



THE CITY OF FIRCREST

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**FIRCREST PLANNING/BUILDING DEPARTMENT
STAFF REPORT
CASE # 19-02 – Preliminary Site Plan Review**

- APPLICANT:** City of Fircrest Parks and Recreation Department
- AGENT:** Emily Wheeler, ARC Architects
- OWNER:** City of Fircrest
115 Ramsdell Street, Fircrest, WA 98466
- PROPOSAL:** Preliminary Site Plan Review for new community center, outdoor pools, and bathhouse to replace existing recreation facilities
- LOCATION:** Southwest corner of Fircrest Park, near intersection of Contra Costa Avenue and Electron Way
- PARCEL ID:** Assessor Parcel Number 7160201251
- PARCEL SIZE:** 7.59 acres
- ZONING CLASSIFICATION:** Park, Recreation and Open Space (PROS)
- PLAN DESIGNATION:** Parks, Recreation and Open Space (PROS)
- ADJACENT ZONING:** North, East and West: Residential-6 (R-6)
South: Park, Recreation and Open Space (PROS)
and Residential-6 (R-6)

PROPOSAL SUMMARY: The City of Fircrest proposes to replace the existing Roy H. Murphy Community Center and Pool and construct a new community center, outdoor pools, and bathhouse. The applicant states that existing facilities were built in the 1960's and need replacement, to provide the community with safe, contemporary and efficient facilities. The project is designed to be constructed in 3 phases.

Phase 1 will include the demolition of the existing community center's locker room and the pool pump room, as well as the existing pools and concrete deck. In its place, a new 4,500 sf bathhouse and two outdoor pools will be constructed. This phase will also include pool decks, fencing, site work, utilities, new parking and landscaping.

Phase 2 includes demolition of the existing community center and removal of foundations and utilities. It also includes construction of a new 15,000 sf community center as well as a parking lot, patios, utilities and landscaping.

Phase 3 includes additional parking and traffic calming features along Electron Way. The City is developing plans to convert Electron Way to diagonal parking between Spring Street and Contra Costa. There would be approximately 20 stalls of angle-in parking to the perimeter of the park and 12 stalls along the tennis court side as well as new sidewalks at all locations where new parking has been added.

A design narrative prepared by the project architect (Exhibit 2) describes the public process used to solicit community input for the project design. This process included three well-attended community meetings, numerous steering committee meetings, and City Council meetings, where presentations on design options have been made and citizen input has been received and considered. The architect's narrative describes the resulting design for the site and buildings and provides graphics for illustration. More detailed plans are provided in the site masterplan submittal (Exhibit 3).

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION: The applicant has prepared an Environmental Checklist summarizing potential impacts of the project on the environment (Exhibit 4). The City issued a Determination of Non-Significance (DNS) on March 13, 2019 with a 14-day comment period ending March 27, 2019 (Exhibit 5). Comments received from the Department of Ecology, provided in Exhibit 6, address hazardous waste and toxics reduction, solid waste management, and water quality. Existing City regulations and proposed conditions of approval will ensure project consistency and compliance with Ecology recommendations and requirements.

CRITERIA FOR SITE PLAN APPROVAL: FMC 22.72.006 provides the following approval criteria that must be met by the proposal for the Commission to grant approval:

- (a) The proposed use and site design will not be detrimental to the public health, safety, and welfare; injurious to property or improvements in the vicinity; or adversely affect the established character of the surrounding vicinity.*
- (b) The proposed use and site design will meet or exceed all applicable development, design and performance standards and guidelines required for the specific use, location, or zoning classification.*
- (c) The proposed use and site design will be consistent and compatible with the goals, objectives and policies of the comprehensive plan.*
- (d) All conditions necessary to lessen any impacts of the proposed use are measurable and can be monitored and enforced.*

ANALYSIS:

Compliance with Approval Criteria. Each of the approval criteria listed above, and the extent to which the proposal meets them, are discussed below.

Criterion (a): The proposed use and site design will not be detrimental to the public health, safety, and welfare; injurious to property or improvements in the vicinity; or adversely affect the established character of the surrounding vicinity.

Staff finding: *The project consists of replacing existing public recreational facilities (a community center that includes outdoor pools and bathhouse) with comparable facilities of a similar scale and in the same general location. The applicant's public outreach process conducted during 2018-2019 was designed and executed to ensure that community input, especially from residents in the surrounding neighborhood, was considered when developing the project design. As conditioned, the proposed use and site design will not be detrimental to the public health, safety, and welfare; injurious to property or improvements in the vicinity; or adversely affect the established character of the surrounding vicinity.*

Criterion (b): The proposed use and site design will meet or exceed all applicable development, design and performance standards and guidelines required for the specific use, location, or zoning classification.

