



CITY OF  
**MillCreek**  
WASHINGTON

**CURRENT**  
Spring 2017



## City Manager Message

As we prepare to move forward on this plan, I'd like to share with you some of the highlights. The full plan is available on the City's website.

Strengthen the City's tourism efforts. Tourism benefits retailers, outdoor recreation, state parks, cities and ultimately the taxpayers of Washington. More than \$1.8 billion in local and state tax revenues are generated directly from tourism in Washington each year, and tourism is responsible for more than 170,000 jobs. Tourism is a significant part of the economy in Snohomish County. Direct tourism-related jobs employ 10,750 people in Snohomish County each year, contributing \$33.1 million in local taxes and \$66.2 million in state taxes. It's critical that we continue to grow this industry.

Boost communications and community engagement. The City is developing a comprehensive communications and marketing approach, which will help keep citizens better informed about City initiatives. This work also includes a redesign of the City's website to make information more accessible for all users. The City also will rollout social media to

ensure more timely communications in mediums used with increasing frequency. We will implement a user-friendly and responsive digital citizen and feedback program. And we will work actively to build civic engagement and pride of community through City programs.

Develop a citizen volunteer program: Such a program will provide opportunities for our citizens to be involved in community programs and serve as ambassadors of this great City to those coming to Mill Creek from the surrounding area. This includes involvement in two citizen police academies, as well as volunteer opportunities at tourism and recreation events.

Enhance the City's infrastructure. Community preservation and revitalization is an ongoing goal for the City. This includes addressing roadway concerns, ranging from the flooding over 35th Avenue at Thomas Lake to neighborhood paving. During this biennium, the City will comprehensively update its Capital Improvement Program to identify needs, projects, priorities and funding options. This

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# Spotlight on Joni Kirk

Joni Kirk joined the City of Mill Creek as the Director of Communications and Marketing in February.

This appointment is key to achieving City Manager Rebecca Polizzotto's vision for the city. Joni has been working to create a robust marketing-communications strategy, which incorporates social media, community awareness efforts, legislative strategy, and internal communications. She also handles day-to-day media relations for the City.

"We are delighted that Joni is now on our team," said City Manager Polizzotto. "She hit the ground running, and has been out meeting members of the community, connecting with the City Council and legislators on key issues, and helping us be positioned for success in our outward-facing activities."

Joni has a busy agenda for this year. She is tasked with overhauling

the City's website, which will make it easier for the community to find and access information. She's also working hand-in-hand with the City departments to ensure people are aware of upcoming projects and events.

This is a familiar role for Joni. With 20 years of communications and marketing experience, she has worked in the public sector for 10 years. She led the communications charge for the HR and payroll modernization effort at the University of Washington, focusing on process improvement and internal communications. Prior to working at UW, Joni was the associate director of communications at the University of Idaho, where she was responsible for managing a statewide communications and rebranding program. She also taught crisis communications and mass media in the University of



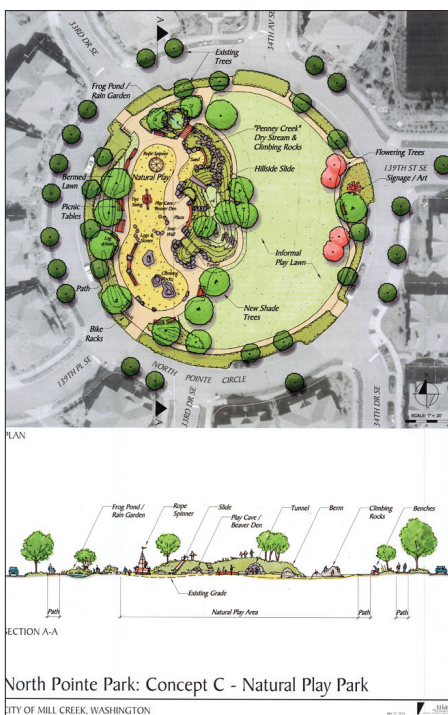
*Joni Kirk, Director of Communications and Marketing*

Idaho's Executive MBA program for four years.

Joni previously provided account management at marketing-communications agencies in both Seattle and the San Francisco Bay Area, where she led teams for economic development, business-to-business, technology, and travel and tourism clients. Most recently, she handled communications and marketing at Snohomish County Tourism Bureau.

A Colorado native, Joni moved to the Evergreen State as a young child. Though she grew up in the Spokane area, she and her family moved to the Seattle area in 2011. She now resides in Snohomish. An avid gardener, she led the development of the Garden of Hope, a new Snohomish community garden, in 2016.

She earned a master's in business administration and a bachelor's degree in public communications from the University of Idaho.



## City Manager Message (Continued)

work will seek community input for prioritization of projects.

