



City Manager's Update March 15, 2024



To: Fircrest City Council
From: Dawn Masko, City Manager
Date: March 15, 2024
Subject: City Manager's Weekly Update

Honorable Mayor and City Councilmembers

Below is the weekly 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. Upcoming Meetings – Week of March 18th – March 22nd

- City Council Study Session Monday, March 18th at 6:00 PM

2. March 12th, 2024 – Council Meeting Recap

Action items at the Tuesday, March 12th regular City Council meeting included:

- Approved a Resolution executing a Transportation Improvement Board grant agreement for the Claremont Street Grind and Overlay Project.
- Approved an Ordinance adopting the 2021 International and Uniform Building Codes as amended by the Washington State Building Code Council.

3. Council Meeting Agenda Items – March 26th, 2024 - Tentative

- Ordinance – 2024 Budget Amendment #1 – 1st Reading
- Resolution – Middle Housing Consultant Professional Services Agreement
- Resolution – Whittier Park Master Plan Contract Amendment
- Resolution – Community Center Close-out
- Resolution – Comprehensive Plan Update Budget Discussion
- Resolution – RWJ Consultants Contract Extension
- Fircrest Parks & Recreation Foundation Year-end Report

4. Administration

Administration highlights include:

- City Manager Dawn Masko, Project Coordinator Bob Jean, and City Attorney Bob Zeinemann continued to meet to discuss the sewer interlocal agreement and have been in continued communications with Alliance/Prose representatives regarding sewer options.

- Acting City Clerk Arlette Burkhart and Public Works Director Tyler Bemis met with KPG Psomas to discuss grant opportunities for sidewalks on 44th Street West.
- The City received nine public records requests this week for a total of 65 requests in 2024.
- The Centennial Steering Committee met today and had a robust discussion about subcommittees, events, volunteers, beautification efforts, communications, and a myriad of other details as we begin planning for the City's 100-year celebration.
- Clerk Burkhart has been in contact with Clear Risk Solutions for essential employee training. She is also now enrolled in CIAW's Zywave, which is a training platform that allows employees the opportunity to plan their training around their peak work hours.
- City Manager Masko updated the City's Sick Leave Donation program forms, reviewed volunteer forms, and updated several job descriptions in preparation for upcoming recruitments.
- Clerk Burkhart has been coordinating with Payroll, Facilities, and IT on offboarding departing employees to ensure a smooth transition.
- City Manager Masko and Parks & Recreation Director Jeff Grover conducted a second interview with a Recreation Specialist candidate this past week.
- The Fircrest Police Officer Eligibility List is live on the City's website, with one candidate currently on the list. Civil Service recently received two additional applications.
- In the last 30 days, the City's website has had 20,711 page views from a total of 6,270 users. Sessions are down 6%, and users are down 2% from the previous 30 days.

5. Municipal Court Update

- Wednesday, March 13th, marked a significant milestone as it was the last court session utilizing the existing 1980s Judicial Information System.
- The Court team is actively engaged in training efforts and ongoing preparation for the new case management system, Enterprise Justice, which will go live next week. The Fircrest Municipal Court is the 2nd municipal court in Washington State to go live with this new system.

6. Police Department Update

- Police Chief Ron Schaub is reviewing eight Lexipol Policies before releasing them to staff.
 - Officer Bugarin attended Emergency Vehicle Operations training on March 14th. We will be sending more officers later in the year.
 - We are working on changes to the Civil Service Rules to allow entry-level and exceptional entry-level applicants to apply for our vacant positions.
 - The supervisors are working on five employee performance evaluations.
 - Detective Roberts is continuing to work on the stolen John Deere tractor case. He has identified one of the suspects.
 - We are working on developing new protocols to address the passing of Initiative 2113 (Police Pursuits) by the State legislature. The new standards will go into effect in 90 days.
 - Police Chief Schaub created a Master Use of Force Logbook and a new Use of Force Report.
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- Fircrest officers responded to 248 calls for service for the period of 3/03/2024 – 3/11/2024, including 187 traffic stops, which generated 122 notices of infraction. Additional information is provided in the chart below.

