



# Happy 25th Birthday University Place

## **Birthday Wishes to U.P. from Your City Council**

The COVID-19 pandemic has forced all of us to reimagine how we celebrate many of life's major milestones, from weddings, to graduations, to notable anniversaries.



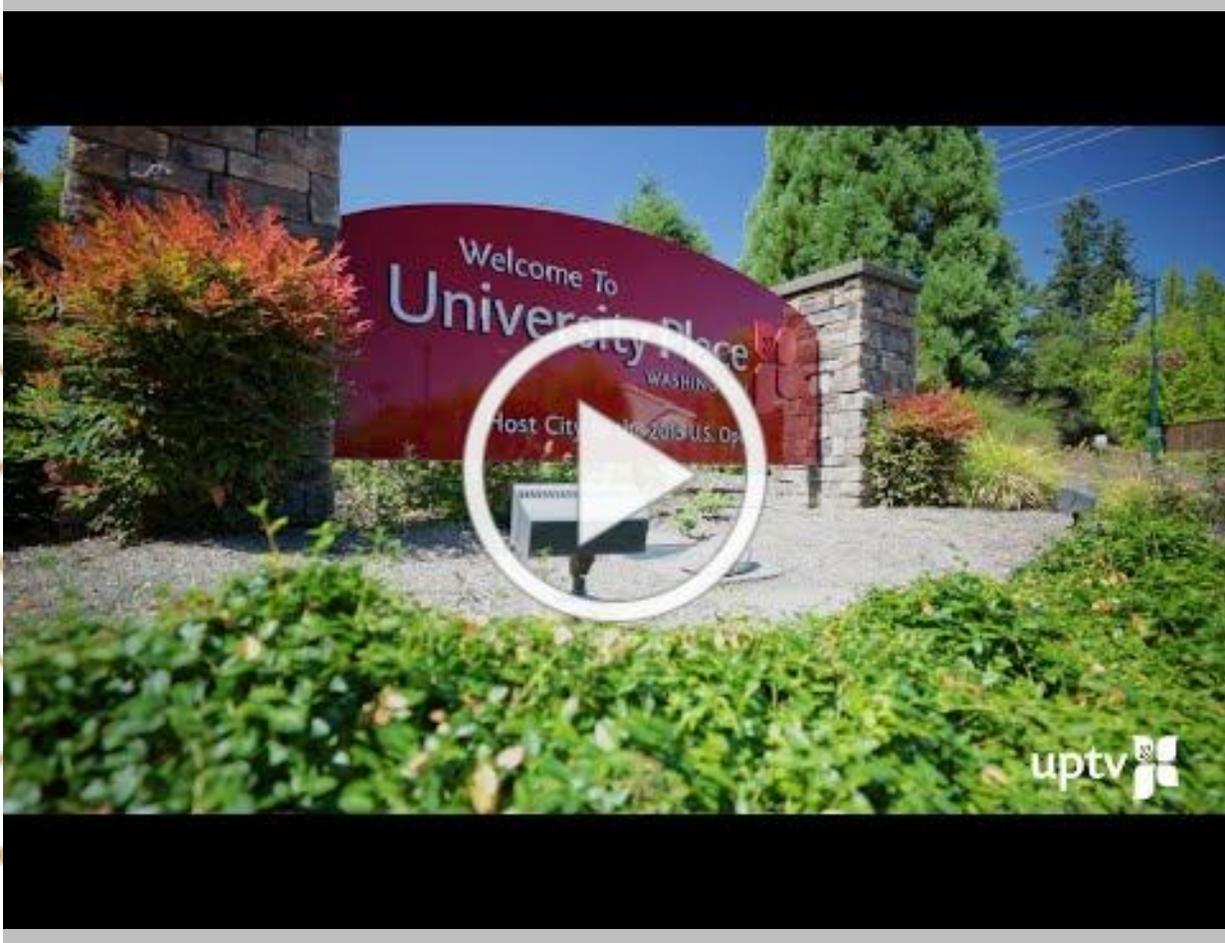
As you know, we had planned a large community-wide celebration to mark our 25<sup>th</sup> "birthday" as an incorporated city. It was going to be an opportunity for us to look back on the many, many accomplishments our City has achieved as well as a chance to look ahead to bright ideas for our future that were shared as part of our Imagine 2045 efforts.

Since we can't be together in person right now, we are holding a special week-long social media celebration beginning today, Aug. 31, which is also our actual date of incorporation in 1995. As part of this virtual birthday party we will share some of the City's success stories on our website, Facebook, Twitter and Instagram accounts throughout the week. But we strongly encourage everyone in the community to participate as well by contributing their own stories, photos and videos using the hashtag **#WeAreUP** so that we can celebrate our sense of community virtually.

Rest assured, we **will** celebrate together when it is safe for us to do so. And when we do, we will celebrate in style. Until then, as your City Council, we thank you for your continued support of our community, of your neighbors and of our future. I think we can all agree, University Place is a very special *Place*.

## Got A Minute (or two)?

Take two minutes and watch Mayor Caroline Belleci and Mayor Pro Tem Steve Worthington spend a sunny morning in Market Square Plaza reflecting on U.P.'s first 25 years as an incorporated city. Then join them in raising a toast to the next 25!