Make improvements to North Pointe Park. This circular neighborhood park is located just west of 35th Avenue SE, and has remained solely an open grass area. Following broad community input on the design elements, improvements on the park as a Natural Play Park are moving forward. Construction should begin this summer, and the park should be open in late fall. This park will include a large play lawn; a natural play area for children, including a climbing hill, logs and rocks; a frog pond; a short tunnel; and some benches and picnic tables for relaxing and eating.

The biennium budget is balanced, eliminates deficit spending, and reflects the City's commitment to cultivate economic prosperity while maintaining a sustainable budget.

We are working hard to ensure a safe, vibrant, and active community, and we appreciate your ongoing support! Thank you for the opportunity to serve and for your trust that our work is centered on the long-time vitality of this great community that we call home.

*See you around the City!*  
Rebecca





## *Arena Sports Facility Moves Forward, Will Bolster Tourism and Economic Development*



*Architect's rendering of the Arena Sports Facility*

In a move that supports the City of Mill Creek's focus on economic development and tourism growth, a proposed arena sports facility in Mill Creek has been approved by the hearing examiner. CSA Real Estate's Binding Site Plan application is to develop 6.75 acres for a 98,000-square-foot indoor arena sports and entertainment center at 13518 Bothell-Everett Highway.

"We are pleased with the hearing examiner's decision," said City Manager Rebecca Polizzotto. "This arena sports facility will have tremendous positive impact for our community. Supporting our city goal about recreational opportunities, it will provide diverse opportunities for families and neighbors to get out, recreate together, and enhance our strong community bond."

The recreation complex will feature two indoor soccer fields, a warm-up field, eight bowling lanes, laser tag, an inflatable play area, party rooms, kitchen and dining areas, as well as storage and administrative office space. To alleviate neighborhood concerns over parking, the developer has included parking for 382 vehicles in the plan, which will eliminate overflow into the surrounding neighborhoods.

The facility's proximity to the North

Creek Trail, the Mill Creek Sports Park, McCollum County Park, Jackson High School and Heatherwood Middle School allows easy access by bicycle. Bike parking and amenities are a priority.

Polizzotto noted that the facility also will provide an opportunity to attract events to Mill Creek that will enhance the City's tourism program. As people come into the community to use the Arena Sports facility, they are more likely to eat and shop in the community.

Growth in tourism is significant for Mill Creek restaurants, retailers, the city and ultimately the taxpayers. According to the Snohomish County Tourism Bureau, visitors spend more than \$1 billion in Snohomish County annually, contributing more than \$99.3 million in state and local tax revenues. With such significant impact, Mill Creek is prioritizing tourism growth in the 2017-2018 biennium.

In particular, sports tourism is a growing trend. In the last decade, the number of people attending out-of-area sporting events has dramatically increased. A study by the University of Florida discovered that nearly 60 percent of the parents traveling for kids' sporting events return to the city for vacation and 74 percent of these parents recommend the location to

others. And according to industry data gathered by George Washington University's Sports Management program, sports-related tourism revenue is increasing about three percent each year.

"We are delighted to have this new arena sports facility in Mill Creek, which will offer family-fun recreational activities for sports teams and their families traveling to Snohomish County for sports tournaments," said Tammy Dunn, sports development director of the Snohomish County Sports Commission, the sports division of the Snohomish County Tourism Bureau. "We look forward to working with Arena Sports in promoting Mill Creek to sports teams competing in sports tournaments throughout Snohomish County."

In addition to growth in the tourism sector, the development of the Arena Sports facility will contribute to the local economy through the creation of new jobs through the construction phase and employment opportunities once operational.

The developer of the Arena Sports complex has submitted construction plans to the city. It is anticipated that work will commence in spring or early summer 2017 and that the facility will open in early 2018.

## Community Notes

### **Smoothing Out Turns from the Bothell-Everett Highway onto 164th Street**

Traffic congestion has been an issue for quite some time for drivers turning westbound onto 164th Street SE from the Bothell-Everett Highway (SR 527), as well as for vehicles at Mill Creek Blvd trying to turn onto 164th.

"Traffic turning westbound onto 164th Street would invariably block the intersection at 527 because the traffic hadn't moved past Mill Creek Blvd," said Police Chief Greg Elwin. "As a result, long wait times were occurring."

Between his own observations of the issue and comments from the community, Chief Elwin sought a solution. In January, he reached out to Washington State Department of Transportation seeking a simple "do not block the intersection" sign for left-hand turn traffic at SR 527. WSDOT went the extra mile and volunteered to review the traffic signal timing.

After analyzing the issue, WSDOT traffic signal engineers coordinated with Snohomish County to adjust the programming for the light at SR 527 and 164th, as well as the light at Mill Creek Blvd. The impact was immediately noticeable.

