Headlines

News from University Place City Hall



April 14, 2021

Help Create a Bright Future for Homestead Park

You spoke—and the City listened.

Residents who provided public comments to the City's 2019-2020 Parks and Recreation Open Space Plan (PROS) indicated a desire to update and improve Homestead Park.

Located at 3761 Bridgeport Way W., Homestead Park



encompasses 5.5 acres and includes wooded areas, walking trails, a fern grotto and a rhododendron collection. It is one of the City's most popular and well-used parks. Given its location near the heart of the Village at Chambers Bay (formally known as Town Center), it is important that the park remain protected and nurtured as an important element of the area's overall plan.

With that in mind, efforts to update Homestead Park will examine the park's existing assets as well as how it might contribute to economic development efforts, especially given its proximity to the Village at Chambers Bay, City Hall and proposed new development on the old City Hall property at Windmill Village.

"Homestead Park has the potential to be a year-round community event space," said Gary Cooper, the City's director of Public Works, Parks & Facilities. "To do this, however, it needs to be updated to meet current community needs, safety, sustainability and design standards that enhance its historic character."

At the direction of the City Council, the U.P. Parks Advisory Commission has been asked for ideas on how to best revitalize both the infrastructure and uses of Homestead Park.

The City is asking the public to share their perspective through **this survey**. Your feedback, along with input from several of the City's advisory commissions, will

be used to craft a final list of recommended areas of emphasis/concern to be presented to the City Council for review and action.

The survey will be open from April 14 to April 30. The public will also be invited to provide additional input at a virtual public meeting on April 28. The Parks Advisory Commission will then meet on May 5 to refine its final recommendations that will be presented to the City Council on June 7.

Chief's Corner: Traffic, Traffic, Traffic

As I have noted in this column before and in my conversations with residents and business owners in U.P., the number one complaint our department receives deals with traffic safety. We certainly hear concerns around all types of criminal or suspicious activity as well, but the one issue that generates the most calls to the station involves issues related to speeding and traffic safety.

I commend the City for the investments it has made over the years to complete road projects such as sidewalks, medians, roundabouts, etc., that not only improve traffic flow and the aesthetics of the city but also serve as traffic



calming measures. The most recent project on Cirque Drive heading toward Grandview Drive is a great example. A post-project survey shows that average speeds in the area slowed by five mph.

But for us to create a community culture that values traffic safety, we will need to commit to more than road projects. I personally don't believe traffic enforcement is the sole answer. It is part of the answer, though. When we combine active dedicated enforcement, better road designs and community education, we can make an impact on traffic safety throughout the community.

We are a city of 34,000 people and eight square miles of roads. That may not sound like a lot, but with the force numbers we currently have, it can be difficult to juggle traffic issues along with the other calls for service we receive.

Some people have suggested we should add dedicated traffic enforcement officers and/or speed cameras. What do you think? I look forward to exploring these and other ideas during my conversations with our community. But don't feel as though you have to wait for an organized event to share your thoughts. Feel free to **email me** anytime.

Cliff Quisenberry Ends Tenure on Planning Commission

After 16 years of serving on the City's Planning Commission, most of which as

chair, Cliff Quisenberry is "retiring" from his volunteer post.

During his tenure, Quisenberry participated in a significant number of City planning efforts including a major update of the City's Comprehensive Plan, Shoreline Master Program, amendments to the zoning code regarding signs, view protection and drive-through restaurants. Most recently, he helped the City establish a Regional Growth Center Subarea Plan and a Form-Based Code.



"This recognition cannot even begin to thank you for all you have done," Mayor Caroline Belleci said at a presentation to Quisenberry during the Council's **virtual April 5 meeting**.

David Swindale, the City's director of Planning and Development Services, agreed. "Cliff is a true leader who cares for the community, especially for the preservation of the character of existing single-family neighborhoods," Swindale said.

"It was always my pleasure and honor to help serve the city and community," the humble Quisenberry said after receiving his award.

Bill Peters will fill the Planning Commission vacancy. He is a recent transplant to the area, having moved to U.P. from Juneau, Alaska, where he served on its Planning Commission.

What's UP with Biz!

As we continue to move into more pandemic recovery and reopening phases, the businesses of University Place are opening their doors and hoping you will support them.

Many local businesses are sporting "We Are UP & Open" signs on their windows or doors. Look for these colorful signs and make a point to stop in and let them know that you value their presence in our community.



According to the Small Business Economic Impact

Study from American Express, approximately 67 cents of every dollar spent at a small business remains in the local community. Moreover, every dollar spent at small businesses creates an additional 50 cents in local business activity as a result of employee spending and businesses purchasing local goods and services.

Your support of local businesses will ultimately help our entire community get back on its feet again.

COVID-19 Vaccine Availability

Beginning April 15, everyone
16 and older will be
eligible for the COVID-19
vaccine. View the
state's vaccine phases
timeline to see who is eligible
now.

To find upcoming vaccine events, visit the **Tacoma- Pierce County Health Department vaccine page**.