Police Officer Activity for 3/03/2024 – 3/11/2024			
Call Activity	Number of Calls	Call Activity	Number of Calls
Traffic Stops	187	Reports Written	21
Notice of Infraction	122	Security Checks	3
Citations Issued	11	Subject Stops	2
Misdemeanor Arrests	11	Suspicious Persons	2
Alarms	5	Suspicious Vehicles	4
Community Oriented Policing	11	Theft	2
Follow-Ups	3	Unwanted Customer	2
Foot Patrol	5	Vehicle Prowls	2
Motor Vehicle Collisions	1	Warrants	1
Noise Complaints	2	Welfare Checks	2
Outside Jurisdiction Response	7	Unwanted Customer	2
Parking Tickets	1		

7. Finance Department Update

- Finance staff are working with Andrews Technology to automate timesheet processing.
- Our new part-time Accountant, Wanda Wells, started on March 6th. She will be working on a variety of projects, such as assisting with payroll and accounts payable, processing the daily deposit, backing up the front desk, and updating ERR spreadsheets, as well as other tasks.
- Staff attended training on annual report preparation and local government service contracting.
- Wellness Coordinator Sierra Lee attended the AWC Healthy Worksite Summit this week.
- The 2024 Budget Document was distributed this week and is also available on the City [website](#).

8. Parks & Recreation

Projects

- Whittier Park Master Plan – An amendment to the AHBL contract will be presented to the Council at the March 26th Council meeting. This amendment would add a third community meeting to the Whittier Park Master Plan scope of work. Pending approval of the contract amendment, staff will commence outreach efforts for the third meeting. The Council’s support and collaboration in this endeavor are appreciated and invaluable to the success of the project.

- Community Center Close-out – We are currently in the process of preparing to file the Notice of Completion with the State for the Community Center project. This procedure entails reporting details such as the date the project was awarded, the date the work was completed, project costs, and the date the City accepted the work. Construction costs paid to the general contractor Kassel amounted to \$8,271,438.91, while the total project cost stands at \$8,846,893.09. The Resolution to accept the project close-out will be on the March 26th City Council agenda. Parks & Recreation Director Jeff Grover would like to express his gratitude to everyone involved for their contributions in helping us reach this milestone.

Recreation Programs

- Chair Yoga – Our [Chair Yoga](#) classes are specially designed for active, older adults! These classes focus on enhancing strength, flexibility, and balance to maintain our ability to engage in the activities we enjoy. Sessions take place seated in a chair, with approximately half the time spent standing. Utilizing chairs, resistance bands, half-foam rollers, therapy balls, and other tools, we aim to challenge strength and balance. Incorporating elements from Yoga, Pilates, and functional exercise, we offer a holistic approach to movement. Participants should bring a yoga mat, a blanket, blocks (if available), a water bottle, and an open mind to explore new movements and have fun! Classes meet on Mondays and Wednesdays from 10:30 – 11:30 AM. Fees are \$8.00 for a drop-in class, \$20.00 for one class per week, and \$35.00 for two classes per week. Register for classes at [Chair Yoga for Active, Older Adults](#).
- Wednesday Workouts – [Registration](#) is now open for our Wednesday workout program that begins on April 17th. This program, led by Tacoma native Arvin Mosley Jr., aims to assist intermediate to advanced players in honing the basketball skills and strategies necessary for competitive youth basketball. This class caters to those seeking a challenge or wanting to enhance their game further. Emphasizing competition, enhancing basketball IQ, and engaging in situational games, the class offers a comprehensive approach to skill development. Triple Impact Coaching is dedicated to empowering players to excel on the court.
- Skyhawks Camps – We currently have two Skyhawks clinics taking place at the Roy H. Murphy Community Center. We are partnering with Skyhawks for two sessions each for basketball and volleyball before we transition to a summer filled with camps at Fircrest Park and the Community Center. We are in the process of transitioning the summer programs to our web page, so visit www.skyhawks.com for registration information.
- Youth Baseball – [Registration](#) started today for Fircrest residents for another exciting season of youth baseball. Registration begins on March 25th for non-residents. There are leagues for Kindergarten/1st grade, 2nd/3rd grades, Girls 4th/5th grades, and Boys 4th/5th grades. Additional information and registration can be found on the Parks & Recreation [web page](#).



