCC Transit Center via Regents Boulevard and the Narrows Plaza neighborhood. Route 52 also links the Tacoma Mall Transit Center via Regents Boulevard and various arterials in Tacoma.

Route 53 provides access for the southern part of Fircrest to the TCC Transit Center via Emerson Street and various arterials in University Place. Route 53 also provides access to the vicinity of the South Tacoma Sounder commuter rail station via South Orchard Street and South 66th Street, although the bus route alignment is three blocks south of the station. Route 53 continues on to the Tacoma Mall Transit Center, eventually terminating in downtown Tacoma. The buses serving these routes accommodate both riders with bicycles and wheelchairs.

SHUTTLE (paratransit) service is provided by Pierce Transit for persons with disabilities in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA). Pierce Transit's SHUTTLE provides transportation for individuals who are unable to access or use fixed route bus services due to a disability. SHUTTLE eligibility standards and service characteristics are designed to meet the complementary paratransit requirements of the ADA. Using lift-equipped vans, SHUTTLE provides door-to-door service, or in some cases access to fixed route service. SHUTTLE provides service that is comparable to fixed route service in a geographic area and hours of service within each area. SHUTTLE is provided directly by Pierce Transit and through contracted services with First Transit. The area served by SHUTTLE is generally defined by the area that is within three-quarters of a mile of a fixed route.

Pierce Transit also offers vanpool, special use van, and rideshare programs. Pierce Transit vanpools typically serve a group of 5 to 15 people sharing the ride in a 12- or 15-passenger van. These vanpools commonly serve groups traveling to and from work, whose trip origin or destination is within Pierce Transit's service area. This highly successful program complements Pierce Transit's network of local and express services, providing commute alternatives to many destinations that cannot be effectively served by local fixed route services.

### ***Sound Transit***

Regional transit service is provided by the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority, commonly known as Sound Transit. Sound Transit plans, builds and operates express bus, light rail and commuter train services in the urban areas of King, Pierce and Snohomish counties. These services are intended to complement other transit services including those operated by Pierce Transit.

Sound Transit's Regional Transit Long-Range Plan establishes goals, policies, and strategies to guide the long-term development of the region's high capacity transportation (HCT) system. It is based on years of intensive planning, environmental



analysis, and public outreach. It is intended to guide how the Sound Transit system can best address the region's mobility needs and support growth management objectives. The long-range plan will be implemented in a series of phases and will be updated over time.

This long-range plan updates and modifies earlier adopted plans. In 1996, Sound Transit adopted *The Regional Transit Long-Range Vision* and Sound Move, -- Sound Transit's initial phase of regional HCT investments. In 2005 the Long-Range Plan was updated and Sound Transit 2 (ST2) was the second phase of regional HCT investments. Where the long-range plan represents a broad regional framework for long-term investments, Sound Move and ST2 represent more detailed sets of projects for which voters approved funding. Most Sound Move and ST2 projects and services are being implemented and are successfully addressing many regional mobility needs. Sound Transit will use this updated long-range plan as the basis for developing the next phase of investments – Sound Transit's next system plan. As with Sound Move and, ST2, the next phase of system planning will encompass a specific set of projects and services designed to build upon the first two phases and to further expand mobility options for the citizens of the central Puget Sound region.

Sound Transit in Pierce County consists of three distinct lines of business:

- 1) Regional Express (bus);
- 2) Sounder (commuter rail); and
- 3) Link (light rail).

Sound Transit improvements in the general area include express bus service from the TCC Transit Center, the Lakewood Towne Center Transit Center, and the Tacoma Dome Station. Sounder operates commuter rail service from the Lakewood, South Tacoma and Tacoma Dome Stations north to Seattle via Puyallup, Sumner, Auburn, Kent and Tukwila. Sounder service is available to Everett on the Seattle- Everett segment. In Pierce County, Sound Transit operates a light rail segment between downtown Tacoma and the Tacoma Dome station. Additional light rail service is planned for Tacoma.

### **AIR, WATER, AND RAIL TRANSPORTATION**

Fircrest does not have an airport within its planning area. Sea-Tac International Airport, located approximately 28 miles north of the City, is the largest airport in Washington State. Regional, national, and international connections can be made through this airport. Shuttle services such as Shuttle Express provide door-to-door service between Sea-Tac and Fircrest residences and businesses. Sound Transit express buses provide service between the airport and the Tacoma Dome Station and other Tacoma-area locations.

Tacoma Narrows Airport is located on the west side of the Tacoma Narrows, south of the Tacoma Narrows Bridge. This general aviation airport provides a limited number of regional commuter flights, but does not offer national or international service.

The Washington State Ferry System operates the Point Defiance-Tahlequah route connecting the south end of Vashon Island with the Tacoma area. The Point Defiance dock is located approximately five miles north of the City.

An Amtrak station is located in the City of Tacoma at 1101 Puyallup Avenue. Service is provided from Tacoma to the north to Tukwila, Seattle, Edmonds, Everett, Mount Vernon, Bellingham, and Vancouver, British Columbia, and to the south to Olympia-Lacey, Centralia, Kelso-Longview, Vancouver, Portland, Oregon, and destinations further south. Amtrak service from Tacoma is also provided on the east-west corridor to Seattle, Wenatchee, Moses Lake, Ritzville and Spokane. There are no passenger rail stops within City limits.

## LEVELS OF SERVICE

Level of service (LOS) standards are measures describing both the operational conditions within a traffic stream and the perception of these conditions by motorists and/or passengers. Each LOS describes traffic conditions in objective terms such as speed, travel time, or vehicle density (i.e. number of vehicles per mile). The conditions are also qualitatively described in terms of a driver's ability to change lanes, to safely make turns at intersections, and to choose their own travel speed.

The LOS grading ranges are from A to F. LOS A describes conditions when no delays are present and low volumes are experienced. LOS E, on the other hand, represents an "at capacity" condition under which no more vehicles could be added to the intersection or road segment without a breakdown in traffic flow. LOS F indicates long delays and/or forced traffic flow. In most jurisdictions in the Puget Sound region, LOS D or better is defined as acceptable, LOS E as tolerable in certain areas, and LOS F as unacceptable.

The following summarizes level of service (LOS) characteristics for signalized intersections and unsignalized intersections.

### ***SIGNALIZED INTERSECTION LOS CHARACTERISTICS***

<b>LOS A</b>	Traffic is light. Most vehicles arrive when the light is green and do not stop at all. Vehicle Delay Range is 0.0 to 10 seconds.
<b>LOS B</b>	Conditions are similar to LOS A, but more vehicles are forced to slow or stop at the light. Vehicle Delay Range is >10 to 20 seconds.
<b>LOS C</b>	The number of vehicles stopping is significant and individual cycle failures may begin to appear. Vehicle Delay Range is >20 to 35 seconds.
<b>LOS D</b>	Longer delay may result from longer cycle lengths, poor progression, and/or more traffic. Many vehicles stop and cycle failures become noticeable. Vehicle Delay Range is >35 to 55 seconds.

- LOS E** This is the limit of acceptable delay. Cycle failures become a frequent occurrence. Vehicle Delay Range is > 55 to 80 seconds.
- LOS F** Delays are considered unacceptable to most drivers. This often occurs when arrival rates exceed the capacity of the intersection. Vehicle Delay Range is more than 80 seconds.

### ***UNSIGNALIZED INTERSECTION LOS CHARACTERISTICS***

- LOS A** Average total delay is less than or equal to 10 seconds per vehicle.
- LOS B** Average total delay is between 10 and 15 seconds per vehicle.
- LOS C** Average total delay is between 15 and 25 seconds per vehicle.
- LOS D** Average total delay is between 25 and 35 seconds per vehicle.
- LOS E** Average total delay is between 35 and 50 seconds per vehicle.
- LOS F** Average total delay is greater than 50 seconds per vehicle.

## **ARTERIAL AND TRANSIT ADEQUACY**

### ***INTERSECTION LOS***

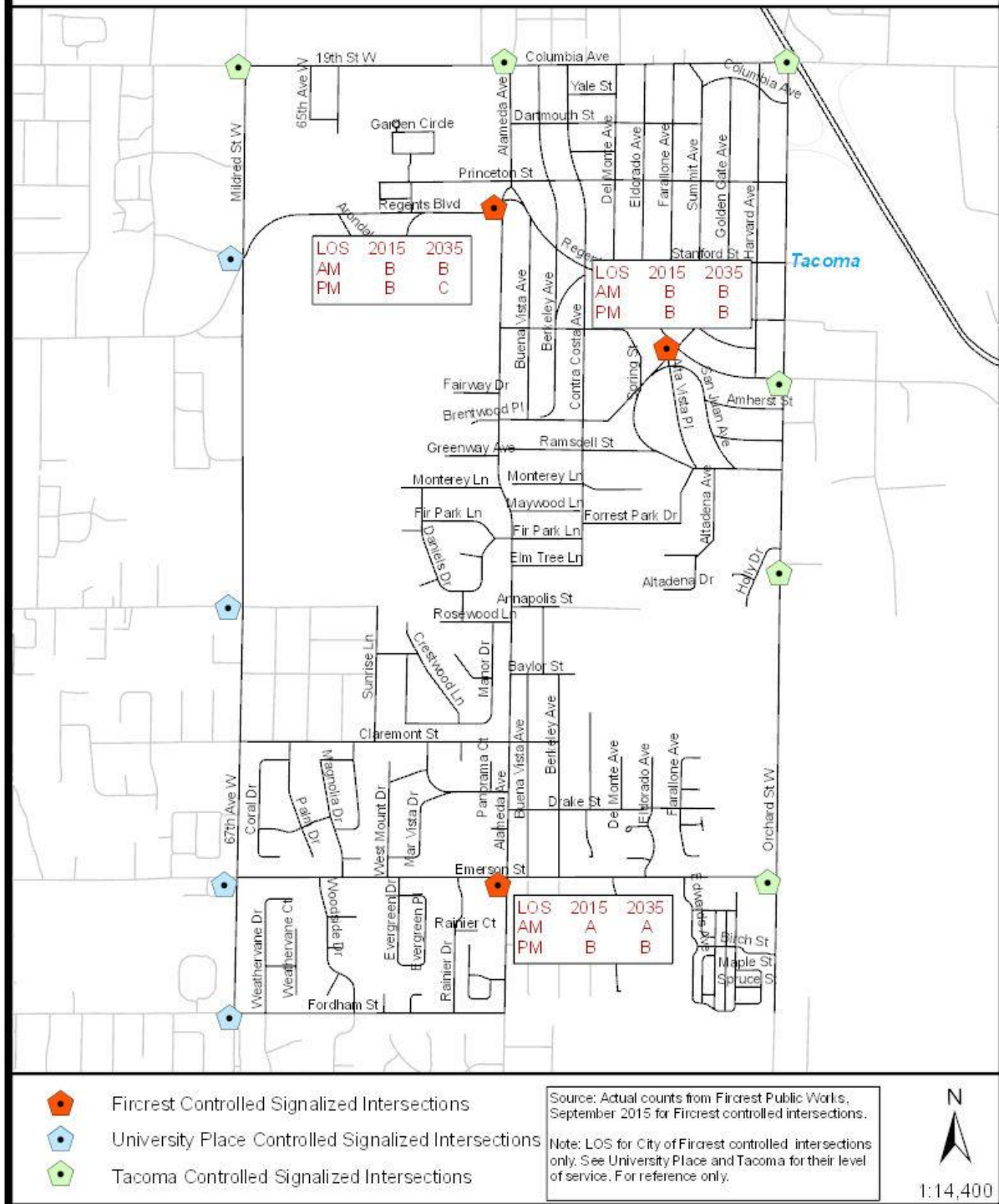
The City performed LOS analyses for existing arterial intersections in 2015. The results of the intersection AM and PM “peak hour” LOS analysis for Fircrest are shown in **Figure T-4**. The intersections shown are under control operation of the City of Fircrest. A number of arterial-arterial intersections surrounding the City such as Center Street/ Regents Boulevard and Orchard Street, and Regents Boulevard and Mildred Street West, are under the control and operation of Tacoma or University Place.

IN 2015, the intersection operation of the key intersections operated at LOS B or better during the AM peak hour and the PM peak hour. The individual directions at each of the intersections shows the 2015 LOS is LOS C or better.

### ***TRAFFIC FORECASTS***

Traffic forecasting is a way of estimating future traffic volumes based on expected population and employment growth. For Fircrest, traffic forecasts were prepared using current traffic counts, a travel demand forecasting computer model developed by PSRC and population and employment estimates contained in the Land Use Element. Given the influence of pass-through traffic, growth rates used in neighboring jurisdictions such as Tacoma and University Place, and WSDOT forecasts, were reviewed to best derive the growth rate used.

**Figure T-4**  
**Signalized Intersections - Level of Service**



Based on this analysis, the traffic growth rate used is forecasted to be 0.5 percent per year as a conservative projection -- with 0.2 to 0.3 percent growth per year more likely. Based on the 0.5 percent growth rate and projected 2035 traffic volumes, the AM peak hour and PM peak hour LOS for signalized intersections were calculated and are shown in **Figure T-4**.

All signalized intersection PM peak hour LOS are expected to decrease moderately between 2015 and 2035. In 2015, there were no signalized intersections operating at either LOS E or F, with the maximum overall LOS expected to be LOS B. By 2035, no signalized intersections will reach LOS E or F (assuming no improvements) with only one intersection, Alameda Avenue and Regents Boulevard, reaching LOS C overall.

### ***ADOPTED ARTERIAL LEVEL OF SERVICE STANDARD***

The GMA requires the City of Fircrest to adopt a LOS standard for arterial streets. A LOS standard is a determination of the maximum level of congestion allowed on a roadway before improvements should be made. For example, if the established level of service for a specific roadway is LOS D, improvements should be made to that roadway if its level of service falls below LOS D (more congestion) or if projected growth would cause the road to exceed the LOS D standard.

LOS standards help ensure that the transportation system can adequately serve expected growth and development consistent with local standards. In addition, the service level policy can become the basis for establishing a traffic impact mitigation fee system to provide “fair share” funding of needed transportation improvements. The City of Fircrest has adopted a LOS standard of LOS D for its arterial streets.

### ***CONCURRENCY***

Concurrency describes a situation in which adequate facilities are available when the impacts of the development occur, or within a specified time thereafter. Based on the City’s adoption of LOS D for its arterial streets, new development will not be permitted if it causes a particular transportation facility to decline below LOS D unless improvements or strategies to accommodate the development’s impacts are made “concurrent with” the development. For transportation, “concurrent with” means that the improvement must be in place at the time of development or within six years of completion and occupancy of the development that impacts the facility. The City has adopted concurrency management regulations in FMC Chapter 22.12 to implement its concurrency management program.

### ***PUBLIC TRANSIT LEVEL OF SERVICE STANDARD***

Pierce Transit is developing a Long Range Plan (LRP) called Destination 2040, which will include performance measures prescribed under MAP-21. In addition, the LRP will include revised and updated service guidelines for 2015 and beyond. It should be noted, however, that the agency does not have Level of Service standards for fixed route services that are designed to align with the roadway network of the municipalities Pierce Transit serves – including Fircrest.

PSRC is working with WSDOT to begin designing multimodal concurrency guidelines “to ensure that transportation infrastructure supports development as it occurs according to local standards.” As such, Pierce Transit will await PSRC’s and WSDOT’s specific guidelines for transit agencies once they are formally adopted. In the interim, more information is available at: [http://www.psrc.org/assets/11737/Multimodal Concurrency Presentation.pdf](http://www.psrc.org/assets/11737/Multimodal_Concurrency_Presentation.pdf).

## **RECOMMENDED TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENTS**

Over the next twenty years, increases in population and employment within Fircrest and surrounding communities will increase traffic volumes. To maintain or reduce levels of congestion on roadways and at intersections in Fircrest, certain transportation strategies will be needed. Possible strategies include:

- Making improvements to existing roads and intersections;
- Construction of new roads to improve access and circulation;
- Enhancement of nonmotorized travel facilities to encourage alternate modes of transportation such as walking, bicycling, and eliminating trips altogether through commute trip reduction;
- Supporting a shift in travel mode from private vehicles to transit and carpooling;
- Transportation Demand Management (TDM) strategies. TDM strategies help create or preserve existing capacity of roadways by reducing demand, thereby deferring or reducing the need for capacity improvements; and
- Transportation System Management (TSM) strategies. TSM strategies focus on improving operations of the existing roadway system to reduce or delay the need for system improvements.

These strategies will require close coordination with surrounding jurisdictions (Tacoma and University Place), Pierce Transit, and other agencies. Arterials located on the perimeter of Fircrest – 19<sup>th</sup> Street West, South Orchard Street, and 67<sup>th</sup> Avenue West (Mildred Street) -- are partly or entirely under the jurisdiction of either Tacoma or University Place. Arterial intersections may have shared jurisdiction with two or even three cities (e.g., 19<sup>th</sup> and Mildred Streets) as do numerous arterial/local street intersections.

### **MOTORIZED IMPROVEMENTS**

To meet the adopted LOS standards, future improvements along arterials and at intersections may be necessary to accommodate growth and achieve concurrency. However, projected growth within Fircrest is unlikely to result in insufficient arterial capacity given the condition of current facilities and completion of funded improvements.

By 2016, the City of University Place will have reconstructed Mildred Street (which falls within University Place jurisdiction between 19<sup>th</sup> Street and Regents Boulevard) as a *complete street* that will have fewer lanes and new curbs, gutters, planter strips with street trees, sidewalks, lighting and transit facilities. The Mildred Street design will

provide sufficient motor vehicle and nonmotorized capacity to accommodate commercial mixed-use development likely to occur adjacent to the street within Fircrest.

19<sup>th</sup> Street and Orchard Street, each shared by Tacoma and Fircrest, will have sufficient overall capacity to accommodate the growth projected to occur within Fircrest. However, non-capacity improvements may be required to improve circulation, improve emergency vehicle response time, enhance pedestrian and vehicular safety, and improve intersection signalization performance.

Planned road improvements that are programmed during the next six-years are included in the City's Six-Year Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP), hereby incorporated by reference. The TIP is updated and adopted annually. The Six-Year Capital Improvement Program (CIP) contained in the Capital Facilities Element also lists planned roadway improvements. Projects listed in the CIP schedule focus on maintenance and repair of existing roadway facilities and construction of new pedestrian facilities. No roadway capacity projects are proposed in the current schedule.

### ***TRANSIT IMPROVEMENTS***

Proposed business strategies, capital projects, service changes, and capital facility improvements or investments over the next six years are documented in Pierce Transit's *Transit Development Plan*, which is updated and submitted to WSODT annually. The agency's current TDP does not include any proposals for specific service modifications or facility improvements in Fircrest. However, future capital improvements and route expansion within or adjacent to Fircrest may occur in high need areas and in conjunction with new commercial mixed-use and residential development activity. Development proposals that will generate significant new demand for transit services may be required by Pierce Transit to mitigate impacts from increased demand by funding transit shelters and supportive facilities in close proximity to the development.

### ***AIR, WATERBORNE, RAIL IMPROVEMENTS***

None of the regional air, marine, or rail facilities has a significant impact on the Fircrest transportation system.

### ***NONMOTORIZED IMPROVEMENTS***

Improvements to the nonmotorized transportation system would establish a more complete framework for an inter-connected pedestrian and bicycle circulation system. A complete pedestrian and bicycle network would link neighborhoods with schools, parks, public services, and retail activity, allowing residents and visitors to walk or bicycle to these areas rather than drive. The creation of a city-wide trail network linking all recreation and school facilities is supported by the *City of Fircrest Comprehensive Park, Recreation and Open Space Plan*.

The community's comprehensive bicycle facility improvement plan, *Town of Fircrest Comprehensive Bikeway Plan*, was prepared in 1975. The bikeway plan is based on inputs from a citizen advisory board and a consultant analysis. It addresses bicycle and pedestrian facilities on all streets that the plan identified as bike routes. The emphasis is

on route continuity, access to frequent travel destinations, and the safety of bicyclists and pedestrians along the routes. It provides streetscape design that includes street trees and appropriate separation of pedestrians, bicyclists, and vehicles.

**Figure T-5** depicts proposed nonmotorized improvements. Development of an integrated nonmotorized improvements plan, which would build on previous Fircrest planning efforts for sidewalk, trail and bicycle facilities, would support the creation of a continuous pedestrian and bicycle circulation system that achieves Fircrest transportation, land use, community character, and park, recreation and open space goals and objectives.

