



**CITY OF FIRCREST  
PLANNING COMMISSION  
MEETING AGENDA**

**TUESDAY, June 4, 2024  
6:00 P.M.**

**COUNCIL CHAMBERS  
FIRCREST CITY HALL, 115 RAMSDELL STREET**

**Pg. #**

- 1. CALL TO ORDER**
- 2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
- 3. ROLL CALL**
  - A. Motion to Excuse Absent Planning Commissioners
- 4. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**
- 5. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**
  - A. None (Refer to Item #9A)
- 6. CITIZEN COMMENTS (FOR ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA)**

(Please state your name and address for the record and refer to the Rules and Decorum laminated sheet at the dais and table.)
- 7. PUBLIC HEARING**
  - A. None
- 8. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**
  - A. None
- 9. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS/ROUNDTABLE UPDATES/STAFF UPDATES**
  - A. Assistant Planner/Permit Coordinator Recruitment Update
- 10. NEW BUSINESS**
  - A. Planning Commission Vacancy Updates
  - B. Middle Housing Study Session Reminder
  - C. [Four Corners/Thriving Communities Webpage](#) 2
  - D. [Middle Housing Tree Code and Off-Street Parking Discussion](#) 4
  - E. [Pierce County CLIHP Award Letter and Staff Workgroup Discussion](#) 7
  - F. [2024 Draft Comprehensive Plan Public Engagement Survey Results Presentation](#) 8
- 11. FUTURE BUSINESS**
  - A. June 17, 2024 – City Council Study Session for Middle Housing Presentation
- 12. ADJOURNMENT**



<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/4CornersPC>

## What is Your Vision for the Four Corners?

Within the next 20 years, Sound Transit plans to extend the Tacoma Link light rail to the intersection South 19th and South Mildred streets (known to many as "the Four Corners"). The new station will connect Tacoma Community College to Sea-Tac International Airport, Seattle and points further north in King County.



**THRIVING  
COMMUNITIES**  
PROGRAM

The project is sure to spur additional economic development opportunities but will also have impacts for businesses and residents. A group of local partners, including Pierce Transit, Tacoma Community College, Tacoma Housing Authority and area cities are encouraging residents and business owners to share their hopes, visions—and concerns—about how this will affect the Four Corners area.

Please take just a few minutes to complete this **10-question survey** and watch future issues of Headlines for the survey results and updates on the project.



## Help us plan for the area around S. 19th and Mildred.

The Four Corners area (at S. 19th and Mildred) is expecting a Link light rail station and new housing is already on the horizon. While this will bring exciting opportunities, we also know that rapid growth and change can be challenging.

Share your vision and ideas for the Four Corners in this survey:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/4CornersPC>



**From:** Mary Connolly <mary.connolly@piercecounitywa.gov>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 28, 2024 12:14 PM  
**To:** Mark Newman  
**Subject:** RE: Pierce County Planners Collaborative Meeting

Hey Mark – wanted to follow up on this.

In regards to section (f), your comment was: “This seems to conflict the [Final Model Ordinance](#) which states that tree retention is one of the development regulations that we retain local control over.”

I said to Anne Fritzel ([anne.fritzel@commerce.wa.gov](mailto:anne.fritzel@commerce.wa.gov)) from Commerce: “My understanding is that this applies on a case-by-case basis. If a city has both off-street parking requirements and tree retention requirements, and applying both of these requirements would make a proposed residential development or redevelopment infeasible, then the parking requirements do not apply. To me this doesn’t take away local control over tree retention, but does take away a bit of control over parking regulations.”

Anne responded: “I think you are correct on the first issue. The model ordinance is to be updated this summer to address these changes. But the intent is to let the development go forward, but save the trees over requiring parking, and yes, local tree codes would take precedence.”

Your comment on section (d) was: “Our code requires improved surfaces to prevent dust and track out to meet NPDES stormwater regulations.”

Here is a response from Abbey Stockwell ([abst461@ECY.WA.GOV](mailto:abst461@ECY.WA.GOV)) at Ecology: “It sounds like they are referring to basic construction activity BMPs to prevent track out from a construction site. The Construction General Stormwater Permit requires construction activities to use BMPs for erosion and sediment control. Paving the surface works, but that is not the BMP used in the Stormwater Management Manuals or permit (seeding, plastic covering, or gravel base for areas that will be paved). The Municipal Stormwater Permits address new and redevelopment activities, but we do not require the paving of surfaces to prevent track out, this sounds like a local code requirement. Hope this helps! Let me know if you have any other Qs.”

Let me know if you have other questions! Anne and Abbey’s emails are above if you want to reach out directly as well. Sorry we didn’t have time to get to odds and ends last Friday 😞

**Mary Connolly | SSHA<sup>3</sup>P Program Specialist 2**  
*she/her* | Cell: 253-625-4153 | Fax: 253-798-2818  
3602 Pacific Ave., Suite 200 Tacoma, WA 98418-7920

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Find us online

[WEBSITE](#)

[Visit the SSHA<sup>3</sup>P Developer Portal](#)

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**From:** Mark Newman <[mnewman@cityoffircrest.net](mailto:mnewman@cityoffircrest.net)>  
**Sent:** Monday, May 13, 2024 6:16 PM  
**To:** Mary Connolly <[mary.connolly@piercecountywa.gov](mailto:mary.connolly@piercecountywa.gov)>  
**Subject:** Pierce County Planners Collaborative Meeting

Hi Mary,

I had a few thoughts come up related to this new off-street parking law that is going into effect on June 6. Would it be possible to discuss this at the next PC Planners Collaborative Meeting to get some feedback from the group? I have also reached out to our Middle Housing consultant and will let you know what I find out. Here is some more information below:

I was reading about this new law SSB 6015 that goes into effect June 6, 2024 regarding off-street parking. It states that we cannot require off-street parking where tree retention makes it unfeasible, and that we have to allow a gravel lot to be used for off-street parking even though our code requires improved surfaces to prevent dust and track out to meet NPDES stormwater regulations. I added it to the Wishlist so we can discuss further, but here is some more background below. I was wondering if you have come across this yet?

#### [SSB 6015](#)

(f) Any county planning under this chapter, and any cities within those counties with a population greater than 6,000, may not require off-street parking as a condition of permitting a residential project if compliance with tree retention would otherwise make a proposed residential development or redevelopment infeasible;

(d) Existence of legally nonconforming gravel surfacing in existing designated parking areas may not be a reason for prohibiting utilization of existing space in the parking area to meet local parking standards, up to a maximum of six parking spaces;

This seems to conflict the [Final Model Ordinance](#) which states that tree retention is one of the development regulations that we retain local control over.

F. The city shall not require through development regulations any standards for middle housing that are more restrictive than those required for detached single-family residences, but may apply any objective development regulations that are required for detached single-family residences, including, but not limited to, set-back, lot coverage, stormwater, clearing, and tree canopy and retention requirements to ensure compliance with existing ordinances intended to protect critical areas and public health and safety.

Thanks!



**Mark Newman, AICP | Community Development Director**

City of Fircrest | 115 Ramsdell Street, Fircrest, WA 98466  
253-238-4129 | [mnewman@cityoffircrest.net](mailto:mnewman@cityoffircrest.net)



STATE OF WASHINGTON  
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
1011 Plum Street SE • PO Box 42525 • Olympia, Washington 98504-2525 • (360) 725-4000  
www.commerce.wa.gov

Tuesday, May 21, 2024

Heather Moss  
Director of Human Services, Pierce County  
3602 Pacific Ave. Suite 200  
Tacoma, WA 98418

*Delivered via email.*

RE: Coordinating Low-income Housing Planning (CLIHP) Grant

Greetings:

I am pleased to inform you that Pierce County, in partnership with your identified Pierce County grant partners, has been awarded \$50,000 for a 2023-2025 Coordinating Low-income Housing Planning (CLIHP) grant. These funds will support coordination of land use planning and homeless service planning, as well as support counties and cities working together to coordinate resources and plans for their lowest income housing needs.

The Washington Department of Commerce, Growth Management Services (GMS) unit will administer the CLIHP grant program. **Before we disburse the funds, a contract with a final agreed upon scope of work and budget will need to be discussed and executed between your organization and the Department of Commerce.** Funds may be retroactively applied to project costs related to your grant scope of work, beginning July 1, 2023, the date the funding became available.

These grant funds are authorized by the 2023-2025 State Operating Budget ([Senate Bill 5187](#)), which directs Commerce to administer grants and provide technical assistance to cities or counties for actions relating to planning for and accommodating housing that is affordable for individuals and families earning less than 50 percent of the area median income.

Laura Hodgson or another member of our team will be in touch with you to develop the contract and answer questions. You can reach Laura at [Laura.Hodgson@commerce.wa.gov](mailto:Laura.Hodgson@commerce.wa.gov).