"After watching three or four traffic cycles at different times this weekend, it looks to me like the traffic light adjustments you made have significantly reduced the 'left

turn congestion' problem off the Bothell Everett Hwy onto 164th," wrote community member Steve Parke. "Thank you for your thoughtful solution."

### **Crosswalk Signs**

Councilmember Donna Michelson recently was approached by some moms in the community, who shared concerns about the visibility of a crosswalk frequently used by children on their way to and from school on Village Green Drive near the Cottonwood division.

"The crosswalk markings were faded, and there was no signage to warn people that they were approaching a crosswalk. This was particularly dangerous for our little ones," said Councilmember Michelson. "Community safety is a priority for us, so I quickly elevated this to City staff."

City Manager Rebecca Polizzotto and Police Chief Greg Elwin visited the area. They discussed opportunities to improve signage. In January, new signs were installed that warn people that a crosswalk is ahead and clearly indicating where the crosswalk is located. In addition, crossing flags are available on each side of the crosswalk to provide an added safety measure to pedestrians as they cross the street.

"Everyone is really pleased," said Councilmember Michelson. "The signs are bright and provide the awareness that was needed. This was really a great community effort."



**Join the Mill Creek community at these events this spring.**

### **Teen Flashlight Egg Hunt April 7, 6-7 p.m.**

Heatherwood Middle School Gym (1419 Trillium Blvd SE, Mill Creek)

Event is for 6th – 12th graders  
[cityofmillcreek.com/flashlightegg hunt](http://cityofmillcreek.com/flashlightegg hunt)

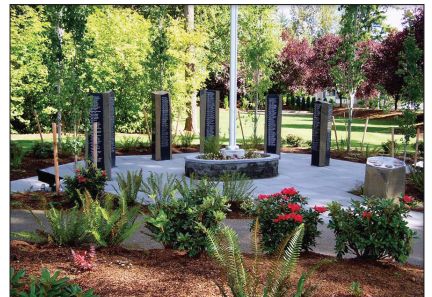


### **Eggstravaganza April 15, 10:30 a.m.**

Heatherwood Middle School Gym (1419 Trillium Blvd SE, Mill Creek)

Age-specific egg hunts. Ages 1 to 4 years starts at 11 a.m.; kindergarten through 5th grade begins at 11:30 a.m.

[cityofmillcreek.com/egg hunt](http://cityofmillcreek.com/egg hunt)



### **Memorial Day Celebration, May 29**

Details will be forthcoming  
[cityofmillcreek.com/memorialday](http://cityofmillcreek.com/memorialday)





# City of Mill Creek Council\*

*\*Elected for four-year terms. Mayor and Mayor Pro Tem selected for a two-year term.*



**Pam Pruitt**  
**Mayor**  
Position 3  
*Term expires 12/31/17*



**Brian Holtzclaw**  
**Mayor Pro Tem**  
Position 4  
*Term expires 12/31/17*



**Sean Kelly**  
Position 1  
*Term expires 12/31/17*



**Donna Michelson**  
Position 2  
*Term expires 12/31/17*



**Vince Cavaleri**  
Position 5  
*Term expires 12/31/19*



**Mike Todd**  
Position 6  
*Term expires 12/31/19*



**Mark Bond**  
Position 7  
*Term expires 12/31/19*

## City of Mill Creek Council

**Pam Pruitt, Mayor**  
Position 3

**Brian Holtzclaw**  
**Mayor Pro Tem**  
Position 4

**Sean Kelly**  
Position 1

**Donna Michelson**  
Position 2

**Vince Cavaleri**  
Position 5

**Mike Todd**  
Position 6

**Mark Bond**  
Position 7

## CITY STAFF

**City Manager**..... Rebecca Polizzotto  
citymanager@cityofmillcreek.com

**Economic and Community  
Development Director** ..... Tom Rogers  
tomr@cityofmillcreek.com

**Police Chief** ..... Greg Elwin  
grege@cityofmillcreek.com

**Director of Finance and Administration/  
City Clerk** ..... Peggy Lauerman  
peggyl@cityofmillcreek.com

**Public Works Director** ..... Scott Smith  
scottss@cityofmillcreek.com

**Director of Communications  
and Marketing** ..... Joni Kirk  
jonik@cityofmillcreek.com

## Important City Phone Numbers

**City Hall Offices** (15728 Main Street)  
For Passports, Executive, Finance,  
Human Resources  
Phone Number: 425-745-1891  
Fax Number: 425-745-9650

**Annex Building Offices**  
(15720 Main Street)  
For Planning, Engineering, Building,  
Parks and Recreation  
Phone Number: 425-551-7254

**Police Department**  
Emergency: 911  
Non-Emergency: 425-775-3000  
Phone Number: 425-745-6175  
Fax Number: 425-745-4680