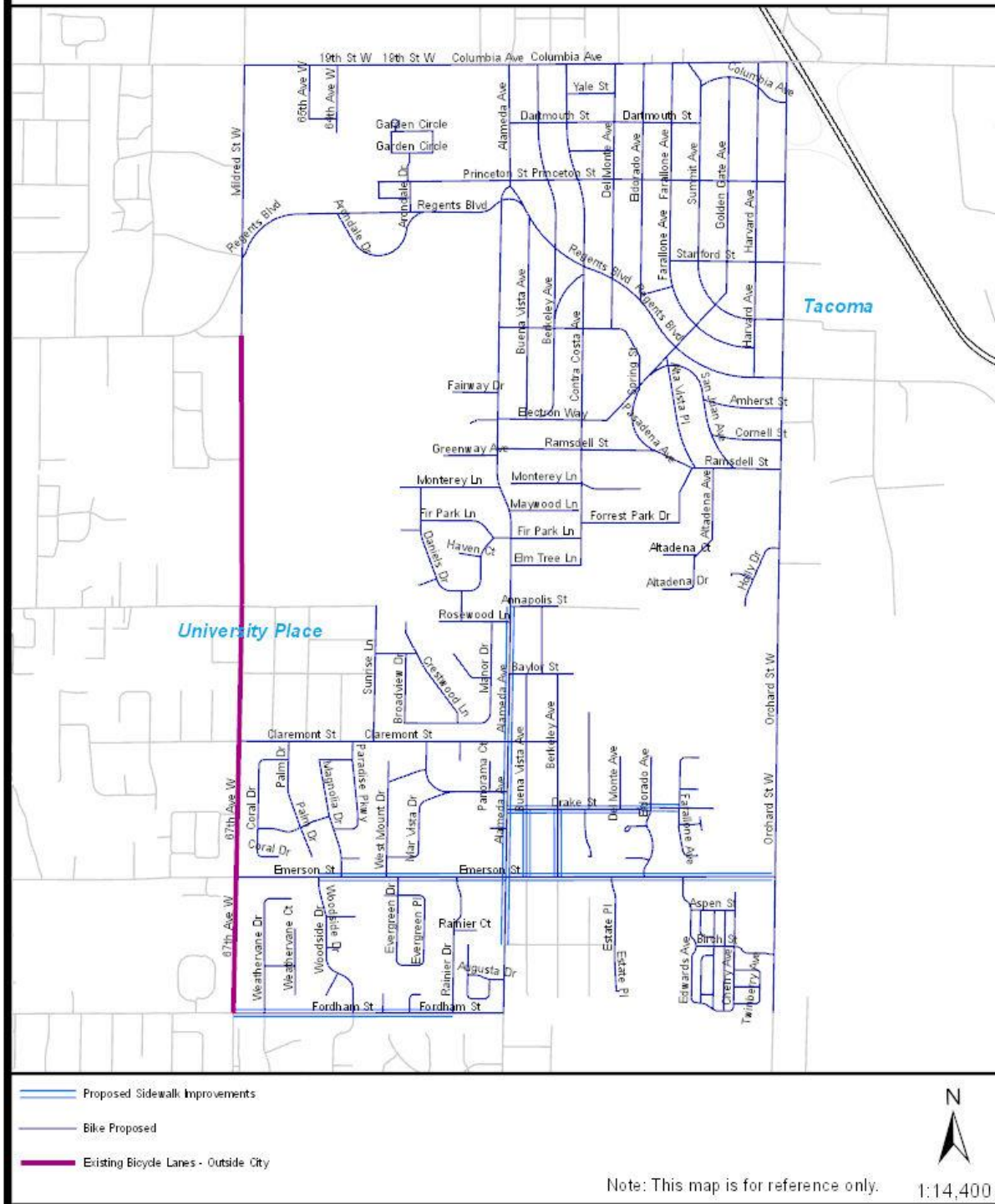
## TRANSPORTATION DEMAND MANAGEMENT

Transportation demand management (TDM) strategies can help create or preserve existing capacity of roadways by reducing demand, thereby deferring or negating the need for capacity improvements. Examples of TDM strategies include:

- Developing a comprehensive transit information program with Pierce Transit,
- Working with Pierce Transit to develop vanpool and ride match services and increase the availability of transit, including the frequency of service and number of routes serving the city;
- Providing a continuous system of walkways and bikeways servicing the community and connecting it with nearby activity centers;
- Providing facilities and services that make multimodal travel more convenient, e.g., covered transit stops, provisions for bicycles on transit vehicles, and shuttle services to transit centers;
- Actively promoting commute trip reduction practices, including complying with the requirements of the State Commute Trip Reduction (CTR) Act for larger employers and encouraging smaller employers to promote commuter trip reduction practices in the work place through employee incentives for using high occupancy vehicles, preferential parking for high occupancy vehicles, improved access for transit vehicles, compressed work weeks, flexible work hours, and telecommuting; and
- Using traffic calming strategies to reduce vehicular speeds and enhance the safety of pedestrians and bicyclists, thereby maximizing pedestrian and bicycle mobility. Examples of traffic calming strategies include the use of raised crosswalks, roundabouts, traffic circles, medians (especially near intersections), narrow driving lanes, interrupted sight lines, narrow distance between curbing to create "neck-downs" or "chokers" (curb extensions), textured pavement, and neighborhood speed watch programs.



**Figure T-5**  
**Proposed Nonmotorized Facilities**



## TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS MANAGEMENT

Transportation Systems Management (TSM) strategies focus on improving the operations of the existing roadway system. Maximizing the efficiency of the existing system can reduce or delay the need for system improvements. TSM strategies include:

- Coordination of traffic signal timing;
- Traffic control devices at highly congested intersections;
- Implementing intersection improvements to facilitate turning movements;
- Access restriction along principal roadways; and
- Implementing a signal retiming and coordination project to reduce delay and congestion at the City's signalized intersections as major improvements are implemented;

## FUNDING CAPABILITY AND RESOURCES

The Growth Management Act (RCW 36.70A.070(6)) requires local comprehensive plans to include a multi-year transportation financing plan for how the jurisdiction will meet the mobility needs identified for the planning period. This financing plan serves in part as the basis for the City's Six-year Transportation Improvement Program.

GMA requirements regarding the financing and funding of transportation-related improvements are addressed in the Capital Facilities Element and goals and policies of this Comprehensive Plan. The Six-year Transportation Facilities Improvements schedule contained in the Capital Facilities Element extends through 2035, Fircrest's 20-year planning horizon, to provide information for the City's multi-year transportation financing plan. This information includes a list of investments to meet transportation needs over the planning period, estimated costs for those investments, and estimated probable revenues available to Fircrest. Potential funding sources are summarized, below and in the Capital Facilities Element.

### ***FUNDING SOURCES***

Transportation funding comes from a variety of local, regional, state, and federal sources. Funding sources can be divided into four primary categories: developer, local, state and federal. Some state and federal funds are allocated to PSRC, the region's Metropolitan Planning Organization, which then disperses the funds through grants and other programs.

#### ***Developer Funding***

As new development occurs, transportation impacts associated with the development are mitigated by the developer. Transportation mitigation typically includes intersection improvements, road widening, new or extended turn lanes, sidewalks, bike lanes and other improvements. These mitigation measures must be in place or provided concurrent with development to maintain adopted LOS.

***Local Funding Sources*****Arterial Street Fund**

The City receives a proportionate share of the State Motor Vehicle Fuel Tax, based on the population. The exact amount varies depending on the amount of fuel sold in the State.

**General Fund**

The General Fund is supported primarily from local taxes to provide governmental services such as police protection, jail services, court services, parks maintenance, recreation programs, building inspections, planning and zoning, construction and maintenance of streets, and general government administration.

**Surface Water Management Funds**

The City collects a surface water management fee on each City parcel to finance surface water and storm drainage elements of various road improvement projects. In addition, the City uses revenues from the Surface Water Management Fund to finance capital improvement surface water and storm drainage projects.

**Real Estate Excise Tax**

The Real Estate Excise Tax is levied on all sales of real estate, measured by the full selling price. The City has authorized a locally imposed tax of 0.5%, in two 0.25% increments. These revenues are restricted to financing capital projects as specified in the City's Capital Improvements Program.

***State Funding Sources***

State funding programs are administered to counties and cities through the Transportation Improvement Board (TIB) and the County Road Administration Board (CRAB). The State also funds projects through the Safe Routes to Schools and Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Programs.

***Federal Funding Sources***

Federal programs are currently funded under the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21) and are administered by the Highways and Local Programs Division of the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT), in conjunction with PSRC and the Regional Federal Highway Engineer.

**CMAQ**

The Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ) funds transportation programs and projects that will, or are likely to, contribute to attainment of a National Air Quality Standard. WSDOT is required to consult with the Environmental Protection Agency to determine whether a transportation project or program will contribute to attainment of standards, unless such project or program is included in an approved State implementation plan. CMAQ funds cannot be used on projects resulting in the construction of new capacity available to single-occupant vehicles unless they are available to single-occupant vehicles at other than peak travel times. Allocation for CMAQ funds will follow the same criteria as Surface Transportation Program (STP)

funds. To be eligible for funding under this program, a project must be on the Regional Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) list and rank high enough on the region's priority array. Funding is based on a Federal share of 86.5 percent, with a 13.5 percent local match.

### STP

The objective of the Surface Transportation Program (STP) is to fund construction, reconstruction, resurfacing, restoration, and rehabilitation of roads that are not functionally classified as local or rural minor collectors. STP also supports funding for transportation enhancements, operational improvements, highway and transit safety improvements, surface transportation planning, capital and operating cost for traffic management and control, carpool and vanpool projects, development and establishment of management systems, participation in wetland mitigation and wetland banking, bicycle facilities and pedestrian walkways.

STP funds have regional allocation through PSRC. The PSRC sub-allocates funds by County region, based on the percentage of the population. Pierce County, as a region, will receive an allocation of 21 percent from STP funds allocated to the PSRC. The Puget Sound Region is formed by the counties of King, Kitsap, Pierce and Snohomish. To be eligible for funding under this program, a project must be on the Regional TIP list and rate high enough within the region's priority array. Funding is based on a federal share of 86.5 percent, with a 13.5 percent local match.

### ***REASSESSMENT***

The GMA requires that Fircrest reassess its plans in order to align them with available revenue if the City's financial analysis shows that revenue is inadequate to support transportation needs. Reassessment should occur as part of the eight-year periodic review process and should include:

- Comparison of actual levels of service to adopted levels of service;
- Updated revenue forecasts; and
- Evaluation of progress in implementing the Transportation Element to show that the community is making progress toward construction of projects and implementation of policies identified in the Transportation Element.

## ***CHAPTER 6***

# ***PARK, RECREATION, AND OPEN SPACE ELEMENT***





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## INTRODUCTION

The Park, Recreation and Open Space Element serves as an expression of the community's goals, objectives, needs and priorities for recreation planning. In all communities, recreation provides an important personal, as well as social, outlet. Park, recreation and open space facilities are common areas that Fircrest residents, as well as visitors, can enjoy. They can promote physical health and social/mental wellness by providing physical activity, making neighborhoods safer, building communities, and fostering social interactions. Parks provide places for exercise, sports, children's playgrounds, relaxation, and community gatherings. These areas also enhance the aesthetic qualities of the community. They serve as important community centers and are among the most heavily used and enjoyed places within Fircrest.

As with other facilities and services provided by the City, park, recreation and open space facilities must be planned for to meet the changing demands that occur with growth. When the population increases, the demand placed upon existing facilities may increase, as well. As such, park, recreation and open space areas and facilities may need to be enhanced or expanded to meet the growing needs. Adequate land must be set aside for these purposes, and capital funds must be made available to develop the facilities. This Element is intended to ensure that provisions will be made to prepare for future needs so that the citizens of Fircrest will continue to enjoy a high level of park, recreation and open space services into the future.

### ***ORGANIZATION OF THE PARK, RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE ELEMENT***

This Park, Recreation and Open Space Element is divided into three sections. The first section summarizes the intent for the Element, its relationship to the Park, Recreation and Open Space Plan, and applicable planning requirements. The second section provides a summary of existing facilities and references proposed facilities explored in detail in the City's Park, Recreation and Open Space (PROS) Plan. The final section provides goals and policies supportive of meeting Fircrest's long-term park, recreation and open space needs.

### ***RELATIONSHIP TO PARK, RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE PLAN***

On February 25, 2014, the Fircrest City Council adopted Ordinance No. 1547, thereby adopting the Fircrest Comprehensive Park, Recreation and Open Space (PROS) Plan. The 2014 PROS Plan and amendments thereto are hereby incorporated by reference and considered to be a component of this PROS Element and Comprehensive Plan.

The PROS Plan provides specific guidelines for meeting the recreational needs of a changing community, and makes recommendations concerning property and facility improvements necessary to provide recreational opportunities in the future.

It serves as a strategic planning tool for making parks, open space, facility and recreational program decisions over a twenty-year period. The PROS Plan identifies the actions the City should implement to satisfy the expectations of the community. It includes recommendations that provide guidance for making land acquisitions and protecting open spaces, and improving and establishing new facilities.

The PROS Plan is divided into five chapters:

- Vision, Goals & Objectives;
- Existing Parks, Facilities & Program Resources;
- Public Involvement;
- Needs Assessment, including Level of Service Recommendations; and
- Capital Facilities Plan & Implementation Measures.

Rather than repeat the information contained in the PROS Plan, this Element will reference the PROS Plan and focus primarily on goals and policies.

## **STATE PLANNING CONTEXT**

### ***GROWTH MANAGEMENT ACT***

The Washington State Growth Management Act identifies the following planning goal:

“Encourage the retention of open space and development of recreational opportunities, conserve fish and wildlife habitat, increase access to natural resource lands and water, and develop parks.” [RCW 36.70A.020(9)]

The GMA also identifies mandatory and optional plan elements. [RCW 36.70A.070 and.80]. A Park and Recreation Element is a mandatory plan element that must, at a minimum, implement, and be consistent with, the capital facilities plan element as it relates to park and recreation facilities. [RCW 36.70A.070(8)]. The element shall include:

- Estimates of park and recreation demand for at least a ten-year period;
- An evaluation of facilities and service needs; and
- An evaluation of intergovernmental coordination opportunities to provide regional approaches for meeting park and recreational demand.

## REGIONAL PLANNING CONTEXT

### **PIERCE COUNTY COUNTYWIDE PLANNING POLICIES**

The Countywide Planning Policies for Pierce County include a *Countywide Planning Policy on Natural Resources, Open Space, Protection of Environmentally-Sensitive Lands, and the Environment*. Open space, for the purpose of this policy, includes parks, recreation areas, greenbelts/natural buffers, scenic and natural amenities or unique geological features or unique resources.

This policy directs Fircrest to:

- Develop a plan for the provision and designation of open space considering a number of factors, including the following:
  - Open space is defined in conjunction with recreation and facilities;
  - Open space and environmentally sensitive lands that create linkages across jurisdictional boundaries and coordination with these entities;
  - Encourage open space cluster design; and
  - Encourage natural buffering as part of development design.
- Consider making the following uses of open space:
  - Recreational areas, including parks (golf courses, picnic areas, bicycle, equestrian, and walking trails) and general recreation;
  - Uses as considered on a case-by-case basis; and
  - Uses derived from community definition (i.e., greenbelts).
- Encourage new housing to locate in a compatible fashion (i.e., clustered design) with open space designations or outside of designated open spaces.
- Regulate open space through tools such as:
  - Zoning and subdivision ordinances, including but not limited to cluster and minimum lot size zoning, overlay zones and adequate off-site public facility regulations;
  - Development impact fees for park and open space acquisition;
  - Dedication of land or money in-lieu of land;
  - Designation of open space corridors;
  - Wetlands, shorelines, floodplain or other environmentally sensitive lands ordinances; and
  - Development agreements.
- Cooperatively inventory existing and potential open space by creating local and regional planning inventories.
- Authorize the following methods of retention of open space land or wildlife corridors:
  - Public acquisition of property in fee simple or through development easement acquisition;

- Private acquisition with covenants, conditions and/or restrictions limiting the use of the property to open space;
- Alternatives to public purchase;
- Retention of existing open space through:
  - Required open space preservation within and without Urban Growth Boundaries established by Pierce County;
  - Preserving, and enhancing significant regional open space networks and linkages across jurisdictional boundaries.

## EXISTING AND PROPOSED PARK, RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE FACILITIES

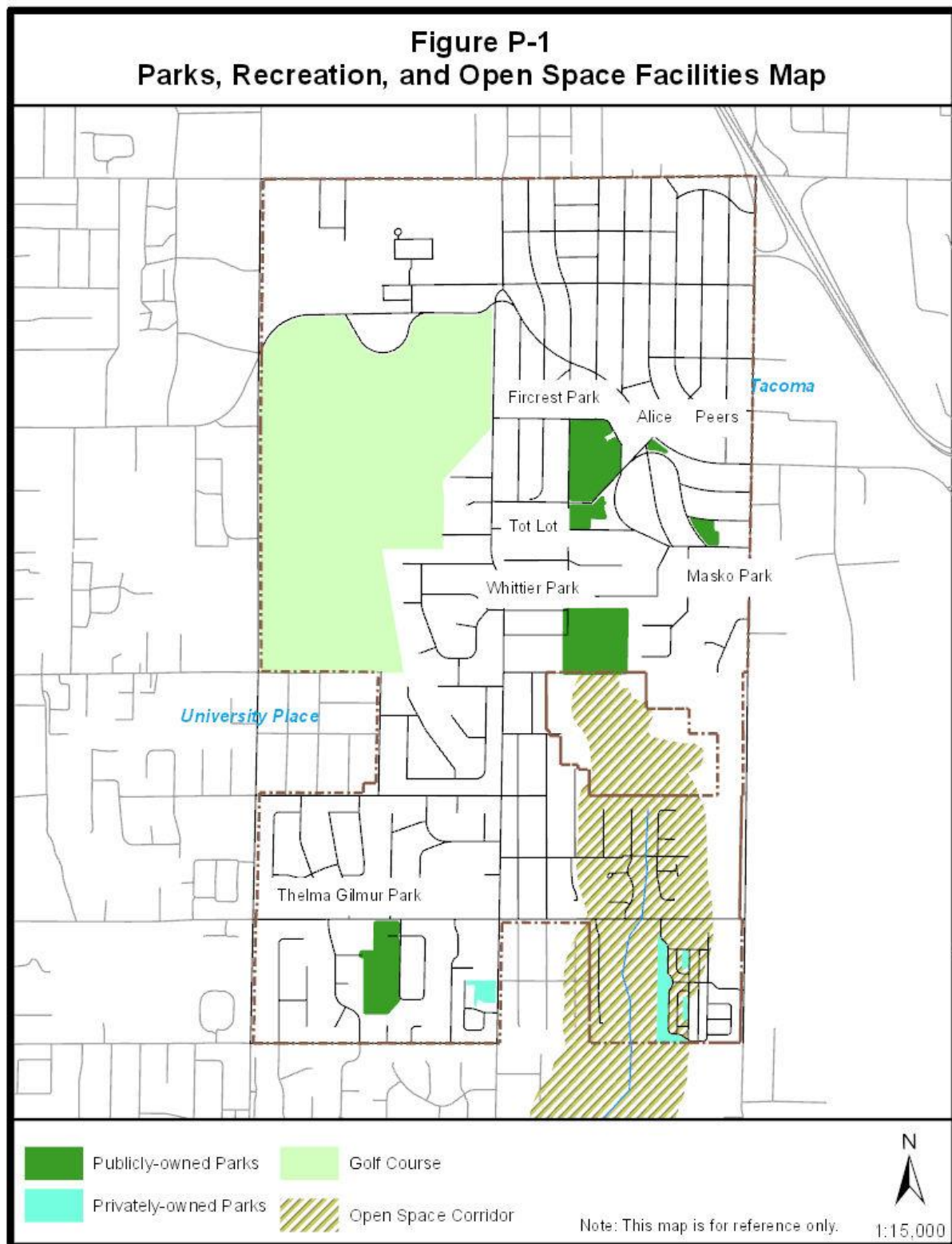
Existing park, recreation and open space facilities are summarized below in **Table P-1**. The locations of these facilities are shown on the PROS Facility map (**Figure P-1**). Additional detail is provided in Chapter 2 of the PROS Plan, which summarizes *existing parks, facilities and program resources*.

**Table P-1**  
**Existing Park, Recreation and Open Space Facilities**

Park, Recreation or Open Space Site	Classification	Acres
Alice Peers Park – 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 Park – 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>

Proposed park, recreation and open space facilities, including specific recommended improvements to existing facilities, are addressed in detail in the *needs assessment* provided in Chapter 4 of the PROS Plan and in the *capital facilities plan and implementation measures* summarized in Chapter 5 of the PROS Plan. The Six-Year Capital Improvements Program for park, recreation and open space facilities is located in the Capital Facilities Element of this Comprehensive Plan. Finance options for recommended projects are explored in Appendix A to the PROS Plan.

Pursuant to RCW 36.70A.160, Fircrest has identified an open space corridor that consists of lands in the vicinity of Leach Creek between Whittier Park and the City of University Place. Future pedestrian trails developed within this corridor would connect to the Chambers-Leach Creek trail system that the Cities of University Place and Lakewood, and Pierce County, are developing. The proposed trail system will reach its terminus at Chambers Bay and the Pierce County Chambers Creek Properties. The location of this proposed corridor is shown in **Figure P-1**.



## GOAL AND POLICIES

This Element contains the park, recreation and open space goals and policies for the City of Fircrest. The following goals reflect the general direction of the City, while the policies provide more detail about the steps needed to meet the intent of each goal. Goals P1, P2, P3 and P4 and their respective policies reiterate goals and policies contained in the PROS Plan.

### GOAL P1

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

#### **Policy P1.1**

Provide parks with activities for all age groups and abilities.

#### **Policy P1.2**

Develop athletic facilities that meet the highest quality competitive playing standards and requirements for all age groups, skill levels, and recreational interests.

#### **Policy P1.3**

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.

#### **Policy P1.4**

Redevelop indoor community spaces that provide arts and crafts, music, video, classroom instruction, meeting facilities and other spaces for all age groups on a year-

#### **Policy P1.5**

Provide a blend of passive and active parks and open spaces that fulfil the recreational needs of the City's residents.

#### **Policy P1.6**

Design and manage park and recreational trails and facilities offering universal accessibility of residents of all physical capabilities, skill levels, ages, income, and activity interests.

#### **Policy P1.7**

Plan for the future so adequate open space, historical elements, recreation facilities and programs are provided for future generations.

**GOAL P2**

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

**Policy P2.1**

Evaluate present use and demand of existing parks and facilities.

**Policy P2.2**

Initiate joint planning and operating programs with other public and private agencies to provide for special activities like basketball, baseball and soccer.

**Policy P2.3**

Provide programs, special events and facilities that promote a sense of community and stimulate socialization for the individuals and family.

**Policy P2.4**

Ensure a broad range of programs to stimulate good health and physical development for all ages,

**Policy P2.5**

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 that provide for the largest number of participants.

**Policy P2.6**

Offer programs at a range of costs and implement strategies to ensure program affordability, while meeting financial goals.

**Policy P2.7**

Evaluate opportunities to produce revenues in excess of expenditures in appropriate areas to help fund other programs.

**Policy P2.8**

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.

**GOAL P3**

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

**Policy P3.1**

Develop parks and recreational facilities only when adequate maintenance and operation funding are available to maximize maintenance efficiency, safety and public enjoyment.



**Policy P3.2**

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.

**Policy P3.3**

Incorporate sustainable standards and best management practices into planning and design of new parks and rehabilitation of existing facilities.

**Policy P3.4**

Preserve and protect significant environmental features for parkland open space use, including unique wetland, open spaces, and woodlands, which reflect Fircrest's natural heritage.

**GOAL P4**

**Develop, staff, train and support a professional Parks and Recreation Department that effectively serves the community in the realization of Goals P1, P2 and P3.**

**Policy P4.1**

Employ a diverse, well-trained work force that is knowledgeable, productive, courteous, responsive and motivated to achieve department and citywide goals.

**Policy P4.2**

Where appropriate, provide staff with education, training, and modern equipment and supplies to increase personal productivity, efficiency, and pride.

**Policy P4.3**

Monitor workload and staffing needs to maintain an adequate and efficient work force.