Senior Programs

- April Senior Trip – Join fellow seniors on April 18th to explore the [Suquamish Museum](#) located on the Port Madison Indian Reservation near Bainbridge Island. The Suquamish Museum preserves and displays relics and records related to the Suquamish Tribe. After touring the museum, participants will head on over to the Suquamish Clearwater Casino for some fun slots, table games, and lunch at the Agate Pass Deli. The \$35 fee includes transportation and museum admission. Participants are responsible for their own lunch. Visit [Senior Trip - Suquamish Museum & Suquamish Clearwater Casino \(recdesk.com\)](#) for more information and to register.
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- March Senior Trip – There are still spots available for the March 21st trip to Imagine Monet - The Immersive Exhibition. Tacoma Arts Live is hosting this unique immersive experience on the art of French painter Claude Monet at the Tacoma Armory. This exhibit promises to transport you into Monet’s vibrant and dreamlike world by immersing visitors in a journey of more than 200 paintings utilizing state-of-the-art 360° projections on walls and floors. Imagine Monet is the exhibition produced and created by the French directors Annabelle Mauger and Julien Baron, the world’s first directors of a digital immersive exhibition.

Registration for this unique experience is now open [online](#). The registration fee of \$45 includes transportation and museum admission. Participants are responsible for their lunch, which will be at the Old Spaghetti Factory. The departure time is 10:45 AM from the Community Center, with an expected return time of 3:00 PM. More information is available online at [Senior Trip - Imagine Monet The Immersive Exhibit \(recdesk.com\)](#).

Community Events

- On St. Patrick’s Day (Sunday, March 17th), the City will be hosting Medallion Madness – a special event featuring 150 limited edition Fircrest medallions hidden throughout the community. Participants are encouraged to keep an eye out for these hidden “treasures” (medallions) scattered in various public places around the City, including the parks. Once a medallion is discovered, individuals can check in at the Roy H. Murphy Community Center to claim their prize – a “bag of gold” prize of chocolate coins. Additionally, participants can keep their medallion as a souvenir. Participants are requested to post a photo with their medallion on social media at [#fircrestmedallionmadness](#).



It's important to note that this event is exclusively happening on St. Patrick’s Day. Each medallion is numbered from 1 to 150, with one special number already pre-selected. The individual who discovers this special medallion will win a unique prize donated by OPTIMUM Physical Therapy. The lucky recipient will find out if they found the special medallion upon arrival at the Community Center. The City will provide updates on the number of medallions still hidden, so participants are encouraged to keep searching until all medallions are found. Participants are asked to keep only one medallion per person and are also advised that they must claim their prizes before Monday, April 1st, 2024. Happy Hunting!

- Staff and volunteers are busy preparing for the annual Easter Egg Hunt that will take place on Saturday, March 30th, at 10:00 AM.
- The 2024 Let's Go Wild Mom & Son Dance is happening on Friday, May 3rd. The roaring event promises an unforgettable night filled with music, refreshments, and games, and each child will take home a goody bag. Whether it’s a Mom, an Aunt, a Grandma, or another cherished loved one, all are welcome to join in on the festivities, which will be held at the Community Center from 6:30 to 8:30 PM. Due to limited space, pre-registration is required. Fircrest residents can purchase their tickets starting on April 1st at 9:00 AM. Non-residents can grab their tickets beginning on April 22nd. Ticket prices are \$25 per couple for residents and \$35 per couple for non-residents. Each additional child is \$10. Tickets will be available for purchase on the Parks & Recreation website. Space is limited, and tickets will sell out quickly! A massive shoutout to Berkshire Hathaway Home Services: South Sound Properties for their generous sponsorship, making this event possible.

Swimming Pool

- Director Grover is meeting with returning pool managers to coordinate training and interview dates, along with other essential milestones, gearing up for the summer season. Letters have already been sent out to last year's employees, outlining the application process for summer pool positions. The staff has also been discussing extending the pool season, as discussed at a previous Council meeting. After careful consideration and a thorough evaluation, it seems extending the season into September would be the most viable option. Director Grover will keep the Council updated as he explores potential opportunities further.

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."