Sincerely,

Dave Andersen, AICP  
Managing Director  
Growth Management Services

cc: Mary Connolly, SSHA<sup>3</sup>P Program Specialist II  
Michelle McCain, Grant Accountant II  
Eric Guida, Senior Planner, Growth Management Services  
Anne Fritzel, Housing Programs Manager, Growth Management Services  
Laura Hodgson, Housing Planning and Data Manager, Growth Management Services  
Courtney Williams, Assistant Planner, Growth Management Services



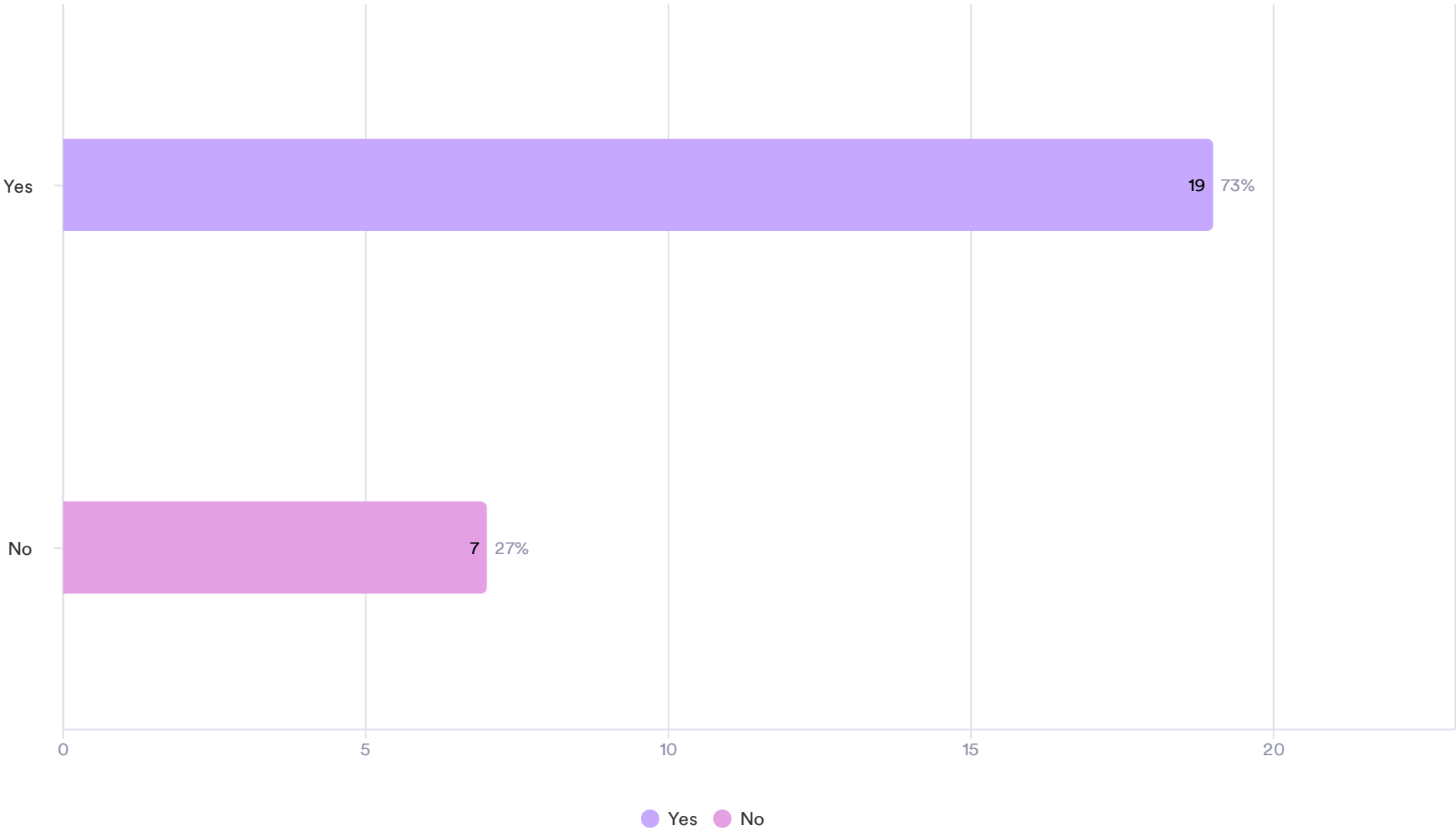
# 2024 Draft Comprehensive Plan

Public Survey Results - May 2, 2024



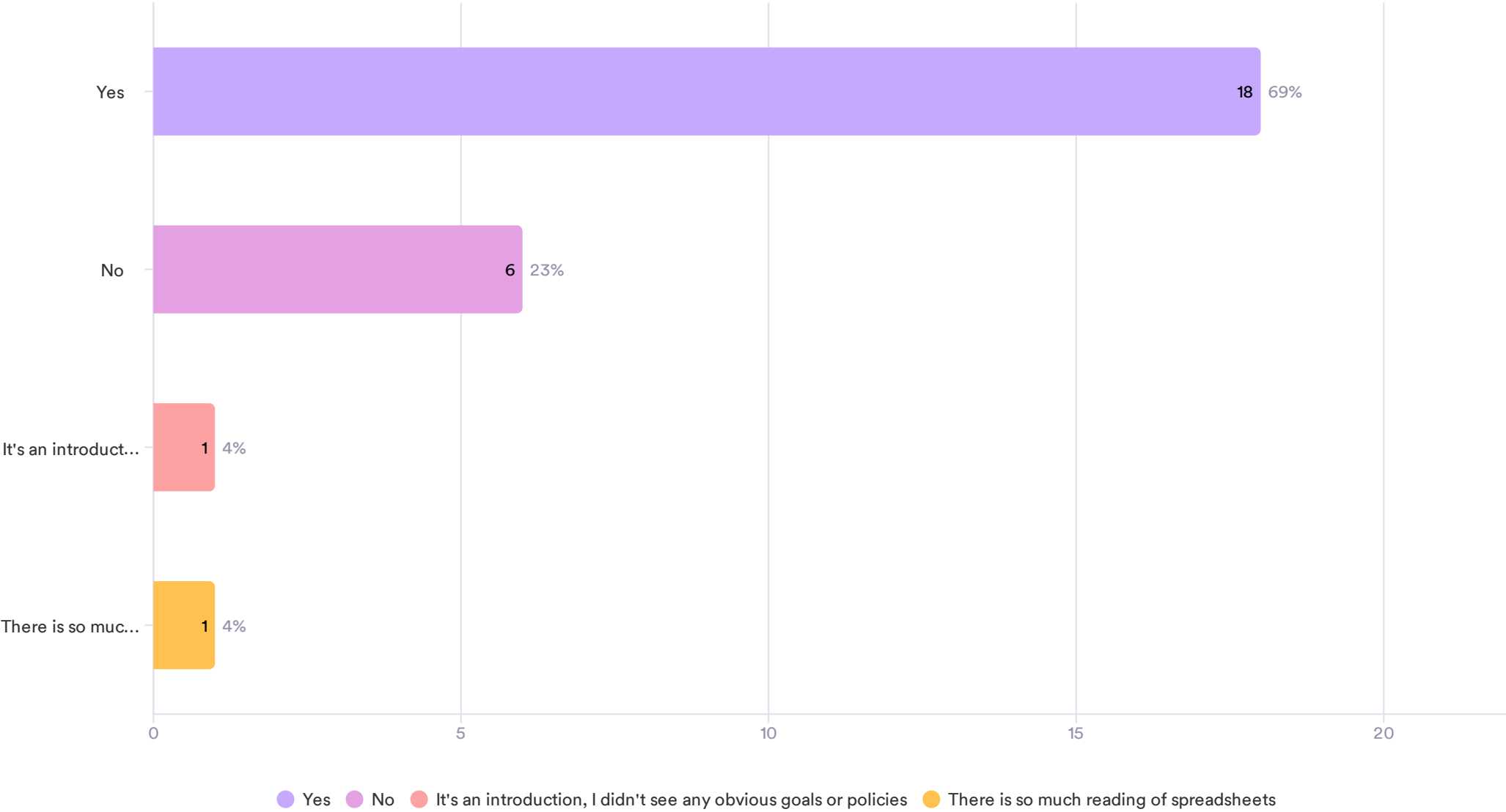
## Did we get the Vision Statement right?

