

Town Topics



City Council Spotlight—Joe Barrentine



The Feeling of Fircrest has been on my mind for a while.

When trying to describe the “Jewel of Pierce County” most of us rely on visual descriptors. Things you can see from the sidewalk as you walk through town. Tall trees, sidewalks, Mid-Mod houses, cute shops, or the many amazing parks we all share.

It’s not uncommon for the city council to consider what feels like Fircrest when discussing the issues of the day. And as Fircrest continues to grow, I think it’s worth thinking about how we can all grow that feeling, too.

As far as I can tell, the feeling is a combination of a great many factors that work together to make this city a great community. The visual things are part of it, to be sure, but what I’ve come to believe is at the heart of it is engagement. Involvement and interactions with the people, organizations, and businesses who call Fircrest home. Think of each interaction as an investment - of yourself - in the community.

We’re lucky to have great organizations like the Kiwanis Club of Fircrest and the Fircrest Parks and Recreation Foundation regularly investing in the city’s future, and we have regular volunteers (We can always use more!) who work tirelessly to make our community events legendary. And it’s in that work, the work of giving for something larger than one’s self, that the Feeling of Fircrest lives.

There’s no wrong way to engage. Show up to public meetings, volunteer for the civil service board, shop at local stores and bring your friends to the holiday tree lighting. Participate in the Lights of Fircrest, pick up trash on your next walk, help maintain the Whittier Trails, join a senior’s trip from the Community Center, or just about anything else you can think of. Make a connection in the city. Grow your ties to the people, organizations, and events that happen all the time here.

Finding time to get involved is tough, especially if you have kids and are trying to juggle all the exhaustion that comes with them. I have good news there. Another great way to make that connection is to donate, or as I like to say, invest in the things you like. Do you love the flower baskets we hang in the summer? You can help make that happen with a small donation. Do you love the Kiwanis’ Terrific Kid program that celebrates our city’s young people? You can help make that happen with a small donation.

I’m sure there are hundreds of other ways to connect with the people, businesses, and organizations in our community that I haven’t touched on here. As we work our way through the dark months of the year, I encourage each of you to make one new connection. Meet a new neighbor, stop at a new shop in town or reach out to one of the great organizations that serve the community. Find one small way to grow that Feeling of Fircrest.

Planning & Building

ADU Information

As our surrounding jurisdictions update their ADU policies, we receive calls about our ADU policies and Codes. We have added a FAQ section to the Permit Center on the City website. Here is a brief overview of ADUs and our City’s regulations.

We have allowed ADUs since the year 2000. Fircrest was one of the first to embrace ADUs in our area. There are two types of ADUs; Detached and Attached.

Detached means a garage conversion or a new structure will be built that is not attached to the home.

Attached ADUs are basement or attic conversions, which are most common, or building an addition to the home.



Here are a few highlights of our regulations.

- Maximum size is 600 square feet or up to 800 square feet with additional permitting.
- The ADU will connect to the same water, sewer, and storm drain as the main house. TPU requires a separate electrical meter to be installed.
- The ADU will share an address with the main house. We are revamping the addressing policy and procedure, but currently, no separate address will be assigned.
- Only one driveway is allowed for the parcel.
- We require an owner to live in the main home or the ADU. A title restriction is placed on the deed of the home.
- The maximum height is 18’ to the top of the ridge.

See the city website for more information on ADUs. Deciding to build or renovate an ADU is a large undertaking. We are here to help!

Serving the Community Since 1925

Public Works

Fall and winter have arrived here in the PNW and the Public Works team works diligently to keep the storm systems clear. Our street sweeper is out, following the posted schedule, to combat the “fall” debris. Public Works staff encourage residents to not blow leaves and other yard debris into the streets, as plugged storm drains are the leading contributor to flooding streets in the City. Residents along with Public Works share the responsibility to keep storm drains clear. It takes all of us working together to keep our streets free of debris and safe for all.



As temperatures drop, we may see snow and ice impact our city streets. Public Works staff can proactively apply salt brine to pretreat roads and/or reactively fight compact snow and ice along with the use of our two plow trucks. Snow and Ice removal schedules will be followed as in years past. As always, if you have questions or need to report problem areas, please call Public Works at (253) 564-8900. After-hours calls are managed through our answering service and then relayed to on-call staff 24/7/365.

Fircrest Police

Catalytic Converter Theft:

Catalytic converter theft continues to be a problem that car owners face in Fircrest and across the nation. This vehicle part has become the center of numerous thefts from residential neighborhoods. Catalytic converters are sold by thieves for approximately \$300-\$500 but the victims of these crimes will pay up to \$3,000 for a new catalytic converter.