**GOAL P5**

**Enhance Fircrest's landscape and provide habitat for wildlife by increasing the amount of property permanently dedicated for open space uses with preference given to properties having the greatest significance as critical areas, properties that can act as buffers between different land use types and intensities, and properties that represent a valuable natural or aesthetic asset to the community.**

**Policy P5.1**

Consistent with Countywide Planning Policy Environment-15, methods that the City may use to increase public open space include, but are not limited to:

- Public acquisition of property in fee simple or through development easement acquisition;

- Private acquisition with covenants, conditions and/or restrictions limiting the use of the property to open space;
- Alternatives to public purchase, including, but not limited to:
  - Flexible zoning, subdivision and regulatory approaches designed for protection or preservation;
  - Land trust;
  - Conservation easement;
  - Transfer of development rights, purchase of development rights, and other compensable regulatory approaches;
  - Donations;
  - Preferential assessments;
  - Planned developments;
  - Dedications;
  - Impact fees;
  - View easements; and
  - Use value assessments.

## **GOAL P6**

**Conduct appropriate long range and current planning analyses that will support the preservation, development, maintenance and expansion of park, recreation and open space facilities to meet the long-term needs of the community.**

### **Policy P6.1**

Fircrest should review, amend and adopt, as appropriate, development regulations that will achieve the intent of the Countywide Planning Policies relating to *Natural Resources, Open Space, Protection of Environmentally-Sensitive Lands, and the Environment*.

### **Policy P6.2**

Park planning and use of facilities should be coordinated with other City projects and not-for-profit, private or public groups to assure maximum use of recreational facilities. Fircrest should encourage a variety of uses in public schools and facilities to efficiently help meet the recreational needs of the community. The City should cooperate and coordinate with other jurisdictions in the planning and development of regional parks and recreational facilities.

### **Policy P6.3**

To ensure adequate park and open space land is dedicated within Fircrest, the City should ensure that park or open space land has been dedicated or impact fees

collected to contribute to park land acquisition and facility development before granting development or redevelopment approvals for residential projects.

**Policy P6.4**

Improvements to dedicated open space should be appropriate for the natural constraints imposed by the open space area. Proposed improvements in critical areas designated as open space should be subject to review under the critical areas ordinance.

## ***CHAPTER 7***

# ***CAPITAL FACILITIES ELEMENT***





# ***CAPITAL FACILITIES ELEMENT – TABLE OF CONTENTS***

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## INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the Capital Facilities Element is to set policy direction for determining capital improvement needs and for evaluating proposed capital facilities projects. The Element also establishes funding priorities and a strategy for utilizing various funding alternatives. It represents the City's policy plan for the financing of public facilities for a 20-year planning horizon, and includes a six-year financing plan for capital facilities.

The Capital Facilities Element promotes efficiency by requiring the City to prioritize capital improvements for a longer period of time than a single budget year. It also requires coordination between other government bodies to ensure that all levels of government are working together to help the City achieve its community vision. Long range financial planning presents the opportunity to schedule projects so that various steps in development logically follow one another, with regard to relative need, economic feasibility, and community benefit. In addition, the identification of funding sources results in the prioritization of needs and requires that the benefits and costs of projects are evaluated explicitly.

The Capital Facilities Element is concerned with needed improvements that are of relatively large scale, are generally nonrecurring high cost, and may require multi-year financing. Day to day operating items such as paper, desks, and shovels are not included. The list of facilities and improvements has been limited to major components in order to analyze community needs at a level of detail that is both manageable and reasonably accurate.

For purposes of this Capital Facilities Element, capital improvements are those major facilities or items which cost \$10,000 or more and which require the expenditure of public funds over and above annual operating expenses. These facilities and items will generally have a life or use expectancy of more than ten years and will result in an addition to the City's fixed assets and/or extend the life or usefulness of existing capital improvements. The cost of capital improvements may include design, engineering, permitting, environmental work, land acquisition, construction, landscaping, initial furnishings, and equipment.

Facilities and improvements which cost less than \$10,000, routine maintenance (e.g. painting and reroofing), and the City's rolling stock (e.g. police cars, public works trucks) will be addressed in the City's annual budget and not within this Capital Facilities Element. The Element will also not include the capital expenditures or improvements of private or nonprofit organizations that provide services or facilities to the public.



## **ORGANIZATION OF THE CAPITAL FACILITIES ELEMENT**

The Capital Facilities Element is organized into the following sections:

- Introduction
- State planning context
- Local planning context
- Public schools, land, and buildings
- Goals and policies
- Level of service standards
- Current and possible funding sources
- Six-year capital improvements program

## **RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER ELEMENTS AND FACILITY PLANS**

Most information about facilities is contained in other elements and documents. To avoid redundancy, this Capital Facilities Element provides references to information contained in other elements and documents instead of repeating information.

### **Utilities and Transportation Elements**

The Utilities, Transportation, and Park, Recreation and Open Space (PROS) Elements of the Comprehensive Plan are concerned with many of the same public facilities as the Capital Facilities Element. To improve readability of the Comprehensive Plan, all topics related to Fircrest-owned public utilities, other than the 6-year CIP, are consolidated in the Utilities Element. Likewise, topics related to transportation are consolidated in the Transportation Element, and park, recreation and open space facility topics are consolidated in the PROS Element. . Specifically, those elements contain facility inventories, existing demand and capacities, levels of service, and future needs for water, sanitary sewer, stormwater, transportation, and park, recreation and open space facilities. Where an improvement will result in capacity changes in a utility, capacity information for the improvement is included in the Utilities Element. The Utilities Element contains additional references to other utility or facility plans as necessary for more detailed information. Detailed project descriptions are available for future projects in the Fircrest Public Works Department.

### **Park, Recreation, and Open Space Plan**

The PROS Element of this Comprehensive Plan incorporates by reference the *City of Fircrest Comprehensive Park, Recreation and Open Space (PROS) Plan*. The PROS plan contains facility inventories, existing demand and capacity, levels of service, future needs, and project information for Fircrest's park, recreation and open space facilities. The PROS Plan will be updated periodically during the implementation of this Comprehensive Plan to reflect changing facility needs and preferences, capacities, and desired improvements. If there are conflicts between the PROS Plan and this Comprehensive Plan, the information in this Comprehensive Plan will supersede that in the PROS Plan. All capital improvement program revisions in the PROS Plan will be included in amendments to this Capital Facilities Element during the Comprehensive Plan amendment process.

## STATE PLANNING CONTEXT

Section RCW 36.70A.070 (3) of the *Washington State Growth Management Act* (GMA) requires that all comprehensive plans contain:

"A capital facilities element consisting of:

- (a) An inventory of existing capital facilities owned by public entities, showing the locations and capacities of the capital facilities;
- (b) A forecast of the future needs for such capital facilities;
- (c) The proposed locations and capacities of expanded or new capital facilities;
- (d) At least a six-year plan that will finance such capital facilities within projected funding capacities and clearly identifies sources of public money for such purposes; and
- (e) A requirement to reassess the land use element if probable funding falls short of meeting existing needs and to ensure that the land use element, capital facilities plan element, and financing plan within the capital facilities plan element are coordinated and consistent. Park and recreation facilities shall be included in the capital facilities plan element.

Additionally, the GMA contains a planning goal that states that comprehensive plans and their associated development regulations must:

"Ensure that those public facilities and services necessary to support development shall be adequate to serve the development at the time the development is available for occupancy and use without decreasing current service levels below locally established minimum standards."

## LOCAL PLANNING CONTEXT

### **CAPITAL FACILITIES VISION**

***Looking ahead 20 years...***

In the 2030s, infrastructure and services meet the needs of a growing, aging and diverse population and promote a safe and healthy environment.

*Fircrest provides high-quality public safety services and well-maintained and dependable public facilities.*

*The community continues to enjoy excellent fire and emergency response times, professional police services, beautiful parks, clean drinking water, and effective wastewater and stormwater management because the capital facilities needed to provide these services were, and still are, planned and maintained for the long term.*

*An efficient multimodal transportation system has taken shape and is continually improved. The City's arterials have been redeveloped as complete streets to enable safe and convenient access for all road users, while accommodating the movement of freight and goods where appropriate. Pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and transit riders of all ages and abilities can safely move along and across these complete streets.*

*The design for each of these streets is unique and responds to its community context. Complete streets in Fircrest include a mix of design elements including sidewalks, bike lanes, special bus lanes, comfortable and accessible public transportation stops frequent and safe crossing opportunities, median islands, accessible pedestrian signals, curb extensions, and narrower travel lanes.*

*Complete streets have improved safety and created efficient connections for all users, and eliminated barriers to achieve neighborhood-level walking routes, within and between residential and business areas, parks and other public facilities. They have increased capacity, avoided the need for expensive retrofits, encouraged physical activity, and helped created a more walkable community. Capital improvements have supported increased street life and community vibrancy. Fircrest residents also embrace and support the high-quality educational, cultural and recreational facilities in the community.*

*Expansion of park, open space and recreation facilities and services has been achieved through cooperative efforts of the City, school districts, and citizen volunteers. Residents enjoy enhanced neighborhood parks and public spaces, a community center, and a variety of recreation programs and activities for children, youth, adults, and senior citizens.*

### Long-term planning for services and facilities.

*Long-term planning carries out the Comprehensive Plan goals and policies, such that new development and new services and facilities arrive concurrently.*

### The cost of providing and maintaining Fircrest's quality services and facilities is borne equitably, balancing the needs of the community with those of the individual.

*Fircrest continues to draw from diverse revenue streams to finance capital facility projects. Additionally, maintenance of new facilities is anticipated well in advance as part of the capital planning program to ensure facility maintenance costs can be effectively incorporated into the City's operating budget. The public facility costs associated with new growth are recovered in part using impact fees that reflect up-to-date costs, including those related to land acquisition and construction. In addition, Fircrest continues to seek grants and other outside funding to maintain its high quality of life.*

## **PUBLIC SCHOOLS, LAND, AND BUILDINGS**

Capital facilities in Fircrest that are not associated with utilities, transportation, or parks, recreation and open space consist of public schools and Fircrest-owned land and buildings. This section provides basic information about those facilities. All of the facilities discussed in this Element are owned and operated by Fircrest except school facilities. Information about school facilities is included to ensure that all capital facilities owned by public entities are addressed. Information about school facilities is based on school district capital facilities plans and other documentation.

### ***PUBLIC SCHOOLS***

#### **Tacoma Schools**

, The Tacoma School District serves a large portion of the City of Fircrest. Whittier Elementary, located at 777 Elm Tree Lane, provides classrooms and other facilities for grades kindergarten through 5. A second elementary school, Wainwright Elementary, was closed by the District several years ago and is scheduled to be replaced by a new grade 4-8 facility in 2016.

The Tacoma School District determines level of service (LOS) standards for the three school types in the district: 1) elementary schools; 2) middle schools; and, 3) high schools. The Tacoma School District's 2014-2019 Capital Facilities Plan (CFP), dated June 10, 2014, identifies for each type of school, student capacity (with and without portables), existing LOS standards (with and without portables), as well as a recommended LOS for each school type. Six-year needs, six-year funding and projects, a rolling capacity balance sheet, and operating and maintenance costs for both the current inventory and proposed projects are all included.

#### **Existing Inventory**

An inventory of Tacoma schools is contained within the Tacoma School District 2014-2019 CFP. The CFP indicates that the District operates 35 elementary schools, nine middle schools and eight high schools. For detailed information about these schools, refer to the Tacoma School District CFP.

#### **Future Needs**

The Tacoma School District CFP has calculated six-year capacity needs for each school type based on recommended LOS. These are summarized in **Table CF-1**.

**Table CF-1**  
**Tacoma School District Projected Capacity Needs**

School Type	Year 2019 (Demand)	Square Feet Required
Elementary School (1)	15,834	1,425,060
Middle School (2)	6,375	658,570
High School (3)	7,589	936,970

(1) Recommended LOS of 90 sq. ft. per student (K-5)

(2) Recommended LOS of 90 sq. ft. per student (grade 6), 110 sq. ft. (grades 7-8)

(3) Recommended LOS of 110 sq. ft. per student (grade 9), 130 sq. ft. (grades 10-12)

### Proposed Location and Capacities

The Tacoma School District's 2014-2019 CFP identifies proposed projects over a six year period for each school type. Nine elementary school (ES) replacement projects are planned as well as the replacement of Fircrest's Wainwright Elementary School with an elementary/middle school (4-8 grades), historic modernization of McCarver ES, historic modernization and additions to Stewart Middle School (MS), and replacement of Hunt MS, modernization and additions to Wilson High School (HS), and modernizations and additions to SAMI HS. Completion of these projects should leave a net reserve of 766,648 square feet.

The District proposes the development of no new middle schools. However, as noted above, a new elementary/middle school would be established on the site of Wainwright ES, and two existing middle schools, Stewart and Hunt, would be replaced. Completion of these projects would result in a year 2019 net reserve of 427,903 square feet.

The Tacoma School District's capacity balance sheet for high schools indicates that with Wilson and SAMI High School modernizations, a net reserve of 492,924 square feet is projected for the year 2019.

### Six-Year Funding Plan

Six-year funding plans are included in the Tacoma School District's CFP for each school type. Six-year operation and maintenance cost schedules by school type have also been prepared. The District will rely upon State matching funds, remaining levy funds, 2013 Capital bond funds, impact fees through voluntary agreements, and impact fees by ordinance, to fund school improvements. For elementary schools, the District anticipates an approximate total of \$307,800,000 from funding sources, \$118,500,000 for middle schools, and \$81,500,000 for high schools.

### University Place Schools

University Place School District has no facilities within Fircrest. The district has completed a series of capital improvements district-wide that were designed to meet projected build-out demand as well as current demand at the district's recommended levels of service. Fircrest students who attend University Place schools typically attend the neighborhood

schools listed in the following table. Each school's capacity and the district's levels of service are provided in **Table CF-2**.

**Table CF-2**  
**Capacity and Level of Service**

Facility	Capacity and Recommended Level of Service
Evergreen Primary Grades kindergarten through 4	Evergreen School capacity is 572 students. The district's recommended level of service is 20-24 students per classroom in Kindergarten to 4 <sup>th</sup> grade.
Narrows View Intermediate Grades 5 through 7	Narrows View School capacity is 702 students. The district's recommended level of service is 24-26 students per classroom.
Curtis Junior High Grades 8 through 9	Curtis Junior High School capacity is 1,000 students. The district's recommended level of service is 26-28 students per classroom and 1,000 students on a 20-acre site.
Curtis Senior High Grades 10 through 12	Curtis Senior High School capacity is 1,600 students. The district's recommended level of service is 26-28 students per classroom.

### ***FIRCREST-OWNED LAND AND BUILDINGS***

Fircrest owns a number of tracts of land for the purpose of delivering urban services. The table below summarizes information about Fircrest's land, buildings and other facilities. Park, recreation, and open space facilities are noted in **Table CF-3** and described in greater detail in the *City of Fircrest PROS Plan*.

**Table CF-3**  
**Park, Recreation and Open Space Facilities**

Location, Size, and Use	Improvements
302 Regents Blvd. Approximately 0.5 acres Public Safety Building	<p><b>Existing:</b> This 9,750 sq. ft. building was completed in 1979 and is shared by the Fircrest Police Department and Tacoma Fire Department. The first floor (5760 sq. ft.) is mostly dedicated for fire purposes including 3 bays for fire apparatus, with the exception of the Police Department offices. The basement area (3,176 sq. ft.) is mostly dedicated to police uses, including a four-stall parking garage. Parking for employees and visitors is provided on site. The Tacoma Fire portion was remodeled in 1995.</p> <p><b>Planned:</b> There are no plans to remodel or add facilities to the Public Safety Building at this time.</p>

Location, Size, and Use	Improvements
115 Ramsdell Street Approx. 1.44 acres City Hall	<p><b>Existing:</b> The building, which is approximately 7,800 sq. ft., serves as City Hall, Municipal Court, and Administrative Offices. It was built in 1998 and replaced the prior City hall building on the site. Parking for employees and visitors is provided on the building site and the south side of Ramsdell Street.</p> <p><b>Planned:</b> There are no plans to remodel or add facilities to the City Hall at this time.</p>
120 Ramsdell Street 7.07 acres Public Works Building, 2 water wells (wells 4 and 5)	<p><b>Existing:</b> The 3,600 sq. ft. public works building with offices, meeting rooms, showers, and shared office facilities was completed in 1993. Associated with the building are two 2,400 sq. ft. enclosed vehicle/equipment storage bays and four 4,800 sq. ft. open bays.</p> <p><b>Planned:</b> There are no plans to remodel or add facilities to the Public Works Building at this time.</p>
<p>Pierce County Parcel 668000-001 (Paradise Parkway Lot 1, Block 1)</p> <p>Pierce County Parcel 0220143-008 (1500 block of Alameda Ave)</p> <p>Pierce County Parcel 0220113-001 (Property owned by Fircrest Golf Club)</p> <p>Orchard and 25th Street (Located outside of City boundaries; Access to site is via 25th Street).</p> <p>Pierce County Parcel 7160200370</p>	<p>These tracts are improved as described:</p> <p>Contains water wells 6 and 7</p> <p>Contains water well 8</p> <p>Contains one water tank</p> <p>Contains two water tanks (one high, one low)</p> <p>Contains water well 9 (located in Masko Park)</p>
805 San Juan Avenue 1.2 acres Masko Park Special Use Area	<p><b>Existing:</b> Veterans Memorial Garden, Rhododendron Garden, and Seabrook Specialty Garden.</p> <p><b>Planned:</b> See PROS Plan.</p>
601 San Juan Avenue 0.2 acres Alice Peers Park Pocket Park	<p><b>Existing:</b> City of Fircrest flag pole, rose garden, and community message board.</p> <p><b>Planned:</b> See PROS Plan.</p>

Location, Size, and Use	Improvements
611 Contra Costa Avenue 1.4 acres Gene Goodwin Tot Lot Neighborhood Park	<b>Existing:</b> Tot Lot contains children's play area with pre-school play opportunities, playground equipment, large sand area, restrooms, lawn and picnic area. The park also has three tennis courts with fencing separation between the children's playground area and the active courts. <b>Planned:</b> See PROS Plan.
555 Contra Costa Avenue 7.8 acres Fircrest Park Community Park	<b>Existing:</b> Community Center, seasonal swimming pool and wading pool, Ron Russo Pavilion group picnic shelter and outdoor basketball court, sports fields for soccer and ball games, and open space for annual community events. The park maintenance center is located onsite, as is limited parking. <b>Planned:</b> See PROS Plan.
921 Contra Costa Avenue 10.0 acres Whittier Park Community Park	<b>Existing:</b> Baseball field, softball field, two soccer fields, three outdoor tennis courts, basketball court, group picnic shelter, restrooms, Bocce courts and nature trail. <b>Planned:</b> See PROS Plan.
921 Contra Costa Avenue 6.5 acres Thelma Gilmur Park Natural Open Space	<b>Existing:</b> Mostly undeveloped with a designated wetland. Nature trails bisect the forested hillside on the eastern edge of the site and the native plant-dominated upland area abutting the centrally located wetland. <b>Planned:</b> See PROS Plan.

## GOALS AND POLICIES

This section contains the goals and policies that will guide the design, construction, operation, maintenance, renovation, removal, cost management, and financing of capital facilities in Fircrest for a 20-year planning horizon following adoption of the Comprehensive Plan and amendments thereto. The following goals reflect the general direction of the City, while the policies provide more detail about the steps needed to meet the intent of each goal. Discussions provide background information, may offer typical examples, and clarify intent. Goals and policies are organized into the following categories:

- Level of service and concurrency
- Environmental impacts
- Facility and service providers
- Financial feasibility
- Coordination with the Comprehensive Plan, other Plans, and other Policies
- Siting facilities
- Essential public facilities



## ***LEVEL OF SERVICE AND CONCURRENCY***

### **GOAL CF1:**

**Provide and maintain adequate public facilities to meet the needs of existing and new development. Establish level of service (LOS) standards and identify capital improvements needed to achieve and maintain these standards.**

#### **Policy CF1.1**

Establish level of service (LOS) standards for certain City owned and operated public facilities. The City shall work with owners and operators of non-City owned and operated facilities to establish levels of service standards necessary to provide for growth and achieve the City's vision. Levels of service should be established in interlocal or contractual agreements between the City and the service provider. Where Fircrest's service area for a particular facility or service extends beyond Fircrest's boundaries, extensions shall be planned and built to a master plan that will ensure adequacy for the entire service area.

**Discussion:** Level of service (LOS) standards are benchmarks for measuring the amount of a public facility and/or services provided to the community. Level of service means an established minimum capacity of public facilities or services that must be provided per unit of demand or other appropriate measure of need (WAC 365-195-210). Level of service standards will be a determining factor for when and where development will occur. This is because level of service is intricately tied to concurrency. (See Policy CF1.2.)

#### **Policy CF1.2**

Require transportation, storm water, sewer, and water facilities concurrent with development. Other public facilities such as schools and parks will be provided based on adopted plans and development schedules.

**Discussion:** GMA Goal 12 states that public facilities and services necessary to support development shall be adequate to serve the development at the time of development without decreasing current service level standards below locally established minimums (RCW 36.70A.020(12)). The GMA requires concurrency for transportation facilities. (The City's level of service for transportation facilities is established in the Transportation Element.) In addition, water and sewer concurrency is highly recommended by the Department of Commerce.

#### **Policy CF1.3**

Issue no development permits (such as a building permit or a land use approval associated with a building permit) unless sufficient capacity for facilities exists or is developed concurrently to meet the minimum level of service for both existing and proposed development.

**Discussion:** New development must not cause the level of service to drop below the City's adopted minimums. If a development causes the level of service to drop below an adopted minimum, a permit will not be issued allowing the new development until the City has

assurances that the level of service will be maintained. Other public facilities will be monitored by the City as development occurs. Provision of these public facilities will be evaluated against applicable codes and levels of service per local, state, and federal requirements.

**Policy CF1.4**

If necessary public facilities are not already provided at the level of service for facilities identified in CF1.2, or if the development proposal would decrease the level of service below the locally established minimum, the applicant may:

1. Provide the public facilities and improvements;
2. Delay development until public facilities and improvements are available; or
3. Modify the proposal to eliminate the need for public facilities and improvements.  
(Modification may include reduction in the number of lots and/or project scope.)

**Discussion:** Should a development cause level of service to go below the established minimum, then options do exist that may allow development to proceed at some point in time.

**Policy CF1.5**

Exempt the following development from concurrency requirements:

1. Development “vested” in accordance with RCW 19.26.095, 58.17.033, or 58.17.170;
2. Expansions of existing development that were disclosed and tested for concurrency as part of the original application; and,
3. Development that creates no additional impact to public facilities.