26 Responses



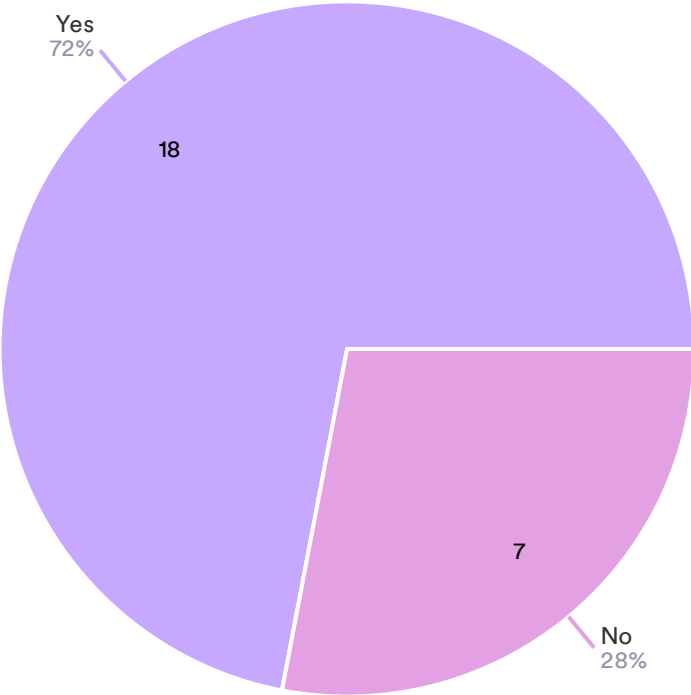
## Introduction

26 Responses



### Community Development

25 Responses- 1 Empty

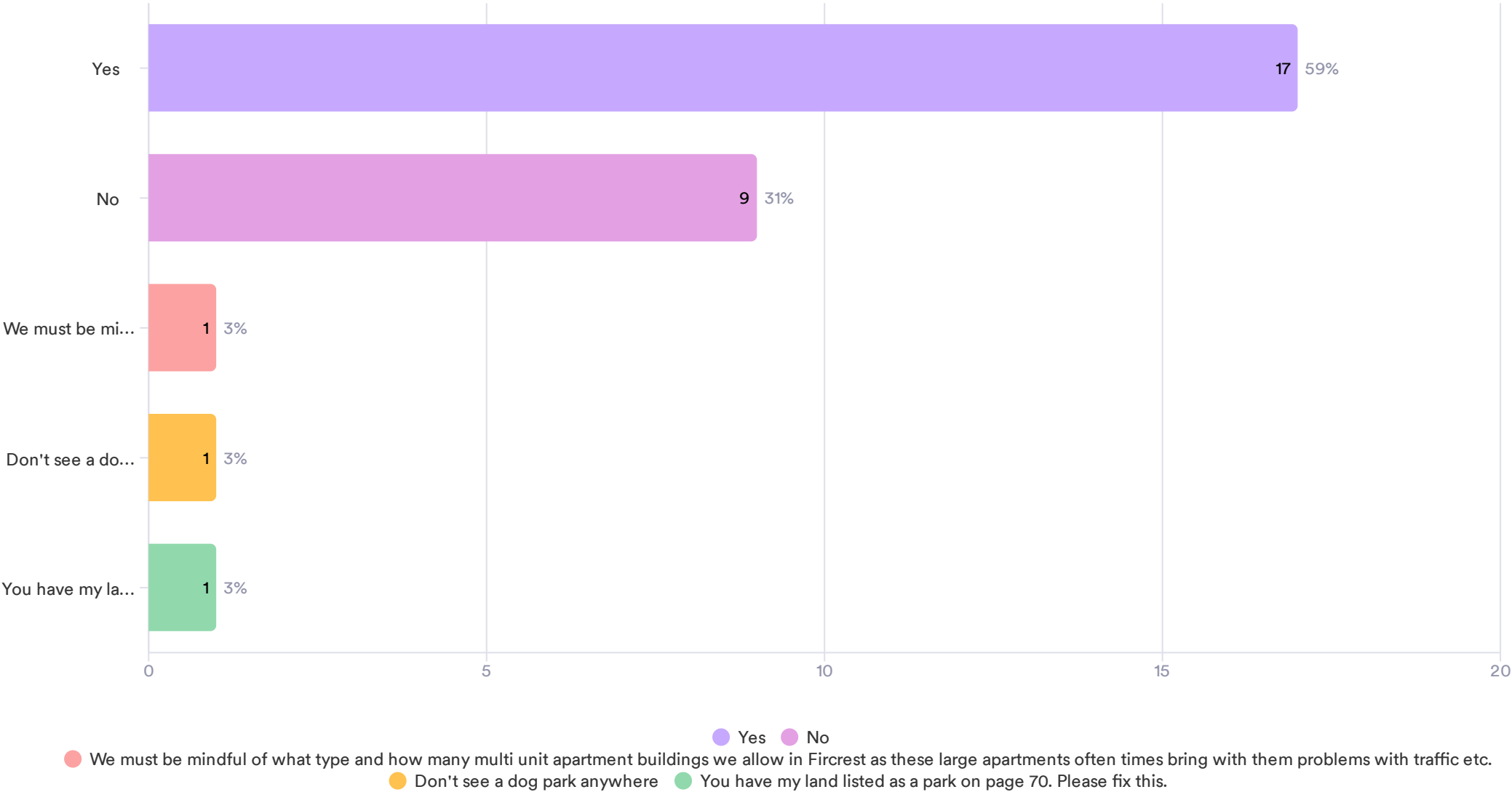


● Yes ● No

# Submit Your Feedback on the 2024 Draft Comprehensive Plan

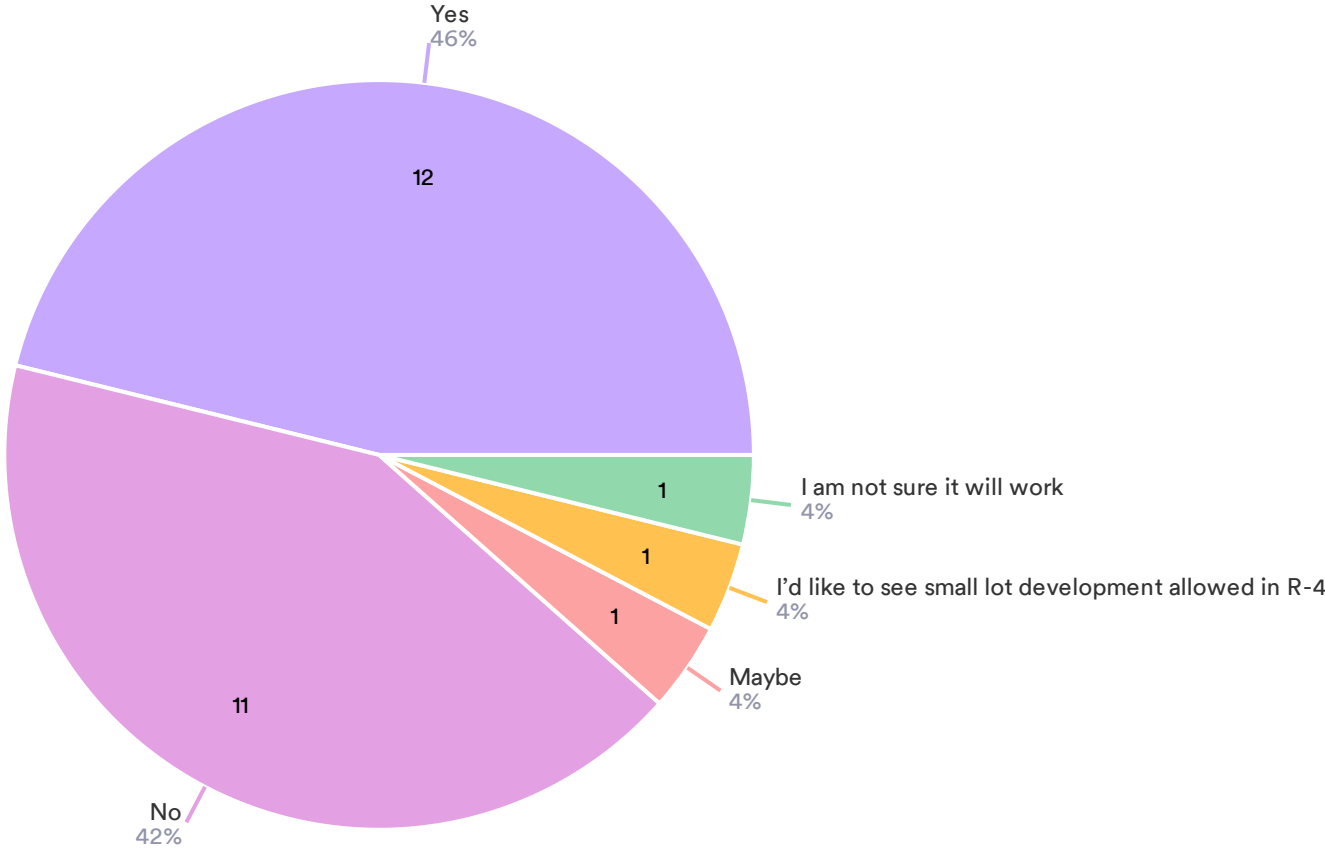
## Land Use

29 Responses



## Housing

26 Responses- 1 Empty

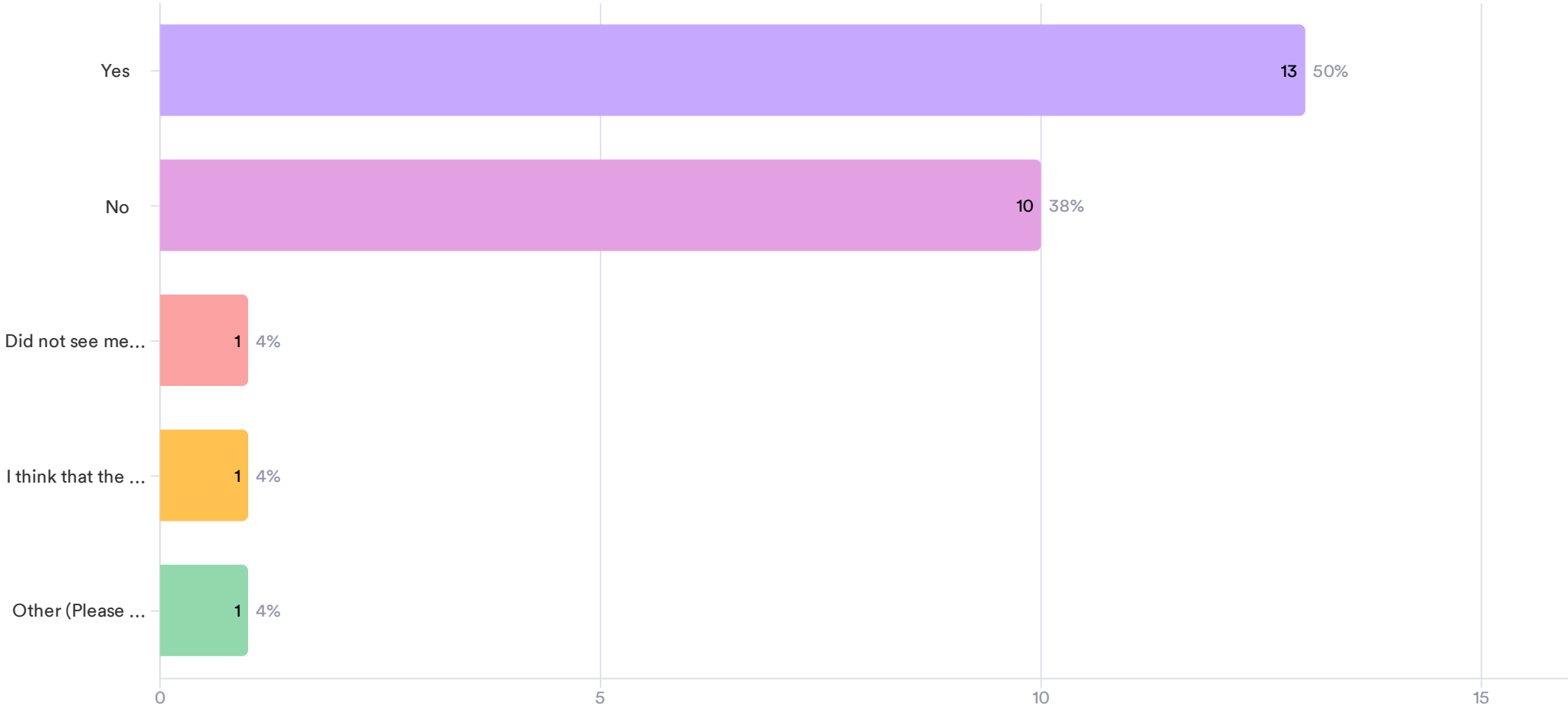


● Yes ● No ● Maybe ● I'd like to see small lot development allowed in R-4 ● I am not sure it will work

# Submit Your Feedback on the 2024 Draft Comprehensive Plan

## Transportation

26 Responses- 1 Empty



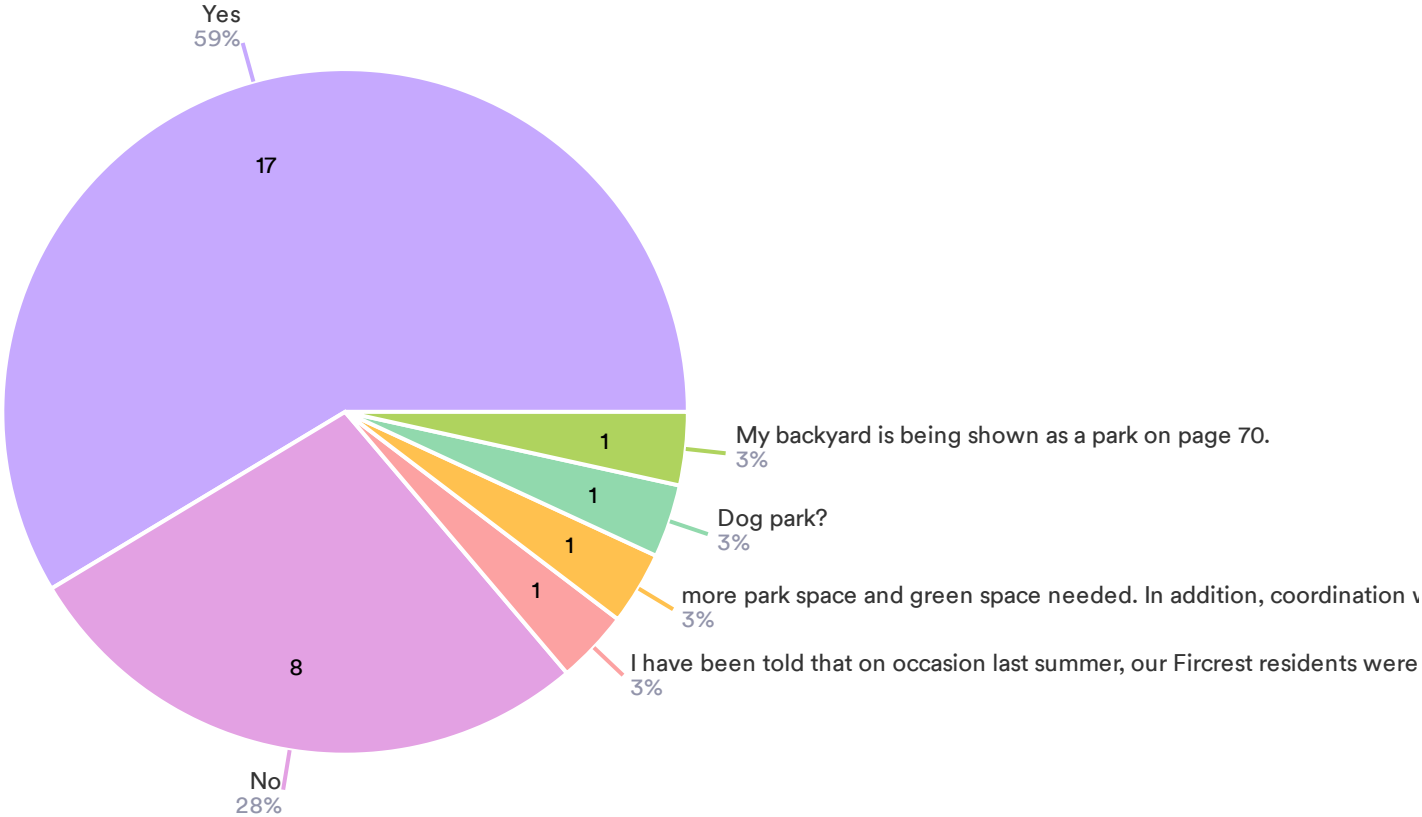
● Yes ● No ● Did not see mention of EV chargers

