



# City Manager's Update

## August 18, 2023

**To:** Fircrest City Council  
**From:** Dawn Masko, City Manager  
**Date:** August 18, 2023  
**Subject:** City Manager's Weekly Update

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### Honorable Mayor and City Councilmembers

I'm happy to utilize the City Manager's update to provide an overview of upcoming events, meetings, and other items of interest for the City. Included with the update are reports from City departments on various programs, projects, and achievements.

#### 1. Concert, Market & Picnic in the Park

The last Concert, Market & Picnic in the Park event of the season is happening on Thursday, August 24<sup>th</sup> at Fircrest Park. Join your friends and community for a summer evening of food, music, and family-friendly fun. Local market vendors will be open for business starting at 5:00 PM and live music will start at 6:00 PM. Food trucks will be on-site with a variety of food and beverages for purchase. Hook Me Up will entertain with jazz, swing, blues, and dance grooves. Don't miss out on all the fun. See you at the Park!

#### 2. Comprehensive Plan Visioning Survey

There is still time to turn in your Comp Plan Survey to the City. The [Comp Plan Survey](#) was recently mailed to all City residents to receive community input for the update of our Comprehensive Plan Update. We have received an overwhelming response to this mailing with surveys continuing to pour into City Hall. This is an anonymous survey and therefore all answers are confidential and not identifiable to any person. Copies of the survey are also available at City Hall and the Community Center. Additional information is also available on the City's Comprehensive Plan [webpage](#).

#### 3. Community Development Director

I am pleased to announce that Mark Newman will be joining our team as the City's Community Development Director. Mr. Newman is an AICP-certified planner and has served as the Community Development Director and Interim Public Works Director for the City of Pacific. He has previous planning experience with the cities of Phoenix, Mukilteo, and Sammamish and with Pierce County Sewer. He earned a bachelor's degree from Temple University and a master's degree in urban and regional planning from UC Irvine.

Mr. Newman has experience in the areas of planning, permitting, building, code enforcement, grant writing, project management (including transportation and utility projects), and GIS. He is a SEPA Official and Floodplain Administrator and has been involved with the 2024 Comprehensive Plan Update and recent state legislative mandates in his current position.

Mr. Newman's first day in the office will be September 18<sup>th</sup>. Please join me in welcoming him to the City!

#### **4. Upcoming Meetings – Week of August 21<sup>st</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup>**

- City Council Study Session Monday, August 21<sup>st</sup> at 6:00 PM
- City Council Meeting Tuesday, August 22<sup>nd</sup> at 7:00 PM

#### **5. Council Study Session Agenda Items – August 21<sup>st</sup>, 2023**

- Insurance Pool Presentation
- “Murphy” Costume – Usage Restrictions
- Comprehensive Plan Draft Vision Statement
- Fircrest Park Maintenance Facility Discussion
- “Prose” Project Update
- Centennial Committee Formation
- Holiday Tree Committee Discussion

#### **6. Council Agenda Items – August 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2023**

- Liquor License Renewals
- Setting 2024 Preliminary Budget Public Hearings
- Resolution – Letters of Understanding for Stormwater Agreements

\*Council Agenda Packets are available on the City's [website](#).

#### **7. Pierce County Emergency Alerts**

Recent tragic events have shown a spotlight on the importance of emergency preparedness and how important it is to take action to prepare for the types of emergencies that could affect us where we live, work, visit, and play.

Emergency alert notification systems allow community members to sign up to be notified of emergency or urgent situations occurring in specific areas. You can sign up to receive alerts via text, phone, or email and can typically customize the types of alerts received.

Two separate notification systems offer Fircrest residents safety updates. Signing up for both systems ensures you receive critical alerts where you live, work, play, and visit. It is also recommended if you work in another county to sign up for an alert system there as well. Below are the options available in the Fircrest area.

[Tacoma Alert](#) uses the CodeRED system to let you know if there is an issue near your home, business, school, etc. There is also a CodeRED app that, if your location permissions allow, will alert you to situations if you and your phone are in any city that also uses CodeRED. Many Pierce County cities utilize CodeRED, which gives you access to their emergency info when you are in those cities. This is also a good option for those who commute through the Tacoma area. Tacoma Alert is an address-based system but if you choose to not enter your address, you will get every emergency alert sent to anywhere in Tacoma. If you have relatives in Tacoma or

routinely check in on someone, you can also sign up using *their* address to know if an emergency is affecting them. CodeRED also allows you to sign up for non-emergency updates.