The Housing Repercussions of COVID-19

Like so many things over the last year, the COVID-19 pandemic has made it difficult to engage the public and solicit comments, questions and concerns on the City's proposed Housing Action Plan that is being developed with funding provided by the State Department of Commerce.



Yet public input is especially important now since the pandemic has slowed the production of housing in many regions. With more people working remotely, commuting rates have diminished and housing preferences are shifting. An analysis by Global Workplace Analytics estimates that up to one-third of the workforce could be working from home multiple days per week by 2021. In addition, the supply of for-sale homes is very tight and low in comparison to previous decades. This, combined with increasing material and labor costs as well as record low mortgage rates, has spurred rapid increases in housing prices ¹.

These trends are further complicated by the fact that the pandemic has impacted the ability to pay for housing and rent. Lost or reduced employment income due to COVID-19 has exacerbated rental affordability and homeownership stability and security. This has intensified housing cost burdens, especially for low-income households and those not gaining CARES Act support or other forms of relief¹.

To gain more insights into the community's thoughts on housing issues in University Place, the City conducted a brief online survey to solicit additional comments using **FlashVote**. Last week residents received a postcard with instructions on how to visit the **City's HAP webpage** to learn more information.

Questions and opinions regarding the HAP should be directed to **David Swindale**, director of Planning and Development Services, at 253.460.2519.

[1] Joint Center for Housing Studies of Harvard University, the State of the Nation's Housing 2020.

It's U.P. Garden Tour Time!

Mark your calendars for May 15 and 16, Saturday and Sunday, from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Brought to you by the U.P. Historical



Society, the garden tour is now in its 11th year of showcasing local gardens for your entertainment and enlightenment.

This year's tour features five unique gardens and the Curran House, where the Historical Society is making great strides in creating a history museum for our community. Plan to visit the Curran House and Orchard as part of your day.

Tour tickets are \$25 each, **but early bird tickets are \$20 until May 1**, and available at **Willow Tree Gardens and Interiors** and on our website, **uphistoricalsociety.org.**

After May 1, tickets are also available at Chirp & Co. in Proctor and at Michael Morrison Sotheby's International Realty, Proctor and Gig Harbor.

The Garden Tour's major sponsors are Gray Lumber, Columbia Bank, Seattle Seahawks, Sotheby's International Realty, UP Refuse and Recycling, and Deric Mazzuca & April Rogalski.

We thank them as well as all our sponsors:

Suburban Opticians, Beach Tavern Inc, Hand & Stone Massage and Spa, Mr. Teller's Mail Room, Portland Avenue Nursery, Sound Community Bank, UP Family Medicine, Atkins Chiropractic, Honest Estate Sales and JY Dental Group.

The UPHS also thanks our many individual donors.

Current Washington State COVID protocols will be observed.

... We want you on our team!



View current job postings at www.CityofUP.com

Visit the Job Opportunities page on the City Website for job description and details! Applications are open until filled.



Natural Yard Care Webinars

Use containers, annuals and perennials to amp up color in your landscape, with Marianne Benetti.

April 20, 7-8:30 p.m. Register: http://bit.ly/YardCareWorkshop1

You will learn:

- The best container gardening plants.
- How to use perennials and annuals, vines and roses to add more summer color and do less work.

Goodbye weeds! Designing yards for less work, with Liesl Zappler.

April 27, 7-8:30 p.m. Register: http://bit.ly/YardCareWorkshop2

You will learn about organic methods of weed control including garden design, mulches, weed flamers and alternative pesticide products.

Lush lawns nature's way. Break your lawn's addiction to chemicals, with Ladd Smith.

May 4, 7-8:30 p.m. Register: http://bit.ly/YardCareWorkshop3

You will learn ways to apply organic methods for great pesticide free lawns!

Register online.

Questions?

Contact Walt Burdsall at wburdsall@tpchd.org or (253) 649-1851.

Sponsored by:







www.tpchd.org

Flashvote

Have you signed up for FlashVote? It's not too late!

Surveys take less than a minute and give participants an opportunity to weigh in on issues within our local community.



Sign up now to take part in upcoming surveys!

Get the Facts: COVID Resources

As the nation and our region continues to battle the COVID-19 outbreak, be sure to stay informed with accurate information from these official sources:



- The **Governor's Office** provides details about on-going response efforts throughout the State of Washington, including the state's Risk Assessment Dashboard.
- The **Washington State Department of Health** provides updated statistics on the occurrence of COVID-19 across the state, as well as testing data.
- The Tacoma-Pierce County Department of Health and Pierce County Government provide important local information on testing sites, phased re-opening status and CARES Act funding to support recovery efforts.
- The City of University Place's dedicated **COVID-19 info page** includes valuable information on resources for businesses and residents, such as local school meal sites and public utilities' contact information for payment plans or assistance.



UNIVERSITY PLACE VIRTUAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING

Monday, April 19, 2021 at 6:30 p.m.

WWW.CITYOFUP.COM





Mayor Pro Tem Steve Worthington











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