9. Planning & Building Update

- The City received one new code enforcement request this week and continues to monitor existing complaints and requests as follows:
 - A concern regarding a cherry picker on the 600 block of San Juan Avenue that could potentially damage the sidewalk. Public Works confirmed that the cherry picker is for City staff to remove the holiday lights from the tree at Alice Peers Park.
 - There is a concern about overgrown blackberry bushes/vegetation creating a nuisance on a vacant lot on the 500 block of Ramsdell Street. Code Enforcement Officer Kristin Singh has reached out to the property owner, who has agreed to trim the blackberry bushes and will make more progress as the weather improves.
 - A concern regarding an over-excavated foundation along the 300 block of Harvard Avenue. CE Officer Singh and Community Development Director Mark Newman have reached out to the building permit applicant, who has agreed to move the foundation forms to meet the 20' required front yard setback.
 - A concern regarding unpermitted residential remodel work along the 1000 block of Brentwood Place. Permit Coordinator Singh is working with the property owner to pull permits for the job.
 - A concern regarding security flood lights at the 500 block of Golden Gate Avenue. The City issued a Notice of Civil Infraction to the property owner.
 - The City posted a Stop Work Order at a property on the 1500 block of Woodside Court for work completed without a building permit and work completed beyond the scope of an existing permit. The applicant is working on submitting appropriate permits and plans to resolve the issue.
 - Permit Coordinator Singh issued two new permits this week for residential plumbing and solar panel installation work.
 - 2024 Comprehensive Plan Update
 - The City has received 20 online responses so far to the [Draft Public Plan](#) survey. Click [here](#) to review survey results from the first two weeks. Both paper and online survey data will be collected on a rolling basis and shared during City Council and Planning Commission meetings as well as on the [2024 Comprehensive Plan Update webpage](#).
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- CD Director Newman and City Manager Masko continue to review budget concerns related to the Comprehensive Plan Update and will be meeting with BHC consultants next week to discuss further.
- CD Director Newman approved the Prose Project major site plan design review application.
- CD Director Newman is coordinating several grants, including the Home Energy and Appliance Rebate (HEAR) with Pierce County and the Coordinating Low-Income Housing (CLIHP) grant with South Sound Affordability Housing Partners.
- CD Director Newman revised the scope of work for the Climate Planning Grant to include both the urban tree canopy study and a critical areas ordinance update. Funding results for this grant should be made available by Summer 2024.
- Our Permit Coordinator/Code Enforcement Officer, Kristin Singh, is leaving the City for a new job opportunity. Her last day in the office was today. We will miss her and wish her well on this new journey. As a result of her departure, permit applicants may experience delays in responses due to the City being short-staffed. We apologize in advance for this inconvenience as we work to fill this role.

10. Public Works Update

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

Highlights include: (in addition to routine daily tasks)

Administration

- Today was Public Works Office Coordinator Vicky Walston's last day with the City. Vicky has been with the City for 19 years, and her departure is a significant loss for the department. Please join me in thanking her for her dedicated service to the City and wishing her well in her next endeavors.

Public Works appreciates your patience as we prepare to recruit for Vicky's replacement and adapt our operations in the short term while others attempt to absorb her job duties.

Utilities – Water, Sewer, Streets, and Stormwater

- One pump is currently being repaired at The Commons lift station due to jammed wastewater debris and worn brass ring screws. Upon return of the repaired pump, the opposite pump will be pulled and inspected for repair needs.
 - Additional sweeping is occurring following the recent wind and rain.
 - Materials have been ordered to repair the damaged hydrant on Aspen in The Commons. The materials will not be received for eight weeks.
 - "Sidewalk closed" barricades are in place near the Claremont rock wall failure site. The property owner is in the process of performing the repairs themselves and will keep Public Works informed throughout the process.
 - No bids were received by the March 11th deadline for the old bucket truck. Staff will now move forward with other options for the sale of the truck, with the intention to set the minimum sale price at \$30,500.
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Maintenance – Parks & Facilities

- The lights have been removed from the tree at Alice Peers Park. A holiday tree committee will be formed in the coming months to explore options to deal with the current tree or a replacement.
- Both Fircrest Park and Whittier Park were fertilized this week.
- Tree City USA “2nd Year” placards have been posted at both ends of Regents Blvd.
- Maintenance Workers Matt and Riley passed their Certified Pool Operator tests.

