

Headlines

News from University Place City Hall



March 25, 2020

Mayor's Message



These are difficult days, indeed. Yet amid the challenges, I continue to be inspired by the ways in which the people of University Place are demonstrating the true meaning of community. I have watched as citizens have made the extra effort to ensure that our elderly residents and those in need are being taken care of, whether it's bringing them groceries, getting medications refilled or simply calling to see how they are doing. I have always been impressed how

Americans come together during difficult situations and take care of their communities and this situation is no different. Thank you U.P. for stepping UP.

I have watched as people have rallied around our restaurants, taking advantage of their "to-go" offerings in an effort to keep them in business. Our business community is largely mom-and-pop businesses and your support now and in the future is critical for their survival. Thank you!

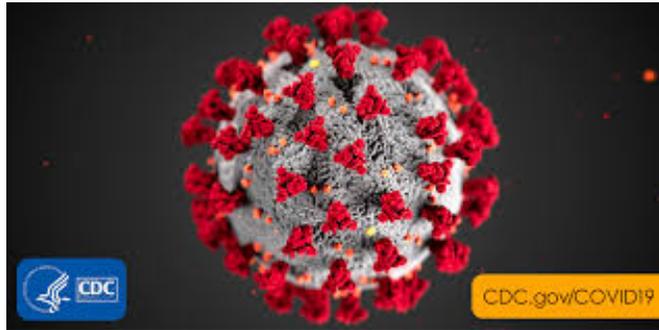
I have watched as City staff have found ways to continue to serve our community while working remotely, or taking shifts to go into the office while not violating the social distancing directive. This situation has placed another element of work on the staff and they have stepped up and put their emergency training to use. Things change on an hourly basis, yet they have managed to make the transitions seem effortless. Thank you to all the U.P. staff.

Amid all this uncertainty, one thing is certain: this will end. We don't yet know when, but it will end. And when it does, it will be up to us, the community of University Place, to do the hard work to help our businesses get back on their feet and to continue to look out for our neighbors. Never before will the term "shop local" and "community" mean more.

I urge you to continue to check the City's website frequently for the best source of information on what is happening here in University Place and in Washington. In the meantime, please continue to follow the instructions of the CDC and our state and local Departments of Health. Stay safe and stay well.

COVID-19 Information and Resources

In case you have missed it, the City of University Place website has a special link to the latest information on the COVID-19 virus from federal, state and local authorities. It can be found on the homepage on the right-hand side under **Quick Links**. It includes the full text of the City's formal **State of Emergency declaration** as well as contact information for community agencies and resources.



Reference it often for reliable, accurate information about the status of the situation. You will also find information specific to University Place, and updates from the **University Place School District**, including information on meal sites and childcare options for first responders and emergency health care workers who need to remain at work.

Chief's Corner

You may have seen in the State of Emergency Declaration that the City released last week that our administrative offices are now closed to the public due to the COVID-19 outbreak. But in all honesty, that's about the only change we have made to our regular routines.

Rest assured, UPPD is here and working. Our officers are still making their regular patrols in the community and are ready to answer *all* 911 emergency calls. You can still reach us for non-emergencies as well by calling 253.798.4058. In fact, we have responded to several vehicle prowls during the last two weeks, particularly at some of our parks. Although parks are now closed, we remind you that regardless of where you park, always lock your vehicle and do not leave valuable items in clear view.



Our officers are trained to operate in an environment where communicable diseases are always a concern, including things like tuberculosis, hepatitis and HIV. But they are taking extra precautions to ensure they do not contract — or spread — the coronavirus.

As a community, we are all in this together and we are counting on everyone to do their share to slow the spread of the virus. You should abide by the current restrictions. That means stay home unless you work at an identified Essential Business or are patronizing one of the open essential services. If you are outside be sure to follow the social distancing rule.

Please understand that our primary goal in enforcing the **Governor's Stay at Home Order** is that of education: we want to help the public understand what

they must do to keep themselves, their families and the community safe. We do not intend to detain violators or establish enforcement checkpoints. We can, however, enforce the order through criminal citation if necessary to help protect our community.

Playing by these rules will help us all get through this situation faster and back to the "normal" we want. But in the interim, your U.P. Police Department is committed to providing our essential community service. Thank you for helping us maintain a safe, peaceful and healthy University Place.

Important Business Updates

The University Place Economic Development is communicating regularly with members of the business community about resources available to them, including:

- **Unemployment assistance through Washington Employment Security Department.** The one-week wait requirement has temporarily been waived to expedite the process.
- **Small Business Administration (SBA) Economic Injury Disaster Loans** for up to \$2 million for impacted businesses. Questions can be directed to 1.800.659.2955 or DisasterCustomerService@sba.gov.
- The **Department of Commerce** has made \$5 million of the Governor's Strategic Reserve Funds available as small grants to small businesses across the state to help prevent closure due to COVID-19. These funds can be used to supplement federal aid.
- The Washington Small Business Development Center (WSBDC) is offering **business resiliency webinars** on March 24, 25, 26, 27, 31 and April 1.
- Essential businesses are still open, particularly restaurants and eateries that are providing take-out or delivery as well as gas stations. Businesses are encouraged to contact **Becky Metcalf** in the Economic Development office to update their hours and status. The department would like to keep a list they can share via Headlines and Talking UP, their newsletter for businesses.

U.P. Parks and Playgrounds Are Closed

Prior to Governor Inslee's order to "**Stay Home, Stay Healthy,**" the City of University Place announced that all University Place parks, playgrounds and sports fields are closed until further notice beginning March 22. This decision was made to further reduce risks to our children, families and community of coming in contact with the COVID-19 virus and spreading it to others.



Please make use of the longer days and warmer weather to encourage children to explore other ways to enjoy the outdoors. Physical activity and social interaction do not have to be mutually exclusive. You can still take walks, ride bikes, hike and beach comb as long as you are mindful of keeping a six-foot distance from anyone else.

If you do find yourself housebound, make use of the time to get a jump on your spring cleaning, or tackle that 1,000-piece jigsaw puzzle you got for your

birthday. Read a book, check out free online learning resources such as the Khan Academy or listen to a podcast. Find ways to divert yourself from the headlines. And remember, we will get through this and eventually life will return to normal.



APRIL 6 COUNCIL MEETING IS CANCELLED

www.CityofUP.com

West Pierce Fire & Rescue Declared a State of Emergency

On Tuesday, March 17, the Board of Fire Commissioners declared a state of emergency within West Pierce Fire & Rescue. This proclamation comes in response to COVID-19, which has impacted not only Pierce County, but at a state and national level.

Having this proclamation in place allows WPFR to take necessary measures to ensure the fire district operates effectively and efficiently, even in time of crisis. It also acknowledges that WPFR's response to COVID-19 will require the use of all available resources and as a result, will need to access state and federal resources, including financial assistance.

The outcomes of COVID-19 are still in its infancy and the potential for numbers to increase is likely. This proactive step reemphasizes WPFR's commitment to keeping its employees and the community safe by running daily operations with as few disruptions as possible.

Visit the **West Pierce Fire & Rescue website** for more information.



Upcoming Events

PUBLIC SAFETY ACADEMY IS CANCELLED



Hosted by the
University Place
Police Department



Upcoming City events have been cancelled or postponed until further notice.

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University Place City Council



Mayor Caroline Belleci



**Mayor Pro Tem
Steve Worthington**



**Council Member
Javier Figueroa**



**Council Member
Kent Keel**



**Council Member
Ken Grassi**



**Council Member Pro Tem
Howard Lee**



**Council Member
Denise McCluskey**



**Council Member
Stan Flemming**