**Discussion:** Concurrency requirements do not apply to vested developments. (Vested developments are those projects entitled to develop under the regulations that were in effect when application was made. Washington State courts and the legislature have defined “vested rights” and these continue to evolve.) Additionally, phased developments can be tested once for all phases, allowing construction to proceed thereafter without the need to revisit concurrency.

**Policy CF1.6**

Evaluate needed improvements to the City’s public facilities on an annual basis.

**Discussion:** Public facilities must be kept in good repair and need to be maintained or expanded as the City grows. Well-maintained facilities with appropriate capacity contribute to quality of life. The City should evaluate the condition of public facilities and determine needed repairs (non-capacity projects). Additionally, the City should annually assess expansion needs based on projected growth (capacity projects). This will assist in the timely identification of improvements needed to achieve minimum LOS standards.

**Policy CF1** When prioritizing improvement projects, Fircrest should consider if the project is needed to correct existing deficiencies, replace needed facilities, or extend the life or usefulness of facilities; increase public health and safety; reduce long-term maintenance and operating costs; coordinate with other providers' projects; meet state

facility requirements; and improve the environment. Financial feasibility and the impact on Fircrest's budget should also be considered.

**Policy CF1.7**

Fircrest shall apply its concurrency management regulations to new development to support the implementation of this Comprehensive Plan.

**Policy CF1.8**

Re-evaluation of total cumulative future demand for capital facilities shall be a requirement prior to issuance of any permits for large-scale residential development on the Fircrest golf club property. No development permits shall be issued if such development will cause levels of service to fall below standards established in this Comprehensive Plan, unless the developer provides the compensating facilities and improvements at the time of development or provides funds to Fircrest to make the necessary facilities improvements when they become necessary to maintain levels of service.

***ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS*****GOAL CF2**

**Capital facilities and services shall be designed and managed to minimize and mitigate adverse environmental impacts resulting from construction, use, operation, maintenance, renovation, and removal of the facilities.**

**Policy CF2.1**

Facilities, services, programs, and procedures should be structured to prevent or minimize pollutants entering the air, water, and soil and to protect the environmental integrity of critical areas.

**Policy CF2.2**

During facility planning and implementation, the cumulative adverse environmental impacts of all projects should be considered as well as immediate adverse impacts.

**Policy CF2.3**

Facilities, services, programs, and procedures should be designed and managed to conserve resources and reduce demand for facilities with significant adverse environmental impacts. Similarly, procedures, programs, and rate structures should encourage citizens to conserve resources and to minimize the negative environmental impacts of their use of facilities and services.

## ***FACILITY AND SERVICE PROVIDERS***

### **GOAL CF3**

**Fircrest may contract with other facility and service providers to ensure adequate urban facilities and services. All providers serving Fircrest should conform to Fircrest's service standards.**

#### **Policy CF3.1**

When selecting facility and service providers, potential providers should be evaluated with respect to cost, Fircrest's service standards, and environmental responsibility. Additional evaluation criteria may be established as appropriate. Fircrest should select the provider offering optimum conformance with evaluation criteria.

#### **Policy CF3.2**

Existing facility and service providers that do not conform to Fircrest's service standards should be informed in writing of nonconformance issues.

## ***FINANCIAL FEASIBILITY***

### **GOAL CF4**

**Provide needed public facilities within the City's ability to fund or within the City's authority to require others to provide.**

#### **Policy CF4.1**

Require new development to fund a fair share of costs to provide services for growth generated by that development.

**Discussion:** New development creates impacts upon public facilities and should be responsible for bearing its fair share of costs. Impact fees are one possible source to fund certain public facilities for new growth. However, impact fees cannot be used to pay for existing deficiencies. Other funding sources must be used to pay for existing system deficiencies.

#### **Policy CF4.2**

Review project costs scheduled in the Capital Improvements Program so that expected revenues are not exceeded.

**Discussion:** Financial feasibility is required for scheduled capital improvements that support new developments. Revenue estimates and amounts must be realistic and probable. Revenues for transportation improvements must be "financial commitments" as required by the GMA. A financial commitment is one sufficient to finance the public facility and to provide reasonable assurance that the funds will be used for that purpose.

#### **Policy CF4.3**

Consider life cycle costs when making capital facilities purchases.

**Discussion:** Capital facilities acquisition often focuses on purchase cost. However, a need also exists to focus on facility maintenance and operation costs and/or depreciation. Capital facility purchases commit the City to an operation and maintenance program. Sound financial practices are necessary when considering capital facility purchases, especially given other existing or anticipated long-term life cycle cost commitments.

#### **Policy CF4.4**

Provide public facilities and services that the City can most effectively deliver, and contract for those best provided by other public entities and the private sector.

**Discussion:** Certain public facilities and services are provided to the City by other public entities through contracts or other agreements. The City should regularly evaluate and monitor each service provider's quality of service and rates. The City may study the feasibility of directly owning and operating these public facilities and services should concerns arise.

#### **Policy CF4.5**

Help residents develop Local Improvement Districts (LIDs) and Utility Local Improvement Districts (ULIDs) and consolidate them to save administrative costs.

**Discussion:** A process exists, mandated by state law, to approve and implement LIDs and ULIDs. This process is often lengthy and consumes considerable staff time and resources. Rather than supporting numerous separate LIDs and ULIDs within a geographic area, the City should anticipate other LID and ULID improvements in the area and help residents implement them under one LID formation process.

#### **Policy CF4.6**

Aggressively seek conventional and innovative funding sources necessary to achieve the City's capital facilities goals, policies, and service standards. Fircrest should make efforts to secure grants and similar sources of funding and should explore other funding mechanisms when such sources will provide needed funding for capital improvements.

#### **Policy CF4.7**

If proposed facility plans, projects, operating procedures, and maintenance procedures will cause cumulative adverse impacts to the natural environment, future costs of mitigating cumulative adverse impacts should be estimated. When decisions are made to implement such plans, projects, or procedures, funding programs should be established concurrently to ensure funds sufficient for future restoration and mitigation programs. Funding programs should be designed to ensure availability of funds when restoration or mitigation programs are expected to be needed.

## ***COORDINATION WITH THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN, OTHER PLANS, AND OTHER POLICIES***

### **GOAL CF6**

**Implement the Capital Facilities Element in a manner that is consistent with other applicable plans, policies, and regulations. This includes, but is not limited to, the Growth Management Act (GMA), VISION 2040, Pierce County County-Wide Planning Policies (CPPs), other Comprehensive Plan Elements, and plans of other regional entities, Pierce County, and municipalities.**

#### **Policy CF6.1**

Ensure that public facility improvements are consistent with the adopted land use plan map and other Comprehensive Plan Elements.

**Discussion:** The GMA requires internal consistency between the Capital Facilities Element (CFE) and other Comprehensive Plan Elements. Consistency is essential because the cost and long life of capital facilities sets precedent for location and intensity of future development. Consistency is also important because the CFE implements other Comprehensive Plan Elements. The CFE serves as a catalyst for financing key proposed projects, and establishes a process to balance competing requests for funds.

#### **Policy CF6.2**

Reassess the Land Use Element if funding for concurrent capital facilities is insufficient to meet existing needs.

**Discussion:** The Comprehensive Plan needs to continually be reassessed to determine whether or not projected capital facilities funding is sufficient to meet existing needs. If probable funding for capital facilities is insufficient to meet existing needs, then Plan Elements will be reassessed. At a minimum, this includes reassessment of the Land Use Element to evaluate whether the growth projected in the Land Use Element can realistically be achieved given expected capital facilities funding. Additional options include re-evaluating projected funding, alternative sources of funding, and level of service standards.

#### **Policy CF6.3**

Amend the six-year Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) on an annual basis.

**Discussion:** The six-year CIP should be amended on a relatively short-term basis so that financial planning remains current with changing conditions, development trends, and the economy.

#### **Policy CF6.4**

Implement the Capital Facilities Element consistent with the requirements of the adopted Pierce County County-Wide Planning Policies (CPPs), Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) VISION 2040, the GMA, and other relevant plans.

**Discussion:** The CPPs, VISION 2040 and the GMA represent region-wide visions for growth. Inter-jurisdictional consistency for capital projects within these regional visions is important in achieving the goal of managed growth. Fircrest should participate in project coordination efforts and joint planning with other jurisdictions to ensure achievement of capital facilities goals, policies, and service standards and to ensure consistency among jurisdictions.

**Policy CF6.5** Seek inter-jurisdictional agreements allocating costs equitably for improvements, operations, and maintenance of facilities that are shared by other jurisdictions.

**Policy CF6.6**

Explore opportunities to share facilities and services with nearby jurisdictions to achieve mutually beneficial increases in services or overall reduction in costs to the citizens of Fircrest and those of other jurisdictions.

**Policy CF6.7**

Inform affected school districts early in the permit application review process for any residential developments that will significantly increase demand for school facilities. Permit applications may be denied if the school district is unable to provide educational services at the time that development is available for occupancy. Impact fees may be imposed to compensate for the school facilities impact of new developments.

**Policy CF6.8**

Plans and projects described in other elements shall be consistent with the financial plan of the Capital Facilities Element and with the capacity of the City to fund facility operations and maintenance. If probable funding falls short of meeting needs, affected elements and the Capital Facilities Element shall be reassessed and revised as necessary to ensure an achievable Comprehensive Plan. Levels of service may be adjusted if other reconciliation measures do not achieve consistency.

## ***SITING FACILITIES***

### **GOAL CF7**

**Locate capital facilities for maximum public benefit while minimizing negative impacts.**

**Policy CF7.1**

Site public facilities to encourage physical activity, and minimize impacts on residential neighborhoods and sensitive environmental areas.

**Discussion:** Like other development, public facilities may impact surrounding land uses and environmentally sensitive areas. Techniques to minimize negative impacts include: completing the environmental review process, conforming to code requirements related to landscaping, setbacks, buffering etc., and avoiding sensitive areas whenever reasonably possible (e.g., designing public roads to avoid sensitive areas).

**Policy CF7.2**

Acquire and locate public facilities to create multiple use opportunities and support business areas where appropriate.

**Discussion:** Certain public facilities support multiple uses. For instance, public facilities may have meeting rooms available for use by community groups and private parties. Accessible areas should be considered when acquiring and siting public facilities. Further, certain public facilities attract people to an area and promote adjacent business development. This provides a convenience to the public while also fostering economic development.

**Policy CF7.3**

Encourage adaptive reuse of existing buildings as community facilities when possible.

**Discussion:** Where feasible and if appropriate, the City will consider adaptive reuse of existing buildings as community facilities. Certain buildings may become notable community landmarks. In such cases, adaptive reuse should at least initially be considered as an alternative to demolition.

**Policy CF7.4**

Coordinate capital facility siting with the plans of surrounding jurisdictions and regional and State agencies as required and as appropriate for each facility.

**Discussion:** Inter-jurisdictional coordination is a fundamental GMA concept. Certain capital facilities are linear in nature and pass through more than one jurisdiction. These facilities often require significant inter-jurisdictional coordination. Other capital facilities may be site specific but regional in nature. These capital facilities serve a population beyond City limits and may have a disproportionate financial burden on the jurisdiction where sited. These facilities also require considerable coordination and may have specific siting criteria.

***ESSENTIAL PUBLIC FACILITIES*****GOAL CF8**

**Permit the siting of essential public facilities in accordance with state requirements and City codes.**

**Policy CF8.1**

Use the City-adopted process and approval criteria when siting listed State-wide, County-wide, and local essential public facilities.

**Discussion:** Essential public facilities are capital facilities typically difficult to site. The GMA requires that no local comprehensive plan may preclude the siting of essential public facilities. Essential public facilities may be drawn from three sources:

- a) the State list,
- b) the County-wide list; and
- c) the City list.



Fircrest will identify essential public facilities of a State-wide nature as defined by the Washington State Office of Financial Management (OFM) list. The Pierce County County-Wide Planning Policies (CPPs) and the Pierce County Comprehensive Plan policies will be used as guidance to identify County-wide essential public facilities. City essential public facilities will be identified using, at a minimum, criteria recommended in WAC 365-195-340 (2)(ii)(C).

**Policy CF8.2**

Adaptively manage the process for siting and permitting essential public facilities to insure the public is protected from adverse impacts.

**Discussion:** Adaptive management involves the monitoring of processes and outcomes to determine if they are achieving their purpose and to modify the process if necessary to achieve the desired outcome. By definition, essential public facilities are difficult and controversial to site due to negative impacts associated with these facilities. An intensive public involvement process, analysis and appropriate mitigation are needed before an essential public facility can be sited. The process needs to be dynamic in order to adapt to changing conditions and technologies.

**Policy CF8.3**

Actively monitor and participate in siting of essential public facilities in other parts of the County that may have an impact on Fircrest.

**Discussion:** The siting of essential public facilities in a neighboring jurisdiction or in the County may have an adverse impact on facilities and services and the citizens of Fircrest. By monitoring proposals to site essential public facilities, the City will be better prepared to mitigate and seek mitigation for any associated impacts.

## LEVEL OF SERVICE STANDARDS

In order to determine existing capacity and future capital improvement needs, level of service standards are required. Level of service (LOS) standards are an indicator of the extent or degree of service provided by, or proposed to be provided by a facility or improvement. These levels of service, the land use vision, or the capital facilities program may need to be modified in the future in response to changing community expectations or vision, revenue shortfalls, or unforeseen or emergency expenditures.

It is important to note that the level of service standards listed below should be considered minimums. Future capital improvements are not limited to meeting these standards, and in some cases the City may choose to exceed these standards. The City's adopted 2014 Comprehensive Water System Plan Update, 2002 Comprehensive Sewer System Plan, and 2014 PROS Plan contain capital and non-capital improvements that exceed the level of service standards. These plans contain additional projects and improvements that although desirable for the community are not essential to the day-to-day operation of the City. **Figure CF-1** identifies level of service

standards that are used to determine what capital improvements are essential to the community.

### **Figure CF-1 - Summary of LOS Standards**

<u>Facility/Improvement</u>	<u>Level of Service Standard</u>
Fire/EMS	4-minute response time
Law Enforcement population	1.33 uniformed commissioned officers/1000
Parks/Open Space	See PROS Plan for each type of facility
Power (electric)	Undergrounding for new facilities; National Electric Code and Washington State Electric Code; LOS as adopted by Tacoma Power
Schools	LOS as adopted by Tacoma Public School and University Place School Districts
Sanitary Sewer	220 gpd/eru
Stormwater	Department of Ecology Stormwater Management Manual for Western Washington – Latest Adopted Version
Streets (arterial)	LOS “D”
Streets (collector/local)	FMC Chapters 22.22 and 22.64
Water (supply service)	173 gpd/eru
Water (fire flow)	1000 gpm @ 20 psi for residential; 2500 gpm @ 20 psi for non-residential

Note: For additional detailed information on existing and proposed levels of service and LOS standards, please see the Transportation, Utilities, and Park, Recreation and Open Space Elements, and specific facility plans referenced in this Comprehensive Plan.

## CURRENT AND POSSIBLE FUNDING SOURCES

This section of the Capital Facilities Element describes the current budgeted sources of City revenue for the General Fund. The possible funding sources listed within this Element are subject to change and should be periodically reviewed for applicability and appropriateness for the City. Additional sources in other funds will also be used in the Six-Year Capital Improvement Program.

### Figure CF-2 - 2015 Sources of Revenue

#### TAXES

General Property Taxes	\$1,502,174
E.M.S. Taxes	311,478
Retail Sales & Use Tax	280,000
Zoo Tax	50,000
Sales Tax - Criminal Justice	92,000
Franchise Fee Cable TV	103,000
Gas Utility Tax	132,000
Garbage/Solid Waste Tax	91,000
Television Cable Tax	130,000
Telephone/Telegraph Tax	200,000
Water Utility Tax	68,000
Water Franchise Fee	5,100
Sewage Utility Tax	120,000
Gambling Excise Tax	4,000
<b>TOTAL TAXES</b>	<b>3,088,752</b>

#### LICENSES & PERMITS

Business Licenses & Permits	\$45,000
Home Occupation Permit	2,500
Building/Structures/Equipment	99,630
Mechanical Permit	17,000
Plumbing Permit	14,600
Excavation Permit	100
Sign Permit	270
Other/Miscellaneous Fees	950
<b>TOTAL LICENSES &amp; PERMITS</b>	<b>90,050</b>

#### INTERGOVERNMENTAL REVENUE

Reimbursements – State of WA	\$5,000
Planning Grant – State of WA	9,000
City Assistance	73,500
MVET/CJF/Violent Crimes/Pop	1,600
MVET/CJ/Special Programs	5,830
DUI – Cities	1,200
Liquor Excise Tax	12,520
Liquor Board Profits	45,860
Liquor Control Board	11,630
<b>TOTAL INTERGOVERNMENT REVENUES</b>	<b>166,140</b>

**OTHER SERVICES AND CHARGES**

Passport Fees	\$7,500
Plan Checking Fees	63,000
Planning Permit	14,990
Site Development	5,800
Swimming Pool Fees	31,000
Swim Team Fees	3,500
Swimming Instructions	32,000
Recreation Fees	6,000
Basketball Registration	12,250
Baseball Registration	17,500
Indoor Soccer	1,500
Police Reimbursement & Special Inspection	2,000
5K Race Registration	2,500
Flag Football	800
Instructor Based Revenue	17,000
RCO Grant	36,500
Interdepartmental Service Charges	430,876
<b>TOTAL OTHER SERVICES &amp; CHARGES</b>	<b>684,716</b>

**FINES & FORFEITS**

Municipal Court	\$220,000
Investigative Fund	4,500
DUI Invest	3,500
<b>TOTAL FINES &amp; FORFEITS</b>	<b>228,000</b>

**MISCELLANEOUS REVENUE**

Investment Interest	5,000
Interest - Utility Deposits	100
Sales Interest	75
Interest on General Property Taxes	100
Interest on EMS Property Taxes	50
Space & Facility Rental	17,000
Land Rental	85,070
Parks Donations	10,500
Police Donations	5,000
Fireworks Donations	1,000
Beautification Donations	10,000
Other Miscellaneous Revenue	1,000
Non-Competition Charge	210,000
<b>TOTAL MISCELLANEOUS REVENUE</b>	<b>344,895</b>

<b>TOTAL ESTIMATED REVENUE</b>	<b>\$4,374,553</b>
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## **POSSIBLE FUNDING SOURCES**

The following are major sources of funding that could be explored to meet existing and projected capital improvement needs. These funding sources are divided into the following categories, with the more common funding sources within each of these categories described in greater detail in the following pages.

- Debt Financing
- Local Multi-Purpose Levies
- Local Single Purpose Levies
- Local Non-Levy Financing Mechanisms
- State Grants and Loans
- Federal Grants and Loans
- Utility Rates

### **Debt Financing**

*Short-Term Borrowing:* The extremely high cost of many capital improvements requires local governments to occasionally utilize short-term financing through local banks.

*Revenue Bonds:* Bonds financed directly by those benefiting from the capital improvement. Revenue obtained from these bonds is used to finance publicly owned facilities. The debt is retired using charges collected from the users of these facilities. In this respect, the capital project is self-supporting. Interest rates tend to be higher than for general obligation bonds, and issuance of the bonds may be approved without a voter referendum.

*General Obligation Bonds:* Bonds backed by the value of the property within the jurisdiction. Voter-approved bonds increase property tax rates and dedicate the increased revenue to repay bondholders. Councilmanic bonds do not increase taxes and are repaid with general revenues. Revenue may be used for new capital facilities, or maintenance and operations at existing facilities. These bonds should be used for projects that benefit the city as a whole.

### **Local Multipurpose Levies**

*Ad Valorem Property Taxes:* (Tax rate in mills (1/10 cent per dollar of taxable value). The maximum rate is \$3.75 per \$1,000 assessed valuation. The city is prohibited from raising its levy more than 1% of the highest amount levied in the previous year, before adjustments for new construction and annexation. A temporary or permanent excess levy may be assessed with voter approval. Revenue may be used for new capital facilities, or maintenance and operations of existing facilities.

*Local Option Sales Tax:* Retail sales and use tax of up to 1%.

*Real Estate Excise Tax (REET):* REET 1 authorizes a 0.25% tax on each sale of real property and the Growth Management Act authorized another 0.25%. Revenues must be

used solely to finance new capital facilities, or maintenance and operations of existing facilities, as specified in the Capital Facilities Element.

*Utility Tax:* A tax assessed on the gross receipts of electric, gas, telephone, water, sewer, stormwater utilities, cable TV and solid waste services. Revenue may be used for new capital facilities, or maintenance and operations of existing facilities.

## **Local Single Purpose Levies**

*Emergency Medical Services Tax:* Property tax level of \$0.50/1,000 assessed valuation for emergency medical services. Revenue may be used to offset the costs of emergency medical services provided by the Tacoma Fire Department.

*Motor Vehicle Fuel Tax:* Tax paid by gasoline distributors. Local jurisdiction receives a percentage of total tax receipts. Shared revenue is distributed by the State of Washington. Revenues must be spent for highway construction, maintenance, or operation; policing of local roads; or related activities.

*Zoo Tax:* A Countywide voter approved tax equivalent to one-tenth of 1% sales and use tax to provide funds for capital and operating costs for parks and nationally accredited zoos, aquariums and wildlife preserves pursuant to RCW 82.14.400. Fifty percent is authorized for Point Defiance Zoo and Northwest Trek. The remainder is distributed on a per-capita basis for parks to Pierce County (with a required match), Tacoma Metropolitan Park District, and each city and town in the county (except Tacoma).

## **Local Non-Levy Financing Mechanisms**

*Fines, Forfeitures, and Charges for Services:* This includes various administrative fees and user charges for services and facilities operated by the jurisdiction. Examples are franchise fees, sales of public documents, permits, sale of public property, and all private contributions to the city. Revenue from these sources may be restricted in use.

*Impact Fees:* These fees are paid by new development based upon its impact to the delivery of services. Impact fees must be used for capital facilities needed by growth, not for current deficiencies in levels of service, and cannot be used for operating expenses. These fees must be equitably allocated to the specific entities that will directly benefit from the capital improvement, and the assessment levied must fairly reflect the true costs of these improvements. Impact fees may be imposed for public streets, parks, open space, recreational facilities, school facilities, and fire protection facilities.

*Reserve Funds:* Revenue that is accumulated in advance. Sources of funds can be surplus revenues, funds in depreciation reserves, or funds resulting from the sale of capital assets.