Park, Recreation and Open Space (PROS) District Permitted Use Requirements. FMC 22.54.002(b) permits active parks including, but not limited to swimming pools. FMC 22.54.002(c) permits recreational buildings including, but not limited to: facilities such as gymnasiums, basketball courts, community kitchens, banquet halls, indoor stages, and meeting rooms. FMC 22.54.002(d) permits off-street parking facility associated with a park, recreation, or open space use permitted in this section (such as pools and community centers). The proposal is subject to site plan approval in accordance with FMC 22.72 and administrative (staff-level) design review approval per FMC 22.66.

FMC 22.54.007 Development Standards. The project design complies with building setback standards (minimum 15 feet from the Electron Way ROW and 25 feet from the Contra Costa Avenue ROW). The code does not specify a maximum building height, leaving it to the discretion of the Planning Commission to determine this through the preliminary site plan review process. The proposed maximum building height of 28 feet, at the gym, (excluding solar panels) is comparable to the maximum 27-foot height allowed in the surrounding R-6 zone. The height of the gym is mitigated with tall conifers along Electron Way and, at its southern edge adjacent to the sidewalk, a storage room that is 15 feet tall, compared to the 28-foot height of the gym. The pool bath house has a height of approximately 15 feet. Maximum lot coverage (25%) and impervious surface coverage (40%) standards are easily met due to the small footprint of this project relative to Fircrest Park when considered in its entirety.

FMC 22.58.008 Performance Standards. This section provides performance standards that the final project design and construction methods will need to meet. A proposed condition of approval references this section. Of note is Subsection (k) Stormwater Management, which requires stormwater facilities to be designed to meet or exceed the standards outlined in the Ecology Stormwater Management Manual for Western Washington. Consistent with NPDES Western Washington Phase II Municipal Stormwater Permit requirements, LID designs and LID BMPs shall be required in areas where soils and geology support it. Larger projects triggering the manual's requirements for water quality

treatment and/or flow control shall incorporate LID components to the extent practicable consistent with The Low Impact Development Technical Guidance Manual for Puget Sound. The project's Civil Engineering firm, AHBL, has prepared a Preliminary Stormwater Site Plan report that concludes stormwater infiltration would be infeasible due to the water table depth at the site. Groundwater was located around three feet deep during GeoEngineer's onsite testing, which took place from January to March in 2016. Therefore, it is unlikely the project design will be able to incorporate substantial LID components, although a proposed bioretention rain garden may ease impacts of run-off on the storm system.

FMC 22.60 Parking and Circulation. FMC 22.60.003 lists parking space requirements for various activities. It does *not* provide guidance as to the appropriate level of parking that should be provided for swimming pools and community centers. Currently, 21 stalls are provided at the 13,000 sf Roy H. Murphy Community Center and Pool. New parking will be added at each of the three phases of construction.

Phase 1 includes installation of 15 angle in stalls, including two ADA parking stalls along Contra Costa adjacent to the bathhouse.

Phase 2 includes demolition of 21 stalls and construction of 15 new ones, including two ADA accessible stalls, in an off-street lot located at the southwest corner of the community center and park. This parking lot includes a passenger loading and unloading zone (3 stall capacity) at the west entrance of the community center that will temporarily offset the minor reduction in parking. Phase 2 includes walkways to a park gateway from Contra Costa that will be comprised of deciduous trees, plantings and a formal path. The walk will lead to a patio with views of the park, connections to the community center, and moveable chairs and tables for patron and public use.

Phase 3 includes the addition of approximately 32 angled parking spaces and traffic calming measures along Electron Way. Based on community feedback, this keeps parking at the park perimeter rather than within a large parking lot in the park.

The new community center will contain 15,000 sf of floor area, an incremental increase in size from the current 13,000 sf facility. The new facility, including the outdoor pools and bathhouse, are expected to generate additional activity and parking demand at the site. Phase 3 parking would significantly increase parking capacity to accommodate expected demand.

Bicycle Parking. FMC 22.60.010(a) requires bike racks or locker-type bike parking in any development required to provide 12 or more parking spaces. Subsection (b) requires at least one bicycle parking space for every 12 spaces required for motor vehicles, which would trigger the bike parking requirement for this project. However, given the expected intensive use of the site by children, youth and active adults of all ages, additional bike parking beyond what is normally provided for some other uses may be warranted.

Under Subsection (b)(2), the planning commission may require additional spaces when it determines that the use or its location will generate a high volume of bicycle activity. This is appropriate for uses such as parks, playfields, and recreational facilities. Staff

recommends that bike racks or lockers be installed near entrances to the bathhouse and community center, consistent with the following subsections:

(c) Bicycle facilities for patrons shall be located on site, designed to allow either a bicycle frame or wheels to be locked to a structure attached to the pavement, or allow for the entire bicycle to be enclosed within a locker.

(d) All bicycle parking and storage shall be located in safe, visible areas that do not impede pedestrian or vehicle traffic flow, well lighted for nighttime use, and located in covered areas or otherwise be protected from the elements where practicable.

