



Living by the Nooksack

A Quarterly Newsletter from the City of Ferndale

Summer 2021

What is This?

While many of our residents follow us on social media and check our website, we know that plenty of you don't have time for that.

This quarterly newsletter is our latest effort to help you understand what is going on in your city.

Inside this article, you will find:

- How to resolve disputes with your neighbors
- Details on the new skate park
- How to prepare for the fall rains
- A message from Police Chief Turner about recent legislative changes
- Best ways to participate in City Council meetings during a pandemic
- . . and more!

If you have thoughts about this newsletter, please call Communications Officer Riley Sweeney at (360) 685-2353 or email him at Rileysweeney@Cityofferndale.org

Accessible online at www.cityofferndale.org/newsletter



Ferndale Becomes the Second Largest City in Whatcom County

According to the latest estimates from Washington State, the City of Ferndale is now the second largest city in Whatcom County with 15,270 residents. This represents a 33.77% increase from 2010 and makes Ferndale the fastest growing city in Skagit and Whatcom County. This is also the first time in the history of Ferndale that the City has had more residents than any other City in Whatcom besides Bellingham.

"This is great news for Ferndale," said Mayor Greg Hansen. "It is no mystery why people chose Ferndale as their home. We have great schools, great parks, and an incredible growing business community," said Hansen.

"While this growth may feel sudden, it is planned. The City is ready to welcome our new neighbors," said Hansen. In the last three years, Ferndale has started over \$50 million dollars' worth of local infrastructure projects including the construction of the Thornton Overpass, the drilling of a new well, and the expansion of the water and wastewater treatment plants.

"For those of you who are concerned about losing our small-town feel, I have a challenge," said Hansen. "Go out and meet one of your new neighbors. Share your favorite things about our city and in doing so, we will continue our proud tradition of kindness, support, and decency that make Ferndale the great place we know and love."

Need Financial Help with Your Utility Bill?

Impacted by COVID?

If you and your household have been impacted by COVID-19 and need assistance with your utility bill, there are funds available to help. The Ferndale Community Service Cooperative, in partnership with the City of Ferndale and the Whatcom Community Foundation, has created an assistance fund. The income limits are generous and they are standing by and ready to help. Please reach out early to ensure you can get the resources you need.

For more information and details, go to www.ferndalecsc.org

Utility Rate Assistance Program (RAP) Available

The City of Ferndale offers a 25% deduction on utility rates to customers who qualify as part of Whatcom County's Property Tax Exemption Program, as well as those who qualify based on Annual Household Income.

More details are available at www.cityofferndale.org/RAP

Due to Gov. Inslee's COVID-19 proclamation, all late fees and utility shutoffs are suspended through Sept 30th. The City encourages all residents to pay what they can to avoid a large accumulated bill.

Resolving Neighbor Disputes Without Fisticuffs



Having neighbors can be a blessing or a source of frustration, often both, but it is important to keep the peace.

While there are many issues that can be solved by Ferndale's Code Compliance (overgrown vegetation, illegal parking, etc.), not all issues fall under our jurisdiction. The City does not become involved with property line disputes, landlord/tenant issues, or other private issues between property owners.

While we may not be able to assist you directly with your dispute, there are some people who can help.

- Whatcom Dispute Resolution Center - <https://www.whatcomdrc.org/>
- Association of Manufactured Home Owners - <http://www.wamho.org/>
- Washington LawHelp - <https://www.washingtonlawhelp.org/issues/housing>

While these resources are here to help you out, sometimes the easiest thing is to take a moment to talk the issue through with your neighbor. If you would like more information, please reach out to the City's Code Compliance Officer, Kyla Boswell, at (360) 685-2365 or kylaboswell@cityofferndale.org.

STORMWATER NEWS - ONLY RAIN DOWN THE DRAIN

HERE COMES THE RAIN! – It's dry now, but soon the rains will return. Now is the time to prepare to prevent pollution from entering storm drains and streams. Most stormwater is not treated before it is discharged into the streams in Ferndale. Here are a few ideas:

- Pick-up pet waste and place it in the trash
- Clean up any trash, spills, oil drips, or other materials that might get blown or washed away
- Cover all materials that will be stored outside or bring them inside
- Sweep up any materials leftover from summer projects such as paint chips or shavings

And don't forget to take a look at your local storm drains to make sure they're clear and ready for the rains!

For more information, or to report spills or pollution, contact the City of Ferndale Stormwater Department stormwater@cityofferndale.org or call 360-685-2357.