*Special Assessment District:* District created to service entities completely or partially outside of the jurisdiction. Special assessments are levied against those who directly

benefit from the new service or facility. Includes Local Improvement Districts (LIDs), Road Improvement Districts, Utility Improvement Districts, and the collection of development fees. Funds must be used solely to finance the purpose for which special assessment district was created.

*Special Purpose District:* District created to provide a specified service. Often the district will encompass more than one jurisdiction. Includes districts for fire facilities, hospitals, libraries, metropolitan parks, airports, ferries, parks and recreation facilities, cultural art/stadiums/ convention centers, sewers, water flood control, irrigation, and cemeteries. Voter approval required for airports, parks and recreation facilities, and cultural art/stadiums/convention center districts. The district has authority to impose levies or charges. Funds must be used solely to finance the purpose of which the district was created.

*User Fees, Program Fees, and Tipping Fees:* Fees or charges for using park and recreational facilities, solid waste disposal facilities, sewer and water services, surface water drainage facilities. Fee may be based on measure of usage, flat rate, or design features. Revenue may be used for new capital facilities, or maintenance and operations of existing facilities.

## **State Grants and Loans**

*Community Development Block Grants:* Grant funds available for public facilities, economic development, housing, and infrastructure projects that benefit low- and moderate-income household. Grants distributed by the Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development primarily to applicants who indicate prior commitment to a project. Revenue restricted in type of project and may not be used for maintenance and operations.

*Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF):* The Drinking Water State Revolving Fund loan is an agreement entered into between the City and the State of Washington, and the Public Works Board, acting through the Department of Community Trade & Economic Development. Funds for the loan are provided by the United States Environmental Protection Agency, CFDA No. 66.468, Title: Safe Drinking Water State Revolving Fund. The loan funds local improvement projects that further the goals and objectives of the Washington State Drinking Water State Revolving Loan Fund Program.

*Recreation and Conservation Office:* Administers several grant programs for outdoor recreation and habitat conservation purposes. Each grant program requires that monies be spent for specific types of projects. The program requires sponsors to complete a systematic planning process prior to seeking IAC funding. IAC has grant limits on most of its programs, and also encourages and often requires sponsors to share in the project's cost. Grants are awarded by the Committee based on a public, competitive process that weighs the merits of proposed projects against established program criteria.

*Public Works Trust Fund:* Low interest loans to finance capital facility construction, public works emergency planning, and capital improvement planning. To apply for the loans, the city must have a Capital Facilities Element in place and must be levying the original .25% REET authorized for capital facilities. Funds are distributed by the Department of Commerce. Loans for construction projects require matching funds generated only from local revenues or state shared entitlement revenues.

*Transportation Improvement Account:* Revenue available for projects to alleviate and prevent traffic congestion caused by economic development or growth. Entitlement funds are distributed by the State Transportation Improvement Board subject to a percentage match. Revenue may be used for capital facility projects that are multimodal and involve more than one agency.

*Water Pollution Control State Revolving Fund:* Low interest loans and loan guarantees for water pollution control projects. Loans distributed by the Department of Ecology. Applicant must show water quality need, have a facility plan for treatment, and show a dedicated source of funding for repayment.

## **Federal Grants and Loans**

*Congestion Mitigation/Air Quality:* Established under the ISTEA Section 1009. The purpose of the program is to fund transportation projects and programs that will contribute to attainment of National Ambient Air Quality Standards. Federal participation for most CM/AQ projects is 80 percent, which increased to 86.50 percent due to public lands adjustments. Federal participation can be 90 percent for some activities that are on the Interstate system. Pedestrian and bicycle activities are limited to 80 percent federal participation.

## **Utility Rates**

*Utility Rates:* Revenues for replacement and repair of existing capital improvements and for new capital improvements can be collected through utility rates.



## **SIX-YEAR CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM**

This section of the Capital Facilities Element determines whether sufficient revenue will be available under the current budgeting assumptions to fund needed capital improvements. It provides an analysis of revenue sources available for capital improvements and balances these revenues against anticipated expenditures for capital improvements. Using this process, the City can estimate annual revenue surpluses and shortfalls. Proposed funding sources for currently unfunded capital projects have also been provided.

The improvements schedules provided in the following pages set forth each capital project that the City intends to construct over the next six years and presents estimates of the resources needed to finance the projects. The schedules will reflect the goals and policies of the Capital Facilities Element and the other elements of the Comprehensive Plan. The first year of the schedules will be included within the annual capital budget, while the remaining five-year programs will provide long-term planning. The Six-Year Capital Improvement Program is a rolling plan that will be revised and extended annually to reflect changing needs and aspirations of the community, revenue projections, implementation of utility, transportation, and park, recreation and open space plans, and changing circumstances. Improvement schedules are included for the following facilities:

- Transportation
- Sanitary sewer
- Stormwater management
- Water
- Parks, recreation, and open space

The Transportation schedule extends through 2035, Fircrest's 20-year planning horizon, to provide additional information required under RCW 36.70A.070(6) for the City's multi-year transportation financing plan.

**Transportation Facility Improvements**

Revenues	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	TOTAL	2024-2036	20 Year Total
<i>The following revenue sources may be available to the City to be used for part or all of the Capital Appropriations identified</i>										
Light Funds from the sale of the Light Utility		50,000		0	0	0		50,000	0	50,000
Property Tax								0		0
Real Estate Excise Tax- To be used as deemed necessary by the City Council to fund improvements		50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	300,000	700,000	1,000,000
State/Federal Grant		200,000	560,000	1,047,580	926,340	664,000	972,000	4,369,920	1,760,000	6,129,920
Local Match Funds for Grants – From REET or Rate Revenue		30,000	115,000	391,894	231,582	166,000	243,000	1,177,476	440,000	1,617,476
Utility Funds for grind and overlay with utility work								0	500,000	500,000
Developer Contributions								0	1,000,000	1,000,000
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>330,000</b>	<b>725,000</b>	<b>1,489,474</b>	<b>1,207,922</b>	<b>880,000</b>	<b>1,265,000</b>	<b>5,897,396</b>	<b>4,400,000</b>	<b>10,297,396</b>

Capital Appropriations	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	TOTAL	2024-2036	20 Year Total
1. Major Pavement Patching: Citywide		50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	300,000	700,000	1,000,000
2. Alameda Avenue: Regents Blvd to Columbia St/South 19th		230,000						230,000		230,000
3. Alameda Avenue: Regents Blvd to Spring Street (sidewalks on one side and reconstruction roadway)				1,009,474				1,009,474		1,009,474
4. Alameda Avenue: Spring Street to Greenway (sidewalks on one side and reconstruction of roadway)					1,157,922			1,157,922		1,157,922
5. Alameda Avenue: Emerson to Rosewood Ln (curb, gutter, sidewalk on east side, bike lane designation)			450,000					450,000		450,000
6. Alameda Avenue: 44th to Emerson (curb, gutter, and sidewalk on both side, and bike lane designation)				300,000				300,000		300,000
7. 44th Street: 67th Ave to 62nd Ave (curb gutter and sidewalk on north side)						450,000		450,000		450,000
8. Regents: Alameda Ave to 67th Ave (grind and overlay)							750,000	750,000		750,000

## City of Fircrest

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9. Emerson Street: Alameda Avenue to Woodside Drive ( <i>planter strip and sidewalk on south side</i> )						380,000		380,000		380,000
10. Emerson – Woodside to 67th ( <i>Retaining walls and entry islands</i> )							465,000	465,000		465,000
11. Berkeley Ave: 1300 Block (curb/gutter and overlay)				65,000				65,000		65,000
11. Buena Vista Ave. 1300 block (curb/gutter and overlay)				65,000				65,000		65,000
11. LED Street Light Replacement		50,000						50,000		50,000
12. Grind and Overlay: Various City Streets			225,000					225,000	1,500,000	1,725,000
13. Sidewalk Gap Completion and Replacement								0	950,000	950,000
14. Regents Blvd. and Alameda Avenue ( <i>channelization and restriping for bike lanes shared facilities</i> )								0	250,000	250,000
15. New development roadway improvements								0	1,000,000	1,000,000
<b>Total Capital Appropriations</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>330,000</b>	<b>725,000</b>	<b>1,489,474</b>	<b>1,207,922</b>	<b>880,000</b>	<b>1,265,000</b>	<b>5,897,396</b>	<b>4,400,000</b>	<b>10,297,396</b>

**Sewer Facility Improvements**

<b>Revenues</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
<i>The following revenue sources may be available to the City to be used for part or all of the Capital Appropriations identified.</i>								
Sewer Rate Revenue		135,000	340,000	470,000	270,000	445,000	324,550	1,984,550
Real Estate Excise Tax - To be used as deemed necessary by the City Council to fund improvements								0
Public Works Trust Fund Loan								0
Washington State Department of Ecology Loan								0
Capital Contributions - Tap Fees		15,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	40,000
Bond Issue								
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>150,000</b>	<b>345,000</b>	<b>475,000</b>	<b>275,000</b>	<b>450,000</b>	<b>329,550</b>	<b>2,024,550</b>

<b>Capital Appropriations</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
3. 44th (Fordham) lift station upgrades			75,000					75,000
4. Estate Place Lift station roadway/generator/control panel			100,000					100,000
3. backyard sewer replacement between 114 and 116 Farallone Ave.		150,000						150,000
6. Crestwood Lane (Cond 4)								0
7. 200 Block Alameda; 45th St Ct (Cond. 4)			170,000					170,000
8. 1000 Block Fairway/Electron (Cond. 4)				475,000				475,000
9. 900 Block Alameda (Cond. 4)					275,000			275,000
10. 400 Block Contra Costa (Cond. 4)						450,000		450,000
11. 300 Block Contra Costa (Cond. 4)							175,000	175,000
12. 200 Block Contra Costa (Cond. 4)							154,550	154,550
<b>Total Capital Appropriations</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>150,000</b>	<b>345,000</b>	<b>475,000</b>	<b>275,000</b>	<b>450,000</b>	<b>329,550</b>	<b>2,024,550</b>

**Stormwater Management Facility Improvements**

<b>Revenues</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
<i>The following revenue sources may be available to the City to be used for part or all of the Capital Appropriations identified.</i>								
Rate Revenues		50,000	40,000	30,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	180,000
Real Estate Excise Tax - To be used as deemed necessary by the City Council to fund improvements								0
WSDOE grants monies			225,000	225,000	225,000	112,500	112,500	900,000
Local Match Funds for Grants – From REET or Rate Revenue			75,000	75,000	75,000	37,500	37,500	300,000
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>50,000</b>	<b>340,000</b>	<b>330,000</b>	<b>320,000</b>	<b>170,000</b>	<b>170,000</b>	<b>1,380,000</b>
<b>Capital Appropriations</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
1. Upgrades to existing stormwater conveyance and treatment system		50,000	40,000	30,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	180,000
2. Storm Water Quality outfall projects, SQ1 to SQ11 (2 per yr.)			300,000	300,000	300,000	150,000	150,000	1,200,000
<b>Total Capital Appropriations</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>50,000</b>	<b>340,000</b>	<b>330,000</b>	<b>320,000</b>	<b>170,000</b>	<b>170,000</b>	<b>1,380,000</b>

**Water Facility Improvements**

<b>Revenues</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
<i>The following revenue sources may be available to the City to be used for part or all of the Capital Appropriations identified.</i>								
Rate Revenues		329,100	595,600	535,600	40,600	40,600	40,600	1,582,100
Real Estate Excise Tax - To be used as deemed necessary by the City Council to fund improvements								0
Capital Contributions - Tap Fees		13,200	4,400	4,400	4,400	4,400	4,400	35,200
Bond Issue								0
Local Match Funds for Grants – From REET or Rate Revenue								
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>342,300</b>	<b>600,000</b>	<b>540,000</b>	<b>45,000</b>	<b>45,000</b>	<b>45,000</b>	<b>1,617,300</b>

<b>Capital Appropriations</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
1. Recoat exterior of the "High Tank" reservoir and high tank and security fencing work		197,300						197,300
2. Water main connections along 600 block Contra Costa		75,000						75,000
3. 12" Water Main on Summit Ave from Princeton St to Columbia St		70,000						70,000
4. Upgrade water meters and software for meter readying changes			450,000	450,000				900,000
5. 8" Water Main on Farallone from Stanford Street to Golden Gate Avenue			75,000					75,000
6. 8" Water Main on Eldorado Avenue from Princeton St to Columbia St			75,000					75,000
7. 8" Water Main Replacement of Old & Undersized Mains				90,000	45,000	45,000	45,000	225,000
<b>Total Capital Appropriations</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>342,300</b>	<b>600,000</b>	<b>540,000</b>	<b>45,000</b>	<b>45,000</b>	<b>45,000</b>	<b>1,617,300</b>

**Parks and Recreation Improvements**

<b>Revenues</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
<i>The following revenue sources may be available to the City to be used for part or all of the Capital Appropriations identified.</i>								
State/Federal Grants								\$0
General Fund								\$0
General Obligation Bonds		\$4,235,000	\$11,330,000					\$15,565,000
Donations		\$1,750,000						\$1,750,000
Real Estate Excise Tax - To be used as deemed necessary by the City Council to fund improvements								\$0
Local Match Funds for Grants (44th & Alameda fund)		\$500,000		\$60,000	\$50,000			\$610,000
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$6,485,000</b>	<b>\$11,330,000</b>	<b>\$60,000</b>	<b>\$50,000</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$17,925,000</b>

<b>Capital Appropriations</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
Fircrest Park Pool Replacement		\$5,000,000						\$5,000,000
Recreation Center Replacement			9,500,000					\$9,500,000
Whittier Park Irrigation Improvements		40,000						\$40,000
Fircrest Park Storage Garage/Restroom			30,000					\$30,000
Fircrest Park Sports Fields Improvements		1,320,000						\$1,320,000
Whittier Park Drainage Improvements			1,800,000					\$1,800,000
Alice Peers Park Reader Board				60,000				\$60,000
Fox Property Development					50,000			\$50,000
Renovation of Whittier Park Restrooms		30,000						
Whittier Park Basketball Court Resurface and Landscaping		30,000						
New electrical panel Whittier Park		7500						
New electrical panel Fircrest Park		2500						
Ron Russo Pavillion Roof		5000						
Fircrest Park Storage Garage		\$35,000						
Resurface Fircrest Park tennis courts		\$15,000						
<b>Total Capital Appropriations</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$6,485,000</b>	<b>\$11,330,000</b>	<b>\$60,000</b>	<b>\$50,000</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$17,800,000</b>

Completed in 2018

3. Whittier Park Tennis Court Resurface	35,000
5. Fircrest Park Playground Development	50,000



## ***CHAPTER 8***

# ***UTILITIES ELEMENT***





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## INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this element is to ensure utilities: (1) are provided at appropriate levels to accommodate projected growth at a reasonable cost; (2) facilitate reliable service; (3) ensure public health and safety; and (4) maintain an attractive community.

### ***INFORMATION INCLUDED IN THIS ELEMENT***

To ensure that all urban services necessary for the health and well-being of the community are available in the future, this element discusses both public utilities and private (investor-owned) utilities. The City of Fircrest currently owns and operates, water, sanitary sewer, and stormwater management utilities within its corporate boundaries. A few areas adjacent to Fircrest are also served by some of Fircrest's utilities. Other public entities such as Pierce County and the City of Tacoma provide some public utilities in Fircrest.

Private utilities in Fircrest provide natural gas and telecommunications services. In addition, solid waste services are provided by a private vendor, although there are no facilities located within Fircrest. Information provided to Fircrest by the private utilities is included in this element.

### ***ORGANIZATION OF THE UTILITIES ELEMENT***

This Utilities Element contains the following sections:

- Introduction
- Goals and policies
- Water
- Sanitary sewer
- Stormwater management
- Electric
- Natural gas
- Telecommunications
- Solid waste

### ***RELATIONSHIP TO THE CAPITAL FACILITIES ELEMENT***

The Capital Facilities Element is concerned with the same public utilities as the Utilities Element. To improve readability of the Comprehensive Plan, all topics related to public utilities are consolidated in the Utilities Element except the capital improvement program. Cross-references between the Capital Facilities Element and Utilities Element are provided as necessary to meet GMA requirements.

## STATE PLANNING CONTEXT

Section RCW 36.70A.070 (4) of the *Washington State Growth Management Act* (GMA) requires that all comprehensive plans contain:

"A utilities element consisting of the general location, proposed location, and capacity of all existing and proposed utilities, including, but not limited to, electrical lines, telecommunications lines, and natural gas lines."

Additionally, the GMA contains the following planning goal relating to public facilities and services. This goal affects utilities planning and states that the comprehensive plan must:

"Ensure that those public facilities and services necessary to support development shall be adequate to serve the development at the time the development is available for occupancy and use without decreasing current service levels below locally established minimum standards."

Finally, the Section RCW 36.70A.110 (3) states:

". . . it is appropriate that urban government services be provided by cities. . ."

## REGIONAL PLANNING CONTEXT

The Pierce County *Countywide Planning Policies* relating to urban growth areas and urban services elaborate on these and other GMA requirements. In addition, the *Comprehensive Plan for Pierce County, Washington* may specify for municipalities a potential annexation area (PAA), formerly known as an urban service area. The PAA represents the geographic area within which the city may anticipate providing urban services in the future, either prior to or subsequent to annexation. Each city's PAA is based on input from the municipalities and on the evidence that the city is capable of providing urban services to the area.

Fircrest's PAA was annexed in 2018.

## LOCAL PLANNING CONTEXT

### **UTILITIES VISION**

#### ***Looking ahead 20 years...***

Through the 2030s, the planning and placement of utilities in Fircrest has supported the community's vision for the preferred location and amount of growth.

*Utility planning for higher growth areas such as the Mildred and 19<sup>th</sup> Street corridors has advanced the vision. For those utilities provided by public entities and private companies, the City has ensured sufficient area is available to locate such facilities and provided a reasonable regulatory climate.*

Utility planning has contributed to a high quality of life for Fircrest residents and businesses by ensuring efficient utility delivery.

*Communications facilities are keeping up with changes in technology. Conservation and protection of existing resources has ensured a continued supply of clean water and energy.*

Proper utility planning has also protected Fircrest's natural environment and resources.

*Upgrades to the sanitary sewer system have eliminated septic systems, thereby controlling contaminants released into the environment. The City has protected the natural environment by developing stormwater systems to prevent or reduce excess stormwater runoff that eventually makes it way to Puget Sound, by designing and upgrading systems and plans to prevent damage to the environment, by fostering conservation operationally and by implementing low-impact development practices.*

## GOALS AND POLICIES

This Element contains the Utilities goals and policies for the City of Fircrest. These goals reflect the general direction of the City, while the policies provide more detail about the steps needed to meet the intent of each goal. The goals and policies address the following utilities challenges:

- Ensuring that adequate public utilities and facilities are planned for, extended, and sized in a cost-effective manner consistent with planned population and economic growth described in the Land Use Element and other provisions of the Comprehensive Plan;

- Locating utilities to minimize impacts on public health and safety, surrounding development, the environment and interference with other public facilities; and
- Reducing demand for new resources through support of conservation policies and strategies and the use of innovative technologies.

## **GOAL U1**

**Ensure that adequate public utilities and facilities are planned for, extended, and sized in a cost-effective manner consistent with planned population and economic growth described in the Land Use Element and other provisions of the Comprehensive Plan.**

### **Policy U1.1**

Work with providers to appropriately site new utility facilities to maintain a reliable level of service, accommodate growth, minimize adverse impacts to the City, maximize efficiency, and preserve neighborhood character.

### **Policy U1.2**

Support efforts by utilities to employ new technology to make operations and work practices safer, increase reliability, facilitate permitting, and minimize rate increases. Consider allowing utilities to develop pilot projects for innovative utility programs in Fircrest that may benefit the City's residents and businesses. Facilitate access to state-of-the-art technology.

### **Policy U1.3**

Work with utility providers and policy makers to improve service while maintaining the lowest possible utility rates. Actively monitor services provided by each utility provider and assess these services against the applicable rate structure. Utilize the franchise negotiation process to ensure provision of quality services to residents. Support reduced service rates for low income senior and disabled householders.

### **Policy U1.4**

Process utility permits in a fair and timely manner, consistent with development and environmental regulations, to minimize the time and cost required for a utility to provide needed services to local residents and businesses. Consider utility providers' concerns about regulations during periodic code updates and strive to balance concerns for the public health, safety, welfare, and environment with utility providers' needs.

### **Policy U1.5**

Assist utilities with the development of accurate, long-term system facility plans that will ensure provision of adequate service capacity by sharing land use planning and growth projections and other information.



**Policy U1.6**

Ensure reasonable access to rights-of-way for all providers consistent with federal and state laws. Utilize the franchise negotiation process to ensure that utilities have reasonable access to use the public right-of-way while guaranteeing that utility use will not degrade the roadway or overly disrupt the traveling public.

**Policy U1.7**

Require proponents of development to pay for or construct the growth-related portion of utility infrastructure needs in order for utility service providers to balance capital expenditures with revenues and still maintain established service standards. Support the use of reimbursement agreements, such as latecomer agreements, as a method of employing equitable cost sharing for development costs among the original developer and subsequent developers who benefit from the increased capacity provided by the original developer.

**GOAL U2**

**Locate utilities to minimize impacts on public health and safety, surrounding development, the environment and interference with other public facilities.**

**Policy U2.1**

Encourage sharing of utility corridors to save time and expense associated with the cost of utility installation and repairs to the City right-of-way, reduce traffic disruptions, extend pavement life, and minimize required monitoring of repair quality. When permits are requested, the City should require the utility to notify other providers for possible coordination.

**Policy U2.2**

Coordinate the design and timing of utilities siting, installation and repair with street improvements whenever possible. The City should share plans for street construction or overlay with utilities in order to identify opportunities for simultaneous construction projects and provide timely resolution of conflicts.

**Policy U2.3**

Promote high quality designs for utility facilities to minimize aesthetic impacts and integrate these facilities into neighborhoods. Use architecturally compatible designs for above ground utilities, landscape screening, buffers, setbacks, and other design and siting techniques to minimize impacts. Mitigate the visual impact of transformers and associated vaults through measures such as the use of varied and interesting materials, use of color, additions of artwork, and superior landscape design.

**Policy U2.4**

Minimize negative siting impacts associated with siting personal wireless telecommunication facilities through the administration of regulations consistent with applicable State and federal laws. Regulate the placement, construction and maintenance of such facilities to minimize their obtrusiveness by ensuring

appropriate screening of facilities and encouraging collocation to lessen the number of towers or structures needed to support telecommunications equipment.

