

# THE RIDGE

News and information about the City we love.



THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER FROM THE CITY OF RIDGEFIELD, WASHINGTON

2018 | EDITION 1



## Our Neighborhood Partners

One of the many unique things about Ridgefield is that every new neighborhood is required to have a Homeowner's Association. In fact, we're one of the only cities in Washington State that does it. That said, we're not the only community with HOAs. According to the Community Associations Institute, the number of HOAs in the U.S. grew from 10,000 in 1970 to 342,000 in 2016.

But why does Ridgefield require ALL new neighborhoods include an HOA? Because in our small but fast-growing City we rely on partnerships with groups like HOAs to help keep the quality of our neighborhoods and community strong over time. Plus, HOAs put people more in charge of their own neighborhoods instead of leaving it all in the hands of City code enforcement.

While there are certainly costs and concerns that arise with HOAs, on balance, there are some key features that have helped Ridgefield neighborhoods: standards for lawn maintenance and general curb appeal that improve community appearance, lawn care is handled by the HOA leaving less work for homeowners, recreational amenities and management of issues such as a barking dog, loud party, or dispute with a neighbor. And, the HOAs are now looking beyond their borders to create an HOA Council that can address shared issues of concern and become a collective voice advocating for neighborhoods in Ridgefield.

For more information please check out the Neighborhoods page on the City's website.

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## Community Events

Check out the Community Events Calendar on our website!

2/3 Tailgate & Chili Challenge  
2/21 State Of The City Event  
3/3 Youth Arts Month  
4/7 Detective Mystery  
4/21 Spring Clean Up

- Saturdays, May-Oct. Farmer's Market
- June 26th-August 21st Playground Program



## A New Year of Family Friendly Events is Coming!

Participate in a **community festival downtown on the First Saturday of each month** that features theme-related games and activities, sidewalk sales, prize drawings, live music, Farmer's Market and other vendors, shopping, local eateries and food vendors! FUN for the whole family.

Enjoy Tuesdays in the Park during the summer months with kids crafts during the day and movies, picnics, and music in the evenings. And don't miss your favorites like Spring Clean Up, State of the City, National Night Out, Big Paddle, and Hometown Celebration. You should have received a postcard with 2018 dates in the mail or you can pick one up at City Hall. You can also stay updated with the Community Events calendar on the City's website and Access Ridgefield App. See you there!

## Councilor in Action

On national holidays Darren Wertz is the Councilor you will see out with other members of American Legion Post #44 proudly lining the streets of Ridgefield with American Flags. In 2007, Darren helped reactivate the now nationally recognized Post 44, serving two terms as Commander. At present he serves as its Chaplain.

Born in Denver, Colorado, Darren first saw the Pacific Northwest when he flew into Ft. Lewis after his tour in Viet Nam. He returned to his family home in San Diego long enough to finish his degree in economics from UCSD. He then came north and completed a Master's degree from U of O (Go Ducks). After witnessing a 4th of July parade in Ridgefield in 1980 he set about making Ridgefield his home.

Darren's first job in Clark County was as an economist for Clark PUD. In 2015, he retired from the Clark County Board of Equalization, helping people appeal their property tax assessments. Darren recently received an Advanced Certificate of Municipal Leadership from the Association of Washington Cities. He served on the Columbia River Economic Development Council



and the Ridgefield Planning Commission until 2008 and has served as a City Council member ever since.

Darren's current focus on City Council is bringing jobs and commercial development to the land that has been set aside for that purpose. He has also long been a strong proponent for open space and a trail network that links our community.

He and his wife, Juanita (a Ridgefield native), have been married since 2012. They enjoy music, especially bluegrass festivals, and getting out in our wonderful outdoors. Darren skis and has been on Mt Hood Ski Patrol for the past 20 plus years. "Ridgefield is our home and we should all work to make it the best we can. I love living here and serving on City Council."



## City Leadership

### CITY COUNCIL

Sandra Day  
John Main  
Don Stose  
David Taylor  
Darren Wertz

### MAYOR

Ron Onslow

### MAYOR PRO TEM

Lee Wells

### CITY MANAGER

Steve Stuart





## Updated Parking Ordinance

On Sept 28th, 2017, the Ridgefield City Council approved an updated parking ordinance to simplify the old one. City staff met several times with community members and other stakeholders to draft the updated ordinance. The new ordinance clarifies parking for neighborhoods and allows police to tow derelict vehicles parked on city streets.

Briefly, the new ordinance allows for parking on both sides of the streets that are over 35' wide. Roadways that are 26' to 35' allow for parking on one side of the street and parking is prohibited on either side of narrow roads that are less than 26' wide. In addition, vehicles parked on the street without moving for more than seven days *may* be cited. The primary goal of the Ridgefield Police is to educate vehicle owners about the new requirements. So, you may find a courtesy notice letting you know if you are in violation.

