



City Manager’s Update

April 13, 2024



To: Fircrest City Council
From: Dawn Masko, City Manager
Date: April 13, 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. Whittier Park Master Plan Public Meeting

The community is invited to a third public meeting to provide input on the final site plan for Whittier Park. ABHL is excited to present its two concept master plans and actively engage with the Fircrest residents during the upcoming meeting. Decisions about how this park will look and function in the future will be made during this meeting, so your participation is encouraged. The meeting is scheduled to take place on April 25th at 6:00 PM in the Names Family Foundation Gymnasium.



Help plan your neighborhood!

How do you envision Whittier Park in the future?

Tell us about your vision!

What do you love about Whittier Park?

2. Upcoming Meetings – Week of April 15th – April 19th

- City Council Study Session

Monday, April 15th at 6:00 PM

3. Council Study Session Agenda Items – April 15th, 2024

- Police LEMAP (Loaned Executive Management Assistance Program) Discussion
- Photo Enforcement Discussion
- Civil Services Rules Update

4. Council Meeting Agenda Items – April 23rd, 2024 – Tentative

- Police 2023 Year-End Report
- Fircrest Parks & Recreation Foundation 2023 Year-End Report
- Resolution – 2024 Stormwater Management Program Update
- Resolution – Stormwater Capacity Grant
- Resolution – Well House #7 Repair Contract
- Resolution – Electron Way/Contra Costa Avenue Project Design Contract

5. April 9th, 2024 – Council Meeting Recap

Action items at the Tuesday, April 9th regular City Council meeting included:

- Held a Public Hearing on the 2024 Stormwater Management Program Plan.
- Adopted the 2024 Budget Amendment #1 Ordinance.
- Approved a Resolution authorizing the Pierce County System Access & Use Agreement for police mobile and portable radios.
- Approved a Resolution authorizing an Interlocal Agreement with Sunnyside Jail.
- Approved a Resolution authorizing a grant agreement with the WA State Department of Commerce for the Electron Way/Contra Costa Avenue Intersection Improvement project.
- Approved a Resolution authorizing a professional services agreement with KPG Psomas for engineering design services for the Claremont Street Grind & Overlay project.
- Approved a Resolution authorizing a grant agreement with the WA State Department of Commerce for a Climate Planning Grant.

6. Administration Update

Administration highlights include:

- Acting City Clerk Arlette Burkhart and Accountant Megan Ryan met with the pool manager to discuss shared responsibilities and best practices for the hiring of seasonal staff.
 - Acting Clerk Arlette Burkhart is continuing to gather information to apply for WA Transportation Improvement Board Complete Streets Early Opportunity funding to complete the entire intersection of Electron Way and Contra Costa Avenue. If awarded, this funding, in combination with the Department of Commerce grant, would replace all out-of-compliance curb ramps to bring them to ADA standards.
 - City Manager Dawn Masko worked with Police Chief Ron Schaub to finalize a draft Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) regarding police schedules. The draft MOU will be forwarded to the Police Guild and, if ratified, brought forward to the City Council for consideration.
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- City Manager Masko, City Attorney Bob Zeinemann, Project Coordinator Bob Jean, and Community Development Director Mark Newman met with the City's internal team regarding Prose Project developments.
- Acting Clerk Burkhart and Community Service Officer John Troung have been inventorying records and organizing them according to the retention schedule prescribed by the Washington State Archives.
- City staff continue to communicate with Facebook Meta to consolidate the City's social media pages under one Business Meta Suite. Special thanks to Administrative Assistant Sierra Lee for her continued efforts with this undertaking.
- Acting Clerk Burkhart is coordinating dates for Council photos with the City's photographer.
- City Manager Masko upgraded the Fircrest Civil Service Rules and Regulations into a searchable PDF file as part of an ongoing effort to continue digitizing City policies, procedures, and records.
- Acting Clerk Burkhart and Public Works Director Tyler Bemis are continuing discussions on grant opportunities regarding Pedestrian Safety.
- The City received seven public records requests this week for a total of 86 requests in 2024.
- City Manager Masko attended the AWC 2024 Legislative Session recap webinar.
- In the last 30 days, the City's website has had 20,276 page views from 6,901 users. Sessions are up 12%, and users are up 11% from the previous 30 days.

