

## [Aberdeen Councilman Announces Run for Mayor](#)

### Local News

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ABERDEEN, Wash. - Councilman Paul Fritts has announced that he plans to run for mayor this November, "I see a variety of challenges ahead for the city&mdash;from the overall budget to specific issues such as deteriorating streets," Fritts says. "As a council member, I have worked on these issues but felt as mayor I could take an even more-direct role in working on them." ***(Click the story title to hear Fritts' February 10th interview on Coffee Talk with Doug McDowell)***

Fritts Press Release States: Paul Fritts, an active member of the Aberdeen City Council since 2004, is pleased to announce he will run for the city's mayoral position in the upcoming election. The 40-year-old Grays Harbor County Sheriff's deputy and lifelong Aberdeen resident says he has been thinking about running for the past year and talked it over with his family before deciding to throw his hat in the ring. "I see a variety of challenges ahead for the city&mdash;from the overall budget to specific issues such as deteriorating streets," Fritts says. "As a council member, I have worked on these issues but felt as mayor I could take an even more-direct role in working on them." Fritts has served as the council's chairperson of the Public Safety Committee for the past three years and was chairperson of the Finance Committee for his first three years in office. Fiscally conscious Fritts has questioned the city's membership with various entities until it could be shown that the value of the membership was worth the money spent by the city. This has led to changes in communications with these entities which have subsequently become more responsive to their members and showing justification for the fees paid to these groups. Fritts' goals for the city include: The **aggressive recruitment of businesses** and a **continuing push for improving downtown**. "We need to work to make the downtown area a place where people want to stop," he says. He recognizes that some downtown business owners and citizens believe the city's transient population makes some places unattractive for people to stop. One of Fritts' solutions: Give the police department more tools to deal with the problem, including finding a way to fund additional enforcement specific to downtown which would make the area less appealing to transients. During the past year, Fritts, along with other members of the Public Safety Committee, worked with Aberdeen Police Chief Robert Torgersen and Corporate Counsel Eric Nelson in trying to find legal solutions to the downtown transient issues. As the economy hopefully improves and monies become available, Fritts also would like to see a **rededication to the abatement program** as a way to remove problem buildings throughout all neighborhoods of the city. **Improvements in the condition of the city's streets**. Like most cities throughout the country, Aberdeen has been unable to keep up with street maintenance, which will continue to become more costly the longer we wait. He also would like to see the city **pursue any and all grants regarding the addition of sidewalks in various areas of South Aberdeen which currently have none**. At the very least, Fritts would like to see the addition of sidewalks in the area of Cushing Street near Stevens Elementary School connecting to those currently near Pioneer Park. **Responsibly manage what proves to be another difficult budget**. "I recognize there have been some recent improvements in the economy, but the budget challenges will still exist over at least the next few years," Fritts says. "It is important to realize that many of our citizens are hurting

financially so any city budget needs to take into consideration any and all reasonable cost savings before any spending is increased. Fritts says he will draw from his experience as chair of the Finance Committee to help him with the budget. Ultimately, Fritts hopes improvement in the city's infrastructure will help in the recruitment of businesses to the area, which in turn will provide much needed employment, especially to younger citizens. "It's always bothered me that after people leave and go to college, they often don't come back because there are no jobs for them," Fritts says. "I want them to be able to find employment here and not have to go elsewhere for it." Fritts is a 1989 graduate of Aberdeen High School, and has been active as a coach in youth sports such as baseball and soccer. He and his wife Melissa, a teacher at Robert Gray Elementary School, are the parents of twin 9-year-old boys.