Lastly, we will be focusing some of our efforts on residents who haven't gotten around to registering all their vehicles in the state of Washington. If your vehicle is still sporting out of state license plates, please take the time to switch them over and avoid the hefty fine imposed by the state.

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## 2018 Budget

At the City Council meeting on December 7, 2017, City Council unanimously adopted the 2018 budget. The budget includes several catalyst projects that will support current growth and lay the foundation for sustainable ongoing revenue sources for the City. The budget also includes projects such as the Ridgefield Outdoor Recreation Complex, a multi-use shared recreational facility, with the Ridgefield School District.

- Overall 2018 budget: \$50.9 million
- Operating budget: \$10.5 million
- Capital budget: \$21.1 million

The City held multiple public meetings on the 2018 budget to facilitate the ability for citizen input into the process. City Council has been setting aside capital funds in recent years to plan for the 2018 capital expenditures, including \$12.9 million in capital fund transfers along with \$6.3 million in grants, sponsorships and bond proceeds, and \$500,000 in operating fund reserves that were identified to be used for street, park/trail, water and storm water capital projects.

“The 2018 budget is a result of careful planning over the past several years and will help support Council’s vision of quality live, work, play options for the future,” According to Finance Director, Kirk Johnson.



# let it snow!

**The City of Ridgefield Public Works crew is ready.**

The City has two plows, two sanders and de-icer truck to help clear the roadways. When snow is in the forecast the crew ensures that our equipment is ready, and will monitor the condition of the roads as the snow begins to fall.

Streets in the City are classified by priority for plowing. Priority 1 routes are main roadways and are plowed first. Depending on how quickly snow is accumulating the crew will move on to priority 2 streets as the priority 1 roads are cleared, then on to priority 3 roads. Some roads are not classified; these roads may be too steep to safely plow, or have limited traffic.

When driving in the snow please remember to drive slowly and use the accelerator and brakes gently. Also please increase your following distance and do not follow City snow removal equipment.

The snow removal map is available on the City’s website.



## Traffic Safety: Using Roundabouts Properly

With three roundabouts on Pioneer and another one under construction, these traffic circles are changing the way we drive in Ridgefield. Roundabouts are becoming more familiar in our City and around the country because they ease congestion, cost less to operate, reduce collisions by roughly half, and use less energy than traditional light-operated intersections. So, to avoid any traffic problems, take the time to learn how to navigate a roundabout safely.



**Tip #1: Slow down and choose a lane.** As you approach a multi-lane roundabout, slow down and look for directional signs. Choose a lane prior to entering the roundabout the same way you would in a traditional multi-lane intersection.

**Tip #2: Yield to traffic inside the roundabout.** Look to your left before entering the roundabout and yield to oncoming traffic in all lanes. Traffic already in the roundabout has the right-of-way. You do not need to stop prior to entering the roundabout if the road is clear.

**Tip #3: Stay in your lane and signal your way out.** Once you have entered the roundabout, maintain a slow speed, stay in your lane, do not stop and engage your turn signal when you exit.

**Tip #4: Don't drive next to larger vehicles.** Roundabouts are designed to accommodate vehicles of all sizes including emergency vehicles, buses, farm equipment and semitrucks. Always give them ample room to turn by staying behind them a bit more than you ordinarily would with passenger vehicles. If an emergency vehicle has lights flashing, proceed through the roundabout and stop on the side of the road after your exit. Simply put, to keep all citizens and visitors safe: slow down and yield to traffic already in the roundabout.

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## Growth and Retaining Ridgefield Character

The Community Development Department is working on several projects that will help the city retain the character of Ridgefield as we continue to experience growth. First, is the Gee Creek Plateau sub-area plan. There's an unincorporated area that's surrounded by Ridgefield, but not actually a part of the city itself. This area is about 355 acres and is located south of Pioneer between Gee Creek and S. 45th Avenue. Over the last year city staff has reached out to residents in this Gee Creek Plateau and developed a vision that highlights its unique character. Clustering homes and providing unique roads, parks, and pathways all designed around a winery theme are elements of the vision and incorporated into a sub-area plan.

The second project that will apply city-wide is an incentive program to encourage environmentally friendly building practices. The program offers a 10% rebate of building fees to home builders that meet or exceed American National Standards Institute standards for best green building practices. To encourage homes with a "visitability" component, the program will also offer a 10% rebate of building permit fees if a home includes features such as a 36-inch wide zero rise entryway, a 36-inch wide bathroom on the ground floor, and lever type door handles so that guests with mobility challenges are able to visit with the same freedom everyone else enjoys.



## Stay In Touch

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