Here are some developed strategies for car owners that help stop or reduce this type of theft:

- Engraving serial numbers on catalytic converters with your vehicle's VIN (Vehicle Identification Number).
- Install a catalytic converter anti-theft device. These are available in many forms from a variety of manufacturers and can provide a level of security against theft.
- Park cars in a garage or car-ports. If cars are going to be parked in a driveway or streets, consider installing motion sensors, security lights, and anti-theft car alarms. Motion-sensing lights can make some thieves think twice about committing a crime due to the sudden introduction of light, causing them to leave the area.

If your converter is stolen, call the police department and insurance company immediately.

What is a catalytic converter and why do thieves want them?

Catalytic converters are part of every exhaust system installed since 1974, and their function is to convert pollutants into neutral gases that aren't harmful to people or the environment. The mechanism contained in catalytic converters that creates this reaction involves several precious metals. Platinum, palladium, rhodium, and other metals are used in varying quantities inside the converters, and the market value of these metals is significant enough that the resale value of a converter is, for many thieves, well worth the few minutes it takes to steal one.

Unfortunately for vehicle owners, it is exceptionally easy to steal a catalytic converter, especially if the thief has small, cordless power tools in hand. It takes minutes—and it's quick enough that it can happen in a public parking lot without much notice or in a driveway during the daytime. Organized thieves can target a whole neighborhood overnight.

SUVs and pickup trucks are easier targets. However, some vehicles, such as hybrid cars, are also attractive targets; because their engines run at least part of the time on electricity, not gasoline, their catalytic converters don't run as hot as those of fuel-powered vehicles, and so more of the precious metal remains inside the converter.

Your Fircrest Police Department



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Police Continued

It's that time of year again. Everyone is gearing up for the holidays, which means online shopping and packages being mailed to your home, packages being purchased and stored in vehicles. This is a time of year that can provide a target-rich environment for thieves. So, let's make sure it's a happy holiday for everyone. Following these simple guidelines will make it difficult and less inviting for would-be thieves to come into our community. We are encouraging our residents to employ some basic preventative measures over the holidays.

General Holiday Safety and Crime Prevention

At Home

- Make sure all doors and windows have secondary locks (window pins, deadbolts, dowels, etc.), and use them!
- Don't hide spare keys in mailboxes or planters, or under doormats.
- Ensure that dark areas and entrances have outdoor lights that are turned on after dark or are activated by sensors.
- Keep trees and shrubbery trimmed so they do not conceal doors and windows. Remember, overgrown foliage can provide a hiding place for criminals.
- Place gifts where they can't be seen from the outside.
- Consider safe deposit boxes for coin and stamp collections, seldom-worn jewelry, stock bonds, etc.
- Be sure to mail cards, checks or gift certificates from the Post Office or at a blue U.S. Postal Service collection box.
- Lock your vehicle and remove all the valuables. Yes, even in your driveway.

Strangers at your Door

- Use caution anytime there is a stranger at your door.
- Be suspicious of unexpected sales calls or deliveries. Ask for identification.
- Be aware of scams that criminals commit to take advantage of people's generosity during the holidays.
- Investigate charities before making donations. Ask how the funds will be used.
- Leaving for the Holidays? Ask a trusted friend, neighbor, to watch your home.
- Call the Fircrest Police Department and request a security check.
- Use timers for lights and radios while you're away.
- Remember to make arrangements for mail and newspapers.

After the Holidays

- Don't advertise expensive toys, electronics, or other gifts received by the boxes left for garbage collections. Compress large boxes and place them in black garbage bags for pick-up.
- Add new items to your home inventory. Take photos or video of all items of value in your home and list each item's make, model, serial number, and other information.
- Engrave new items to help identify them in the event they are stolen.

Avoid Porch Pirates: 5 Tips to Protect Your Packages

- Network with Neighbors
- Have Packages Delivered to Work
- Leave Specific Drop-off Instructions
- Use a Smart Lock
- Install Security Cameras

5 ways to Grinch-proof your holiday light displays

- Shut down at night
- Set up surveillance
- Crime-proof your yard
- Consider bringing in valuable items at night
- Stay connected

What to do if you've become a victim of a porch pirate

- Check with your delivery company to make sure your package was delivered.
- Know exactly what's in the missing box.
- Call 911 and ask for an officer to come to your home.
- If you have a security camera on your home, get a copy of the video to police. Ask your neighbors if their cameras captured the thief in action.

Lets continue to work together and by doing so we will keep Fircrest the wonderful place it has always been.

