

# THE RIDGE

News and information about the City we love.



THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER FROM THE CITY OF RIDGEFIELD, WASHINGTON

2019 | EDITION 1

## The Cost of Growth

With all the new homes being built, a familiar question is whether all that growth is paying for the added impacts to our roads, parks, water, sewer, schools, etc. The simple truth is that for the costs we can measure and charge for, it's paying about as much as can be legally charged and more than just about anywhere else.

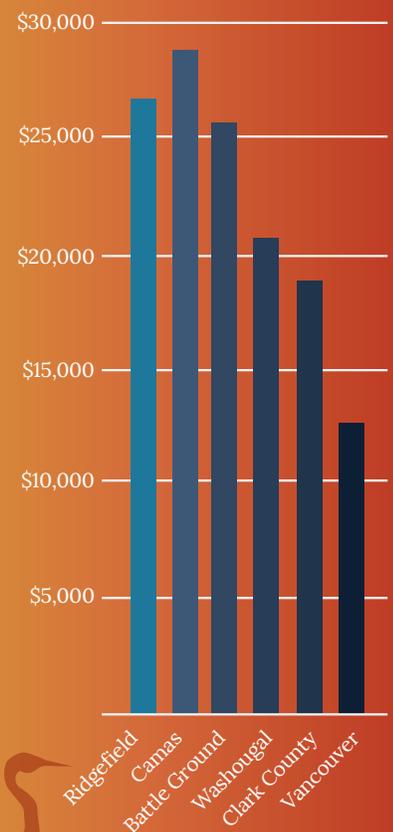
Here's a rundown of the costs that are built into every new residence and business in Ridgefield.

1. 100% of the costs to extend water and sewer service to and through the property.
2. 100% of the costs to build new roads that serve the new growth specifically (neighborhood streets like Pioneer Canyon Drive).
3. Traffic Impact Fees and required contributions that cover 61% of the costs to build new roads that we all use (larger streets like Hillhurst and Royle Rd).
4. 25% of residential developments have to be set aside for parks, trails, and open space.
5. Park Impact Fees to help build new parks we can all use. A great example is the Ridgefield Outdoor Recreation Complex - built **100%** by new development fees.
6. School Impact Fees to help fund the schools to educate the new kids moving here.
7. Real estate transfer fees, used to help build public facilities like parks and roads.
8. Local sales tax from all the new construction, which for 2019 is projected to be approximately \$1.2 million dollars.
9. Local property tax increases from all the new construction, which for 2019 is projected to be over \$100,000, and lowers the property tax burden for everybody else.

Adding it all up, every new home in Ridgefield pays over \$26,000 for the impacts they create, which is among the highest in Clark County. And the City Council is making sure that as there are even more roads, schools, parks, etc. needed, the developers pay more to cover it. In December, the City Council raised Traffic Impact Fees by 25% to help cover costs for all of the new roads needed by people moving here. In January, the City Council will be having a similar conversation about School Impact Fees (which are already more than \$7000 per new home).

The bottom line is that the City will continue working to make sure that growth pays its way as much as it legally can and more than just about anywhere, to build the roads, parks, and schools we need for not just the new people but all of us.

Comparison of Regional Impact Fees



## Stormwater Facilities Improve Water Quality

Rain that falls on our City picks up pollutants - heavy metals, petroleum products, sediment, etc. - on its way into the stormwater system. Stormwater facilities serve the important purpose of slowing the water down and removing these pollutants before water is released to wetlands and streams. Stormwater facilities have been required for new developments in the City since 1995.

Areas of the City that were built pre-1995 may include stormwater drains but do not have stormwater facilities, meaning that pollutants in the water have been released to the environment. The City is working to change that. For example, thanks to a \$100,000 grant from the Lower Columbia Fish Recovery Board a stormwater facility will be built in 2019 to treat stormwater runoff from the neighborhood in northeast downtown Ridgefield. This project will use natural topography and high quality filters to clean the water before it is sent to an outfall along Gee Creek. The end result will be improved water quality and ecosystem health in lower Gee Creek.