7. Finance Department Update

- Finance Director Colleen Corcoran is continuing to work on the Annual Report, which must be submitted to the WA State Auditor's Office by May 29th.
- Part-time Accountant Wanda Wells continued her training. She is doing a great job at filling in for Accountants Julie Dunbar and Megan Ryan this week.
- Finance Director Corcoran is continuing her work on updating 2023 grant files. This information will be used for the Annual Report and to ensure that all grant revenue is billed and received. Acting Clerk Burkhart has created a tracking spreadsheet that will be updated to include financial tracking and used citywide.
- The City's network and phone system will be down on Thursday, May 9th, for planned upgrades. We will work to ensure that adequate notice is provided via our website, social media, and signage. There will also be a recorded message on City phone lines on May 9th informing the public that the City is undergoing planned maintenance on its phone system and network, that all City buildings will be open during regular business hours, and that some services may be unavailable due to the maintenance. All systems are scheduled to resume on May 10th.

8. Police Department Update

- Police Chief Ron Schaub attended the Kiwanis Terrific Kids Assembly at Wainwright Intermediate School.
 - Officer C. Roberts completed the EVOG (Emergency Vehicle Operations) Instructor course.
 - Chief Schaub conducted an introductory interview with an out-of-state lateral officer applicant. A Civil Service Oral Board for two candidates will be scheduled within the next few weeks.
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- Chief Schaub attended the Public Safety Communications Operations Committee meeting at South Sound 911 this morning.
- There were 962 total calls for service for the month of March.
- Fircrest officers responded to 176 calls for service from 3/31/2024 to 4/07/2024, including 157 traffic stops, which generated 104 notices of infraction. The chart below provides additional information.

Police Officer Activity for 3/31/24 – 4/07/24			
Call Activity	Number of Calls	Call Activity	Number of Calls
Traffic Stops	157	Reports Written	21
Notice of Infraction	104	Security Checks	3
Citations Issued	10	Shots Fired	2
Misdemeanor Arrests	11	Subject Stops	3
Warrant Arrests	1	Suspicious Persons	2
Alarms	3	Suspicious Vehicles	3
Follow-Ups	3	Unwanted/Unwelcome Person	2
Motor Vehicle Collisions	2	Vehicle Prowls	3
Outside Jurisdiction Response	1	Welfare Checks	8

9. Planning & Building Update

- The Planning & Building Department is currently short-staffed as it searches for a new Permit Coordinator/Assistant Planner/Code Enforcement Officer. We appreciate your patience during this transition.
- Please note that our permitting system and phone system will be unavailable on Thursday, May 9th, for scheduled network maintenance.
- Interviews were held for the Permit Coordinator/Assistant Planner position this past Monday. The top candidate is undergoing a background check, and we hope to extend an offer soon.
- Staff continue to run day-to-day operations, issuing permits, routing inspections, and answering phone calls and emails from the public regarding zoning, ADUs, and business licensing.
- CD Director Mark Newman completed the planning and engineering reviews for a new single-family residential home and ADU along the 1200 block of Arondale Drive.
- City staff met with Kimley-Horn & Associates for a Middle Housing kick-off meeting. The meeting included discussion on the development of a public participation plan, community engagement strategies, and scheduling a public open house this summer. Stay tuned for more information in the coming months.
- There is still time to submit feedback for the [2024 Comprehensive Plan Update](#). Please submit your feedback either [online](#) or in person at City Hall or the Community Center no later than April 30th, 2024.