Keep your bills in line, online

Go paperless

Conveniently
pay online,
anytime 24/7

Save a stamp.
Pay online.

With AutoPay,
your bills pay
themselves

Your data is
secure

Save time, save a trip: pay online, on the device of your choice

www.cityofferndale.org



Take Advantage of our New Online Utility Portal

Earlier this summer, the City launched our new online utility billing portal. While this is optional to use, it is a convenient and cost-efficient way to pay your utility bill. If you wish to opt-in, please register your account today.

To Register Your Account:

- Enter your **account number** exactly how it appears on your recent billing statement (including the decimal "." and the numbers following it)
- In the address field, enter the **numerical portion of your address**
- Click **search invoices**
- **Select your invoice** by clicking the box under select
- Click **register customer**
- Set up your user name and create your password

It's that easy. For questions about the portal or your utility bill, please call our utility clerk Jeanna at 360-384-4269 or email at utilitybilling@cityofferndale.org



Participating in Public Meetings During a Pandemic



During this pandemic, it is more important than ever for the public to be able to share their thoughts and perspectives with their elected officials. Here are some of the ways you can weigh in on City decisions.

- 1) **Email Your Elected Officials.** CityCouncil@cityofferndale.org for councilmembers or GregHansen@cityofferndale.org for the mayor.
- 2) **Speak at a Council Meeting.** Come down to City Hall at 5:00 PM on the 1st or 3rd Monday of the month and speak during public comment. Council meetings are held remotely but the City conference room is set up for the public. Mask use is required for the unvaccinated and strongly recommended for all.
- 3) **Submit a Public Comment.** Email City Clerk Susan Duncan at SusanDuncan@cityofferndale.org to have your letter included in the public record of the meeting.

Ferndale Skate Park Scheduled for Construction in 2022



Initial concept provided by Grindline Skateparks

The Washington State Recreation and Conservation Board announced the award of a grant to the City of Ferndale for Metalworks Skate Park, a 10,000 square foot skate park facility planned at Pioneer Park.

“This has been something people have been asking about for years,” said Mayor Greg Hansen, “and I’m so excited that we are finally able to make it happen.” The skate park will be located off Second Avenue, directly adjacent to the Phillips 66 Sports Complex and within sight of the Star Park playground.

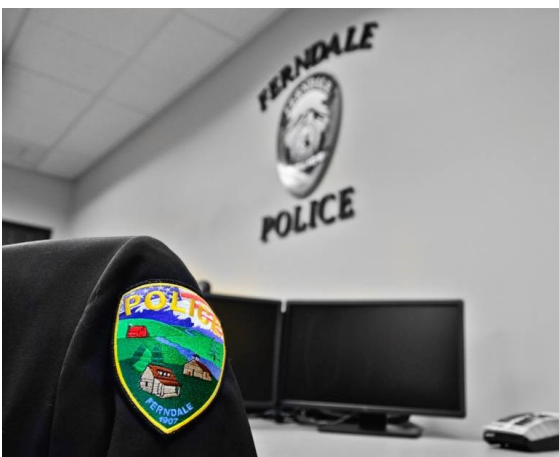
“We chose the name ‘Metalworks Skate Park’ to pay tribute to our industrial roots here in Ferndale, and the art and design of the park will reflect that,” said Hansen.

The total grant award is for \$480,000 with a portion of the overall project funding to be provided by the City and private donors. Design work will get underway later this year, with construction to begin in 2022.

“We are extremely thankful to our delegation in Olympia – Reps. Sharon Shewmake and Alicia Rule and Senator Doug Ericksen for supporting funding for projects such as these,” said Hansen.

Letter from Police Chief Kevin Turner Reaffirms Commitment to Protecting Ferndale

You may have heard about some of the recent legislative changes made affecting law enforcement and our level and quality of service. Some of these new laws have changed how, and if, we are able to respond in certain situations. Our ability to help in these situations is now determined and limited by some of these legal changes. I believe these new laws have compromised the safety of our community and our officers.



Despite this, the Ferndale Police Department promises you that we will continue to give you the best quality service to the best of our ability. If there is an emergency, please call 911 and I assure you, we will do our utmost to provide for our community.

We are your peace officers committed by oath to protect and serve our community, to protect property, and to preserve life.

Our entire team would like to express our sincere thanks to you for your continued support and for all of the cards, notes, treats, and messages of appreciation we receive. Despite these trying times, we are very fortunate to live in and serve our great community. We will continue to honor our oath, and are proud to commit to our mission - to be a “Stronger Community Together.”

Take care and be safe. - Chief Kevin Turner