



City Manager's Update April 5, 2024



To: Fircrest City Council
From: Dawn Masko, City Manager
Date: April 5, 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 April 8th – April 12th

- City Council Meeting Tuesday, April 9th at 7:00 PM

2. Council Meeting Agenda Items – April 9th, 2024 - Tentative

- Public Hearing on the Stormwater Management Program Plan
- Ordinance – 2024 Budget Amendment #1 – Adoption
- Resolution – Electron Way/Contra Costa Ave. Intersection Improvement Grant Agreement
- Resolution – Climate Change Planning Grant Agreement
- Resolution – Pierce County System Access & Use Agreement
- Resolution – Sunnyside Jail Interlocal Agreement
- Resolution – Claremont Street Grind & Overlay Professional Services Agreement

3. Spring Cleanup Day

Westside Disposal Spring Cleanup Days for Fircrest residents **only** are Saturday, April 6th and Saturday, October 13th. Westside Disposal is located at 2815 Rochester St. West in University Place (1/2 block south of Cheers). Residents may bring in the following items for disposal and recycling: Miscellaneous junk, yard waste, wood, metal, concrete, tires, car batteries, etc. No liquids, paint, or hazardous materials will be accepted. There is a limit of one load per household for all items except yard waste. There is no limit for yard waste loads only. Trucks and trailers larger than a standard pickup bed are not allowed. Please make sure to secure all loads!

4. Administration

Administration highlights include:

- City Manager Dawn Masko met with a consultant to discuss an audit of the City's utility taxes, franchise fees, and potentially sales tax.

- Acting City Clerk Arlette Burkhart is working with KPG Psomas regarding an engineer's estimate to potentially complete the full intersection of Electron Way and Contra Costa Avenue with Rectangular Rapid-Flashing Beacons (RRFB) by applying for grant funds from the WA Transportation Improvement Board Complete Streets Early Opportunity Program.
- Acting Clerk Burkhart and Accountant Megan Ryan met with a representative from the Association of WA Cities to begin discussions on the City's upcoming Benefits and Wellness Fair in October. More information will be available as we get closer to the event. City Manager Masko also met with the AWC representative to discuss City benefits and the Wellness Fair.
- The Fircrest Civil Service Commission recertified the lateral police officer eligibility list at their April 1st meeting. Currently there is one applicant left on the list.
- City Manager Masko met with Civil Service Commission Chair Alex Koerger to discuss the Civil Service Examiner performance evaluation process and job description.
- City Manager Masko, City Attorney Bob Zeinemann, and Project Coordinator Bob Jean met with the City's internal team regarding Prose Project developments.
- The City received three public records requests this week for a total of 79 requests in 2024.
- In the last 30 days, the City's website has had 22,660 page views from 7,079 users. Sessions are up 16%, and users are up 20% from the previous 30 days.

5. Finance Department Update

- Finance Director Colleen Corcoran is working with the Fircrest Municipal Court to reformat the remittance reports that the Court provides to Finance at the end of each month. She is creating an Excel spreadsheet that will help automate the process.
 - The Washington State Treasurer's Office has selected Principal Financial Group as the statewide securities provider effective April 1, 2024 through March 31, 2028. The Local Government Investment Pool (LGIP) interest for March 2024 was 5.41%. This is 5.1% higher than it was in April of 2022 when it was 0.40%. For the month of March, the City received \$77,543.86 of interest from the LGIP.
 - Finance continues to meet with Andrews Technology to work on the new electronic timesheet program. They are hoping to have a file to test by the end of the month. Once testing is completed, department heads will receive training on the program.
 - Finance Director Corcoran and Accountant Julie Dunbar are continuing to work on the Annual Report. They are working on Schedule 1 and doing research for SBITAs. This is a new requirement from the State requiring additional reporting for contracts involving the use of software programs. More detailed information was provided in last week's Weekly Update.
 - Representatives from Locke Systems will be onsite on Monday to discuss the City's network with department heads in preparation for some needed upgrades. It may be necessary to shut down the network for up to a day to make the network changes. More information will be provided in the coming weeks.
 - Finance Director Corcoran is reviewing and updating grant files from 2023. This information will be used for the Annual Report as well as assuring all grant revenue is billed and received. Acting Clerk Burkhart has created a tracking spreadsheet that will be updated to include financial tracking to be used citywide.
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6. Police Department Update

- Police Chief Ron Schaub is working on 2023 year end stats for the Police Department.
- Officer C. Roberts is finishing week #2 of the EVOC (Emergency Vehicle Operations) instructor course in Spokane.
- The Civil Service Commission met on Monday and discussed updating some of the Civil Service rules. Commissioners were provided with some initial language change suggestions.
- Chief Schaub attended the FBI NA Spring Training in Mukilteo.
- There were 962 total calls for service for the month of March.
- Fircrest officers responded to 252 calls for service from 3/24/2024 to 3/31/2024. There were 962 total calls for service for the month of March, including 667 traffic stops which generated 443 notices of infraction. The chart below provides additional information.