## New Building and Permitting Location

One of Ridgefield's greatest strengths is the partnerships we have with other organizations that also have made it their mission to serve the Ridgefield community. Because of our partnership with the Ridgefield School District, the city will soon have a modern, integrated business center, along with a permanent meeting room for our City Council Chambers and other public meetings, all at a significantly lower cost than if the city constructed similar facilities on its own.

This business center and public meeting facility will be co-located with RSD administrative offices in the former View Ridge Middle School, right on Pioneer, providing convenient access to people with questions or concerns about building or permitting in Ridgefield. The space is designed to be open and inviting for people to visit, and comfortable for citizens to come in and conduct city business when needed. The expected opening time frame is early February 2019. Stop by and see what the strength of community partnerships means for the citizens of our community. City Hall will remain open and continue to provide the same services as always for Ridgefield citizens and visitors.

## 2019 Balanced Budget

On December 6, 2018 City Council adopted the 2019 balanced budget. The total budget for 2019 will be \$19.7 million with an operating budget of \$11.2 million, which is 5.7% less than the 2018 amended budget. The budget includes three new full-time positions and capital projects focused on obtaining water rights and drilling new wells, to serve residents into the future. Council also approved a 1% increase to property taxes. But, despite the increase, Ridgefield property owners will see a reduction in their property tax levy amount of 8 cents per \$1,000 in assessed value down to 85.6 cents per \$1,000 in assessed value.

The City also recently received the Distinguished Budget Presentation Award for the 2018 budget from the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada (GFOA).

2019

## Events

Check out all our 2019 events  
on our website: [www.ridgefieldwa.us](http://www.ridgefieldwa.us)

**First Saturdays All Year Long**  
Family friendly themed events on  
the 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday of every month!

**Saturdays May-October**  
Farmer's Market

**Tuesdays July-August**  
Playground Program

**March 5**  
State of the City

**April**  
Spring Clean Up

**May 4**  
Garden Club Plant Sale and  
Ridgefield Art Association Show

**June 1**  
Big Paddle

**July 4**  
4th of July Parade & Celebration

**July 10 - 31**  
Evenings in the Park

**July 12**  
Main Street Day

**August 6**  
National Night Out

**August 17**  
Farm-to-Table

**September 9**  
MultiCultural Festival

**September 14**  
Oktoberfest by Ridgefield  
Main Street & Experience Ridgefield  
by Ridgefield School District

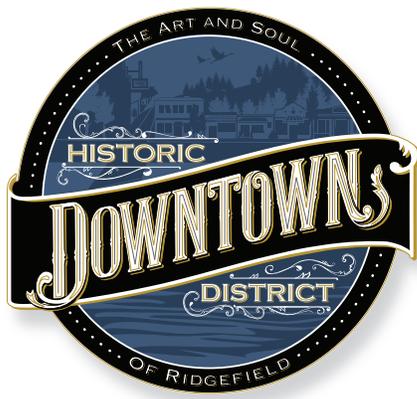
**October 4-6**  
Birdfest & Bluegrass

**October 18-19**  
Halloween Hall by Ridgefield Art  
Association

**November 11**  
Veteran's Day Service

**November 28**  
Turkey Trot by Ridgefield Public  
Schools Foundation

**December 7**  
Hometown Celebration



## Small Town Charm

Ridgefield's downtown evokes a "Main Street America" charm and historic character. The City wants to preserve that small, hometown feel - a place you are likely to meet and greet your neighbors. To do that, the City sponsors multiple community events downtown, created an Arts Quarter, and recently developed a logo to identify what is unique and special about downtown. You will start to see the logo on wayfinding signs, pole banners, and published material.

Take a day-cation downtown and discover the tree lined streets, sweeping views of the Wildlife Refuge, charming restaurants, historical buildings, unique shops, a salon, coffee house, gift shops, historic theater, four parks and more!

## Councilor in Action

Jennifer Lindsay brought her energetic spirit to the Ridgefield City Council in October 2018 when she was appointed to a vacant Council seat. She applied for the position to expand her volunteer efforts and make a difference in the community. As a member of the Council, Lindsay is interested in keeping the rural feel surrounding our town as the City grows, a trail system network that creates a draw to the region and maintaining the historical, small town atmosphere of downtown.