[Pierce County ALERT](#) is a FREE system that allows you to sign up and receive notifications about emergencies that may affect the locations that concern you. This service allows fire, police, and other agencies handling emergency response to send out accurate and up-to-date information to residents. Receive alerts on different devices such as your cell phone, home phone, email, and TTY. Choose up to five locations you want to be notified about such as your residence, workplace, children's school, and more.

## 8. Administration Update

Administration highlights of the past week include:

- The City implemented L&I heat exposure precautions to ensure the safety of our employees. City Manager Masko also participated in Pierce County EOC Excessive Heat Briefings.
- The City opened a Cooling Center this past week due to the hot temperatures. The Cooling Center was located at the Community Center and was open Monday – Thursday from 1:00 – 9:00 PM. Pierce County Emergency Management provided the City with 4 cases of bottled water. Although we did not have many people utilize it, those who came by and stayed for a few hours to enjoy the air conditioning were very appreciative.
- Researched government paperwork required by a Community Center contractor to apply for the Energy Efficiency Tax Credit Program.
- Prepared resolution and charter document for the formation of the Centennial Committee for discussion at the upcoming Study Session.
- Coordinated with contractors regarding the Police Chief background process.
- Corresponded with Tacoma Public Schools representatives regarding Whittier School.
- Great Job Sierra, Megan, Kristin, Julie, Colleen, and Eddie (and others I may have neglected to mention) on the annual employee & family event this past week! The Summer Hawaiian Luau was a huge success and those in attendance enjoyed wonderful food, great camaraderie, and a LOT of water balloons to keep everyone cool. 😊

## 9. Police Department Update

Fircrest officers received over 140 calls for service this past week, including 46 traffic safety-related contacts (stops, collisions, parking violations), and 8 reports with 2 arrests (warrant and DUI). There were 4 property crimes, including 1 motor vehicle theft and 1 vandalism. Officers investigated a single-vehicle DUI collision and the driver was arrested. Officers had 50 community policing events (foot patrols, citizen assistance, security checks community policing activities, vehicle contacts, and suspicious people). A graveyard officer was able to quickly get to the Rec Center after a door was left unsecured and the alarm was activated. No damage to the building was reported.

The background check on our 9<sup>th</sup> officer was completed on August 14<sup>th</sup> and the polygraph, psych, and medical will be scheduled soon. Oral boards to fill our 10<sup>th</sup> officer position have been preliminarily scheduled for September 1<sup>st</sup>.

Sergeant Bollinger will be attending First Level Supervisor training the first week of January 2024. LETS (Police Scenario Simulator) training occurred this past Wednesday. Due to scheduling the simulator was only on site for one day. EVOG (emergency vehicle operation course) and Range dates have been shored up and our sergeants are scheduling officers for these.

## **10. Parks & Recreation**

Parks & Recreation highlights include:

### ***Community Events***

- The Market in the Park and Concert was a fantastic success last week, and we're excited to announce that it's making a return next week. Join us for another round of local vendors and community bonding on Thursday, August 24<sup>th</sup> at the final event of the summer season.
- We recently held a debrief session with our Fircrest Fun Days Volunteer Leadership Team. The planning sheet will be updated, and we will start gearing up for 2024's Fun Days in November.
- Planning for Haunted Trails is underway. We are currently in touch with local high schools to assemble volunteer teams for this spooky event being held on October 19<sup>th</sup>.
- We are eagerly awaiting Murphy's arrival and are currently in touch with the manufacturer for an update on the delivery date.

### ***Recreation Programs***

- Registration begins on August 21<sup>st</sup> at 9:00 AM for the September Senior Trip to the Washington State Fair. Sponsored by the Edwards Family Foundation, this trip is scheduled for Wednesday, September 13<sup>th</sup>. It's your chance to enjoy this year's exhibits including agriculture and horticulture, art, and photography, the Hobby Hall, Expo Hall, animals, and all of your favorite fair food (did someone say scones?). Transportation and admission are included. For more information and registration details, please contact Raquel at [rlapointe@cityoffircrest.net](mailto:rlapointe@cityoffircrest.net).
- Youth Cross Country for ages 5-11 is happening from September 8<sup>th</sup> – October 27<sup>th</sup> on Fridays from 4:00 – 5:00 PM. It's a fantastic opportunity for all levels of runners to engage in fitness and fun.
- Join us for Open Gym Volleyball on Thursdays from 6:00 – 8:30 PM. It's free and suitable for all ages.
- Beginner Barre classes take place on Sundays from 9:30 – 10:30 AM. Classes include a fusion of Pilates, yoga, and ballet!
- Our Weekly Schedules [webpage](#) includes a comprehensive list of activities and programs for all age groups. Information about all of our adult programming can be found at [Adult Classes & Sports](#) and youth programs can be found on our [Youth Programs](#) webpage.