Police Officer Activity for March 2024			
Call Activity	Number of Calls	Call Activity	Number of Calls
Traffic Stops	667	Motor Vehicle Collisions	5
Notice of Infraction	443	Noise Complaints	2
Citations Issued	42	Outside Jurisdiction Response	19
Felony Arrests	1	Parking Tickets	18
Misdemeanor Arrests	42	Reports Written	82
Warrant Arrests	2	Security Checks	20
Alarms	11	Subject Stops	14
Civil Complaints/Issues	3	Suspicious Persons	11
Community Oriented Policing	38	Suspicious Vehicles	15
Court Transports	3	Theft	3
Disabled Vehicles	3	Traffic Complaints	3
Disturbances	3	Unwanted/Unwelcome Person	3
Domestic Violence	3	Vehicle Prowls	21
Follow-Ups	14	Welfare Checks	13
Foot Patrol	18	911 Calls – Trouble Unknown	7
Fraud	3		

7. 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.
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- Community Development (CD) Director Mark Newman coordinated with Acting Clerk Burkhart and City Manager Masko to review applications for the Permit Coordinator/Assistant Planner position as well as schedule interviews with candidates the week of April 8th.
- The City received one new code enforcement request this week and continues to monitor existing complaints and requests.

Resolved Code Enforcement Concerns

- Concern over too many cars parked along the 1200 block of Buena Vista Avenue. Staff worked with the complainant to explain the City's laws on parking time limits (overparking), junk vehicles, and registration requirements. As a result, staff were able to resolve the issue.
- Concern regarding over-height vegetation blocking the required clear vision triangle along the 600 block of Summit Avenue. Staff met with the property owner, who agreed to trim back the vegetation to allow for better visibility. Staff completed an inspection on April 2nd and confirmed the bushes had been trimmed for better visibility.

Ongoing Code Enforcement Concerns

- Concern over multiple inoperable vehicles, garbage accumulation, and burning of trash along the 200 block of Regents Blvd. Staff sent out a notice of violation letter last week and continues to monitor the situation.
 - Concern over an RV parked long-term in the City's right-of-way along the 400 block of Harvard Avenue. Staff sent out a notice of violation letter last week and continues to monitor the situation.
 - There is a 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. The staff hasn't received a response from the property owner and is preparing a second notice of violation letter with a follow-up inspection.
 - There were repeated concerns regarding foundation work along the 300 block of Harvard Avenue and the accumulation of junk and debris on the lot. CD Director Mark Newman inspected the lot for compliance and worked with the City's building inspector to complete an inspection on April 2nd. The inspection found no compliance issues with the property, and construction will continue to progress. However, a complainant expressed an ongoing concern following the inspection, and staff will continue to monitor the situation.
- City staff issued four residential over-the-counter building, mechanical, and plumbing permits.
 - City staff worked with an applicant interested in opening an adult family home and guided them through the permitting and DSHS processes.
 - City staff assisted a resident interested in the ADU process to be able to age-in-place in Fircrest.
 - Passport Specialist Laura Thompson processed 147 new passport applications for March!
 - 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.
 - In the coming months, City staff will work with its consultant, Kimley-Horn, to establish a public participation and community engagement plan to implement Middle Housing requirements required by the State. Please stay tuned for more information, and look out for a sign-up link to stay updated
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- CD Director Newman reviewed the Level 2 EV Charging Grant and Tacoma Public Utilities rebate program to analyze which program would be most successful for the City to implement. He is preparing an update to provide to the Council.
- CD Director Newman and City Manager Masko fine-tuned several grant proposals in preparation for the April 9th City Council meeting.
- CD Director Newman met with the City's internal Prose Project team for an update on permitting and sewage capacity.

8. Parks & Recreation

Whittier Park Master Plan

- Parks & Recreation Director Jeff Grover is working with AHBL in preparation for the 3rd Whittier Park Master Plan Community Meeting. Meeting information will be made available throughout the community utilizing a variety of mediums, including direct mailing, website, social media, and the City reader board. The meeting is scheduled to take place on April 25th at 6:00 PM in the Names Family Foundation Gymnasium. The community's presence and input are highly valued as we discuss the Whittier Park Master Plan and its future development.

