



City Manager's Update

November 9, 2023



To: Fircrest City Council
From: Dawn Masko, City Manager
Date: November 9, 2023
Subject: City Manager's Weekly Update

Honorable Mayor and City Councilmembers

Below is an overview of upcoming events, meetings, and other items of interest for the City. The update includes reports from City departments on various programs, projects, and achievements.

1. City Hall Offices Closed for Veterans Day

City Hall will be closed on Friday, November 10th, in observance of the Veterans Day holiday. Happy Veterans Day to all those who have served and those who continue to serve. Thank you for your service and sacrifice. Those who live in freedom will always be grateful to those who helped preserve it.

2. Upcoming Meetings – Week of November 13th – 17th

- City Council Meeting Tuesday, November 14th at 7:00 PM
- Whittier Park Master Plan Public Meeting Thursday, November 16th at 6:30 PM

3. Council Agenda Items – November 14th, 2023

- Arbor Day Proclamation
- Public Hearing – 2024 Preliminary Budget
- 2024 Budget Discussion
- Ordinance – Salaries of Non-Union Employees
- Ordinance – Municipal Court Judge and Civil Service Examiner Rate of Pay
- Resolution – NW GIS Consulting Contract Amendment
- Resolution – Holiday Sleigh Agreement with Town of Steilacoom
- Ordinance – 2024 Property Tax Levy
- Resolution – Summit Law Contract Amendment
- Resolution – KBH Change Order #2
- Resolution – Olbrechts & Associates Contract Amendment

*Council Agenda Packets are available on the City's [website](http://www.cityoffircrest.net).

4. Administration Update

Administration highlights of the past week include:

- City Manager Dawn Masko continued working with Finance Director Colleen Corcoran on the 2024 budget, worked on personnel and labor relations issues, and public records requests.
- The Civil Service Commission was introduced to Police Officer Miguel Bugarin at their November 6th meeting. The Commission will certify the current lateral police officer eligibility list at their December 4th meeting. As a reminder, the Civil Service Commission meets at City Hall on the first Monday of every month at 4:00 PM.
- City Manager Masko had discussions with CIAW on the 2024 renewal process.
- Acting City Clerk Arlette Burkhart continued working with Public Works and the Safety Committee to update the City's emergency management policies and procedures. This week, staff verified all emergency To-Go bags are fully inventoried and free from any outdated items.
- The 2023 City Council group photo will be taken before the Council meeting on Tuesday, November 14th, at 6:30 PM. Acting City Clerk Burkhart has noticed this as a special meeting, and all Councilmembers should be receiving their official notification soon.
- The City Clerk's office received five new public records requests this week. To date, the City has received 227 public records requests. The City had received 197 public records requests at this time last year.
- City Manager Masko continued reviewing contracts and professional agreements that need to be renewed and/or renegotiated for 2024, with several on the November 14th meeting for approval.
- Acting City Clerk Burkhart has begun developing the 2024 departmental work plan, which includes updates to the Personnel Manual, a public records policy, City records indexing, and hosting a benefits fair for employees. City Manager Masko is coordinating departmental work plans for all departments.
- The City Clerk's office continues to work through record management and contract indexing. This week's efforts focused on creating space in the vault for pertinent records from the Public Works attic.
- In the last 30 days, the City's website has had 25,855 page views with a total of 6,050 users.

Acting City Clerk Arlette Burkhart will be out of the office on vacation from November 15th – 22nd.

Community Development Director Mark Newman will be out of the office on vacation on November 13th & 14th.

5. Police Department Update

- Fircrest officers received or generated 158 calls for service this past week, including 51 traffic safety-related contacts (stops, collisions, parking violations). Officers responded to calls, including animal complaints, residential burglary alarms, unwanted loiterers, and two verbal domestic violence complaints. They also had two agency assists and two follow-up investigations. Officers had 71 community policing events (foot patrols, citizen assists, security checks, COP activities, sex offender checks, and suspicious people and vehicles).
 - Police Officer Bugarin was introduced to the Civil Service Commission at the November 6th meeting.
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- Police Chief Schaub met with Heidi Traverso from Novoaglobal, Inc. last week to discuss various photo enforcement options. They discussed traffic lights, school zones, and park zones around the city. Traffic data collection will occur within the next few weeks. The traffic data she collects will be used to assess the viability of photo enforcement traffic calming options. She will present her findings to the City Council during a study session in February 2024.
- “Coffee with the Chief” is scheduled for November 14th from 5:30 – 6:30 PM at the Community Center.