Chief John Cheesman



Join us! City Council Meetings are held the 2nd & 4th Tuesday's of the month at 7:00 pm, Council Study Sessions are the 3rd Monday of the month at 6:00 pm, & Planning Commission Meetings are the 1st Tuesday of the month at 6:00 pm.

Serving the Community Since 1925

Fircrest Parks and Recreation Upcoming Events

Winter Programs at the Roy H. Murphy Community Center

We are excited to offer a variety of great programs and activities this winter at the Roy H. Murphy Community Center. Adult programming includes physical fitness activities such as *Gentle Hatha Yoga, Chair Yoga, Drop in Pickleball* and *Drop in Table Tennis*. Thanks to a generous donation from the Edwards Family Foundation we are continuing to offer *Sr. Trips and Sr. Mornings* in the Gathering Room. Community members 65+ can enjoy local freshly brewed coffee, donuts, and the daily newspaper on Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings from 8:30-10:30 AM. Pre-school-aged kids can choose from a variety of *dance classes, Tot Story time, Tot Gym*, and our *STEM-based Snapology programs*. Registration for our 4 & 5-year-old *Pee Wee Soccer program* will open up in January. Look for more information coming to our website in December about our *after school* and *teen night programs*. The Gym will be busy this winter as we host our inaugural basketball season in the new Names Family Foundation Gymnasium. Elementary-aged kids who are registered for this *basketball league* will be participating in practices and games Monday through Saturday in the Community Center Gym.

Facility Rentals

Many community members have already enjoyed the reservable spaces in the new Roy. H Murphy Community Center. The community center offers a wide variety of spaces to fit most sizes of gatherings. The first step for renting a facility is to create an online RecDesk Account if you don't already have one. Once your account is created and approved you can then access the City of Fircrest RecDesk site and view specific details on all of our spaces. Once you find a space that fits your needs our real-time availability calendar will show you what dates and times are available. Once your date is selected you will be asked to complete and sign the rental agreement. Once your application is approved you will receive an email confirmation. Office staff is here to help with the RecDesk account and Facility Rental process. Stop by or call the front desk Monday through Friday from 8 am to 2 pm. 253-564-8177



New Parks & Recreation ID/Membership Cards

The Parks & Recreation Staff are preparing to implement photo ID/Membership Cards this winter! Although membership is not required to enter the Community Center, programs such as Drop in Pickle ball and Adult Open Gym offer monthly and yearly memberships, therefore we are encouraging all Fircrest Residents to get an ID/Membership card this winter. We will also be using membership cards as a safe way to check kids in for our afterschool and teen night programs. One of the most frequently used memberships is the Edwards Family Aquatic Center season pass. Due to the high volume of visitors to the pool last season we are implementing an express check-in station where season pass holders with membership cards will be able to check in more efficiently by scanning their individual cards through a separate entrance. Look for more information coming in January on how to get your Parks & Recreation ID/Membership Card!

Visit our Parks & Recreation webpage for up-to-date information on all of our programs, events, and facility rentals. <https://www.cityoffircrest.net/government/parks-and-recreation/>

Small Business Spotlight: MAGGIE MAGEE'S BAKESHOP

One of the main attractions in Fircrest is the many family-owned small businesses throughout the city. Down Regents Boulevard, you will find a strip of many of these businesses, the new kid on the block being Maggie Magee's Bakeshop which is set to open on 604 Regents Blvd this 2022 holiday season.

They plan on selling decorated royal frosting sugar cookies, gourmet drop cookies, cake pops, and dessert bars. The Maggie Magee's special is called Doughnies, which are brownies, baked like a donut with all sorts of fun things such as peanut butter cups, smores, caramel pecan, etc. They also offer custom orders for cakes, cupcakes, cookies, and dessert tables. Vegan and gluten-free items are offered as well. Michele Maggi, the owner, says she is most proud to be able to bring great-tasting treats to the community regardless of their dietary needs. She is a self-taught baker who started baking at her grandmother's knee. As she grew up, she found a love for baking for friends and family, you can tell all the desserts are made with love.



Maggie Magee's Message to the Fircrest Community: "We are a female-owned, family--run small-batch bakery serving sweets and treats to satisfy most any sweet tooth. The 'we' behind the bakery are Michele and Shilo, high school sweethearts who have 3 beautiful, now grown, children. We moved to the area over 20 years ago and have always been proud to call Fircrest home as our kiddos went to Whittier and Wainwright, played soccer with Fircrest Soccer Club, and spent many a day riding bikes through town and stopping off to have pizza bread snacks! As our family grew up and out, the Fircrest community was always a safe place, and we are thrilled to be a part of that."