### ***Summer Day Camp***

- Running from August 14<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup>, our Fircrest Parks & Recreation Summer Day Camp reached full capacity and provided opportunities for exploration, skill-building, and a

variety of activities from 9:00 AM – 2:00 PM. Activities included neighborhood walks, games, swimming, crafts, and more! It's fair to say that a fun time was had by all.

### ***Aquatic Center***

Take advantage of the sunny weather to check out the Edwards Family Aquatic Center. Lap swim, open swim, and evening swim schedules are posted on the City website at [Swimming Pool - City of Fircrest](#).

- Due to staffing constraints created by students departing for college, we've had to make some minor schedule modifications at the Aquatic Center this weekend. The pool will NOT be available for open swim sessions from 11:00 AM – 2:00 PM on Saturday, August 19<sup>th</sup>, and Sunday, August 20<sup>th</sup>. But don't worry – the pool will be back in action with pool hours starting at 2:30 PM on both days. Thank you for your understanding!
- The last week of swim lessons concluded today. Starting August 21<sup>st</sup>, we are transitioning to a new schedule with extended hours for adult lap swimming and water walking. Join us from August 21<sup>st</sup> to September 1<sup>st</sup> from 6:30 AM to 9:30 AM for these sessions. Admission fees are \$4 for residents and \$8 for non-residents. Season passes are also accepted.
- Believe it or not, the end of the 2023 pool season is almost here! Before we close for the year, we invite everyone to join us in celebrating an amazing summer at our Barbieland Pool Party! On Friday, September 1<sup>st</sup> from 6:30 – 8:30 PM, come to the pool for music, games, prizes, and FUN! The pool and our staff will be all decked out in pink, and we hope you will be too! Regular night session rates will apply. Please email [pool@cityoffircrest.net](mailto:pool@cityoffircrest.net) or call 253-564-8188 for more info.

Please call (253) 564-8177 or visit the City's website at [Parks and Recreation Department](#) for events and program information, class registration, facility rentals, questions on Parks & Recreation activities, or for volunteer opportunities. Want to know more? Like us on Facebook at "City of Fircrest, Washington".

### **11. Planning & Building Update**

- The Community Survey results have been overwhelming! While we've received almost 100 electronic results, we've received over 500 mailed survey results and still counting. Community interest in the Comp Plan is significant.
- City Attorney Bob Zeineman has completed his summary of key RCW changes regarding the Comp Plan and Contract Planner Jeff Boers has finished his memo regarding Code "tools" we can use this spring to tailor our response to the RCW changes.
- The Prose Project status is the same as last week. We are waiting for the final plan sets for Contract Planner Boers's approval and are still waiting for the MOU for the City Manager and City Attorney to review before moving forward to Council for review and approval. Our Alliance contact person indicated that their attorney has been out of the office, and they are pushing to get this to us in the coming days.
- The Sewer Basin Interlocal Agreement is in final discussion with Pierce County. This should be ready for Council in September.

- The September 5<sup>th</sup> Planning Commission meeting will be an update and workshop with our consultant BHC and Project Coordinator Bob Jean to prepare for the Special Council Meeting/Community Open House on September 18<sup>th</sup>.
- While City staff have determined that the numerous vehicles at the Golden Gate property do not appear to be a de facto extension of the property owner's Tacoma and Puyallup car lots, we are still working with them on the sidewalk and lot coverage code issues. A stop work order was issued this past Monday and Public Works Director Bemis is working with Code Enforcement regarding compliance issues. We have also received several noise complaints regarding this property which our Police Department is monitoring.
- Our Code Compliance Officer has been coordinating with Police this past week on a code compliance complaint involving too many cars parked at a residence, which is blocking the sidewalk and forcing walkers to go on to Columbia/19<sup>th</sup> St. Other code enforcement complaints involved sign code violations, a large white truck blocking a sidewalk for more than 2 weeks, junk left outside by owner/resident for more than 2 weeks, and a strong marijuana smell coming from a neighbor resulting in being unable to enjoy their backyard.