FMC 22.62 Landscaping Regulations. The applicant's design narrative states that landscape will be native plants and drought resistant. The design will help further tie the pool and buildings together and will complement the park with splashes of color and texture. Improvements are sited to retain 3 of 5 large Douglas firs on the southernmost edge of Fircrest Park. Detailed landscape plans that demonstrate code compliance with all applicable standards will need to be submitted for administrative design review approval.

FMC 22.64 Design Standards. In order for the Planning Commission to approve a preliminary site plan, it must make a finding that the proposed use and site design will meet or exceed all applicable design standards and guidelines. In addition, the proposed development is subject to administrative (staff level) design review per FMC 22.66.008 in order to ensure project compliance with all applicable development regulations, the design guidelines contained in Chapter [22.64](#) FMC, and the goals, policies and objectives of the comprehensive plan.

Administrative design review for this project consists of a two-step process that begins with a review of conceptual plans conducted concurrently with the Commission's review of the site plan review application. If the Commission grants site plan approval for a conceptual design, the applicant will need to submit detailed plans for final design review by staff. This second review is intended to ensure that all design issues identified during the review of the conceptual plans are fully addressed prior to issuance of a building permit or other construction permit.

Staff has reviewed the conceptual plans for consistency with the design guidelines contained in Chapter [22.64](#) FMC and believes that the proposal is generally consistent with the applicable guidelines listed below.

- 22.64.002 Natural features. Intent – Retain natural features and landmarks as open space amenities.
- 22.64.003 Grading and storm drainage. Intent – Retain the natural landscape and avoid creating unnatural or unsightly grading, drainage, and other site disturbances.
- 22.64.004 Landforms and views. Intent – Fit building improvements into the natural landscape and preserve views of surrounding features.

- 22.64.006 Parking lots and areas. Intent – Develop parking areas that highlight buildings and pedestrian areas, screen parked vehicles from adjacent land uses, and reflect land use activities.
- 22.64.008 Building heights. Intent – Create building heights that reflect pedestrian scale and provide visual interest.
- 22.64.009 Modulation and articulation – Walls and roofs. Intent – Reduce building mass to human scale and increase visual detail and interest.
- 22.64.010 Building scale. Intent – Create buildings that reflect function with visually interesting architectural definitions.
- 22.64.011 Building entries. Intent – Create visible, functional, efficient, and safe building pedestrian access systems.
- 22.64.012 Building materials. Intent – Use construction materials and methods that are durable, maintained, visually attractive, and functional to the region.
- 22.64.014 Service equipment and activities. Intent – Locate trash, mechanical, and utility service equipment in ways that are functional, secure, and visually screened.
- 22.64.015 Solar orientations. Intent – Maximize passive and active solar energy possibilities.
- 22.64.040 Landscape materials. Intent – Install landscape materials that are native, drought resistant, and appropriate to the purpose of the improvement.

Guidelines *not* listed above are largely inapplicable to this project.

Staff finding: *Based on review at a conceptual level, staff believes the proposed use and site design will meet or exceed all applicable development, design and performance standards and guidelines required for the specific use, location, or zoning classification. The applicant will need to submit detailed information concerning architectural design, landscape design, and other design elements for final staff review and approval.*

Criterion (c): The proposed use and site design will be consistent and compatible with the goals, objectives and policies of the comprehensive plan.

Staff finding: *The proposed use and site design will be largely consistent and compatible with Park, Recreation and Open Space Goals P1 and P2, Community Character Goals CC1 and CC4, Land Use Goals LU2 and LU10, and associated policies, listed below:*

- **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 P2.3**
Provide programs, special events and facilities that promote a sense of community and stimulate socialization for the individuals and family.
- **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.
- **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.
- **Policy CC1.4**
Design and build Fircrest's public buildings and indoor/outdoor facilities to enhance their function as community gathering places.
- **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.
- **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 CC4.5**

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.

- **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.

- **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 LU2.3**

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.

- **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 LU10.7**

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.

Criterion (d): All conditions necessary to lessen any impacts of the proposed use are measurable and can be monitored and enforced.

Staff finding: *The proposed conditions of approval listed in the preliminary resolution (Exhibit 7) will ensure that all potential impacts resulting from the project are mitigated to a satisfactory level in conformance with applicable code requirements. All proposed conditions can be monitored and enforced through the administrative design review, site development permit, and building permit approval processes and subsequent site inspection process.*

RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends the Planning Commission grant approval of the preliminary site plan review based on the findings and subject to the conditions listed in the preliminary resolution provided as Exhibit 8.

Jeff Boers
Jeff Boers, Principal Planner

April 19, 2019
Date

EXHIBITS:

1. Land Use Application
2. Project Architect's Design Narrative
3. Site Master Plan Submittal
4. Applicant's Environmental Checklist
5. SEPA Determination of Nonsignificance
6. Comment Letter from Department of Ecology, dated March 27, 2019
7. Preliminary Resolution