- The City received two new code enforcement requests this week:
 - Two requests regarding transient merchants and commercial canvassing without City of Fircrest business licenses. Staff contacted the businesses to inform them of the licensing requirements.
- The City continues to monitor existing complaints and requests:
 - Concern over multiple inoperable vehicles, garbage accumulation, and burning of trash along the 200 block of Regents Blvd.
 - Concern over an RV parked long-term in the City's right-of-way along the 400 block of Harvard Avenue. The owner committed to having the RV towed by April 12th. Staff will follow up this coming week.
 - Concern over the accumulation of trash, food waste, and overgrown vegetation along the 200 block of Alameda Avenue. This is in addition to an existing concern regarding an RV being lived in within a single-family zoning district.
- CD Director Newman updated the City Council on the Level 2 EV Charging Grant and TPU rebate program and provided associated cost estimates.
- CD Director Newman attended the AWC's 2024 Legislative Session recap webinar.
- Washington State's Arbor Day was held on April 10th this year. The WA State Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has released an Arbor Day coloring book. You can download a copy here: [DNR Arbor Day Coloring Book](#) or request a printed copy at City Hall by contacting Mark Newman at mnewman@cityoffircrest.net.




10. Parks & Recreation Update

Park Projects

- Community Center – Green Leaf Landscaping has replaced the trees at the Community Center, which Kassell wouldn't replace. Green Leaf did an excellent job matching the size and species of each tree. Thank you Maintenance Lead Bryce Wakefield, for helping coordinate this project.
- Fircrest Park Athletic Field Improvements – KBH Construction recently completed the removal of the fence at Fircrest Park, and the newly laid sod is looking fantastic. While the project is nearing completion, there are still a couple of punch-list areas that need attention. Additionally, we will be focusing on addressing the lighting in the next few weeks, as there are a few lights that are not consistently working. Thank you for your continued patience and support as we work to enhance Fircrest Park.
- Whittier Park Master Plan – DataBar has assured us that the postcard for the upcoming meeting on April 25th will be mailed out to all Fircrest households by April 19th at the latest. Furthermore, advertising for the meeting started this past week on our website, social media, and the readerboard. ABHL is excited to present its two concept master plans and actively engage with the community during the upcoming meeting. The meeting is scheduled to take place on April 25th at 6:00 PM in the Names Family Foundation Gymnasium.

Community Events

- Community Yard Sale – Mark your calendars for the annual Community Yard Sale, which will be held on Saturday, June 15th, from 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM in yards all around Fircrest. Sign up to be included on the list of participating homes starting May 1st.

- The 2024 [Let's Go Wild Mom & Son Dance](#) is happening on Friday, May 3rd, from 6:30 to 8:30 PM in the Names Family Foundation Gymnasium. [Registration](#) is now open for Fircrest residents. Non-residents can grab their tickets beginning on April 22nd. Ticket prices are \$25 per couple for residents, \$35 per couple for non-residents, and each additional child is \$10. Tickets are available for purchase on the Parks & Recreation website. We are currently at 50% capacity, so don't delay - tickets will sell out quickly! Register at [Let's Go Wild Mom & Son Dance](#).
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- [Family Game Night](#) – Join us for an evening of fun and games at our Family Game Night hosted by The Curious Bear Toy & Book Shop. Bring the entire family and get ready for a night of laughter, fun, and some friendly competition. Game night is being held on Friday, April 19th, from 5:00 – 7:00 PM at the Multi-Purpose Room. This two-hour event is limited to just 20 families, so ensure your spot by registering early at [Family Game Night](#).

Senior Programs

- [May Senior Trip](#) – Join fellow seniors on Tuesday, May 21st, for a guided tour of the [LeMay Collections](#) at Marymount. A guide will lead the tour, which will be filled with historical and fun facts, through the Main Exhibit Building, Union Station, and the White Building, where you will see over 500 vehicles along with other exhibits. After the tour, participants will enjoy lunch at Krickitt's Bar & Grill. The \$25 fee includes transportation and admission to the LeMay Collections. Participants are responsible for their lunch. Visit [Senior Trip - The Lemay Collections @ Marymount](#) for more information and to register. Thank you to our generous anonymous donor for making the reduced cost of \$25 possible!