## A Message from City Manager Steve Sugg

We all know that the pace of progress can be glacial at times, but in the City of University Place, I believe our progress has been almost meteoric. We have achieved so much in our relatively short 25-year history.

It all began with our **1996 Community Vision, which represented residents' input on what you wanted from your new city.** That feedback would become the basis for U.P.'s Comprehensive Plan. This master document outlined our aggressive goals for improving our City's infrastructure as well as ways to develop consistent sources of funding so we could achieve your aspirations for top-notch public services and an outstanding quality of life.

Only six years after incorporation, we adopted the Town Center plan that



would literally prove to be the foundation of our economic security. Since 2010, we have seen **more than \$150 million in private investment in what we now call the Village at Chambers Bay**, and developers' **impact fees have contributed over \$1.1 million to benefit our City parks.**



We also got busy **improving safety and accessibility** around the City for motorists, cyclists and pedestrians—including our students. We have created a **network of more than 39 miles of sidewalks while also upgrading our street lighting and crosswalks.**



With community input, we created **flower-filled roundabouts, public art and signage ordinances** that have helped us carve out a truly unique sense of "Place" that sets us apart from our neighboring cities.

We've **gone from one park to 17** and every year, we draw thousands of people from around Pierce County to our **signature festivals and events, such as Duck Daze and our Christmas Tree Lighting** in Market Square Plaza.

With hundreds of new residents in the three new mixed-use buildings in the Village at Chambers Bay, a gorgeous, **modern library, national retailers** including Whole Foods and Trek Bikes, as well as scores of **unique independent businesses**, University Place has become a *destination*.



Every time a developer chooses to invest in U.P., every time a shopper spends money in U.P., every time a visitor comes to town to participate in one of our public events, **we all benefit.** They provide the "gas in our tank" that keeps us moving forward.

And moving forward we are. As our current pandemic has demonstrated, we can never truly anticipate what the future has in store for us, but we can still

plan. So we will **continue to seek grants to build out our arterial streets' sidewalks and bike lanes**. We are beginning to implement the PROS (Park, Recreation and Open Space) Plan that calls for things like **additional picnic shelters, shading, sports courts and bike racks in our parks**. We continue to work with our **public safety** personnel to ensure they have the resources to protect our community and we are promoting **economic development opportunities in our City's traditional business districts** as well.

Needless to say, U.P.'s story is still being written. But if the first 25 years are any indication, we will have much more to tell when 2045 rolls around.

Take a look at some of the before and after images below!



**Bridgeport and Market Square**



**Bridgeport Way West**



**Grandview Drive West**



**Grandview Drive West**

## The Way We Were

We asked several of U.P.'s "pioneers," those who were around during the earliest days of the City's beginnings to share with us some of their recollections about that exciting—and somewhat daunting—period in the City's history.

*"Prior to incorporation, U.P. was being split between Tacoma and Fircrest. A community survey asked the people what they wanted: go with Tacoma, go with Fircrest or become their own City of University Place. No one formed an 'anti' committee. So we put a big banner over donated office space that read 'Citizens for Incorporation.' And a team of us volunteers got to work."*

Linda Bird, Incorporation Campaign Manager, Former City Council and Mayor

*"Over 80 percent of the people were for the vote (for incorporation). It was wonderful to knock on doors and have people so supportive! We wanted parks for our families. The first City Council was so important and all of those we voted in really worked hard to help us become the City we wanted to be."*

Ben and Paula Brossard, incorporation drive volunteers

*"After we won the campaign to control our destiny, we went to work! We now have streetlights, sidewalks, bike lanes and a multitude of parks throughout our community. Extensive development codes were created to encourage thoughtful growth designed to meet our needs while ensuring we didn't lose the character and 'feel' of our community. Our City's success is also based upon the efforts of thousands of volunteers who participated in meetings, served on committees and commissions or helped with community events. They are the heart and soul of our community...they are what makes University Place such a special place to live."*

Debbie Klosowski, Former Mayor and Councilmember 1995-2011

*"Our family arrived in the Pacific Northwest and landed on Olympic Boulevard six weeks before U.P. was voted into existence. We cheered its arrival, encouraged its baby steps, rooted for it during its teenage years, and admire it now as a beautiful adult. You are smart, strong and vibrant, and we know your destiny is to welcome, embrace and nurture families like ours for generations to come! Happy Birthday U.P.!"*

Val Zeeck, Former Economic Development Commissioner

Read more Happy Birthday messages on the [City Website!](#)

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## Share Your #WeAreUP Stories

Although we can't be together right now to celebrate our City's 25<sup>th</sup> Birthday, we can express our collective community pride for our great city on social media.

Share your photos, videos and stories of life in U.P. at #WeAreUP. Maybe it's a memory of the first time you attended Duck Daze, video of your family enjoying the trails at Chambers Bay, or a picture of you and your friends sipping cool drinks or hot coffee in Market Square Plaza.

Whatever it is, your shared contributions and experiences are an integral part of what collectively make up University Place. The City of U.P. will contribute content, but we hope residents, organizations and businesses will also join in. #WeAreUP is a great way for us to stay connected, even when we have to be apart.

Invite your family and neighbors to join the #WeAreUP conversation and help us capture all the things that make the City of University Place a *Place* worth celebrating!



University Place  
WASHINGTON