● I think that the traffic light located at Alameda Avenue and 19th Street is an accident waiting to happen, as the driver traveling north and wanting to turn left onto 19th street often has their vie...

● Other (Please Describe) More walkable and bike able options please

## Parks, Recreation, and Open Space

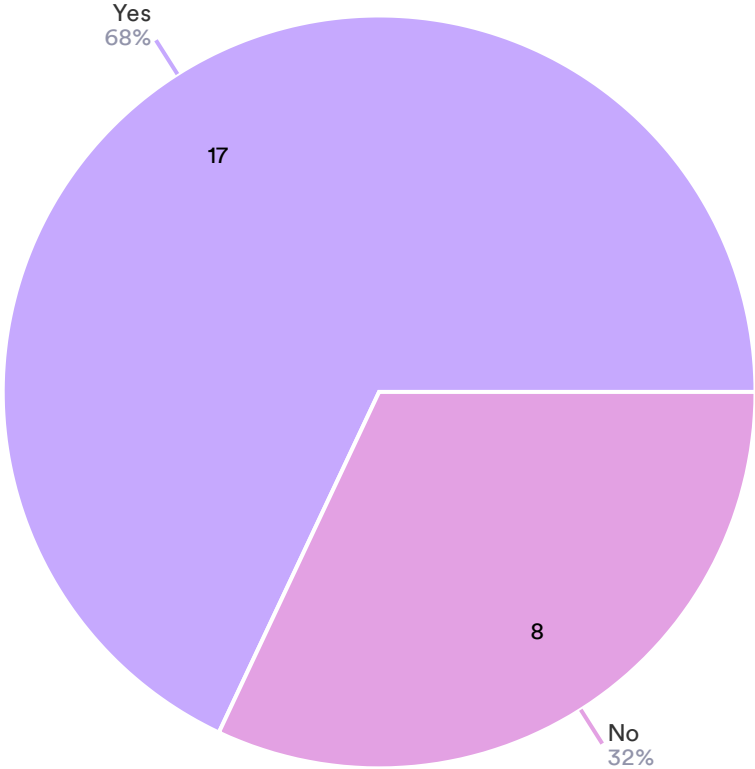
29 Responses



- Yes
- No
- I have been told that on occasion last summer, our Fircrest residents were turned away at the pool because of capacity issues, while out of towners were enjoying what we residents are being tax...
- more park space and green space needed. In addition, coordination with University Place for the protection and expansion of Leach Creek
- Dog park?
- My backyard is being shown as a park on page 70.