**Policy U2.5**

Apply regulations and franchise agreement provisions that encourage the use of smaller telecommunication facilities that are less obtrusive and can be attached to existing utility poles or other structures without increasing their visual impact.

**Policy U2.6**

Design, locate and construct facilities to minimize adverse impacts to the environment and to protect environmentally sensitive areas, including critical areas. When no viable alternative exists to constructing facilities in critical areas, the environmental review process and critical areas regulations should identify and, if appropriate, mitigate negative impacts. Mitigation should take into account both individual and cumulative impacts. Impacts should be minimized through actions such as:

- Using construction methods and materials to prevent or minimize the risk of overflows into watercourses and water bodies;
- Locating utility corridors in existing cleared areas;
- Locating utility facilities and corridors outside of wetlands;
- Minimizing crossings of fish-bearing watercourses;
- Using biostabilization, riprap or other engineering techniques to prevent erosion where lines may need to follow steep slopes; and
- Minimizing corridor widths.

**Policy U2.7**

Avoid utility impacts to public health and safety, consistent with current research and scientific consensus. Monitor scientific research and adopt regulatory measures if research concludes that a proven relationship exists between electric utility or wireless communication facilities and adverse health impacts. Monitor improvements in the natural gas industry and require gas pipeline utilities to upgrade their facilities to implement the best available technology with respect to leak detection devices and other components.

**Policy U2.8**

Protect the City's rights-of-way from unnecessary damage and interference and ensure restoration to pre-construction condition or better. Ensure that trenching for the installation, repair, or maintenance of facilities; installation of poles and streetlights; boring; or patching or restoring streets where work has just been completed are performed in accordance with City standards that apply to construction or repair of utility facilities in the right-of-way. Require bonds or other financial guarantees to ensure that restoration is performed properly and that failed repairs will be corrected.

**Policy U2.9**

Promote undergrounding of existing utility lines to reduce visual clutter, minimize inappropriate pruning of trees and shrubs to accommodate maintenance of overhead lines, and enhance reliability of power and telecommunication facilities. Consider new technologies, such as wireless transmission, as they become available in order to minimize aboveground utilities.

**Policy U2.10**

Require undergrounding of utility distribution lines or provisions for future undergrounding as a condition for development projects. Underground existing utility distribution lines or provide for future undergrounding as street projects occur. Fund undergrounding through a capital improvement program or through formation of a local improvement district. Require individual service lines to be underground when significant site improvements are made. Require undergrounding except where underground installation would cause greater environmental harm than alternatives or where it is demonstrated that such installation will be economically infeasible.

**Policy U2.11**

Support efforts by utility providers to enhance the security of their infrastructure and protect critical systems from natural environmental forces and intentional acts of vandalism and terrorism. Coordinate with utility service providers in advance planning efforts as well as during or following an event that threatens critical infrastructure and public health and safety.

**GOAL U3****Reduce demand for new resources through support of conservation policies and strategies and the use of innovative technologies.****Policy U3.1**

Encourage resource saving practices and procedures in facilities and services used by the City. Conduct operations in a manner that leads by example through activities such as recycling, water conservation, energy conservation and low- impact development processes whenever possible. Encourage coordination with utility providers to identify and implement resource saving procedures in City facilities and services. Use City facilities as demonstration sites for innovative resource conservation techniques.

**Policy U3.2**

Cooperate with utility providers and other agencies in encouraging resource conservation by local residents, employees, citizens and businesses. Support efforts to disseminate educational materials and other information regarding resource conservation programs.

**Policy U3.3**

Encourage the use of innovative technologies to provide and maintain utility services, reduce the negative impacts of additional utility service demands, improve the existing service, and reduce, where appropriate, the overall demand on utility systems.

## UTILITY SERVICES AND FACILITIES

### **Water**

#### **SUMMARY OF SERVICES AND FACILITIES**

Water services are provided in Fircrest within the context of federal, state, regional, and county regulatory acts, plans, and programs. A host of agencies is responsible for implementing and overseeing programs ensuring water quality and supply, allocating rights, controlling distribution, and promoting conservation. The Fircrest Public Works Department, which provides water service within Fircrest, conforms to regulations through the ongoing implementation of its *Comprehensive Water System Plan*. Tacoma Public Utilities, which provides water service to portions of the areas annexed to the City in the 1990s and 2018, conforms through the ongoing implementation of its *Water System Plan*. The delineation of service area boundaries is contained in a May 27, 2014 service area agreement as part of the Comprehensive Water System Plan.

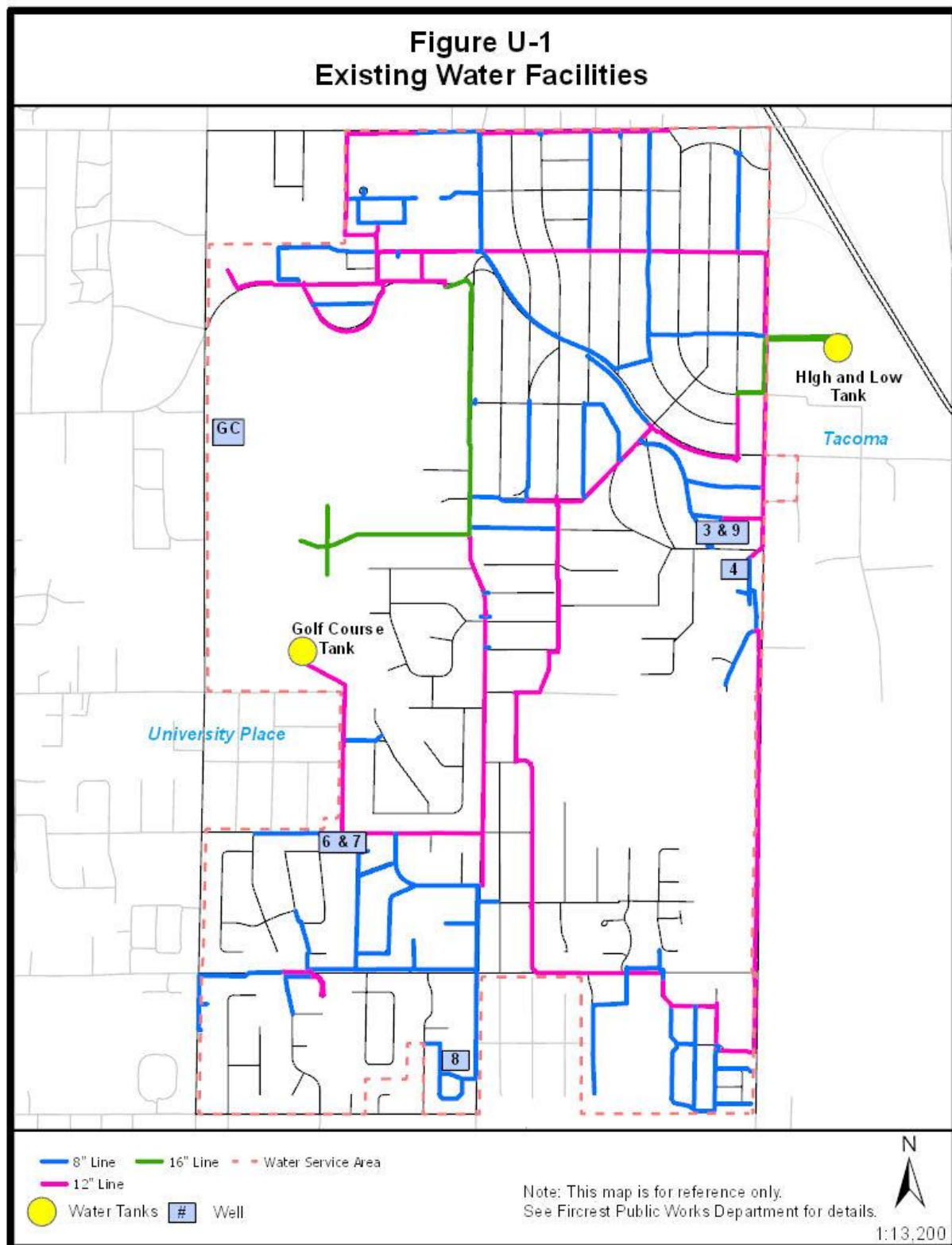
#### **FIRCREST FACILITIES INVENTORY**

**Figure U-1** shows Fircrest's major water facilities and their capacities. Fircrest relies on five existing ground water wells located within its municipal boundaries for its entire water supply. Fircrest has ground water rights and pumping capacity projected to be sufficient to serve a population of 10,000-15,000 (depending on consumption levels). The system also includes reservoir storage capacity of 1.8 million gallons and 26 miles of transmission and distribution piping. Descriptions of the current service area and customer base, consumption patterns, and service levels are provided in Fircrest's *Comprehensive Water System Plan*. The water system plan also contains a detailed inventory of facilities (including locations and capacities), projections of demand through 2033, system adequacy to meet projected demand, and a list of capital improvement projects and costs.

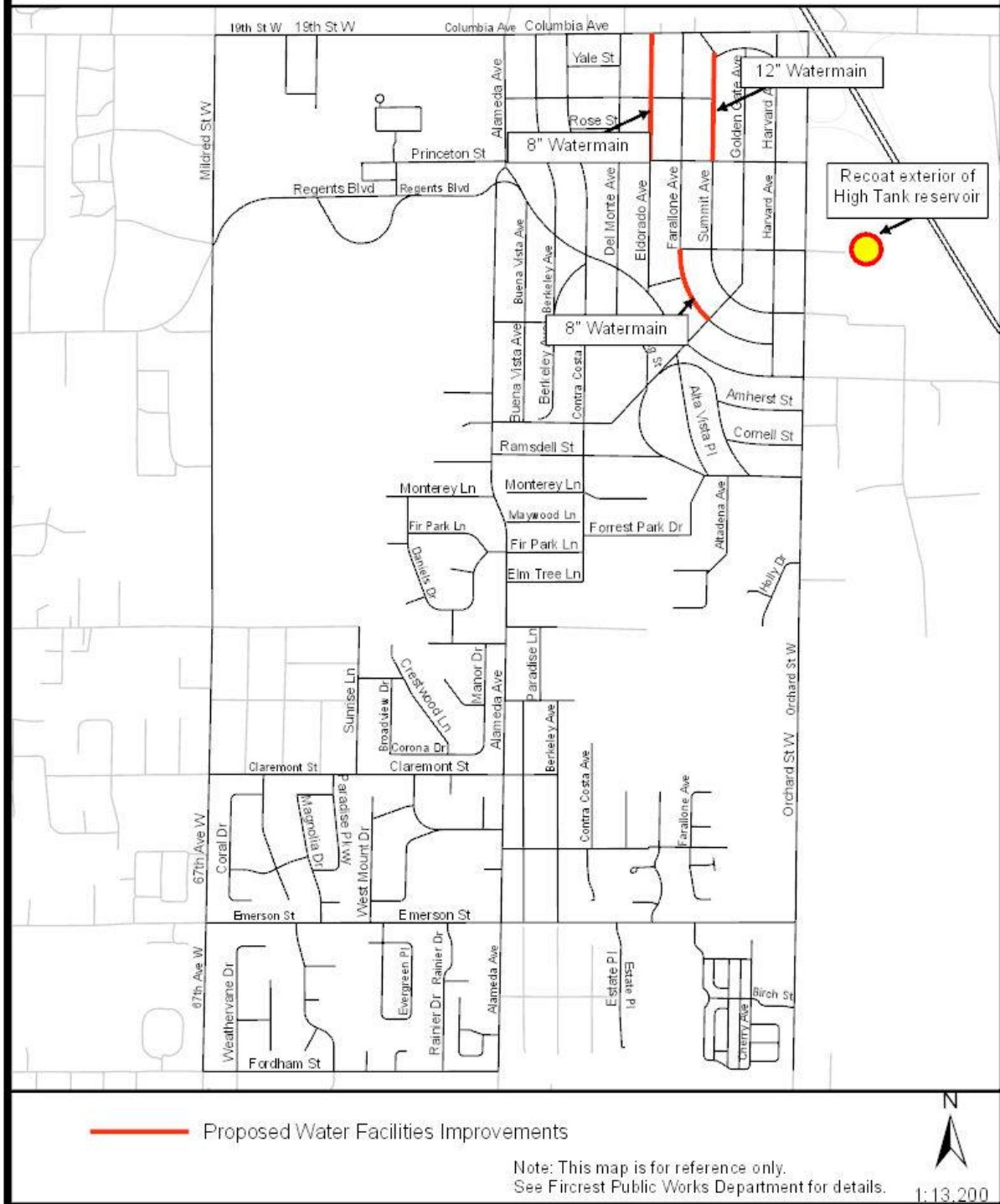
#### **TACOMA FACILITIES INVENTORY IN FIRCREST AREA**

Tacoma Public Utilities provides water service to 24 parcels in the northwest corner of the City, properties within the 1300 blocks of Buena Vista Avenue, Berkeley Avenue, and Contra Costa Avenue, the Valley Firs Condominiums and the former 67<sup>th</sup> Avenue PAA. Tacoma Public Utilities is governed by a five-member board, appointed by the Tacoma City Council.

The primary water supply to this area comes from the Green River in King County and local wells. During high demand periods, mostly in the summer, well water from the south Tacoma aquifer and other local aquifers supplements the river water. Tacoma Water's Green River First Diversion water right can supply up to 73 million gallons of water each day. Tacoma Water's Green River Second Diversion water right can provide up to 65 million gallons of water each day. This second diversion is subject to minimum streamflow standards and is a resource shared with Tacoma Water and its Regional Water Supply System partners. Tacoma Water's share of the second diversion equals 27 million gallons of water per day. In addition to the Green River, Tacoma Water owns wells located in and around the City of Tacoma. Tacoma Water's wells have a short-term combined pumping capacity of approximately 60 million gallons per day.



**Figure U-2  
Water Facilities Improvements**



A water system consists of a transmission supply and distribution system made up of various sized mains (transmission and distribution), reservoirs, standpipes, wells, and pump stations. **Figure U-2** identifies Tacoma Water facilities inside the City of Fircrest. Tacoma Water supplies water to Fircrest's 2018 annexed area, some properties located in the northwestern corner of the city, and a small area in the southeastern corner of the City.

The City of Tacoma Capital Facilities Plan (CFP) establishes a level of service of 442 gallons per day per equivalent residential unit (ERU) and/or as contained in Tacoma Water's current Washington State Department of Health approved water system plan. 442 gallons per day per ERU represents a 4-day peak period demand, with a peak factor of 2.01 times the actual average daily residential water consumption of 220 gpd per ERU. Based on Tacoma Water current demand forecast, Tacoma Water has excess supplies when taking into account peak day requirements looking out to year 2060.

Tacoma Water will complete construction and initiate operations of a new Green River filtration facility in 2015. Filtration of the supply will meet regulatory requirements and provide enhanced reliability for the supply.

### ***SERVICE LEVELS AND CURRENT DEMAND AND ADEQUACY***

As with all other aspects of water supply, service levels and standards applicable in Fircrest are determined by federal, state, regional, and county regulations. Fircrest's *Comprehensive Water System Plan Update* plan is being implemented in conformance with all applicable regulations.

#### ***Supply***

Fircrest consumption levels conform to the assumptions used for county-wide long-term planning in Pierce County's *Coordinated Water System Plan (CWSP)*. The CWSP assumes consumption for Fircrest as 180 gallons per capita per day. Fircrest's average consumption is currently 172 gallons per day per equivalent residential unit (ERU), which is the amount consumed by a household in a single-family dwelling unit.

#### ***Storage***

The available storage for the Fircrest water system is 1.8 million gallons. Based on the hydraulic analysis and the "Source and Storage" analysis in the Fircrest Comprehensive Water System Plan, the Fircrest water system has sufficient storage for the planning period.

#### ***Fire Flows***

In Fircrest, the standard for fire flow in residential areas has been set at 1,000 gallons per minute and in commercial areas, 2000 gallons per minute. The engineering analysis of areas requiring improved fire flows is contained in Fircrest's *Comprehensive Water System Plan*. Projects to improve fire flows are listed in this plan.

## ***FUTURE DEMAND AND ADEQUACY***

### ***Demand and Adequacy in Fircrest's Service Area***

Details concerning future demand and facility adequacy in Fircrest's service area are available in the *Comprehensive Water System Plan*. **Table U-1** summarizes the adequacy of Fircrest's facilities to meet future demand.

**Table U-1**  
**Demand and Adequacy**

<b>Demand Factor</b>	<b>Future Adequacy</b>
Supply	Fircrest has sufficient water rights and well and reservoir capacity to supply up to 3,959 ERUs (approximately 9,461 population). This capacity is well above the Fircrest build-out population, which is projected to be 6,950.
Storage	Adequate based on current consumption levels.
Transmission & distribution	Adequate for fire flows in most areas; older main replacement may be made to provide better flow.
Telemetry	Adequate and in good working order.
Service metering	Adequate; installation of individual service meters at all services was completed in 2001.

## ***WATER FACILITY ISSUES***

Fircrest faces issues concerning transmission and distribution piping, consumption levels, and potential contamination of Fircrest's water supply. A summary of each of these issues is provided in the *Comprehensive Water System Plan*. In the event the Fircrest water system is not capable of meeting system demands due to an emergency or unforeseen circumstance an intertie with the City of Tacoma water system will supply the needed water. This intertie was completed in 1994 and is located on the east side of Orchard Street across from Stanford Street.

## ***WATER FACILITY PROJECTS***

The capital improvements program in the 2014 *Comprehensive Water System Plan* identifies the improvements needed for the current planning period. Figure U-2 shows the proposed water system for Fircrest and includes new or updated facilities as well as existing facilities. Project schedules, costs, and financing are summarized in the Capital Facilities Element.

## ***Sanitary Sewer***

Fircrest are part of the Chambers Creek-Clover Creek Drainage Basin, which is an aquifer recharge area providing ground water for public use. As Pierce County has developed, ensuring wastewater treatment capacity sufficient to handle increasing wastewater volumes and to protect ground water quality has increasingly become a



focus of sanitary sewer facilities planning. Septic systems, which dispose of wastewater through percolation into the aquifer, are a known source of ground water pollution. Hence, Fircrest and Pierce County share the long-term goal of eventually connecting all development in the Chambers Creek-Clover Creek Drainage Basin to a sewer system. The sewer system replaces septic tanks and drain fields with wastewater collection and conveyance facilities and percolation of untreated effluent with wastewater treatment and biosolid disposal.

In August 2000, Fircrest hired a consultant to develop a Comprehensive Sewer System Plan. This plan was approved by the City and the Washington State Department of Ecology in 2002.

### **SUMMARY OF SERVICES AND FACILITIES**

Fircrest is provided with wastewater collection services by the City of Fircrest Public Works Department. Refer to **Figure U-3** for service area boundaries. The majority of Fircrest's service area is on the sewer system, with the primary exceptions being a portion of the West End Addition that was annexed in 1997 and the 2018 annexation, where a number of residences use septic systems.

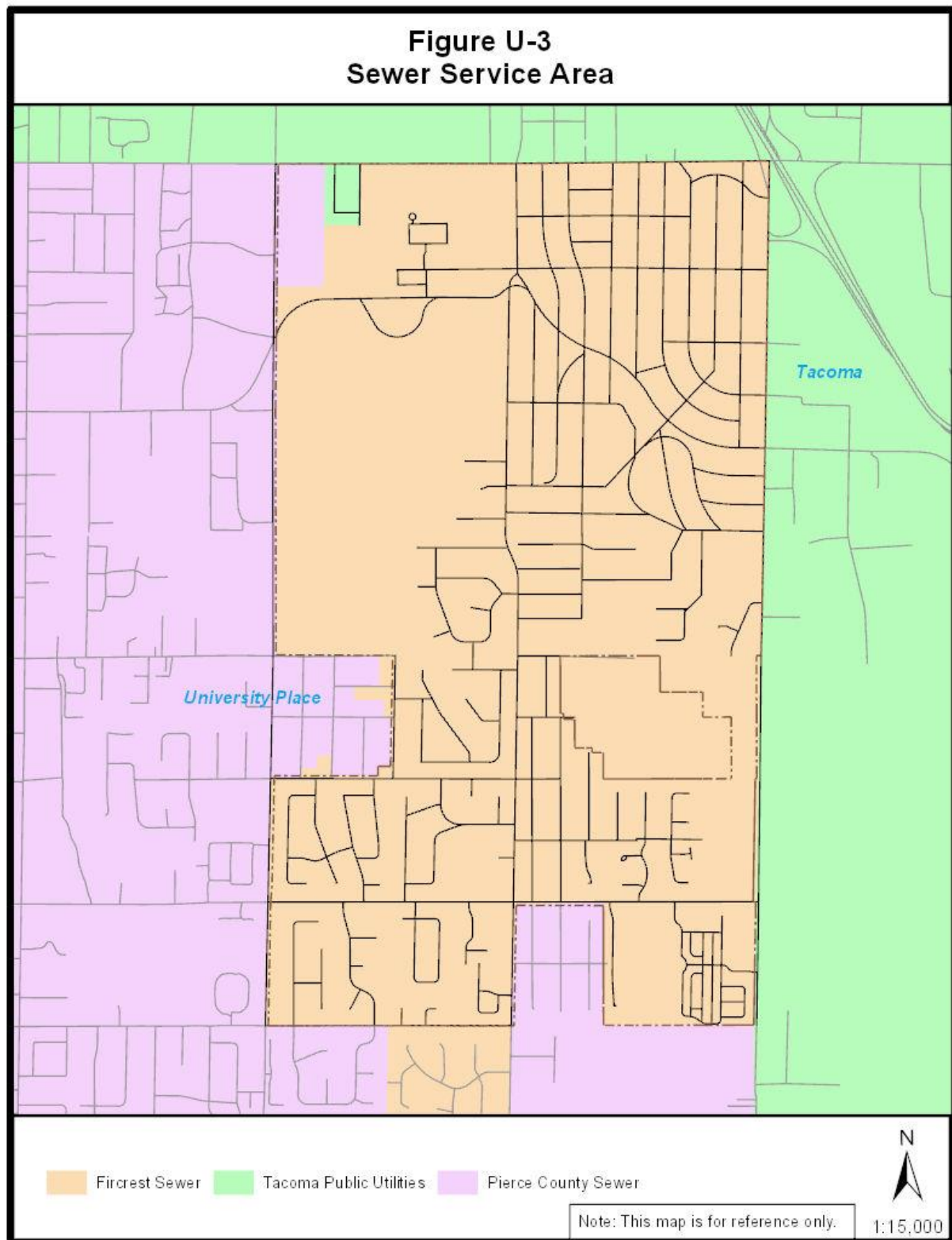
The primary components of Fircrest's sanitary sewer system are 32 miles of sewer main and six lift stations. The lift stations pump wastewater against gravity to overcome elevation gains on the route to a Tacoma Public Utilities treatment plant. Wastewater is conveyed to a Tacoma treatment plant outside of Fircrest.