## 12. Finance/Information Technology Update

### *Finance*

- 2024 Budget preparation continues with department heads finishing up preliminary revenue and expenditure projections and budget narratives. Department Director review meetings with Finance Director Corcoran and City Manager Masko begin next week.

### *Information Technology*

- The video portion of the new AV system is tentatively scheduled for September 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, and 11<sup>th</sup>. The rechargeable batteries and docking station for the wireless microphone are on order with an estimated delivery date of 2-3 weeks.
- We are still working on inventorying our network and devices.
- The current voucher run contains invoices from Right Systems (our prior vendor) for project work outside of their contract. These are older invoices that we have been delaying payment of to ensure the work had been performed.

## 13. Public Works Update

Public Works is operating under summer hours from 7:00 AM – 3:30 PM.

Highlights include: (in addition to normal daily tasks)

### *Utilities – Water, Sewer, Streets, and Stormwater*

- Well #8 is up and running and is functioning properly.
- Well #7 issues have been narrowed down to the soft start. We are awaiting delivery of the soft start and the needed parts for installation.
- Utility staff responded to an after-hours vehicle vs. landscaping tree accident at the island on Emerson and Edwards. Utility Foreman Jeff Davis is tracking labor hours and coordinating the replacement of the tree with the City's landscaping contractor.

- Public Works Director Bemis and Finance Director Corcoran met with BHC to discuss and compile additional Comprehensive Plan Update materials.
- Summer hire Noel Wittner's last day is today. Thank you Noel for your contribution to the Public Works team and best of luck at the University of Washington!

### ***Maintenance – Parks & Facilities***

- The Fircrest Park Tennis Courts resurfacing preparation is completed. Resurfacing is scheduled for August. Drainage concerns have been addressed and we are looking into sound mitigation materials.
- Repair and upgrades were performed on the public information sign at the Public Safety Building.
- The Tacoma Pierce County Health Department visited the Pool this past week. A “wiggly” starting block and handrail were the only items of concern and were immediately addressed by staff. The inspector stated that our pool is one of the nicest and best-kept in the area.
- The Alice Peers Park sign is on order and expected to arrive any day. Thank you to Tapco Credit Union who is paying for the sign.

### ***Project Updates***

- 44<sup>th</sup> Street West & 67<sup>th</sup> Ave West Lift Station Upgrade
  - Preparing to post for construction bid.
  - Supply chain constraints were identified for the SCADA control cabinet. Once approved and ordered, there is upwards of a 52-week delay for delivery.
- Water System Plan Update
  - All necessary agencies have now signed off on the plan. Final approval from the Department of Health (DOH) is anticipated soon.
- AMI Water Meter Exchange Program
  - Meters continue to be exchanged. Director Bemis is developing a plan for City Manager Masko regarding speeding up the meter replacement process.
- Storm Water Pre-Treatment Outfall Grant Project – Emerson Street & Estate Place
  - Final close-out Progress Reports and Payment Requests are in progress.
- Emerson Street Sidewalk Extension (south side) – Woodside Drive to 67<sup>th</sup> Ave West
  - Met with WSDOT on August 16<sup>th</sup> to discuss the project status.
  - We are awaiting the Scope of Work and Fee Schedule from the selected consultant. The consultant contract will come before Council on September 12<sup>th</sup> for approval.
- Regents Blvd (west) Grind & Overlay – Alameda Ave to 67<sup>th</sup> Ave West
  - Met with WSDOT on August 16<sup>th</sup> to discuss the project status.
  - We received four submittals in response to our RFQ for design. Interviews are scheduled, with WSDOT oversight, for August 21<sup>st</sup>.

- South Orchard Street Grind & Overlay – TIB Grant Funded
  - Design in process for construction in 2024.
  - Received pavement coring results and are exploring options with TIB to increase structural integrity and potential longevity of the pavement.
  - Continuing communications with Tacoma staff to coordinate the paving of the entire intersection.
- Electron and Contra Costa Intersection Improvement – Legislative Funds
  - We were granted a \$153,000 appropriation of funds from the State Legislature.
- Claremont Street TIB Grant Application
  - Grant application submitted on August 11<sup>th</sup>.
  - The application certification identified total TIB funds of \$677,409 and total Local Funds of \$124,543.

***Equipment***

- Bucket Truck (utilities) – tentatively scheduled for delivery by the end of August 2023.