### Capital Facilities

25 Responses- 1 Empty

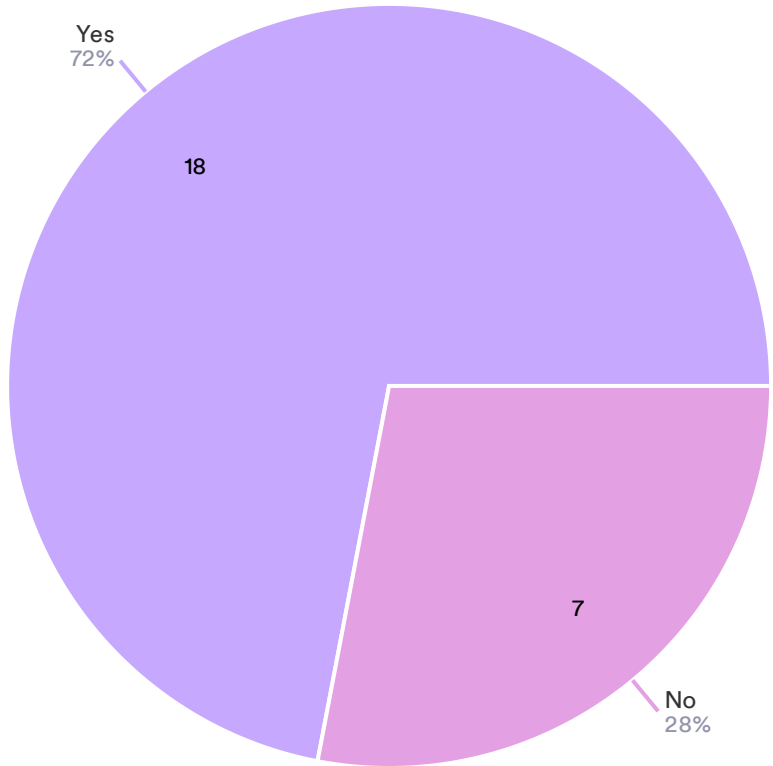


● Yes ● No



### Utilities

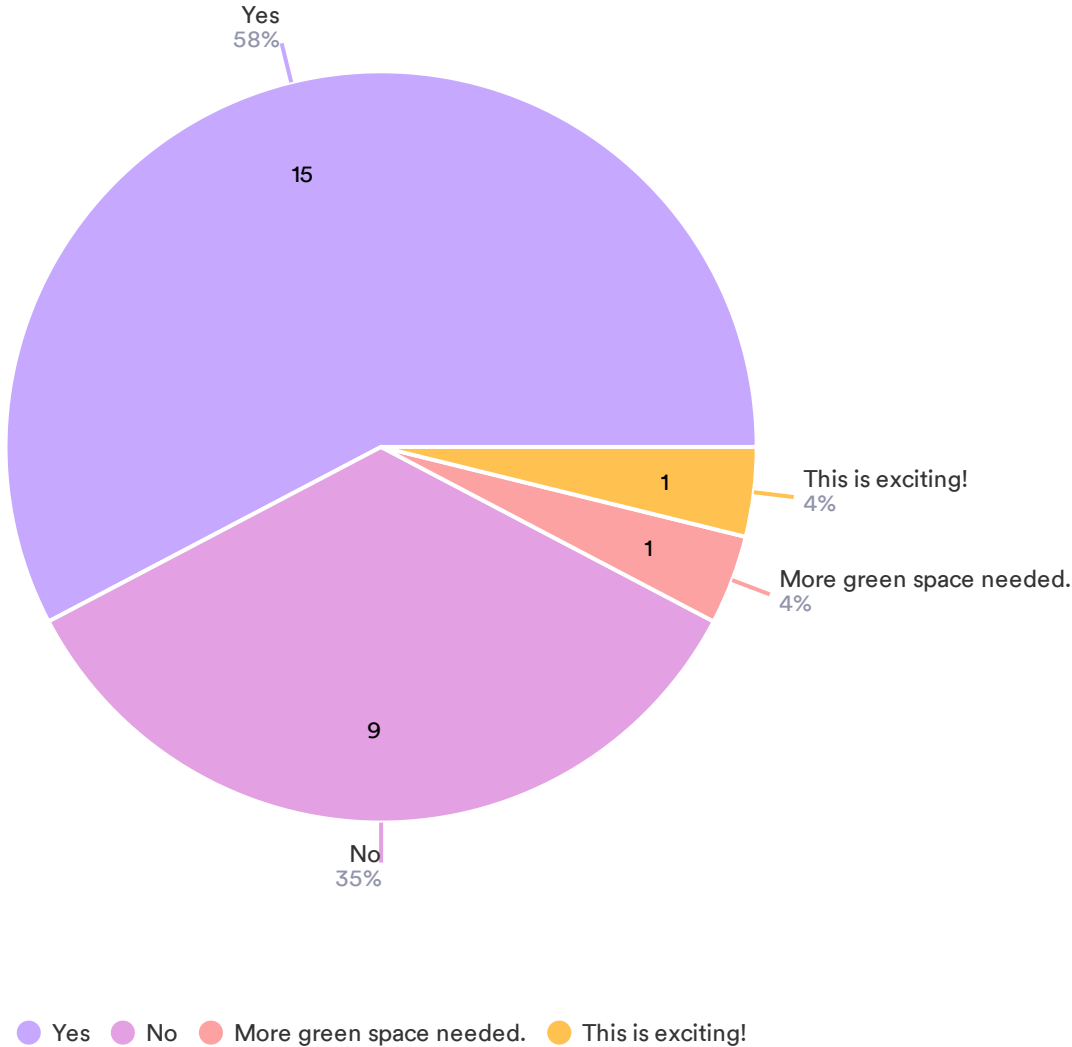
25 Responses- 1 Empty



● Yes ● No

## Climate Resilience

26 Responses- 1 Empty



# Submit Your Feedback on the 2024 Draft Comprehensive Plan

What are we missing? Do you have any other feedback to share?

17 Responses- 9 Empty

Data	Responses
<p>Excellently crafted plan. This is why we love Fircrest. I did not see anything about EV charging. Is this going to be something we will see in the community?</p>	<p>1</p>
<p>I'm pleased to see a focus on preserving the tree in our community. They are such a critical resource for our community!</p>	<p>1</p>
<p>A lot of the items notated with a "New" or "Revised" indicator seem like they will add unnecessary burdens to our City Council and staff. A bit too much identity politics in some places. Electric vehicles do not need to be explicitly mentioned anywhere, and it comes off as if someone is getting a kickback from EV manufactures - "cleaner fuel" and "low emissions" is all that is needed. Sorry for not listing specifics on each section - we're a full-time employed household with little free time. Seeing what's been added to the plan reinforces our frustration that we can't trust our council to act with our best interests in mind.</p>	<p>1</p>
<p>I appreciate the focus on walkability - our community is very healthy and I think we should focus on supporting local businesses by making them easily accessible for pedestrians - even those businesses on the edges of the city. I would also like to see continued commitment to reserving the trees of Fircrest. Sadly the sound of chainsaws is near daily when the weather is nice. I also appreciate the focus on greenspace - having a robust and longer trail system starting in Fircrest would be a crown jewel of the city.</p>	<p>1</p>
<p>There does not seem to be recognition in the plan that something with great mixed use designation could be done to what is currently showing as commercial only land designation by Umpqua bank. That land could be created into a wonderful mixed use space with cottage housing, parks, seniors living, transit access/hub spot, yet is being ignored because the right business hasn't been found in years to do something with such a large tract of land. This land is away from the Wetlands, yet can be an easy walk to local businesses IF additional natural pathways and sidewalks could be developed around the housing. This should also incorporate coordinating with UP on proper sidewalk and bike lane alongside the golf course on 67th/Mildred to allow safe access to enjoy the Paradise Pond Park on the edge of Fircrest. More specific protection to ALL the existing Wetlands and creek areas also seems weak, yet done correctly, could become a very desirable extension of climate contribution and some safe park space - particularly the tract of land on the corner of Orchard and Emerson/40th down to Leach Creek. Purchase of this land instead of it continuing to be a real estate for sale sign would be a excellent step towards more protection of the small-town feel City of Fircrest wants to maintain and give residents a natural path/park between their homes and the new businesses at 40th and Orchard, rather than trying to not be hit by cars trying to walk along Orchard....continuing to complement the new sidewalk work done on 40th/Emerson to these businesses all while assisting in climate control/water protection for Leach Creek and the Wetlands to the northwest of this tract of land.</p>	<p>1</p>
<p>I got bored of reading the entirety of this spreadsheet... way to much info!</p>	<p>1</p>
<p>We do not need to double the population of the city by 2050.</p>	<p>1</p>

How satisfied are you with the City's efforts in public outreach?

25 Responses- 1 Empty



**3.16**  
Avg. Response

**25**  
Responses



# Thank You!

Submit Your Feedback on the 2024 Draft Comprehensive Plan

## Where do we go from here?

- Make changes based on the public feedback we have received.
- Make changes based on the stakeholder feedback we have received from WDFW, SSHA3P, PSE, and PSRC.
- Make changes based on Planning Commission/City Council feedback.
- Go through document to check for spelling errors, grammar, inconsistencies, and a QA.
- Complete through the summer/fall.
- Submit to State for review.
- Public Hearing at City Council Meeting, Adoption by City Council by December 2024

**Do the goals and policies in the Introduction support the Vision Statement?**

#1
It's an introduction, I didn't see any obvious goals or policies
<p>Staff Response to #1</p> <p>Thank you for the comment. The goals and policies include the Vision Statement and 3 Principles (Pages 8-9).</p> <p><u>Proposed Vision</u></p> <p>Fircrest treasures its walkable and forested environment, its peaceful and quiet nature, while embracing a variety of more housing choices for all people. Fircrest is a unique community in the region. We will remain safe, resilient, flexible, and connected to our neighbors. We value community spaces and events that bring us together.</p> <p>Principle 1: Community-oriented</p> <p>Principle 2: Peaceful and connected to nature</p> <p>Principle 3: Housing choices available for all</p>

#2

There is so much reading of spreadsheets

Staff Response to #2

Thank you for the comment. We understand that this is an incredibly large document and have tried to make use of infographics in lieu of spreadsheets where possible. Survey applicants were encouraged to only read what they are interested in or had the option to pause the survey and come back to it at a later date by revising their responses after submitting.

