



# COMMUNITY CENTER AND POOL PROJECT



## ADDITIONAL ONLINE RESOURCES

(Note: These materials are available on the [project website](#)).

- [Renderings](#)
- [Survey Results](#)
- [Financing Documents](#)
- [Steering Committee Notes](#)
- [Public Meeting Reports & Presentations](#)
- [City Council Presentation](#)
- [Operational Analysis](#)
- [Schematic Design](#)
- [Bond Document](#)

## WHY DO WE NEED A NEW POOL?

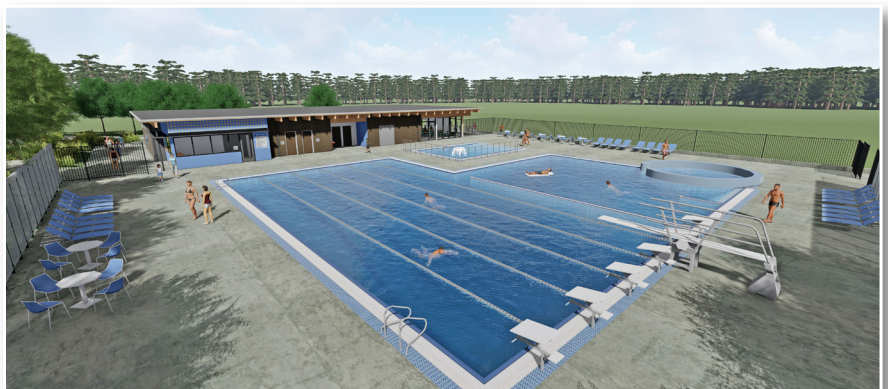
The pool opened in 1962, and after 57 seasons of serving the community it has reached the end of its lifespan. It leaks thousands of gallons a day. The city spent \$33,000 trying to repair it last year, and it still leaks. There are no more fixes; the city can't find replacement parts anymore.

**Related Materials:** [Community Center Predesign Report](#) (07/2016) | [Community Center & Pool Survey Results](#) (08/2017) | [Pool & Community Center Online Survey](#) (10/2018)

## WHY DO WE NEED A NEW COMMUNITY CENTER?

The community center opened in 1960 and needs lots of improvements. The gym is too small and its rubber floor is failing and needs to be replaced. The bathrooms are small and do not meet ADA requirements or provide any measure of privacy. Youths describe the teen room as unwelcoming and isolated in a way that doesn't feel safe. Also, seismic building standards have changed substantially over time. Major renovations are hard to accomplish without required ADA and seismic upgrades, and at that point renovation costs will approach replacement costs. At 59 years old, a cost benefit analysis favors rebuilding rather than spending money on renovations. Two community surveys show that people feel the building is old and dingy, and not welcoming anymore.

**Related Materials:** [Community Center Predesign Report](#) (07/2016) | [Community Center & Pool Survey Results](#) (08/2017) | [Pool & Community Center Online Survey](#) (10/2018)



## RELATED QUESTIONS

### *Is there anything else in the park bond?*

If the project bids come in as expected, the City would like to make as many of the following park improvements as it can:

- Improvements to the field turf at Fircrest Park (est. \$100,000)
- Upgrading the baseball field at Whittier Park to accommodate adults (est. \$35,000)
- Improvements to the irrigation system at Whittier Park (est. \$40,000)
- Renovation of the restroom at Whittier Park (est. \$30,000)
- Improvements to the tennis courts at Fircrest Park (est. \$26,000)
- Improving the roof of the Fircrest Park pavilion (est. \$5,000)
- New electrical panels at Fircrest and Whittier Parks (est. \$10,000)
- Lighting improvements at Fircrest and Whittier Parks (est. \$300,000)
- Replacement of the Fircrest Park storage garage (est. \$35,000)
- Additional paved paths at Fircrest Park (est. \$58,000)
- [County PROS Plan](#)

## WHAT ARE THE AMENITIES IN THE NEW FACILITIES?

**Pool:** More efficient mechanical equipment. Lap lanes for the swim team (that finally meet the legal competition length). Separate kiddie pool, by popular demand. Diving board. Vortex – a whirlpool that's popular for kids to play and adults to exercise. New locker rooms in a modern bathhouse that includes family changing rooms and restrooms that are available for park users year-round. Also, a party room for rent year-round.

**Community center:** larger gym. Better design that allows staff to monitor the whole building. Improved multipurpose rooms for more program offerings. Designing for solar for energy efficiency (still analyzing that to see how that pencils out). Designed for modern earthquake standards and including a generator so it can be a community shelter in emergencies.

**Related Materials:** [Public Meeting Presentation](#) (03/2019)

## WHAT ABOUT PARKING AROUND THE NEW COMMUNITY CENTER AND FIRCREST PARK?

In discussing the layout early in the design process, both the community and the City Council provided feedback urging the design team to reduce on-site parking so that the new pool and community center would not encroach too far into the park.

In discussing street parking and the potential for angle-in parking around the park, it was decided the City could design and build the angle-in parking around the park much more cost effectively if it was done separate from the pool and community center project. Parking will be designed and built along with the pool and community center project, just not as part of the project scope and funding (View the [Site Plan Rendering materials online](#)).

## Community Center & Pool Project





## PROJECT COST

### WHAT WILL IT COST, AND HOW WILL YOU PAY FOR IT?

The total project cost is estimated at \$18 million. The park bond will authorize up to \$13.5 million. The remaining \$4.5 million will come from: at least \$750,000 from city reserves, a \$750,000 state grant for the pool, a \$1 million gift from the Bill and Joyce Edwards Family Foundation, and additional grants and donations.

