

**FIRCREST CITY COUNCIL  
STUDY SESSION AGENDA**

**TUESDAY, JANUARY 21, 2025  
6:00 P.M.**

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

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1. Call to Order
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Roll Call
4. Agenda Modifications
5. [Middle Housing Committee Discussion](#) 2
6. [City Council/Planning Commission Joint Meeting Topics](#) 10
7. [2025 Department Goals Overview](#) 11

The public is invited to listen to the meeting via Zoom utilizing the below call-in information:

**Zoom Meeting Details:**

*Dial-in Information: 1-253-215-8782 Webinar ID: 885 3802 7612 Password: 771679*

## **FIRCREST CITY COUNCIL AGENDA SUMMARY**

**NEW BUSINESS:** Middle Housing Ad Hoc Committee Update  
**ITEM:** 5  
**DATE:** January 21, 2025  
**FROM:** Dawn Masko, City Manager

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**RECOMMENDED MOTION:** None. Discussion only.

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**SUMMARY:** The Special Middle Housing Ad Hoc Advisory Committee was formed by City Council Resolution No. 1943 on November 26, 2024, to assist City staff in gathering and preparing materials and documentation to apply for an extension with the Department of Commerce for an alternative to or timeline extension for full implementation of [House Bill \(HB\) 1110](#).

The Middle Housing Committee serves as an advisory committee to the City Council. While the Committee does not have the authority to submit the formal application to the Department of Commerce, it provides recommendations to the Council regarding the application.

The Middle Housing Committee will discuss their progress on preparing the Notice of Intent, which the City must file with Commerce prior to submitting a formal application for a timeline extension for implementing HB 1110.

The Notice of Intent will be presented to the Council for approval at a future meeting before the City submits it to Commerce.

**ATTACHMENTS:** [Notice of Intent Cover Letter – Draft](#)  
[Notice of Intent – Draft](#)  
[History of Fircrest](#)

## City of Fircrest

1/21/2025

RE: Timeline Extension for Implementation of HB 1110

**Lilith Vespier** | Residential Infill Manager

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Eric Guida: [eric.guida@commerce.wa.gov](mailto:eric.guida@commerce.wa.gov)

Direct: 360-725-3044

Lilith and Eric:

Per our phone conversation and email exchanges, we look forward to working with you on both our NOI and Formal Application as outlined in the Department of Commerce Link from July 2024. Per that information we would like this letter to introduce our 'formal Notice of Intent' request for the timeline extension authorized by HB 1110. This is due to infrastructure issues, primarily our sewer, water and stormwater systems as well as transportation impacts.

An overview of why we are making this request follows by providing the information outlined on page 3 of said link. More complete and detailed information and back-up will come with the Formal Application as outlined on page 4.

Along with this request – to provide an overview and additional context, we are also going to demonstrate how Fircrest currently meets the intent of the Middle Housing Bill now with significant areas of the 'missing middle housing' already existing inside of Fircrest SFR

locations. This information will also show where ADU's are allowed and are present within our SFR zoned areas.

Lastly, we believe we can show how Fircrest can play its part in absorbing our allocated potential population for the next 20 years. The City of Fircrest has been involved in ongoing efforts prior to the passage of HB1110 to develop a large section of land with substantial potential for walkability, multifamily housing, residential and commercial growth in the 19<sup>th</sup> and Mildred area also known as "The Four Corners". This area is contiguous with the City of Tacoma's transit center located at Tacoma Community College.

Sincerely,

Fircrest Ad Hoc Committee

## **CITY OF FIRCREST**

**1/13/2025**

**DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**

**RE: NOTICE OF INTENT FOR A TIMELINE EXTENSION TO HB 1110**

### **1. Notice of Intent form:**

As of a July 2024 Department of Commerce publication, a Notice of Intent Form for a timeline extension must be filed by the City of Fircrest. As of this time, the Ad Hoc Committee is awaiting receipt of the official form from Commerce. The City of Fircrest requires adequate time to solve the infrastructure inadequacies as well as work out a solution to the disparate concerns of Pierce County and Tacoma which interfere with our solutions and plans for the 4 Corners area.

In the interim, please see attached 'Draft' letter (IN PROGRESS)

### **2. Identification of the ordinance(s), plan(s), documents, and other materials the city intends to submit to support its request for a timeline extension, as best known at the time of the submitting the Notice of Intent:**

Per RCW 36.70A.635(4) our request for a timeline extension is based on lack of infrastructure capacity

Both sewer, water and stormwater systems have City wide issues that need to be addressed. Transportation issues also are a concern.

Sewer service for Fircrest is an ILA with the City of Tacoma. The City has an area (the Four Corners area, 19<sup>th</sup> and Mildred) in which sewer service is being questioned – essentially, there is a point of contention about the sewer service between Pierce County and Tacoma.