**Do the goals and policies in the Land Use Element support the Vision Statement?**

#1
Yes
We must be mindful of what type and how many multi unit apartment buildings we allow in Fircrest as these large apartments often times bring with them problems with traffic etc.
Staff Response to #1
Thank you for your comment. The development of new multifamily buildings is a lengthy process that involves many chances for the community to weigh in and provide input. A typical process will include:
1. A Notice of Application with a State Environmental Protection Act (SEPA) analysis. This is a fourteen-day public comment period where the public can review the draft plans, comment on proposed mitigation measures, and propose mitigation measures of their own.
2. After public comment is taken into consideration, the applicant will update the plans to take these comments into consideration and propose revised plans ready for a public hearing. City staff will produce a staff report and the public will have an opportunity to provide public comment during the public hearing and review the latest plans. An independent Hearing Examiner will make final conditions of approval after reviewing the staff report and exhibits such as a traffic study, parking study, environmental/geotechnical studies, landscape plans, and more.
3. Changing the land use of a property and the zoning of a property requires even more steps and input from the public. This is in addition to meetings between the developer and City staff to make sure that all design, zoning, building, and development standards are met and that the public is happy with the new development.



#2
No
Don't see a dog park anywhere
Staff Response to #2
<p>Thank you for the comment. It is true that we do not have an existing dog park in the city. Your comment has been noted and passed onto our Parks and Recreation Department Director Jeff Grover for consideration. Additionally, the City is completing its Whittier Park Master Plan process and many comments indicated a preference for a dog park. Please stay tuned to the Whittier Park Master Plan process.</p>

#3
Yes
You have my land listed as a park on page 70. Please fix this.
Staff Response to #3
<p>Thank you for the comment. To clarify, there are two separate designations for land in the City. The base or underlying designation is a land use designation which is a generalized description of what the land should be used for. Ideally, both the land use and the zoning should match up, i.e. low-density residential land use should match up with single-family zoning. However, this is not always the case.</p> <p>Due to the two vacant adjacent properties containing Leach Creek, these lots have been designated as a potential site for open space or park. That does not mean that it is a park, but it does have the potential to become one in the future, should someone wish to pursue that option and rezones the property to Parks, Recreation, and Open Space. The house is zoned R-6 for single-family residential meaning that a house is permitted to be built on the lot. Currently, the land use supports a park, but the zoning does not. You would have to file a Comprehensive Plan Map Amendment or request a change during the docket process in 2025 for the City to change those areas back to residential land use.</p>



1250 Farallone Avenue (in green) at Drake Street and Farallone Avenue

**Do the goals and policies in the Housing Element support the Vision Statement?**

#1
Yes
I'd like to see small lot development allowed in R-4
Staff Response to #1  Thank you for submitting a comment. You are correct that the adopted Design Standards and Guidelines for Small Lot Development are currently only allowed in the in the R-4-C and GC zones and new multi-family developments in R-20, R-30 and CMU zones.  We are beginning work on our Middle Housing update. Our consultant and City staff are working hard to make sure these new rules preserve as much Fircrest character as possible in our traditional single-family neighborhoods. We are working to balance these new housing laws that will allow duplexes and ADUs within single-family residential and infill lots, but they must also meet our strict development and design standards while integrating into existing neighborhoods. As a result of this change, beginning in July 2025, there will be some additional housing choice available in the R-4 zoning district. We will also bring up the idea of allowing small lot development in R-4 with our consultant to include in a public feedback survey.

#2
I am not sure it will work
Staff Response to #2  Thank you for the comment. The aim of the Housing Element is to meet state housing law obligations to provide more housing choices in areas where they can be supported by infrastructure and zoning while preserving the traditional character of Fircrest which is made up substantially of single-family homes. We are required by law to put policy decisions in place to meet regional growth targets and countywide planning policies provided by Pierce County and Puget

Sound Regional Council. It is up to the market whether these additional homes will get built. If you have any specific questions or comments on the feasibility of the Housing Element, please do not hesitate to contact me at [mnewman@cityoffircrest.net](mailto:mnewman@cityoffircrest.net) or (253) 238-4129.

**Do the goals and policies in the Transportation Element support the Vision Statement?**

#1
Did not see mention of EV chargers
Staff Response to #1  Thank you for flagging this. We do have several mentions of EV charging in the Comprehensive Plan which I have pasted below:  <u>Policy CR-7.5 (Policy T-12.1)</u> <i>Enhance strategies that improve air quality and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Build green streets to improve air and water quality, and coordinate with transit agencies. 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 and in public commercial areas, and revise regulations as technology advances.</i>  <u>NEW, MPP-T-29, CPP TR-9, and MPP-T-30 Policy T-12.4</u> <i>Pursue transportation projects that include energy conservation, alternative energy sources, and promote the use of cleaner fuels and electric vehicles. This includes identifying grants for and developing infrastructure that supports a widespread shift to electrification.</i>  <u>Goal U-4:</u> <i>Support and expand electric vehicle infrastructure by including public charging stations.</i>

#2
No I think that the traffic light located at Alameda Avenue and 19th Street is an accident waiting to happen, as the driver traveling north and wanting to turn left onto 19th street often has their view of oncoming traffic totally hidden by trucks and/or vans in the south bound lanes waiting to turn left!

### Staff Response to #2

Thank you for bringing this matter up. We are aware of the issues at this intersection. The light is operated and controlled by the City of Tacoma. Our Public Works Director, Tyler Bemis, has reached out to the City of Tacoma to address the situation. The Public Works Department, Police, and City Manager are working on a long-term Pedestrian Safety Plan to address issues at this intersection and at other areas around the City.

### #3

Other (Please Describe) More walkable and bike able options please

### Staff Response to #3

We hear your desire for more walkability and bikeability. The City has successfully pursued several grant opportunities to make this happen. The projects are identified in the 2024-2029 Six-Year Comprehensive Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) which is located in Appendix C (Page 174).

TABLE 1: 2024-2029 TRANSPORTATION FACILITY IMPROVEMENTS

City of Fircrest Six-Year Comprehensive Transportation Improvement Program (2024 to 2029)

Transportation Facility Improvements	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	TOTAL
<b>Pedestrian, Non-Motorized / Active Transportation Program</b>							
7 Alameda Ave (Emerson St to Cypress Point) (curb/gutter, sidewalk - west side)		\$ 255,000					\$ 255,000.00
8 44th St (67th Ave W to 60th Ave) (curb/gutter, sidewalk - north side)			\$ 1,129,000				\$ 1,129,000.00
9 Alameda Ave (Emerson St to Rosewood Lane) (curb/gutter, sidewalk - east side)						\$ 1,480,000	\$ 1,480,000.00
10 Emerson St (Woodside Dr to 67th Ave W) (designed in 2023) (sidewalks, retaining walls)	\$ 451,000						\$ 451,000.00
4 Southbound South Orchard St (Columbia Ave to Regents Blvd)				\$ 1,100,000			\$ 1,100,000.00

Puget Sound Regional Council has also provided comments that we need to include multimodal level of service standards (meaning other choices of transportation besides cars).

**Do the goals and policies in the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Element support the Vision Statement?**

#1
No
I have been told that on occasion last summer, our Fircrest residents were turned away at the pool because of capacity issues, while out of towners were enjoying what we residents are being taxed for.
Staff Response to #1
Thank you for bringing this to our attention. I have forwarded this comment to our Parks and Recreation Director Jeff Grover for review and an equity analysis of citizens versus non-citizens.

#2
more park space and green space needed. In addition, coordination with University Place for the protection and expansion of Leach Creek
Staff Response to #2
Thank you for bringing this to our attention. I have forwarded this comment to our Parks and Recreation Director Jeff Grover for review. The City is aware of several grant opportunities such as RCO and Pierce County Conservation Futures. Should a willing seller of vacant or environmentally-sensitive land approach the City, we are able to apply for these grants to preserve open space such as wetlands, streams, and tree canopy. In 2022, the City did attempt negotiations at purchasing vacant properties along Orchard Street, commonly referred to as the Bourgaize Properties, which are adjacent to Leach Creek, but the seller decided to pursue another offer.

Fircrest Wetlands acquisition w dev envelope



Legend:   
 ■ Affected Parcels   
 ■ Wetlands   
 ■ Development Potential

*Bourgaize Properties with wetlands*

Finally, the City of Fircrest was awarded Climate Change Planning grant funding to pursue an urban tree canopy study. The study would document urban tree canopy percentages around the city to show where more is needed and areas of opportunity to promote more shade and replanting, such as parks and walking routes. Due to short-staffing, we have not been able to start on this project just yet, but we will be sure to advertise it so that the public can stay involved.