Part of the development of the Comprehensive Sewer System Plan included in-line video inspections of the pipes and manholes, which occurred in 2013. Updated and prioritized repair and replacement projects were identified and will be completed by 2016.

### **SERVICE AGREEMENTS**

Fircrest has agreements with other service providers concerning service area boundaries and wastewater treatment. An ongoing agreement with the City of University Place delineates service area boundaries. Under this agreement, Fircrest provides service to specific areas outside of its corporate boundaries.

Wastewater treatment is provided through the *Tacoma-Fircrest Sewer Agreement*, which began in 1979 and was updated in 2014. This agreement provides for treatment of all wastewater from Fircrest at the Tacoma Central Wastewater Treatment Plant.



## ALTERNATIVE SERVICE

The Pierce County Sewer Division Unified Sewer Plan was adopted in 2001 and updated in 2010 with final state Department of Ecology approval in 2012. The plan identifies future service needs for the County and makes provision for expansions to meet those needs, including expansion of the Chambers Creek Wastewater Plant (WWTP) to 43-45 MGD (million gallons per day) capacity in the first phase of a five-phase major expansion to be completed in December 2016.

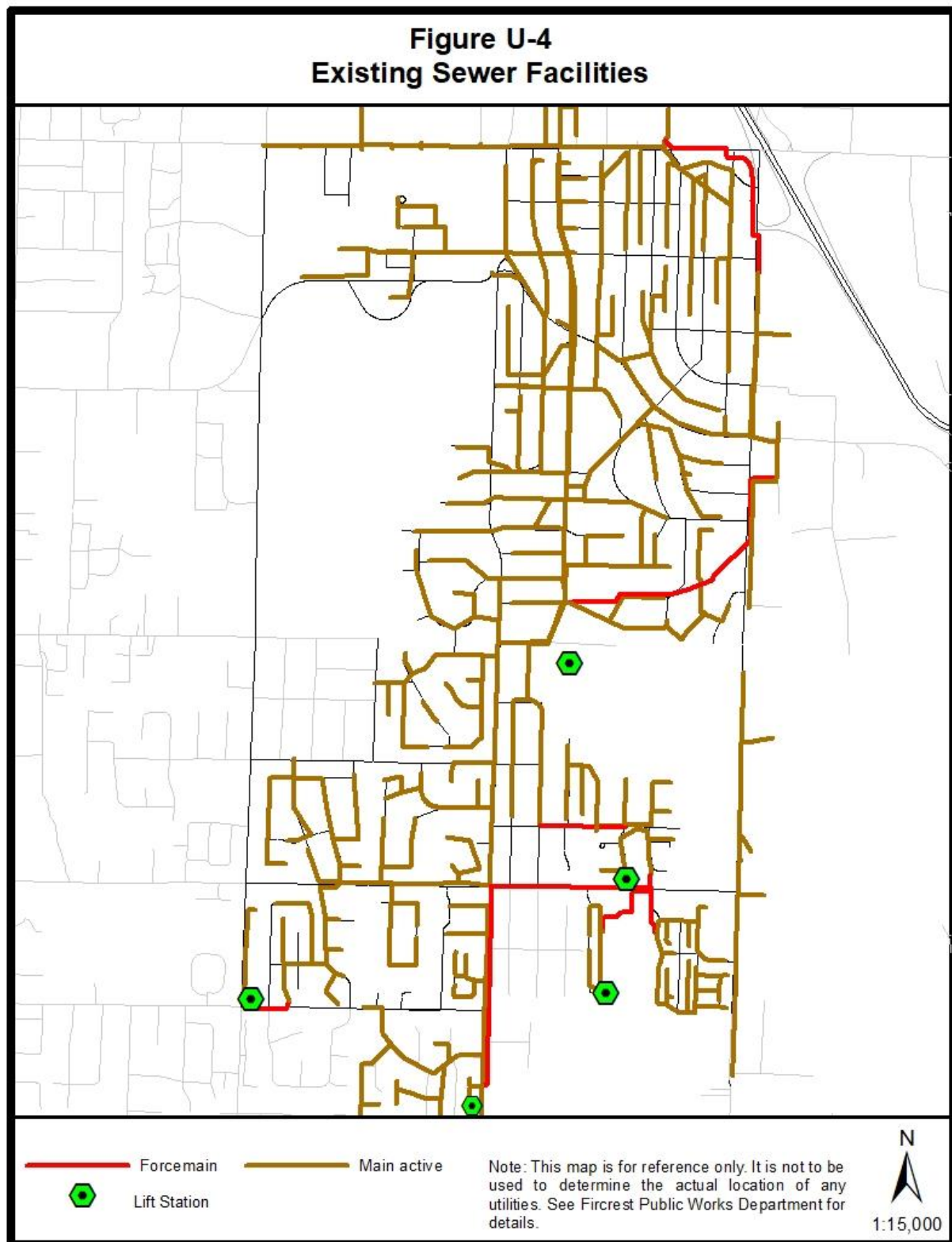
The Unified Sewer Plan identifies one project, the Upper Leach Creek Interceptor, which is on schedule to be completed by 2020. This improvement will enable new service to be provided to areas of eastern University Place not served and could also serve the City of Fircrest in the event its flows were to be transferred to Pierce County. This system component would be generally gravity fed, designed to direct flows downhill to the WWTP. Current treatment capacity is rated at 28.7 MGD and the WWTP operates at an average capacity of 18.0 - 20.0 MGD. Expansion is expected to continue to meet demand, accommodate anticipated growth (including possible flows from Fircrest), and meet increasingly stringent water quality standards over the next 25 years. Total build out is expected to be 60 MGD as outlined in the Unified Sewer Plan.

## FACILITIES INVENTORY

**Table U-2** summarizes Fircrest's major sewer facilities. **Figure U-4** shows locations of major facilities. Detailed maps showing all sewer lines are available in Fircrest Public Works.

**Table U-2**  
**Major Sewer Facilities**

Facility Name and Location	Capacity and Condition
Sewer mains: located primarily in road and alley rights-of-way; some are located on private property.	Fircrest's service area has approximately 32 miles of sewer mains ranging in diameter from 4 to 24 inches. The majority of the pipe is 8-inch. Fircrest also uses a 14-inch force main that conveys large amounts of wastewater across extensive geographic areas on the route to a treatment plant. Some sewer mains are force mains through which lift stations pump wastewater to adjacent gravity systems. Lengths of force mains depend on the elevation rise. Sewer main conditions range from failure to excellent depending on the age of the pipe, the quality of the installation, and the quality of ongoing maintenance.
Lift stations (6): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contra Costa Av. &amp; Elm Tree Lane</li> <li>Drake &amp; Farallone</li> <li>Alameda &amp; 46th St.</li> <li>67th Av. &amp; 44th St.</li> <li>Estate Place</li> <li>Princeton Place</li> </ul>	Pump 1: 1,850 gallons per minute (gpm) maximum Pump 2: 1,800 gpm max. Combined capacity: 2,550  100 gpm normal, 234 gpm max. 100 gpm normal, 200 gpm max. 100 gpm normal, 200 gpm max. 172 gpm constant output 150 gpm, two pumps alternating  All lift stations are in fair to good condition.
Manholes	Manholes are typically located approximately every 300 feet along sewer mains. Fircrest has approximately 600 manholes, which vary from good to poor.



## **SERVICE LEVELS AND STANDARDS**

**Table U-3** summarizes the service levels and standards applicable in Fircrest.

**Table U-3**  
**Service Levels and Standards**

<b>Service Parameter</b>	<b>Service Level</b>
Capacity	220 gallons per day (gpd) per single family dwelling, which is referred to as a <i>residential equivalent</i> (one RE); service levels for multifamily dwellings, commercial and industrial businesses, public service organizations, etc. are expressed in numbers of REs; for example, multifamily units are expected to produce .83 RE or 183 gpd.
Average daily and peak flows	Average daily flow in 2014: 482,000 gpd Peak flow in 2014: 790,000 gpd
Wastewater quality	Sewage quality must conform to County Sanitary Sewer Utility Administrative Code and county Pretreatment Code requirements.
Design and construction of facilities	Construction of new facilities and rehabilitation of old facilities must conform to the standards of the wastewater treatment service provider.

## **DEMAND AND ADEQUACY**

This section discusses current and future demand for sanitary sewer services and adequacy of facilities to meet demand.

Current demand from Fircrest's service area was studied by a consulting firm under the supervision of the Fircrest Public Works Department. The system is capable of handling current demand and future projected growth demand.

Future demand is based on assumptions of successful reduction of infiltration and inflow and of decreased residential water consumption. Therefore, a standard effluent rate of 220 gallons/RE has been used for computing future demand.

**Table U-4** summarizes future residential demand in Fircrest.

**Table U-4**  
**Projected Residential Demand in 2035**

Area	Single Family (millions of gallons/day [mgd])	Duplex, Multifamily and ADUs (mgd)	Total (mgd)
Total projected residential demand	0.558 (2,535 units)	0.162 (884 units)	0.720 (3,419 units)

## ***Stormwater Management***

Surface water and stormwater in Fircrest originate with precipitation falling in and north, west, and east of Fircrest. Fircrest is located in the approximate center of this drainage area, which is known as the Leach Creek drainage subbasin. The Leach Creek subbasin has a total of 7.18 square miles and is a portion of the larger Chambers Bay drainage basin. This drainage basin is located in the Chambers - Clover Creek Watershed Resource Inventory Area 12 (WRIA 12). A small portion of Fircrest falls within the Tacoma West drainage basin. **Figure U-5** illustrates those portions of the Chambers Bay and Tacoma West drainage basins located in close proximity to Fircrest.

Stormwater within the Leach Creek subbasin, along with stormwater from the entire Chambers Bay basin, eventually reaches Puget Sound via Chambers Bay. The following section provides a general overview of flows in the Leach Creek subbasin.

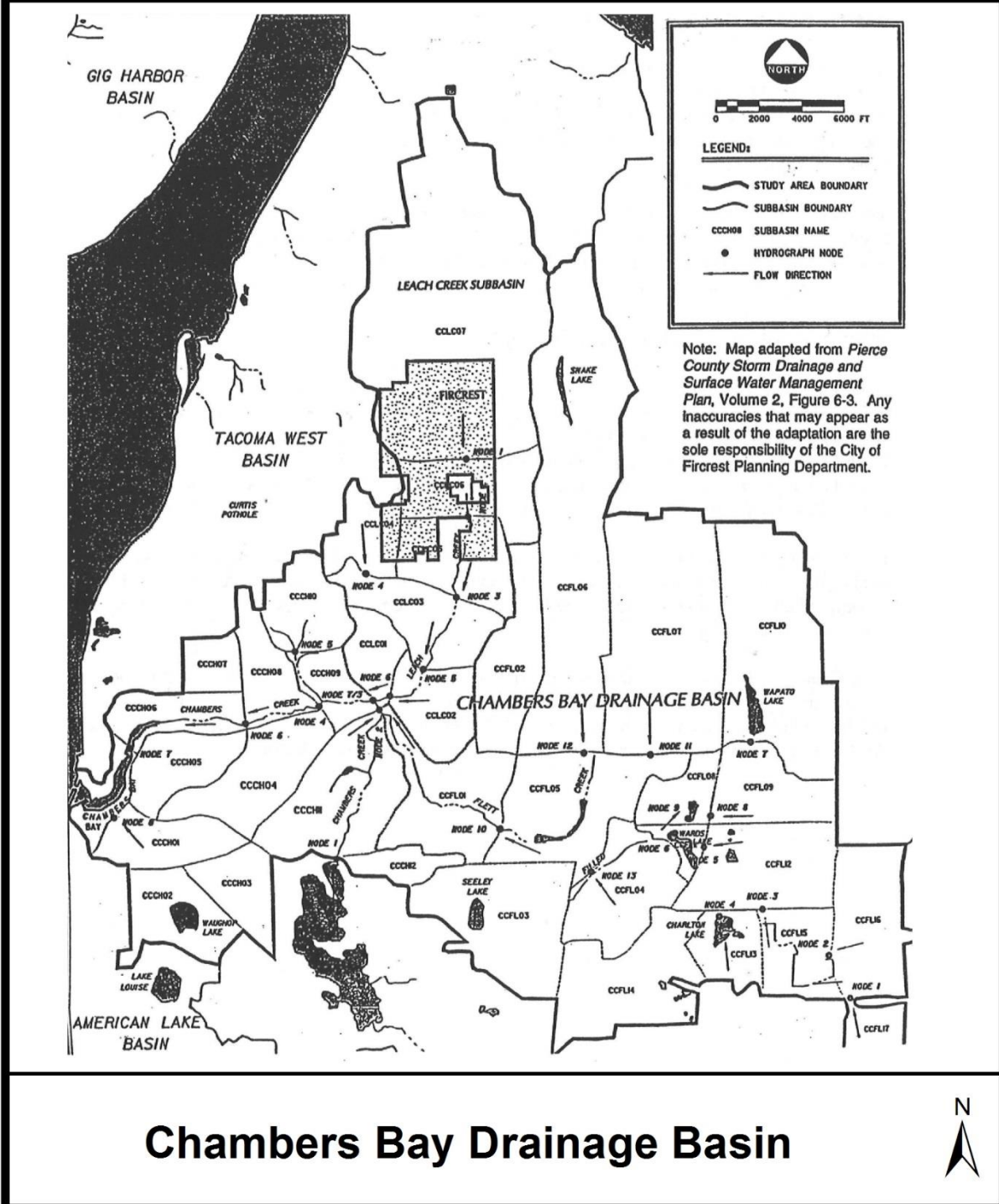
### ***SUMMARY OF SERVICES AND FACILITIES***

Stormwater flows over the surface into dry wells, swales, ponds, and basins where some of it percolates through the soil into ground water. The remainder is conveyed to detention facilities via ditches and subsurface storm drainage pipes. Much of the stormwater originating in the northern portion of the Leach Creek subbasin is collected in the Leach Creek holding basin, which provides sediment removal, infiltration to ground water, peak discharge control, and outflow to Leach Creek. Subsurface water at Fircrest Park, the former site of Spring Lake, also is intercepted and piped to the holding basin.

In the southern portion of Fircrest, a pond within the Thelma Gilmur Park is a collection point for some stormwater. Like the holding basin, this pond provides sediment removal and infiltration. Overflow from Thelma Gilmur Park is conveyed ultimately to Leach Creek. Leach Creek flows into Chambers Creek, which flows into Puget Sound via Chambers Bay.



**Figure U-5  
Drainage Basin**



A small amount of stormwater within the western boundary of Fircrest sheds west toward Puget Sound rather than east; this area is part of the Tacoma West drainage basin. The small number of facilities in that area conveys stormwater away from Fircrest and Leach Creek. Stormwater in the Tacoma West drainage basin does not have a significant impact on Fircrest stormwater facilities.

Because stormwater originating in the City of Tacoma, City of University Place and unincorporated Pierce County flows through Fircrest, how stormwater is managed in those jurisdictions directly impacts the stormwater present in Fircrest. Likewise, Fircrest's stormwater management practices affect the water present in Leach and Chambers Creeks.

Fircrest has adopted the *latest version of Department of Ecology (DOE) Stormwater Management Manual for Western Washington* which addresses the standards, procedures, and development practices needed to implement good stormwater management.

### ***FACILITIES INVENTORY***

Stormwater facilities in Fircrest are owned by the City of Fircrest and the City of Tacoma and are planned, installed, maintained, and operated under the supervision of the respective Public Works Departments. Each jurisdiction assesses properties for stormwater management within its own boundaries. The *DOE Stormwater Management Manual for Western Washington* includes the procedures necessary to facilitate consistency in interlocal planning and implementation of stormwater facilities projects.

*Note: In addition to publicly-owned stormwater facilities, there are some privately-owned stormwater facilities. Privately-owned stormwater facilities are not discussed in this document.*

**Table U-6** lists major stormwater facilities and their owners and capacities. Locations are shown in **Figure U-6**. Jurisdiction-specific maps showing the locations of all facilities listed below are available in the City of Fircrest Public Works Department.



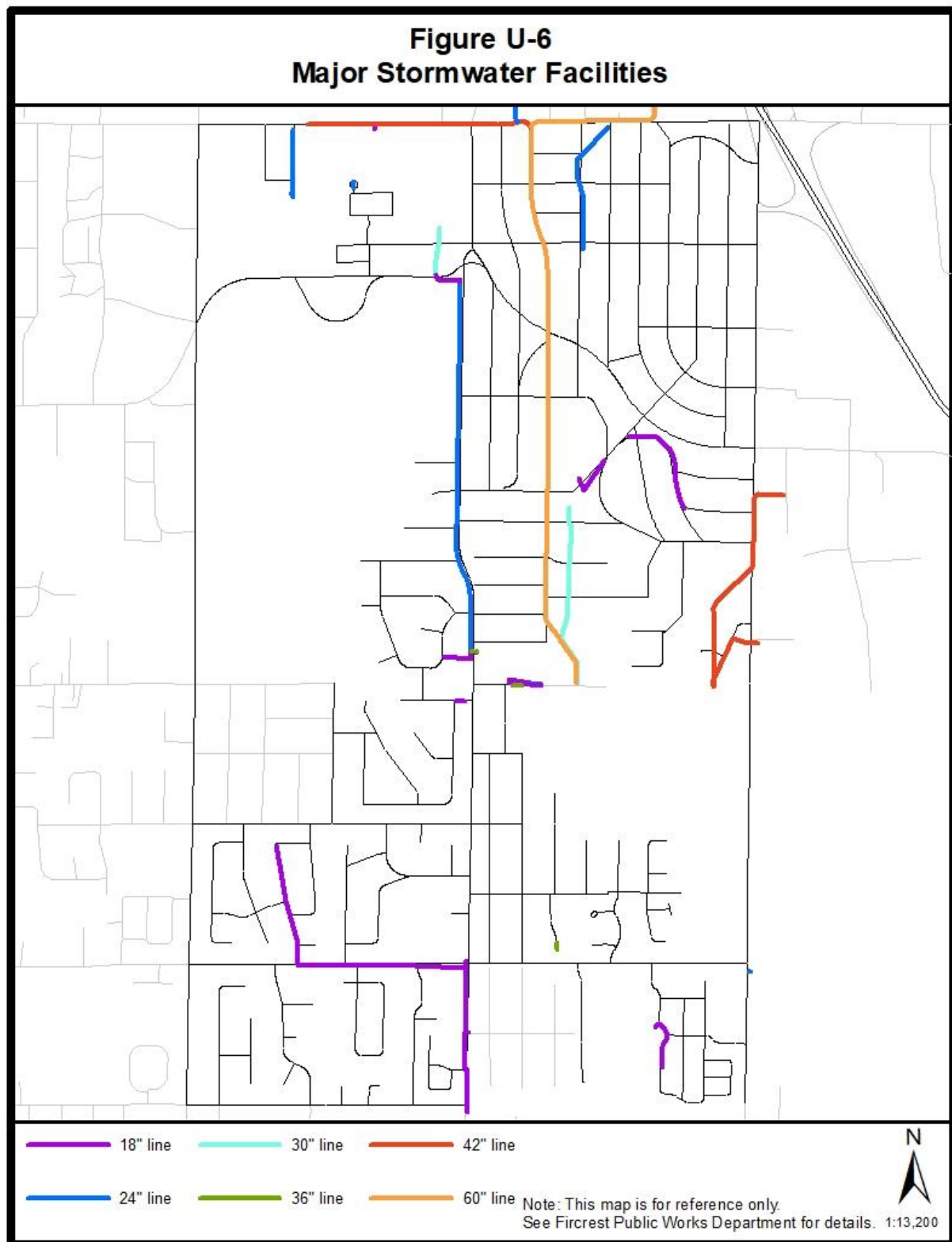
**Table U-6**

<b>Facility Name (Owner)</b>	<b>Location, Capacity, and Condition</b>
Leach Creek holding basin and pump (Tacoma Public Works)	Located near Fircrest's eastern boundary between 35th Street West and 37th Street West Drainage area: 2,450 acres Storage capacity: 82 acre-feet Pumping capacity: 96 cubic feet per second When stormwater flows discharged from the holding basin exceed a preset level, the pump redirects some of the stormwater to the Thea Foss Waterway in Commencement Bay.
Conveyance system facilities (Tacoma Public Works)	Design event: 10-year, 24-hour storm
Trunk lines (Tacoma Public Works)	Design event: 25-year, 24-hour storm
Detention pond (Fircrest Public Works)	Thelma Gilmur Park contains a natural detention pond south of Emerson St. between Woodside and Evergreen Drives. Capacity data is not available.
Conveyance system facilities and trunk lines (Fircrest Public Works)	Design events: Existing stormwater facilities in Fircrest have been designed in accord with the <i>Standard Plans for Road, Bridge, and Municipal Construction</i> by the Washington State Department of Transportation and the American Public Works Association.

### ***SERVICE LEVELS AND STANDARDS***

The primary controls for stormwater quality in Fircrest have been administrative. Administrative techniques are still in use. For example, development projects are controlled through site plan review, conditioned permits, and on-site inspection. Controls also include Public Works maintenance techniques such as street sweeping and cleaning of sedimentation out of catch basins. Operational solutions such as installation of oil/water separators are also employed. Fircrest publishes educational articles in the City's newsletter that encourage the reduction of non-point pollution sources from households and businesses.

Standards, specifications, and best management practices to prevent, control, and treat pollution in stormwater in new development and redevelopment in Fircrest must conform to those defined in the latest version of the *DOE Stormwater Management Manual for Western Washington*.



Fircrest will need to comply with Phase II Western Washington Municipal Stormwater Permit requirements in accordance with the EPA's National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES). The City will need to incorporate best management practices during periodic refinement of storm water regulations to address stormwater quality and quantity, erosion prevention, and minimizing downstream impacts of runoff in a manner consistent with NPDES Phase II requirements.

### ***STORMWATER MANAGEMENT ISSUES AND PROJECTS***

The City of Fircrest has been developing a Stormwater Management Program since 2007. The first Stormwater Management Program was adopted in 2009 and an update of the program was completed in April, 2015. The purpose of the program is to reduce the discharge of pollutants to the “maximum extent practicable”, protect water quality and satisfy the appropriate requirements of the Clean Water Act. This program is operated by the City and regulates its surface and storm water facilities. The program includes five permit specific elements:

- Public Education and Outreach;
- Public Involvement and Participation;
- Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination;
- Controlling Runoff from New Development, Redevelopment and Construction Sites; and
- Pollution Prevention, and Operations and Maintenance for Municipal Operations.