Recreation Programs

- [Youth Baseball League](#) – The Fircrest Youth Baseball League is filling up quickly, with only a few spots remaining. The K/1st grade division is full; there are only a few spots left in the 2nd/3rd grade division, and several spots are still open for the 4th/5th grade divisions. Practices begin on Monday, April 22nd. Register at [Youth Baseball Registration](#).
- [Pee Wee T-Ball](#) – [Registration](#) for Pee Wee T-Ball opens on April 19th for Fircrest residents and will open for non-residents on April 26th. This is a six-week instructional league for Pre-Kindergarten kids aged 4-5. Games and practices will be held on Saturday. Resident fees are \$35, and non-resident fees are \$55. Additional information and registration can be found on the Parks & Recreation [web page](#).
- [Open Gym Volleyball](#) – Open Gym Volleyball has resumed on Thursdays from 7:00 to 8:45 PM in the Names Family Foundation Gym. Admission is \$2.00 for Fircrest residents and \$4.00 for non-residents. Fircrest residents aged 65 and over are free.
- [Yoga](#) – The Recreation staff would like to acknowledge one of our yoga instructors who recently transitioned to new opportunities. Terry Miranda joined us after our longtime instructor, Cynthia Endicot, retired. Terry seamlessly took over the class, ensuring that this group of active older adults didn't miss any exercises. Taking over the role of a longstanding instructor is no easy feat, and Terry proved she was more than capable. She also introduced her colleague Sheri Larson to the group, and with Terry's departure, she will now be teaching all yoga classes. In addition to the Monday, Wednesday, and Friday classes, Sheri is adding a Thursday class to the lineup. We extend our heartfelt thanks to Terry for her service and dedication and for bringing gentle yoga and chair yoga to our programming at the Roy H. Murphy Community Center!



Other Information

April is National Volunteer Month, and this year, we're excited to celebrate the individuals who selflessly support and uplift our Fircrest Recreation Department programs and events. At the Fircrest Community Center, volunteerism holds a special place in our hearts. We are thankful for our community, where the spirit of volunteerism runs deep, and our residents who embody the value of giving back. Whether through summer programs, youth sports, or community events, volunteers are the backbone of our Recreation programs and events. Thank you to all of our incredible volunteers!!

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."

11. Public Works Update

Public Works' current winter operating winter hours are 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM.

Highlights include: (in addition to routine daily tasks)

Administration

Your patience is appreciated as Public Works is currently short-staffed and is working to fill the vacant position of Public Works Office Coordinator. Four candidates have been selected to participate in the interview process, which is tentatively scheduled for April 16th.

Utilities – Water, Sewer, Streets, and Stormwater

- Maintenance and repairs are occurring on the fluoridation systems at all Well sites.
- The Alameda Lift Station's repairs, including the replacement of an impellor and wear rings on a pump, are scheduled for April 19th. These repairs should improve pump efficiency.
- The replacement pump for The Commons Lift Station will not arrive for at least 10-12 weeks.
- The replacement fire hydrant for the damaged one at The Commons is estimated to arrive in early May.
- The fire hydrant at El Dorado and Regents Blvd. is scheduled for repairs next week. The repairs were rescheduled because a hot tap of the main is necessary.
- "Sidewalk closed" barricades are in place near the Claremont rock wall failure site. The property owner is currently performing the repairs and continues to keep Public Works informed.
- The James G. Murphy Co.'s [online auction](#) closed yesterday. We are hoping to hear soon what the auction results were for our Bucket Truck.

Maintenance – Parks & Facilities

- Irrigation repairs are underway in preparation for summer watering at all City parks.
- Staff continued working on pool preparations for the upcoming 2024 season.
- Staff repaired picnic tables at Fircrest Park.

Project Updates

- Claremont Street Grind & Overlay TIB Grant
 - Council approved the design services agreement on April 9th.
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- Well #7 (Claremont)
 - We received one bid from the five contractors who were invited to bid on the project from the MRSC Small Works Roster. The construction bid award will be brought forward on April 23rd for Council approval.
- Fircrest Park Maintenance Facility Structure Upgrade
 - Bids for this project were due today. Following bid review, a contract will be brought forward for Council approval at an upcoming Council meeting.
- 44th Street West & 67th Ave West Lift Station Upgrade
 - The contractor is procuring equipment and materials in preparation to start construction and is coordinating tree removal to begin the site prep 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 67th Ave West
 - Engineering design is in process.
- Regents Blvd (west) Grind & Overlay – Alameda Ave to 67th Ave West
 - We are working with WSDOT to prepare a Notice to Proceed.
- AMI Water Meter Exchange Program
 - Meter exchanges are in progress, with program completion currently at 54%. No meters were exchanged this week due to meter readings and staff training.