6. Parks & Recreation

Parks & Recreation highlights include:

Projects

- Community Center Close-out – The general contractor has dispatched the flooring installation subcontractor to address minor issues in the gym and fitness room flooring. Repairs are tentatively scheduled for the last weekend in November.
- Tennis Courts – Parks & Recreation Director Jeff Grover is working on final reports and billing for the RCO grant agreement. The City had received a \$16,000 grant from the Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office to renovate three tennis courts and add new tennis and pickleball striping adjacent to the Gene Goodwin Tot Lot.
- Whittier Park Master Plan – Join us for the first public engagement event for the Whittier Park Master Plan! The Fircrest community is invited to a public meeting on Thursday, November 16th, at 6:30 PM at the Roy H. Murphy Community Center, located at 555 Contra Costa Avenue. The community’s input will be invaluable in shaping the future of Whittier Park. This is a crucial moment when major decisions about the park’s design and features are being made, and we highly encourage the community’s active participation. More information is available on the City [website](#) and the [Whittier Park Master Plan project page](#). A second public meeting is scheduled for Thursday, December 14th.
- Fircrest Park Athletic Field Improvement Project – Our contractors have been hard at work restoring the natural grass athletic field at the south end of Fircrest Park. The contractor has completed approximately 90% of the work and is closely monitoring the rain saturation of the exposed soil so they can lay the remaining sod.

Community Events

- FIRfest – Join us on Saturday, November 18th for a day of eco-fun at Whittier Park. It’s your chance to score a FREE tree and embrace your inner gardener. The event runs from 9:00 AM to 12:00 Noon, and you can register at the [FIRfest Registration link](#). If you’re up for a bit of dirty work, don’t forget to bring your gloves and tools and join the work party at Whittier Park. Our friends from the Pierce County Conservation District will be there to guide you. And if you’re not in the mood for digging in the dirt, no worries! Just swing by to pick up your free tree – it’s that easy. Let’s work together to make Whittier Park even greener.
 - Dad & Daughter Sock Hop – Mark your calendars for February 9th, 2024, for the Dad & Daughter Sock Hop. Tickets will go on sale to Fircrest residents on Monday, January 8th at 9:00 PM. Ticket prices for Fircrest residents are \$25 per couple and \$10 for each additional child. More information will be coming soon.
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Recreation Programs

- Gobble Gobble Sugar Decorating Classes - We are thrilled to announce two exciting new cookie decorating classes in partnership with Maggie Magee's Bake Shop. The classes will be held at the Roy H. Murphy Community Center on Sunday, November 12th, and Saturday, November 18th, running from 2:30 – 4:00 PM. The cost for each class is \$50 per person. The last cookie class was a huge success, so don't miss your chance to wobble on over to this Thanksgiving sugar cookie class. Sign up online at www.maggiemagees.com.



- December Senior Trips – Registration begins on November 16th for the next Senior Trip on Thursday, December 7th. Join us for a nostalgic evening of watching the Christmas classic “It’s a Wonderful Life” at the Blue Mouse Theater located nearby in Tacoma’s Proctor District. We will have dinner at Knapp’s Restaurant, right next door to the theater.

Registration for the Lights of Fircrest Bus Tour will begin on November 21st. Join us for a bus tour through Fircrest as we drive around to admire the homes and businesses that are decorated for the Lights of Fircrest event. We will meet at the Community Center to enjoy an optional \$10 early bird dinner from Espresso Yourself. Bring your thermos for coffee, hot cocoa, or apple cider to take on the bus with you.

There are 12 spots available for these holiday trips. Registration is \$10. These trips sell out quickly, so sign up as soon as registration opens! Thank you to the Edwards Family Foundation for their generous sponsorship of our Senior Trips program. For more information, please get in touch with Raquel at rlapointe@cityoffircrest.net.