Supporting documentation will be provided including but not limited to our past Comprehensive Plan as well as our specific infrastructure CIP plans from 2000 up through 2020.

Documentation of current issues of I & I will be provided

Population of Fircrest – supports that Fircrest is the densest City in Pierce County

Current Land Use and Zoning Maps

Mapping of Existing Middle Housing already in Fircrest throughout our Residential Zones

Existing ADU's allowed and currently existing in SFR zoned locations. Will provide city ordinance regarding ADU zoning

**3. The geographic areas for which the time extension request will be made, as best known at the time of submitting the Notice of Intent:**

Maps will be provided clearly showing the geographic areas mentioned above.

**4. A summary of the status of the analysis required by RCW 36.70A.635(4) to support the application**

Said summary will demonstrate that a timeline extension can be justified by the information provided in detail in the Formal Application. The committee will show that the majority of Fircrest already meets the 'spirit' or the 'intent' of HB 1110 with middle housing mixed throughout the residential areas in the city. This has been an ongoing effort by the city planning department. Our existing middle housing includes apartments, townhomes, cottage home, duplexes, fourplexes, sixplexes, and ADUs. Also, we will show the willingness to comply with HB1110 in an area of Fircrest that potentially aids in our City's projected population responsibility.

## City of Fircrest

1/15/2025

In reviewing the application from the City of Fircrest, the Committee feels it is of greatest importance to look at Fircrest in context of our history and of the community that has developed through the past century.

1. The City of Fircrest was incorporated September 14, 1925 and is a middle class neighborhood bordering Tacoma and University Place.
2. The population of Fircrest as of 2024 was 7,230.
3. Fircrest is only 1.58 square miles, standing as the densest city in Pierce County. Fircrest already allows for middle housing throughout the city rather than in just targeted locations. This housing consists of apartments, townhomes, duplexes, fourplexes, sixplexes, cottage homes, and ADUs
4. Our current density has a significant impact with wear and tear on all of our infrastructure systems.
5. Prior to HB 1110, Fircrest underwent decades of land planning per state code using density per acre/or dwelling units per acre according to DOE guidelines. Infrastructure engineering for the city was based on that method of determining density. Now, it is being asked to rapidly change to 2+units per lot when current infrastructure is already over capacity at the current population level. This is additionally difficult for Fircrest as our footprint is only 1.58 square miles(very little area for additional development) and current infrastructure will not support the increased density contemplated by HB 1110 without

infrastructure solutions which will require significant time, planning and financial resources.

6. The infrastructure issues in Fircrest are additionally impacted by an extremely high water table which causes periodic flooding as well as intrusion and infiltration issues (I and I). I and I issues are also present with even normal rainfall causing over capacity problems with outdated sewer infrastructure.
7. The legislature or the courts need to decide the issue of whether a house plus an ADU (HB 1337) equates to the two housing units that are required to be allowed per SFR lot according to HB 1110. Currently, Commerce is not defining an ADU as a middle housing unit under HB 1110. Since the city already zones all SFR lots (other than lots with covenant restrictions or HOAs) for both a principal residence as well as an ADU, Fircrest considers that such zoning should be adequate under HB 1110. If Commerce, the legislature or the courts determine that an ADU qualifies as a housing unit under HB1110, then Fircrest has met its obligation to have two units per lot in SFR areas.

## **FIRCREST CITY COUNCIL AGENDA SUMMARY**

**NEW BUSINESS:**      **Joint City Council/Planning Commission Meeting Topics**  
**ITEM:**                      **6**  
**DATE:**                      **January 21, 2025**  
**FROM:**                      **Dawn Masko, City Manager**

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**RECOMMENDED MOTION: None. Discussion only.**

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**SUMMARY:** The City Council and Planning Commission will hold their annual joint meeting on February 4, 2025. As established by Resolution No. 809, this joint meeting takes place on the first Tuesday of February each year. The meeting provides the City Council and Planning Commission an opportunity to discuss items of mutual interest and key topics affecting the City.

The Planning Commission provided their proposed topics for the upcoming joint meeting at their January 7<sup>th</sup> meeting. Suggested topics include [House Bill \(HB\) 1110](#), traffic and pedestrian safety, the Centennial, and fire resilience.

Staff are now seeking input from the City Council on topics that they would like to see added to the agenda for discussion. Other potential topics for consideration include design standards for Whittier Elementary School and the sign code update.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

## **FIRCREST CITY COUNCIL AGENDA SUMMARY**

**NEW BUSINESS:**       **2025 Department Goals Overview**

**ITEM:**               **7**

**DATE:**               **January 21, 2025**

**FROM:**               **Dawn Masko, City Manager**

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**RECOMMENDED MOTION: None. Discussion only.**

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**SUMMARY:** Department Directors will provide a high-level overview of their 2025 goals and work plan priorities. A formal presentation of 2024 accomplishments and 2025 work plans will be done at a future Council Study Session.

**ATTACHMENTS:**