State Rep. Mari Leavitt is sponsoring the city's request for a second state grant to be applied to the community center portion of the project. The city hired The Briggs Group as a fundraising consultant to help raise money from community foundations and individual donors. They, in turn, have said they are waiting for the results of the vote before committing.

### WHAT WILL THE PARK BOND COST HOMEOWNERS?

The park bond would cost Fircrest property owners an estimated 68 cents per \$1,000 of assessed value. The current median home value in Fircrest is \$390,000, and that homeowner would pay an estimated \$265 a year, or \$22 per month.

Value of Home	\$200,000	\$300,000	\$400,000	\$500,000
Cost of Bond Measure a Year	\$136 / year	\$204 / year	\$272 / year	\$340 / year
Cost of Bond Measure a Month	\$11.33 / month	\$17.00 / month	\$22.66 / month	\$28.33 / month



### Community Center & Pool Project



<https://www.cityoffircrest.net/community-center-pool-project/>



### RELATED QUESTION

#### *Is there a tax break for seniors?*

Not specifically for this park bond. However, the Pierce County Assessor's office has information about general property tax relief for qualifying seniors and people with disabilities.

## WILL YOU SPEND THE FULL \$13.5 MILLION IN PROPERTY TAX REVENUES?

The bond authorizes up to \$13.5 million. The city is budgeting for \$4.5 million from other sources: city funds, state grants, and private philanthropy. If the city can generate more than \$4.5 million from those other sources, it can draw less from the bond.

## ARE PROPERTY TAXES REALLY GOING DOWN OVERALL?

For 2019, local school levies drop to \$1.50 under the new McCleary funding formula. The Tacoma school levy will drop from \$3.52 per \$1,000, and the UP levy will drop from \$3.53 per \$1,000. That decrease of over \$2.00 per \$1,000 in valuation reduces property taxes by \$800 for the owner of a \$400,000 home. More information is available on the [Pierce County Assessor-Treasurer's website](#).

It's important to note that some state lawmakers are working on an adjustment to the school funding formula due to the big cuts that were imposed on urban districts like Tacoma's. The local levy cap might be raised from \$1.50, but no one knows at this time what the final number would be.



Community Center & Pool Project



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### RELATED QUESTION

*Is the government still providing postage-paid envelopes for ballots?*

Yes. Voters can mail their ballots for free. Or they can drop it off in any of the county's official ballot drop boxes, including the one outside Fircrest City Hall.

## VOTING

### WHAT WILL IT TAKE TO APPROVE THE PARK BOND?

Approval is a 2-step process.

1. To validate the election, tax levies require a minimum turnout of 40% of the previous November general election. Based on turnout from the November 2018 election, the minimum turnout requirement for the park bond will be approximately 1,418 votes.
2. After meeting the minimum turnout requirement, it takes a 60% supermajority "yes" vote to approve the bond. In other words, the park bond could get 59.9% of the vote and fail.

### DOES THE CITY LOSE THE STATE GRANT MONEY IF VOTERS SAY NO?

The city will have to return the \$750,000 state grant if it doesn't build the pool. State Reps. Mari Leavitt and Christine Kilduff sponsored the city's request this year for a second grant for the community center portion of the project. The proposed House Capital budget includes \$1,000,000 for the community center. We are working with our State delegation to ensure this gets included in the final State Capital Budget.

A majority of the City Council would have to agree on next steps. However, the deteriorating pool is almost certain to close after the 2019 season, regardless of the outcome. And the gym floor must be replaced.

### WILL YOU BUILD IT ALL AT ONCE OR IN PHASES? WILL SWIMMERS MISS A SUMMER SEASON?

The city would build the facilities in two phases. Pool construction would start after the end of the 2019 summer season with the goal of opening in time for the 2020 season. Once the pool is open, the city would finish designing the community center and build it in 2021.

Related Materials: [Public Meeting Presentation \(03/2019\)](#)

Community Center & Pool Project





# PROGRAMMING AND BUSINESS PLAN

## HOW WOULD A NEW POOL AND COMMUNITY CENTER OPERATE DIFFERENTLY?

The City would optimize the spaces in a modern pool and community center for programming, general community use, and rentals. If the park bond is approved, the City would offer more and different programming for all ages based on community need. For example, the senior yoga program is growing in popularity, and the youth basketball league is at maximum capacity. The “party room” at the pool would be available for year-round rentals for parties, meetings, celebrations, etc. The multipurpose rooms in the new center would be better configured for those uses as well.

The new community center is not expected to cost any more than the current facility.

City staff estimate the cost of operating a larger modern facility is offset by the cost of running the current 59-year-old facility.

## DOES THE CITY OF FIRCREST HAVE A GOOD TRACK RECORD OF PAYING OFF DEBT?

The City’s General Fund, which covers police, parks and other general services, has no debt. The City paid off the last park bond, which was approved in 1993, and it built a new City Hall in 2000 and paid it off in 10 years.

The City’s only current debts are in the water and sewer utility funds, which by law are separate from the General Fund. The water utility debt will be paid off in 2022, and the two sewer loans for sewer main replacements will be paid off in 2030 and 2035.

### RELATED QUESTIONS

#### *Is the kiddie pool free? What will it cost to use the pool?*

The kiddie pool is a popular feature. It’s too soon to know exactly how the fee structure would work, but we are still considering fee structures related to our business plan that kids under a certain age will have free admittance to both pools. Access to the pool by Fircrest residents is always the top priority, which is why there are resident and non-resident rates.

#### *How will this affect the Fircrest Soccer Club? Will they lose any space?*

The City and the nonprofit Fircrest Soccer Club have been partners for some 30 years. The FSC board endorses this project, and the city is committed to making sure our fields remain viable for the club. In fact, the park bond includes turf, irrigation and lighting improvements to Fircrest Park and Whittier Park that would provide better playing surfaces.

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