Community Events

- The Easter Egg Hunt was a huge hit again this year! We gave out over 3,000 candy-filled eggs and 150 special prize eggs to kids in three age groups. A big thank you to all of the volunteers who helped make this Egg Hunt the best one yet and made sure each age group had a fair and fun time. The success of the event was thanks to careful planning by our volunteers, who ensured everyone enjoyed the happy atmosphere and that everything ran smoothly. We also want to thank our local sponsors and community members whose support made the event possible and whose contributions added extra fun. Looking ahead, we're excited to keep enhancing our Easter Egg Hunts and, with the help of volunteers and the community, to make each event even more EGG-ceptional and bring more joy to everyone involved!

- 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. Due to limited space, pre-registration is required. [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 and \$35 per couple for non-residents. Each additional child is \$10. Tickets are available for purchase on the Parks & Recreation website. Space is limited, and tickets will sell out quickly! Thank you, Berkshire Hathaway Home Services: South Sound Properties, for your generous sponsorship! Register at [Let's Go Wild Mom & Son Dance](#).



- [Teen Late Night](#) – We are eagerly preparing for our first Teen Late Night in partnership with TeamWrk. Teen Late Night will take place on Friday, April 12th, from 7:00 – 11:00 PM at the Roy H. Murphy Community Center. TeamWrk is partnering with the Tacoma Community College basketball team to provide fantastic volunteers to assist with supervision and event organization. Our Fircrest staff will handle the food for the evening, while TeamWrk will bring in various technology-based games, gym games, and other activities. This event is free for all youth in the 6th – 12th grades. Participants must check in before 9:00 PM. More details are on the Parks & Recreation [webpage](#).



- 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.
- 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 own 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

- 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](#).
- Explore Sports After School – Have fun and be active after school playing new sports and games. Explore sports like ping pong and pickleball, and play well-known playground games like dodgeball, capture the flag, and kickball. This program is for kids ages 9-13 in the 3rd – 9th grades. The session runs Wednesdays from 4:00 – 5:00 PM from April 17th – May 22nd. The resident fee is \$40, and the non-resident fee is \$55. Register at [Explore Sports After School](#).



Parks

- Parks & Recreation Director Jeff Grover and Public Works Director Tyler Bemis have identified a potential solution to address the noise concerns stemming from the community’s use of the Fircrest Park Courts. They are currently exploring the feasibility of testing noise absorption matting to mitigate the impact on neighboring residents. The plan is to procure enough used mats from the Kitsap Humane Society to span the length of the affected neighbor’s yard, with the goal of significantly reducing the noise generated by the courts. Staff is sensitive to the noise concerns and is committed to fostering positive relationships with the surrounding neighbors while also considering the needs of community residents who enjoy utilizing the courts. The aim is to finalize the acquisition next week so installation of the materials can begin. Our staff welcomes any feedback or suggestions regarding the Fircrest Park Courts.

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. 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. Three candidates have been selected to participate in the interview process, which is tentatively scheduled for next week.

Utilities – Water, Sewer, Streets, and Stormwater

- Meter reading started on Monday, April 1st.
- The new impellor and wear rings ordered for replacement on a pump at the Alameda Lift Station are anticipated to arrive in 2-3 weeks. These repairs should help with pump efficiency.
- The replacement pump for The Commons Lift Station won't arrive for at least 12 weeks.
- The replacement fire hydrant for the damaged one at The Commons is estimated to arrive in early May.
- Repairs are scheduled for next week for the fire hydrant at El Dorado and Regents Blvd.
- “Sidewalk closed” barricades are in place near the Claremont rock wall failure site. The property owner is currently performing the repairs and will keep Public Works informed throughout the process.
- The Bucket Truck is up for auction through James G. Murphy Co.'s [online auction](#) until 10:00 AM on April 11th.

Maintenance – Parks & Facilities

- Staff continued working on pool preparations for the upcoming 2024 season.
- Staff worked with the vendor on adjustments to the City Hall fire alarm system.