#3
No
Dog park?
Staff Response to #3
<p>Thank you for the comment. It is true that we do not have an existing dog park in the city. Your comment has been noted and passed onto our Parks and Recreation Department Director Jeff Grover for consideration. Additionally, the City is completing its Whittier Park Master Plan process and many comments indicated a preference for a dog park. Please stay tuned to the Whittier Park Master Plan process.</p>

#4
No
My backyard is being shown as a park on page 70.
Staff Response to #4
<p>Thank you for the comment. To clarify, there are two separate designations for land in the City. The base or underlying designation is a land use designation which is a generalized description of what the land should be used for. Ideally, both the land use and the zoning should match up, i.e. low-density residential land use should match up with single-family zoning. However, this is not always the case.</p> <p>Due to the two vacant adjacent properties containing Leach Creek, these lots have been designated as a potential site for open space or park. That does not mean that it is a park, but it does have the potential to become one in the future, should someone wish to pursue that option and rezones the property to Parks, Recreation, and Open Space. The house is zoned R-6 for single-family residential meaning that a house is permitted to be built on the lot. Currently, the land use supports a park, but the zoning does not. You would have to file a Comprehensive Plan Map Amendment or request a change during the docket process in 2025 for the City to change those areas back to residential land use.</p>



1250 Farallone Avenue (in green) at Drake Street and Farallone Avenue

**Do the goals and policies in the Climate Resilience Element support the Vision Statement?**

#1
More green space needed.
Thank you for bringing this to our attention. I have forwarded this comment to our Parks and Recreation Director Jeff Grover for review. The City is aware of several grant opportunities such as RCO and Pierce County Conservation Futures. Should a willing seller of vacant or environmentally-sensitive land approach the City, we are able to apply for these grants to preserve open space such as wetlands, streams, and tree canopy. In 2022, the City did attempt negotiations at purchasing vacant properties along Orchard Street, commonly referred to as the Bourgaize Properties, which are adjacent to Leach Creek, but the seller decided to pursue another offer.

Fircrest Wetlands acquisition w dev envelope



*Bourgaize Properties with wetlands*

Finally, the City of Fircrest was awarded Climate Change Planning grant funding to pursue an urban tree canopy study. The study would document urban tree canopy percentages around the city to show where more is needed and areas of opportunity to promote more shade and replanting, such as parks and walking routes.

#2

Yes

This is exciting!

Staff Response to #2

We agree and are glad you think so as well! Please continue to stay involved as we wrap up the final Comprehensive Plan adoption process by the end of 2024.

**What are we missing? Do you have any other feedback to share?**

#1
Excellent crafted plan. This is why we love Fircrest. I did not see anything about EV charging. Is this going to be something we will see in the community?
Staff Response to #1  Thank you for flagging this. We do have several mentions of EV charging in the Comprehensive Plan which I have pasted below:  <u>Policy CR-7.5 (Policy T-12.1)</u> <i>Enhance strategies that improve air quality and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Build green streets to improve air and water quality, and coordinate with transit agencies. 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 and in public commercial areas, and revise regulations as technology advances.</i>  <u>NEW, MPP-T-29, CPP TR-9, and MPP-T-30 Policy T-12.4</u> <i>Pursue transportation projects that include energy conservation, alternative energy sources, and promote the use of cleaner fuels and electric vehicles. This includes identifying grants for and developing infrastructure that supports a widespread shift to electrification.</i>  <u>Goal U-4:</u> <i>Support and expand electric vehicle infrastructure by including public charging stations.</i>

#2
I'm pleased to see a focus on preserving the tree in our community. They are such a critical resource for our community!
Staff Response to #2  Thank you for your comment. We are just as excited as you are! The City of Fircrest was awarded Climate Change Planning grant funding to pursue an urban tree canopy study. The study would document urban tree canopy percentages around

the city to show where more is needed and areas of opportunity to promote more shade and replanting, such as parks and walking routes. Due to short-staffing, we have not been able to start on this project just yet, but we will be sure to advertise it so that the public can stay involved.

#3

A lot of the items notated with a "New" or "Revised" indicator seem like they will add unnecessary burdens to our City Council and staff. A bit too much identity politics in some places. Electric vehicles do not need to be explicitly mentioned anywhere, and it comes off as if someone is getting a kickback from EV manufactures - "cleaner fuel" and "low emissions" is all that is needed. Sorry for not listing specifics on each section - we're a full-time employed household with little free time. Seeing what's been added to the plan reinforces our frustration that we can't trust our council to act with our best interests in mind.

Staff Response to #3

Thank you for your comment. Again, these policies and goals are ambitious and they are something the City will aspire to, but we may not necessarily implement every single goal or policy as that does not often match economic reality and resources.

HB 1181 is a state law that mandates the City of Fircrest plan for climate change by reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Reductions must be provided for in a new climate change element in the Comprehensive Plan. Additionally, the City's Comprehensive Plan must align with Pierce County's Countywide Planning Policies. Both this law and the Countywide policies encourage electric and alternative fuel vehicle infrastructure in private and public development projects and long-range planning efforts. This is why they are mentioned in our Comprehensive Plan. Failure to abide by these regulations risks being out of compliance with County and state policies, meaning we would lose important grant funding for road and infrastructure projects that the City depends on to maintain the quality of life for its residents.

#4

I appreciate the focus on walkability - our community is very healthy and I think we should focus on supporting local businesses by making them easily

accessible for pedestrians - even those businesses on the edges of the city. I would also like to see continued commitment to reserving the trees of Fircrest. Sadly the sound of chainsaws is near daily when the weather is nice. I also appreciate the focus on greenspace - having a robust and longer trail system starting in Fircrest would be a crown jewel of the city.

**Staff Response to #4**

I appreciate your comments that clearly show why Fircrest is the “Jewel of Pierce County.” The City is looking at several pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure projects to promote walkability.

The City has successfully pursued several grant opportunities to make this happen. The projects are identified in the 2024-2029 Six-Year Comprehensive Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) which is located in Appendix C (Page 174).

TABLE 1: 2024-2029 TRANSPORTATION FACILITY IMPROVEMENTS

City of Fircrest Six-Year Comprehensive Transportation Improvement Program (2024 to 2029)							
Transportation Facility Improvements	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	TOTAL
<b>Pedestrian, Non-Motorized / Active Transportation Program</b>							
7 Alameda Ave (Emerson St to Cypress Point) (curb/gutter, sidewalk - west side)		\$ 255,000					\$ 255,000.00
8 44th St (67th Ave W to 60th Ave) (curb/gutter, sidewalk - north side)			\$ 1,129,000				\$ 1,129,000.00
9 Alameda Ave (Emerson St to Rosewood Lane) (curb/gutter, sidewalk - east side)						\$ 1,480,000	\$ 1,480,000.00
10 Emerson St (Woodside Dr to 67th Ave W) (sidewalks, retaining walls) (designed in 2023)	\$ 451,000						\$ 451,000.00
4 Southbound South Orchard St (Columbia Ave to Regents Blvd)				\$ 1,100,000			\$ 1,100,000.00

Puget Sound Regional Council has also provided comments that we need to include multimodal level of service standards (meaning other choices of transportation besides cars).

Finally, the City of Fircrest was awarded Climate Change Planning grant funding to pursue an urban tree canopy study. The study would document urban tree canopy percentages around the city to show where more is needed and areas of opportunity to promote more shade and replanting, such as parks and walking routes. Due to short-staffing, we have not been able to start on this project just yet, but we will be sure to advertise it so that the public can stay involved.



#5

There does not seem to be recognition in the plan that something with great mixed use designation could be done to what is currently showing as commercial only land designation by Umpqua bank. That land could be created into a wonderful mixed use space with cottage housing, parks, seniors living, transit access/hub spot, yet is being ignored because the right business hasn't been found in years to do something with such a large tract of land. This land is away from the Wetlands, yet can be an easy walk to local businesses IF additional natural pathways and sidewalks could be developed around the housing. This should also incorporate coordinating with UP on proper sidewalk and bike lane alongside the golf course on 67th/Mildred to allow safe access to enjoy the Paradise Pond Park on the edge of Fircrest. More specific protection to ALL the existing Wetlands and creek areas also seems weak, yet done correctly, could become a very desirable extension of climate contribution and some safe park space - particularly the tract of land on the corner of Orchard and Emerson/40th down to Leach Creek. Purchase of this land instead of it continuing to be a real estate for sale sign would be a excellent step towards more protection of the small-town feel City of Fircrest wants to maintain and give residents a natural path/park between their homes and the new businesses at 40th and Orchard, rather than trying to not be hit by cars trying to walk along Orchard....continuing to complement the new sidewalk work done on 40th/Emerson to these businesses all while assisting in climate control/water protection for Leach Creek and the Wetlands to the northwest of this tract of land.

Staff Response to #5

We appreciate your detailed feedback. Community Development Director Mark Newman would be happy to set up a meeting to discuss this more with you.

The Umpqua Bank property at 2401 Mildred Street West – believe it or not – is actually zoned Mixed-Use Neighborhood and could support a development, such as live/work space or apartments with ground floor retail. A developer interested in this idea, similar to the goat property, would have to approach the City as the City does not have any current plans to create a master plan for that area.

I have forwarded your comments about better sidewalk infrastructure on 67<sup>th</sup> Avenue to our Public Works Director, Tyler Bemis.

The City is aware of several grant opportunities such as RCO and Pierce County Conservation Futures. Should a willing seller of vacant or environmentally-sensitive land approach the City, we are able to apply for these grants to preserve open space such as wetlands, streams, and tree canopy. In 2022, the City did attempt negotiations at purchasing vacant properties along Orchard Street, commonly referred to as the Bourgaize Properties, which are adjacent to Leach Creek, but the seller decided to pursue another offer.

Fircrest Wetlands acquisition w dev envelope



Affected Parcels      Wetlands      Development Potential

*Bourgaize Properties with wetlands*

Finally, the City of Fircrest was awarded Climate Change Planning grant funding to pursue an urban tree canopy study. The study would document urban tree canopy percentages around the city to show where more is needed and areas of opportunity to promote more shade and replanting, such as parks and walking routes. The City was also awarded funding to update its critical areas ordinance (CAO) to make sure that wetlands, streams, and other sensitive areas are adequately protected. Due to short-staffing, we have not been able to start on this project just yet, but we will be sure to advertise it so that the public can stay involved.