Planned improvements that are consistent with this program are identified in the Capital Facilities Element. These improvements are intended primarily to provide for treatment of existing stormwater facilities.

## ***Electric***

Tacoma Power, a division of Tacoma Public Utilities, is the electrical provider to Fircrest. The utility is governed by a five-member utility board appointed by the Tacoma City Council. Tacoma Power has a 180 square mile service area that includes the cities of Tacoma, Ruston, University Place, Fife, and Fircrest, part of Lakewood, as well as portions of unincorporated Pierce County including Graham, Spanaway, Parkland, Joint Base Lewis McChord, Midland, Summit, Frederickson, Waller, South Hill Puyallup, and Elk Plan

### ***SUMMARY OF SERVICES AND FACILITIES***

Tacoma Power operates both transmission and distribution facilities. Tacoma Power has one transmission line that runs through Fircrest. Six distribution substations, each located outside of Fircrest, supply customer load for the city, and the total nameplate capacity is 150 Megavolt Amperes (MVA). Several feeders from these substations ring the area along major arterials. Through these feeders, the substations back one another up in case of substation outage. Of the 3082 customers served by Tacoma Power in Fircrest, approximately 92.7 percent are residential and 7.3 percent are commercial and other non-residential.

Tacoma Power utilizes forecasts produced by the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) and local municipalities to project future load growth. Tacoma Power uses this information in conjunction with its system planning criteria to prepare a six-year facilities plan. The six-year plan helps Tacoma Power identify those strategic projects that will ensure a safe, reliable, and operable system. Tacoma Power's current level of service is to maintain the standard voltage level within + or - 5% of nominal voltage. All distribution service shall be provided within the acceptable range established by current industry standards.

Pursuant to its six-year plan, Tacoma Power does not anticipate development of new substations or major line replacements within Fircrest. The addition of a large commercial or industrial load in the area may require development of additional new facilities.

**Figure U-7** depicts the general location of electrical system facilities in Fircrest and adjoining areas.

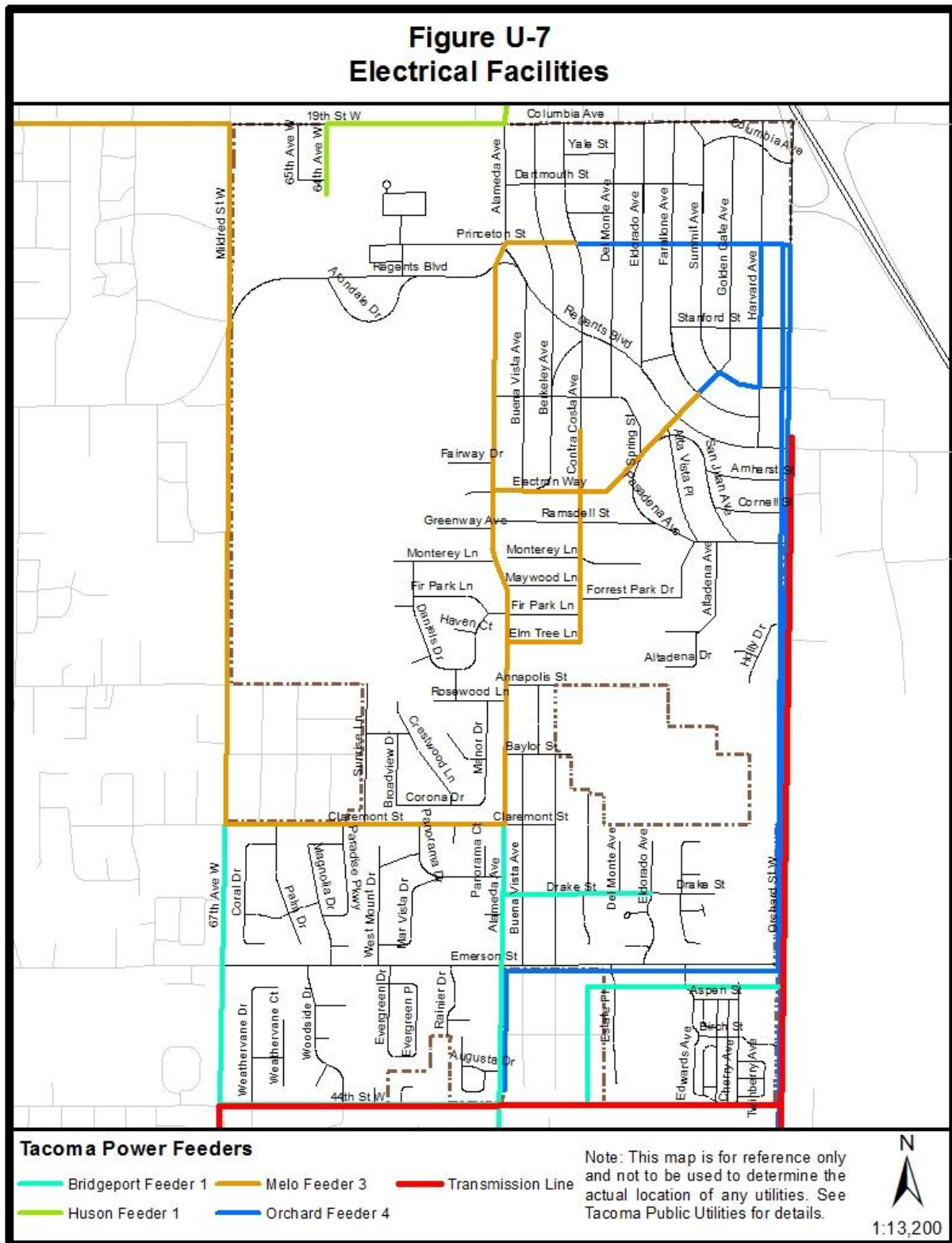
## ***Natural Gas***

### ***COMPANY OVERVIEW***

Natural gas is provided in Fircrest by Puget Sound Energy (PSE), an investor-owned utility. PSE is a private utility providing natural gas and electric service to homes and businesses in Puget Sound region of Western Washington and portions of Eastern Washington, covering 10 counties and approximately 6,000 square miles. PSE's regional and local natural gas and electric planning efforts are integrated and centered on providing safe, dependable, and efficient energy service. PSE provides natural gas to more than 770,000 customers, throughout six counties, covering approximately 2,900 square-mile area. As of March 2015, PSE provides natural gas service to approximately 1,893 customers within the City of Fircrest.

### ***REGULATORY ENVIRONMENT***

PSE's operations and rates are governed by the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (WUTC). PSE natural gas utility operations and standards are further regulated by the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT), including the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Administration (PHMSA). PHMSA's Pipeline Safety Enforcement Program is designed to monitor and enforce compliance with pipeline safety regulations. This includes confirmation that operators are meeting expectations for safe, reliable, and environmentally sound operation of PSE's pipeline infrastructure. PHMSA and the WUTC update pipeline standards and regulations on an ongoing basis to assure the utmost compliance with standards to ensure public safety. The businesses and residents within the City of Fircrest rely on the coordinated effort between PSE and the City for the adoption and enforcement of ordinances and/or codes to support on the safe, reliable, and environmentally sound construction, operation and maintenance of PSE's natural gas facilities.



## **INTEGRATED RESOURCE PLAN**

In order for PSE to meet its regulatory requirements, it updates and files an Integrated Resource Plan (IRP) with the WUTC every two years. The IRP identifies methods to provide dependable and cost-effective natural gas service that address the needs of retail natural gas customers. Natural gas sales resource need is driven by design peak day demand. The current design standard ensures that supply is planned to meet firm loads on a 13-degree design peak day, which corresponds to a 52 Heating Degree Day (HDD). Currently, PSE's supply/capacity is approximately 970 MDth/Day at peak. This figure will be updated in the fall of 2015. The IRP suggests the use of liquefied natural gas (LNG) for peak day supply and to support the needs of emerging local maritime traffic and truck transport transportation markets.

## **NATURAL GAS SUPPLY**

PSE controls its gas-supply costs by acquiring gas, under contract, from a variety of gas producers and suppliers across the western United States and Canada. PSE purchases 100 percent of its natural-gas supplies needed to serve its customers. About half the natural gas is obtained from producers and marketers in British Columbia and Alberta, and the rest comes from Rocky Mountain States. All the gas PSE acquires is transported into PSE's service area through large interstate pipelines owned and operated by Williams Northwest Pipeline. PSE buys and stores significant amounts of natural gas during the summer months, when wholesale gas prices and customer demand are low, and stores it in large underground facilities and withdraws it in winter when customer usage is highest; ensuring a reliable supply of gas is available.

## **SYSTEM OVERVIEW**

To provide the City of Fircrest and adjacent communities with natural gas, PSE builds, operates, and maintains an extensive system consisting of transmission and distribution natural gas mains, odorizing stations, pressure regulation stations, heaters, corrosion protection systems, above ground appurtenances, and metering systems. When PSE takes possession of the gas from its supplier, it is distributed to customers through more than 21,000 miles of PSE-owned natural gas mains and service lines.

PSE receives natural gas transported by Williams Northwest Pipeline's 36" and 30" high pressure transmission mains at pressures ranging from 500 PSIG to 960 PSIG. The custody change and measurement of the natural gas occurs at locations known as Gate Stations. PSE currently has 39 such locations throughout its service territory. This is also typically where the gas is injected with the odorant mercaptan. Since natural gas is naturally odorless, this odorant is used so that leaks can be detected. The Gate Station is not only a place of custody transfer and measurement but is also a common location of pressure reduction through the use of "pressure regulators". Due to state requirements, the pressure is most commonly reduced to levels at or below 250 PSIG. This reduced pressure gas continues throughout PSE's high-pressure supply system in steel mains ranging in diameter of 2" to 20" until it reaches various other pressure reducing locations. PSE currently has 755 pressure regulating stations throughout its service territory. These locations consist of Limiting Stations, Heaters, District Regulators, and/or high-pressure Meter Set Assemblies.

The most common of these is the intermediate pressure District Regulator. It is at these locations that pressures are reduced to the most common levels ranging from 25 PSIG to 60 PSIG. This reduced pressure gas continues throughout PSE's intermediate pressure distribution system in mains of various materials consisting of polyethylene and wrapped steel that range in diameters from 1-1/4" to 8" (and in a few cases, larger pipe). The gas flows through the intermediate pressure system until it reaches either a low-pressure District Regulator or a customer's Meter Set Assembly.

To safeguard against excessive pressures throughout the supply and distribution systems due to regulator failure, over-pressure protection is installed. This over-pressure protection will release gas to the atmosphere, enact secondary regulation, or completely shut off the supply of gas. To safeguard steel main against corrosion, PSE builds, operates, and maintains corrosion control mitigation systems to prevent damaged pipe as a result of corrosion.

### ***FUTURE PROJECTS***

To meet the regional and City of Fircrest's natural gas demand, PSE's delivery system is modified every year to address new or existing customer growth, load changes that require system reinforcement, rights-of-way improvements, and pipeline integrity issues. The system responds differently year to year and PSE is constantly adding or modifying infrastructure to meet gas volume and pressures demands. Ongoing system integrity work includes:

- The replacement of DuPont manufactured polyethylene main and service piping and certain/qualified steel wrapped intermediate pressure main and service piping. There will be ongoing pipe investigations throughout the city to determine the exact location of any DuPont pipe and qualified steel wrapped pipe to be replaced.
- Investigations throughout the City to determine the location of where gas lines have been cross bored through sewer lines and make subsequent repairs.

## ***Telecommunications***

Telecommunications services in Fircrest consist of land-based telephone service, cellular telephone service, and cable television service furnished by private providers. The following subsections summarize the information provided to Fircrest by each of the private service providers.

### ***LAND-BASED TELEPHONE SERVICE***

CenturyLink, a private for-profit corporation, is certified by the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (WUTC) to provide local telephone and other related special services (alarm circuits and data transmittal) throughout Fircrest. The WUTC regulates the provision of telecommunication services, including those provided by local exchange carriers such as CenturyLink. Telephone utilities are considered an essential utility by the WUTC; therefore, CenturyLink has an obligation to serve the public

requirements for communication utilities. CenturyLink is also subject to various federal laws and regulations administered by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC).

Local jurisdictions in Washington fall within a particular Local Access and Transportation Area (LATA). A LATA is a telephone exchange area that services to define the area within which Century Link is permitted to transport telecommunications traffic. Century Link is permitted to carry telephone calls only within LATA boundaries. Calls outside of the LATA require long distance carriers, which Fircrest residents may select for this service.

Hundreds of Central Offices (COs) serve Century Link customers in Washington. A CO is a telecommunications common carrier facility where calls are switched. For local exchange or intra-LATA calls the central office switches calls within and between line exchange groupings.

The transmission facilities that serve Fircrest originate with the Logan Central Office located at 2823 Bridgeport Way, from which main cable routes extend generally north, south, east, and west to serve Fircrest and the surrounding area. From each main cable route are branch feeder routes. Branch feeder routes may be aerial or buried, copper or fiber. Extending from the branch feeder routes are the local loops that provide dial tone to every telephone subscriber. Century Link construction planning is driven by the needs of its customers. As communities grow, facilities are upgraded to ensure adequate service levels. RCW 80.36.090 requires Century Link to provide adequate telecommunications services on demand. To comply with RCW 80.36.090, Century Link regularly evaluates the capacity of its facilities. Century Link's goal is to maintain its routes at 85 percent capacity. When usage exceeds 85 percent, additional facilities are planned, budgeted and installed. Moreover, facilities are upgraded as technology makes additional services available. Capacity is available to serve the area.

### **CELLULAR SERVICE**

There are seven cellular providers licensed by the FCC to serve in the Puget Sound area. With the passage of the Federal Telecommunications Act of 1996, service area competition has increased. Prior to the Act's passage, only two cellular providers would be licensed by the FCC to service a particular area. With the Act's passage, the number of carriers competing in a particular market may conceivably include all seven. In the future, the FCC may also expand the frequency range available to wireless providers, potentially resulting in new providers entering the market.

Where feasible, cellular companies site facilities on existing structures, poles, and buildings. This is where antennas can be mounted on rooftops and electronic equipment located within the building itself. Topography and other engineering constraints influence specific site selection because of the need to "hand off" the signal so that it can be picked up by another facility. The City has adopted telecommunications regulations to address the siting of cellular and other telecommunications facilities inside of the City limits.



There are two cellular transmission facilities in Fircrest. The facilities are located on the City's water tank within the Fircrest Golf Club and the Fircrest water tower located east of the City's Orchard Street boundary across from Stanford Street.

### ***CABLE TELEVISION SERVICE***

Click!, a division of Tacoma Public Utilities, and Comcast provide cable service to the City of Fircrest under separate franchise agreements. Fircrest is a member of Rainier Communications Commission, which was created through an inter-local agreement with Pierce County and other cities and towns in the County, in order to establish inter-jurisdictional cooperation on regulation and oversight activities and to build expertise in negotiating with cable companies.

Cable service is delivered to customers through a complex series of electrical components and many miles of cable. Located at the origin of a cable system is the *receive site* where towers with antennae and earth station receivers are located to pick up off-air and satellite signals. From the receive site, signals are sent to the *headend* to be processed for entry onto the *trunk line*, which is the main artery of the cable system. From the trunk, the signals are branched off onto *feeder lines*, which carry the signals through neighborhoods past individual residences. The signals are branched off again from the feeder onto *drop cable* that allows the signal to flow to the subscriber's television set or computer cable modem.

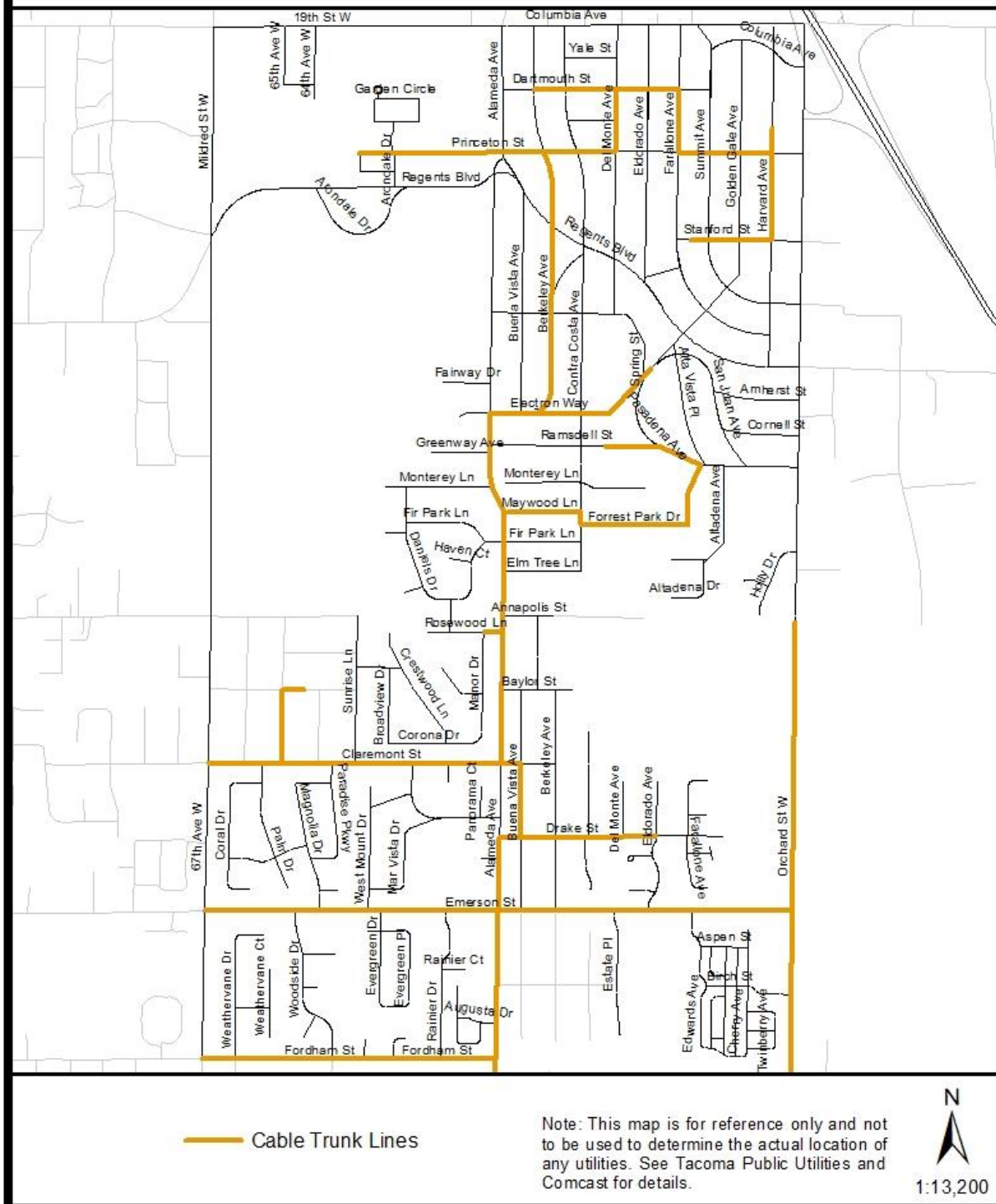
The Comcast headend serving Fircrest is located at S. 56th St. and Orchard St. The trunk line runs north along Orchard St. from the headend. At Emerson Street St. it branches west and follows Emerson west through Fircrest. Figure U-8 shows Comcast trunk line routes in Fircrest. Feeder lines branch off from this trunk line to reach every street in Fircrest. Feeder lines are generally co-located with electric lines. Detailed maps indicating the locations of all facilities in Fircrest are available in the Fircrest Public Works Department.

Click! offers cable television packages for residential and commercial locations in Fircrest. Two internet service providers (ISPs) operate on its network: Advanced Stream and Rainier Connect. These ISPs offer a variety of high-speed internet and phone packages to residential and commercial locations.

Commercial customers in Fircrest have access to custom network solutions through Click's Authorized Service Partners: Integra, Rainier Connect, Optic Fusion and Spectrum Networks. These Authorized Service Partners offer voice and data services, internet, co-location, and local and long-distance phone services. Services can be delivered over SONET Based Line Services or Metro Ethernet Services.

Comcast and Click! make every attempt to provide service to all residents within their franchise areas. Factors considered in extending service include the overall technical integrity, economic feasibility, and franchise agreements. Both Comcast and Click! can serve future growth in Fircrest.

### Figure U-8 Cable Facilities



## ***Solid Waste***

State law requires counties, in coordination with their cities, to adopt comprehensive solid waste plans for the management, handling, and disposal of solid waste for twenty years and to update them every five years. Cities may choose to be joint participants in the plan, delegate planning to the county, or do their own plan. In Pierce County, waste management and recycling activities for all jurisdictions are coordinated under the umbrella of the Tacoma-Pierce County Solid Waste Plan.

There are three separate collection and disposal systems in the County: 1) The County's system includes the unincorporated areas of the county and 19 cities and towns using the County's disposal system; 2) Tacoma, as a joint participant in the plan, has its own collection utility and disposal system and the Town of Ruston operates its own collection utility, but has an inter-local agreement with Tacoma for disposal and an inter-local agreement with the County adopting the Solid Waste Plan; and, 3) Joint Base Lewis McChord use the Fort's disposal system but coordinate with the County on public outreach and educational programs about waste reduction and recycling.

An update of the Solid Waste Plan was adopted in 2008 and the City signed an interlocal agreement with Pierce County pursuant to the plan. Under this agreement, the County has responsibility for overall planning, disposal and waste reduction and recycling education. Cities are responsible for collection and the development of any recycling program specific to their jurisdiction.

Waste is collected in Fircrest by Westside Disposal, a subsidiary of University Place Refuse. Collected waste is handled through the Pierce County disposal system. Westside Disposal has a franchise with the City that runs through 2022. The company offers residents solid waste, recycling, and yard waste collection programs coordinated with the unincorporated areas and 18 other cities and towns. Further, the company coordinates with the City to provide citywide clean-up programs in the spring and fall of each year plus special yard waste pick-up programs each spring and fall. The County provides public outreach and school education programs about waste management, waste reduction, and recycling for all residents of 19 cities and unincorporated areas.

Cities are responsible for collection and the development of any recycling program specific to their jurisdiction.