Lindsay learned at an early age that if something is important to you, you should get involved and make a difference. This lesson came from watching two strong women in her life, her mother and grandmother, volunteer their time with organizations that were important to them. Since then, Lindsay's desire to lift people up, make a positive difference for others and act as a good role model for her children has served as a guide for her volunteer and business activities.

Lindsay's volunteer work began in the schools her children attended with teaching art to kindergarten and 1st grade students and involvement with Parent-Teacher organizations. She expanded her efforts into the community as a volunteer for Ridgefield Lion's Club, the 4th of July Committee and on the City's Planning Commission. And, she followed her artistic interests by having one of the first businesses to teach paint & sip classes.

Lindsay spends her free time with her husband, two children, ages 18 and 13, and two dogs enjoying the out-of-doors in Ridgefield, which she believes is the most beautiful place in the world.

## Appointments to Ridgefield Advisory Boards

Congratulations to the Ridgefield citizens who have been appointed to serve on advisory boards to the City Council. And a huge thank you to all of these dedicated individuals for volunteering their time to serve our Community:

### Parks Board

Dave Zigler, Marie Bouvier, Kim Stenbak

### Salary Commission

Shaun Ford, Darcy Rourk, Victoria Haugen

### Civil Service Commission

Mike Jones

### Liaison to Clark County Arts Com.

Liz Kollings

### Mosquito Control Board

Rian Davis

### Planning Commission

Paul Young, Rob Aichele, Judy Chipman

## City Leadership

### CITY COUNCIL

Sandra Day  
David Taylor  
Darren Wertz  
Ron Onslow  
Jennifer Lindsay

### MAYOR

Don Stose

### MAYOR PRO TEM

Lee Wells

### CITY MANAGER

Steve Stuart



## City Hall Placed on the Historic Register

One of the City's goals is to retain the small town culture and preserve the history of Ridgefield. A large step in support of that goal was accomplished on December 5, 2018 - the Clark County Historic Preservation Commission voted to place the Ridgefield City Hall building on the Clark County Historic Register.

In 1910, the town of Ridgefield had 297 residents and was a burgeoning community with timber production, agriculture and a shipping port which made all the other activities economically viable. A financial institution was a logical addition and Ridgefield State Bank opened in a small wooden office rented from the Mercantile.

Over the next 10 years, the bank grew, added a telephone, survived multiple downtown fires and two burglary attempts and the town's population tripled to 900 residents. As the only formal financial institution in town, Ridgefield State Bank needed a larger building. The Bank President Charles Henry Greely Jr., "Potato King of Clark County," decided to build a new bank. In 1920, the City Hall building was constructed with an 11'X14' vault with 18" thick walls reinforced with 1" steel bars. The vault exists today as a storage space.

In 1935, Edward Firstenburg left teaching to work at the bank for a monthly salary of \$50. During WWII, he drove the local school bus prior to opening the bank, and then worked in a cannery until midnight after the bank closed. In 1949, the bank president, retired and sold his interest in the bank to Firstenburg. The institution was reorganized in 1954 and the name changed to First Independent Bank which grew to a total of 25 offices in 2001.

In 1975, the bank building was donated to the City for civic use and to "restore and maintain as a historical landmark" and became Ridgefield City Hall. In 2013, Council spearheaded an effort to renovate the building to provide a more efficient office space for employees and citizens. The renovations retained the historical materials, layout and structure of the original building. Today, City Hall continues to be housed in one of relatively few remaining smaller bank buildings of the era that has not been significantly remodeled.

## 2019 Brings "Neighbors on Watch" to Ridgefield

The Ridgefield Neighbors on Watch program began its formation in the fall of 2018 via several meetings with Chief John Brooks. The program is divided into three areas:

1. *Police Volunteers who assist the Ridgefield Police Department on routine local safety concerns.*
2. *Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT) who aid with emergencies at large events such as earthquakes and floods.*
3. *Chief's Advisory Forum which is open to all citizens and meets twice yearly. Our next meeting will be April 3, 2019.*

If you are interested in participating at any level, please contact the Ridgefield Police Department. The best way to ensure Ridgefield remains one of the safest cities is an engaged and active community.