- Our Weekly Schedules [webpage](#) includes a comprehensive list of activities and programs for all age groups. Information about our adult programming can be found at [Adult Classes & Sports](#), and youth programs can be found on our [Youth Programs](#) webpage.

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

7. Planning & Building Update

- The community is invited to the 2024 Comprehensive Plan Year 1 Status Update. This will be a presentation by our consultant BHC on what has been accomplished thus far and what work remains in the year ahead. The presentation is on the agenda for the November 20th, 2023, City Council Study Session, which starts at 6:00 PM at City Hall. While no public comment is accepted at a study session, the public is still welcome to listen to the presentation.
- The Planning & Building Department is currently updating its SEPA distribution list. This is an email list sent to agencies, cities, and tribes on SEPA determinations. The purpose of the list is to disclose any environmental impacts and mitigation requirements and give the opportunity for public comment on a project. If you would like to be included on this list to receive notifications, please contact Community Development Director Mark Newman at mnewman@cityoffircrest.net or stop by the Permit Counter at City Hall.

- The City has submitted another grant application for four electric vehicle chargers to be located near the Roy H. Murphy Community Center. This grant from the Department of Commerce awards up to \$32,250 to cities looking to invest in electric vehicle infrastructure to help achieve cleaner air and a healthier climate. This is in addition to the \$10,000 Department of Ecology grant that the City previously applied for.
- CD Director Newman is creating an inventory of existing affordable housing stock in the City of Fircrest to better understand existing conditions.
- CD Director Newman is conducting the final design review for the Alliance Prose mixed-use project at 2119 Mildred Street W.
- Code Enforcement continued to tackle temporary sign violations, including an LED advertising truck and signs posted on utility poles.
- Project Coordinator Jean continued coordinating with Pierce County on the Sewer Basin IIA, with the City of Tacoma on the I&I program, and with representatives from Alliance.

8. Finance/Information Technology Update

Finance

- Finance Director Colleen Corcoran is continuing to prepare 2024 budget materials, including the ad valorem ordinance.
- The 2022 State Audit is beginning, and Finance is busy compiling requested information. Finance Director Corcoran, City Manager Masko, and Accountant Julie Dunbar participated in a kick-off meeting this past week. The City has requested to have in-person entrance and exit conferences and will keep the Council apprised of the entrance conference date.

9. Public Works Update

Public Works is operating under winter hours from 8:00 AM – 4:30 PM.

Highlights include: (in addition to routine daily tasks)

Utilities – Water, Sewer, Streets, and Stormwater

- Public Works Director Tyler Bemis and Utility Foreman Jeff Davis are continuing to analyze wastewater flow data following the recent heavy rainfall. On Monday, the City's total wastewater pumped to the City of Tacoma was approximately 540,000 gallons. This is quite a bit shy of the 2.25 mg/d identified in the 2014 Interlocal Agreement. Public Works will continue to monitor this data and are working to identify an official weather station to connect recorded rainfall and flows.
- Wind and rain response, including catch basin cleaning and additional sweeping throughout the City due to excess wind and rain.
- Upcoming Utility Billing Schedule:
 - Tuesday, November 14th – Late notifications will be sent out.
 - Tuesday, November 21st – 48-hour disconnect notices put on doors of delinquent accounts.
 - Tuesday, November 27th – Water shutoffs for delinquent accounts.

Maintenance – Parks & Facilities

- Windfall cleanup around all City facilities.
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- The crew continued painting at the Public Works building.
- Public Works provided assistance for the Fircrest Park field resurfacing project.