TOTAL BY YEAR	
	Total
2019	11
2020	143
2021	444
2022	283
2023	296
2024	128

PROJECT UPDATE	
Total City Meter Connections	2,402
New Meters Installed	1,305
Remaining Meters to be Installed	1,097
Percentage of Completion	54%

- 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 are continuing, with a joint coordination meeting occurring on April 5th.
- Electron and Contra Costa Intersection Improvement – Legislative Funds
 - City Council approved the Commerce (DOC) grant agreement on April 9th.
 - We are continuing to explore options to apply for additional funds from TIB.

12. Children’s Book Drive

The City of Fircrest is holding a book drive during the month of April in recognition of International Children’s Book Day, which was on April 2nd. All books donated will be donated to the Community Center for the community to use. Drop-off locations are City Hall at 115 Ramsdell Street and the Community Center at 555 Contra Costa Avenue. Start your spring cleaning and bring in your books!

13. Community Conversations

28th Legislative District Representative Mari Leavitt is hosting a community conversation on Thursday, May 2nd, from 11:00 AM to 12:00 PM at the Steilacoom Library, located at 2950 Steilacoom Blvd. This is an opportunity for citizens to tell Representative Leavitt about the issues that matter the most to them, review the 2024 legislative session, and learn about important funding coming to our community.

14. Property Tax Exemption Program

Attention all low-income seniors and people with disabilities. If you own your home, you may be eligible to apply for the [Pierce County Property Tax Exemption Program](#), which freezes the value of your residence for tax purposes and exempts you from various levies. The Pierce County Assessor-Treasurer's Office is hosting in-person Property Tax Exemption Seminars to answer your questions on the exemption program and provide valuable information. Upcoming events are on April 4th in Graham, May 21st in Gig Harbor, and June 12th in Lakewood. The seminars are free and open to the public. To learn more and RSVP to secure your spot, visit [Property Tax Exemption Seminars](#).

15. Sustainable Solutions Weekly Classes

Pierce County offers a free class series – Sustainable Solutions – designed to equip you with the knowledge and tools to create a more livable community for everyone. Weekly environmental education topics include gardening, composting, and energy conservation. The classes are led by experts from Pierce County Planning & Public Works, with each session offering practical insights and valuable tips for reducing your eco-footprint. Whether you're new to sustainability or a seasoned enthusiast, these classes will empower you with the resources to contribute to a healthier, more vibrant Pierce County.

Demystifying Curbside Recycling – Thursday, April 18th, from 6:00 – 7:00 PM; Virtual on Zoom. Are you curious about recycling in Pierce County? What goes into your curbside recycling cart, and what needs to be thrown away? Where do recyclables go after they are collected? Are they really getting recycled? Get your recycling questions answered and learn the ins and outs of recycling right in Pierce County. To register, visit [Sustainable Solutions Series: Demystifying Curbside Recycling](#).

16. Natural Yard Care Webinars

The Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department is offering a series of free natural yard care webinars. Natural yard care emphasizes proper plant care and lawn management, wise water and fertilizer use, proper plant placement, and healthy soil conditions. Contact Troy Rowan at trowan@tpchd.org or 253-649-1839 for additional information.

Lawns of the Future: Less Grass, Less Work – Wednesday, April 17th, from 7:00 – 8:30 PM. Marianne Binetti will share advice on how to transform your outdoor space into a beautiful and sustainable landscape. You'll get tips on how to reduce the amount of grass in your yard. Save time and effort! Register at [naturalyardcareapril17.bpt.me](https://www.naturalyardcareapril17.bpt.me).

Have Your Garden & Eat It Too – Wednesday, April 24th, from 7:00 – 8:30 PM. Create a beautiful garden that provides fresh, healthy produce. Learn tips and tricks from Jessi Bloom for growing fruits, vegetables, and herbs right in your backyard. Register at [naturalyardcareapril24.bpt.me](https://www.naturalyardcareapril24.bpt.me).