We do coordinate closely with Pierce County to make sure Leach Creek is protected from runoff. You might also be interested in learning about the [Chambers-Clover Creek Watershed Council](#).

## **ABOUT**

The mission of the Chambers-Clover Creek Watershed Council is to promote the protection and enhancement of the Chambers-Clover Creek Watershed.

The Council (CCWC) provides an opportunity for local agencies and citizen groups to coordinate their efforts to benefit the watershed. The council is committed to improving the health of the watershed by working to improve fish habitat, water quality and foster a sense of stewardship among watershed residents.

The watershed extends from the town of Ruston on Commencement Bay south to DuPont, and east to Frederickson, covering about 149 square miles. Major lakes include American, Spanaway, Steilacoom, Gravelly, and Tule. Major streams are Chambers, Clover, Spanaway, Morey, Murray, Flett, Leach, Puget and Peach.

**NEW** - Stay up to date on the latest CCWC news via the [Council's blog](#).

#6

I got bored of reading the entirety of this spreadsheet... way to much info!

Staff Response to #6

Thank you for the comment. We understand that this is an incredibly large document and have tried to make use of infographics in lieu of spreadsheets where possible. Survey applicants were encouraged to only read what they are interested in or had the option to pause the survey and come back to it at a later date by revising their responses after submitting.

#7

We do not need to double the population of the city by 2050.

Staff Response to #7

Thanks for the comment. We do not plan to double our population by 2050. Our 2022 population estimate from the WA State Office of Financial Management is 7,215. The projected population (growth target) for 2050 is 9,565 which is an additional 2,350 residents or a 32.6% increase. However, these targets are only targets to aspire to and not mandates. Our policies need to show that our city's zoning and land use could handle the potential growth.

#8

The plan says to make Fircrest a walkable city and forested for enjoyment of all. the city enhances sidewalks in some areas BEFORE installing basic sidewalks in others. Please provide basic city functions to all residents evenly. before you enhance a service please provide that basic to others.

Staff Response to #8

Thank you for this comment. I have sent this along to our Public Works Director, Tyler Bemis, for review. You are correct that certain projects are funded before others. For instance, grant funding that connects parks and schools is often easier to obtain than areas without those community assets. You are welcome to provide public comment during the upcoming Transportation Improvement Program public hearing which typically takes place in June or July each year.

#9
You have woke agendas and policies taken into vision and strategy
<p>Staff Response to #9</p> <p>Thank you for your comments. Could you please reach out to city staff to clarify what you mean?</p>

#10
Not what the Fircrest citizens said at all the meetings.
<p>Staff Response to #10</p> <p>Thank you for your comment. Please review the survey response feedback which indicates citizen approval or disapproval with the Comprehensive Plan and each of the Elements. I would be happy to answer any specific questions you have.</p>

#11
The city has paraphrased the Pierce county and state laws, trying to get them to fit this horrible document that says what the consultants what it to say not the citizens of Fircrest. Shame on you all.
<p>Staff Response to #11</p> <p>Thank you for your comment. The City's Comprehensive Plan must align with Pierce County's Countywide Planning Policies. This is why many policies and goals overlap between Pierce County cities and the County itself and are mentioned in our Comprehensive Plan. Failure to abide by these regulations risks being out of compliance with County and state policies, meaning we would lose important grant funding for road and infrastructure projects that the City depends on to maintain the quality of life for its residents.</p>

#12
In the housing section, it talks about the importance of maintenance of older houses. The statement "encourage repair & maintenance of older houses" is vague enough to not have much meaning. In the transportation section, it

discusses the importance of walkability & sidewalks; yet the sidewalks (where they exist) are in terrible shape & certainly not ADA compliant. I know the plan is not meant to be too specific with how to achieve these goals; however, the current method of having neighbors put in a concern & have the city notify the "offending party" (for lack of a better descriptor) is a no-win situation. It puts neighbors in positions of not only having to notify the city but also the position of being a "tattle tale" (which no one likes) & can make for bad blood between neighbors. Also, the city does not check to make sure the problem is resolved. Usually folks will comply for a week or two & then stop. Most residents do not know that the sidewalk is their responsibility & realtors & sellers do not fix them or let the buyer know about their responsibility (along with the vegetation overgrowth). So this system does not work & renters also feel that it doesn't, as landlords are not responsible with upkeep of the property either (as been relayed to me by renters). I do not feel as I grow older that Fircrest is as safe as it used to be (crime & speeders), nor are the sidewalks safe to use. Unfortunately, all the good things about Fircrest (& there are many) do not outweigh these issues for me & I have been considering moving away (which I really do not want to do)

#### Staff Response to #12

I am sorry to hear your concerns about safety and hope we can work together to solve them. We do have a position that oversees Code Enforcement, but in addition to that role, they are also the Permit Coordinator and Assistant Planner which does make it a challenge to proactively go out and monitor all issues in the City. That is why we are a response-based agency and respond to citizen-initiated requests. Requests can be submitted anonymously on our online form or dropped anonymously at City Hall either through mail or the drop box. We do believe in strong private property rights and seek to strike a balance to preserve community character, resolve public nuisances, but let people enjoy their property as they want to. We are exploring the possibility of using the International Property Maintenance Code to help with these concerns. The IPMC is a maintenance document intended to establish minimum maintenance standards for basic equipment, light, ventilation, heating, sanitation, and fire safety. Responsibility is fixed among owners, operators, and occupants for code compliance. The IPMC provides for the regulation and safe use of existing structures in the interest of the social and economic welfare of the community.

Your comments about crime and speeders have been forwarded to our Police Department for review.

#13

I think small lot development of single family being allowed in R-4 zone better suits overall goals of more density and diversity than only allowing it in R-4C.

Staff Response to #13

Thank you for submitting a comment. You are correct that the adopted Design Standards and Guidelines for Small Lot Development are currently only allowed in the in the R-4-C and GC zones and new multi-family developments in R-20, R-30 and CMU zones.

We are beginning work on our Middle Housing update. Our consultant and City staff are working hard to make sure these new rules preserve as much Fircrest character as possible in our traditional single-family neighborhoods. We are working to balance these new housing laws that will allow duplexes and ADUs within single-family residential and infill lots, but they must also meet our strict development and design standards while integrating into existing neighborhoods. As a result of this change, beginning in July 2025, there will be some additional housing choice available in the R-4 zoning district. We will also bring up the idea of allowing small lot development in R-4 with our consultant to include in a public feedback survey.

#14

Your website doe ls NOT provide your vision in any way shape or form. Get a person who knows how to do correct web design to dilo your design. I have no idea what your vision is, so I do not agree with it and have been a resident for 40 years.

Staff Response to #14

The vision statement is shown on some of the very first slides in this survey. You would have had to click past it to finish the survey. We will make a note for next time to make it larger and bolder.

#15

You missed the mark

Staff Response to #15

Thank you. Could you please provide more context to your comment so that City staff can reply?

#16

Form-Based Code is NOT compatible with the Fircrest ideal. That is, preserving the city's character cannot be done with any more expansion of FBC.

Staff Response to #16

The City has not indicated in the 2024 Draft Comprehensive Plan that it will further expand the footprint of the Form Based Code/Mixed Use zoning districts. Any expansion would require a Comprehensive Plan land use map amendment and/or rezoning, subject to City Council approval.

#17

I think the Comp Plan is definitely on the right track. There are many areas that seem to be vague, e.g., we're going to lower the carbon in the air, but no mention of how. (I just made this up--don't feel like going back & checking my notes for something specific.)

Here are a few of the things I would definitely like to see:

All City vehicles be switched to electric as they are replaced.

All City tools be changed to battery-operated as soon as possible.

Encouragement to Fircrest residents to use battery-operated garden tools--eventually a code requiring it.

My real question is: When do we start talking about these particulars? I didn't know if these kinds of details are supposed to be included in the Comp Plan or not.

Lastly, I don't like to criticize anyone in the City because I admire all of you & know you are working hard. However, I do have to say that I feel the outreach to



residents has been poor, but that's a topic for another email. I'm sorry to say that, but you probably want to know.

Staff Response to #17

I appreciate your comments. Regarding your questions on sustainability/zero emissions technology, we have a Climate Change Element with goals and policies as you know, but we will not start the actual work until we receive Grant Funding from the Department of Commerce. We did receive the grant funding to start, but have not officially kicked-off the project due to short staffing. The actual Element needs to be completed in 2029 so I expect we will get the grant award by 2027. Then we will have to go and find consultants to do the actual work. It is a process. It will include things like a greenhouse gas emissions inventory, a fleet electrification study and more.

I do apologize that the initial kick-off to the Comprehensive Plan had challenges, especially with the JotForm and QR Code not working. We have learned from our mistakes by testing QR codes, providing extensive public outreach via postcard mailers, weekly updates, and social media updates to spread the word.

#18

Hi Mike,

I'm really wondering if I should even take the time to respond to the survey. Clearly it seems that the residents of Fircrest's opinion doesn't really matter.

Y'all are gonna do what you want regardless.

Just wanted to share my opinion with you.

Certainly not the one who feels this way.

Staff Response to #18

Thank you for the comments. Unfortunately, this is not specific enough for me to address your concerns. Please do not hesitate to reach out to Community Development Director Mark Newman at 253-238-4129 or [mnewman@cityoffircrest.net](mailto:mnewman@cityoffircrest.net) to voice your concerns.