Project Updates

- Well #7 (Claremont)
 - We received the structural assessment report and recommendation for repairs and are reviewing with the Planning and Building department.
 - The damaged fence was repaired on Monday, November 6th.
- 44th Street West & 67th Ave West Lift Station Upgrade
 - Contract documents are being prepared to bring forward to the Council for approval.
- AMI Water Meter Exchange Program
 - Forty meters were exchanged this week, with program completion now at 49%.
- Storm Water Pre-Treatment Outfall Grant Project – Emerson Street & Estate Place
 - Final close-out Progress Reports and Payment Requests are in progress. We are awaiting the final review of the Quarter 2 submittal and then will submit Quarter 3.
 - Met with Department of Ecology Finance staff to coordinate final billing.
- Emerson Street Sidewalk Extension (south side) – Woodside Drive to 67th Ave West
 - We are communicating with PSRC and WSDOT to advance construction funds to the design portion of the project.
 - The design contract is being prepared to be brought forward to Council for approval.
- Regents Blvd (west) Grind & Overlay – Alameda Ave to 67th Ave West
 - We are communicating with PSRC and WSDOT regarding the funding shortfall.
- South Orchard Street Grind & Overlay – TIB Grant Funded
 - Design is in process for construction in 2024.
 - We are meeting with City of Tacoma staff and the design consultant on November 9th to continue discussions to coordinate the paving of the entire intersection at South Orchard and Regents Blvd/Center Street.
- Electron and Contra Costa Intersection Improvement – Legislative Funds
 - We received a \$153,000 appropriation of funds from the State Legislature.
 - Staff are preparing the Construction Readiness form and identified a timeline for deliverables.
- Claremont Street TIB Grant Application
 - The grant application certification identified total TIB funds of \$677,409 and total Local Funds of \$124,543.

10. Veterans' Appreciation Day at Point Defiance Zoo and Northwest Trek

U.S. military veterans and active duty are invited to enjoy the wonders of Northwest Trek and Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium for FREE during Veterans' Appreciation Day on November 11th. Veteran's immediate family members will receive half-off general admission. Free or half-price admission is not valid on online purchases and is valid at the Zoo or Trek admission windows. Visit [Metro Parks Tacoma](#) for additional information.

11. Housing Assistance Programs

For current homeowners who meet the income requirements, there are several loans and programs available from Pierce County to help folks like seniors stay in their homes long-term. Visit the Pierce County website at the below links for additional information on these programs.

- [Home Rehabilitation Loan Program | Pierce County, WA - Official Website](#)
- [Home Repairs | Pierce County, WA - Official Website \(piercecountywa.gov\)](#)
- [Rebuilding Together South Sound - Our Programs \(rebuildingtogetherss.org\)](#)
- [Home Repair - Tacoma/Pierce County Habitat For Humanity \(tpc-habitat.org\)](#)

12. Thanksgiving Turkey Giveaways

The Tacoma Police Department and Tacoma Ministerial Alliance are leading an effort to provide free turkeys to families during Thanksgiving. Turkeys will be given away while supplies last on a first-come, first-serve basis. There is a one-turkey per-family limit. Turkey pickup locations, dates, times, and contact information can be found by clicking the [Turkey Giveaway link](#).

13. Representative Leavitt Recognition

Representative Mari Leavitt, from the 28th Legislative District, which includes the City of Fircrest, was recognized last month as the 2023 Outstanding Service to Veterans Legislator of the Year by the [Governor's Veterans Affairs Advisory Committee \(VAAC\)](#) and the [Washington Department of Veterans Affairs \(WDVA\)](#). This award is presented annually to an individual who has made significant contributions to the lives of those who have served our country. Rep. Leavitt is actively involved in the veteran community through her co-chairing of the [Joint Committee for Veterans' and Military Affairs \(JCVMA\)](#) which regularly meets with military partners and veterans to hear their concerns and learn more about their needs. She also serves on the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) [National Task Force on Military and Veteran' Affairs](#). Congratulations Representative Leavitt on this recognition!

14. Week of Kindness

World Kindness Day falls on November 13th this year, and City staff are celebrating by holding a Week of Kindness from November 13th – 17th. During this week, we encourage you to go out of your way to be kind to others. Acts of kindness could range from donating to charity or simply smiling at someone just because! Kindness is contagious. If at least one person has a better day because of you, it's a win. Kindness in the workplace helps cultivate a positive culture where people want to show up and do their best.

During the Week of Kindness, sponsored by the City's Wellness Committee, if you think of a compliment, see someone working hard, or see someone who may need some extra kindness, write them a note and place it in a Kindness Envelope located at each building. On Friday, November 17th, the envelopes will be collected, and the notes will be distributed. Please make sure to place the name of who is to receive the note on the outside. A simple anonymous note can completely change someone's day for the better. We hope all of you are ready to spread some kindness!