Project Updates

- 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 bid is being reviewed, and if it is responsive, a contract will be forwarded to the Council for approval.
 - Fircrest Park Maintenance Facility Structure Upgrade
 - We are seeking multiple bids utilizing the MRSC Small Works Roster. The bids for this project are due April 12th.
 - 44th Street West & 67th Ave West Lift Station Upgrade
 - The contractor is procuring equipment and materials in preparation to start construction.
 - Storm Water Pre-Treatment Outfall Grant Project – Emerson Street & Estate Place
 - Final close-out Progress Reports and Payment Requests are in progress.
 - Claremont Street Grind & Overlay TIB Grant
 - The professional services agreement for design services will be coming to the Council for approval on April 9th.
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- 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	120

PROJECT UPDATE	
Total City Meter Connections	2,402
New Meters Installed	1,297
Remaining Meters to be Installed	1,105
Percentage of Completion	54%

- Claremont Street Grind & Overlay TIB Grant
 - The professional services agreement for design services will be coming to the Council for approval on April 9th.
- 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, with a joint coordination meeting being held today.
- Electron and Contra Costa Intersection Improvement – Legislative Funds
 - The Department of Commerce (DOC) grant agreement is coming to the Council for approval on April 9th.
 - We are continuing to explore options to apply for additional funds from TIB.

10. 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!

11. 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](#).

12. 28th Legislative District Community Meeting

Senator T'wina Nobles is hosting a Community Meeting to hear diverse opinions about what residents find important in the 28th Legislative District. All ages are welcome to attend. The meeting will be held at Watson's Event Center, 11521 Bridgeport Way SW in Lakewood, on Thursday, April 11th, from 6:30 to 7:30 PM. Please RSVP using this link: bit.ly/noblescm. Residents are encouraged to use the link to submit any questions they may have. Senator Nobles will do her best to answer as many questions as possible during the meeting.

13. Whittier School Update from Tacoma Public Schools

Tacoma Public Schools is still on schedule to post the Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for Design Build (DB) Services for the Whittier School Project in October of this year. The DB procurement process of RFQ, Statement of Qualifications (SOQ), Proprietary Interviews, Request for Proposals (RFP), Solicitation for Proposals (SOP), Interview and Price Factor usually takes about 12 weeks. Their goal is to have the DB team selected by the end of 2024 and under contract starting planning and design in early Quarter 1 2025.

Per the City Manager's suggestion, Jim Dugan from Parametrix will be attending the third Whittier Park Master Plan meeting to see how the project will relate to the school rebuild.

14. 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.

Bike Talk – Thursday, April 11th, from 6:00 – 7:00 PM; Virtual on Zoom. May is Bike Month in Pierce County! Get excited by learning about upcoming events, programs, and infrastructure updates from the Pierce County team and nonprofits, including ForeverGreen Trails and 2nd Cycle. To register, visit [Sustainable Solutions Series: Bike Talk](#).

Edible Gardens: Your Summer Garden – Saturday, April 13th, from 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM. This class is offered in conjunction with Pierce Conservation District. Participants can attend either virtually on Zoom or in person at the WSU Puyallup Campus (2606 West Pioneer in Puyallup). Learn the basics about planting, weeding, and watering your summer vegetable garden. To register, visit [2024 Edible Gardens Workshop Series](#).

Demystifying Curbside Recycling – Thursday, April 18th, from 6:00 – 7:00 PM; Virtual on Zoom. 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](#).

Edible Gardens: Garden Bugs – Saturday, April 13th, from 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM. This class is offered in conjunction with Pierce Conservation District. Participants can attend either virtually on Zoom or in person at the WSU Puyallup Campus (2606 West Pioneer in Puyallup). Prevent and tackle problems in the garden with safe remedies specific to vegetable gardening in Western Washington. To register, visit [2024 Edible Gardens Workshop Series](#).

15. South Sound Sustainability Expo

The 16th Annual South Sound Sustainability Expo will take place at the University of Washington Tacoma campus along the Prairie Line Trail and in Tollefson Plaza on Saturday, April 13th, from 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM. This free, family-friendly event features activities, presentations, performances, and art exhibits. The Expo is hosted by the City of Tacoma's Office of Environmental Policy and Sustainability (OEPS). Visit [South Sound Sustainability Expo 2024](#) for information.

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.

What on Earth? Vital Soil Care Tactics for Every Garden – Wednesday, April 10th, from 7:00 – 8:30 PM. Christina Pfeiffer will share her soil care tactics to help you achieve a thriving garden. Whether you're a beginner or a seasoned gardener, this event will help you improve your gardening skills. Register at naturalyardcareapril10.bpt.me.

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.

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.

When you use natural yard care, you help the environment – and get a healthy, beautiful yard.

Five steps to natural yard care:

1. [Build healthy soils.](#)
2. [Plant right for your site.](#)
3. [Practice smart watering.](#)
4. [Think twice before using pesticides.](#)
5. [Practice natural lawn care.](#)

Resources

- [5 steps to Natural Yard Care](#)
 - [Puget Sound Rain Gardens](#)
 - [Northwest Natural Yard Days](#)
 - [King County Native Plant Guide](#)
 - [UMass Soil Testing](#)
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