Project Updates

- Well #7 (Claremont)
 - We are continuing to seek other bids utilizing the MRSC Small Works Roster.
- Fircrest Park Maintenance Facility Structure Upgrade
 - We are seeking multiple bids utilizing the MRSC Small Works Roster.
- 44th Street West & 67th Ave West Lift Station Upgrade
 - Equipment submittals for the generator and SCADA cabinet have been approved.
- 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 67th Ave West
 - Engineering design is in process.
 - We changed from a one-year funding extension request to a 45-day extension per guidance from PSRC.
- AMI Water Meter Exchange Program
 - Meter exchanges are in progress, with program completion currently at 54%.

TOTAL BY YEAR	
	Total
2019	11
2020	143
2021	444
2022	283
2023	296
2024	113

PROJECT UPDATE	
Total City Meter Connections	2,402
New Meters Installed	1,290
Remaining Meters to be Installed	1,112
Percentage of Completion	54%

- Regents Blvd (west) Grind & Overlay – Alameda Ave to 67th Ave West
 - We are working with WSDOT to prepare a Notice to Proceed.
 - South Orchard Street Grind & Overlay – TIB Grant Funded
 - The design is in the process of construction in 2024.
 - Communication and coordination with City of Tacoma staff is continuing.
 - Electron and Contra Costa Intersection Improvement – Legislative Funds
 - We are still awaiting the Department of Commerce (DOC) paperwork.
 - We are exploring the option to apply for additional funds for this project from TIB.
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- Claremont Street Grind & Overlay TIB Grant
 - The Council authorized the City Manager to sign the Transportation Improvement Board (TIB) grant acceptance documents, including a Fuel Tax Agreement, at the March 12th Council meeting. The forms were submitted to TIB today.

11. State Building Code Update

⚠ The 2021 State Building Code, which was adopted by the City Council on March 12th as required by the State Building Code Council, went into effect today. Any permits or applications submitted prior to March 15th are vested under the 2018 Code. Any applications submitted on or after March 15th will be reviewed using the 2021 Code. This information has been posted on the [Permit Center's webpage](#). The amendments to the Code can be found on the [State Building Code website](#). ⚠

12. Storytime with a Princess

Daffodil Princesses will be at various Tacoma Public Library branches on Saturday, March 16th, for a special storytime. The princesses will read stories, sing songs, greet children, and be available for photos afterward. [Storytime with a Princess!](#) will be held at the [Swasey Branch](#), located at 7001 Sixth Avenue, from 11:00 AM – 12:00 PM.

13. Pierce Transit Service Changes

There will be many changes at the end of March at Pierce Transit. Bus routes and how customers ride them will be adjusted to make the most of the resources available. Changes include schedule improvements to most bus routes, launching an on-demand service zone in Gig Harbor, and adding a high-capacity transit service between Spanaway and downtown Tacoma. Additional information can be found at [What's New > Pierce Transit](#).

14. Spring Break Day Camps

Spring Break is just around the corner, and many families are looking for daycare options for kids of all ages. Several local organizations are offering a variety of spring break day camp options.

- Metro Parks Tacoma offers a variety of day camps, both traditional day camps and several specialty camps such as Hip Hop Audio Camp, Bricks 4 Kidz LEGO Camp, Flag Football, Basketball, and Golf. Visit [Spring Break Camps - Metro Parks Tacoma](#) for more information.
- The YMCA is offering a spring break camp filled with active, enriching activities, refreshing swim sessions, and engaging craft zones. Visit [YMCA Spring Break Camp](#) for more information.
- The Mountaineers is offering a spring break camp that offers a variety of outdoor activities, which may include climbing, hiking, navigation, outdoor cooking, first aid, knots and rope skills, or basic wilderness skills. More information is available at [Youth Programs - The Mountaineers](#).

15. Humane Society Waiving Adoption Fees

The Humane Society dog kennels are overflowing, and the shelter urgently needs to create space. As a result, they are waiving adoption fees for adult dogs through Sunday, March 17th. For more information and to view adoptable dogs, visit [The Humane Society for Tacoma & Pierce County](#).

