



City Manager's Update May 10, 2024



To: Fircrest City Council
From: Dawn Masko, City Manager
Date: May 10, 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. Planning Commission Opening

The City is seeking interested residents for appointment to the [Planning Commission](#). This 6-year voluntary position is an opportunity for citizens to play a pivotal role in the development and future vision of Fircrest. Eligible applicants must be residents of Fircrest and registered voters. Letters of interest, along with a resume (optional), are due to the City Clerk no later than 5:00 PM on Thursday, May 23, 2024. Appointments are made by the Mayor and confirmed by the City Council. For more information on how to apply, visit [Planning Commission Opening](#).

2. Seasonal Maintenance Worker Job Opportunities

The Fircrest Public Works Department is currently seeking individuals to join our team as Seasonal Maintenance Workers. Seasonal workers will perform skilled manual labor utilizing a variety of hand and power tools to maintain and repair City parks, roads, grounds, and facilities. We are looking for hard-working individuals with a positive and friendly attitude who enjoy working outdoors and can engage with the public in a courteous and professional manner. We are seeking team players who can work effectively alongside co-workers as well as working independently with intermittent supervision. If you are a motivated individual with a passion for community service, we encourage you to apply and join us in making a positive impact in the City of Fircrest.

The Seasonal Worker positions are temporary and typically work 40 hours per week, Monday through Friday, from 7:00 AM to 3:30 PM. Positions start between late spring and early summer. Applicants must be 18 years of age and possess a valid Washington State Driver's License with an acceptable driving record. For additional information and to apply for this job opportunity, please visit the [Employment Opportunities - City of Fircrest](#) section on our website.

3. Summer Day Camp Registration

Registration for Kids Summer Camp opens on Monday, May 13th. This year, we are offering six weeks of day camp for kids ages 7-12. Sessions begin on July 8th, with a weekly price of \$165 for residents and \$195 for non-residents. Register at <https://fircrest.recdesk.com> or the Community Center. Our camps fill up quickly, so make sure to sign up soon to secure your spot for summer fun!

4. Transient Merchants Registration

As the weather is slowly improving, the City has begun experiencing an uptick in transient merchant activities. A transient merchant is a person or business that conducts temporary business in the City. Transient merchants are also called canvassers, peddlers, or street sellers, who most commonly sell goods or services on a temporary basis. They may go door-to-door or operate out of a pop-up booth but are certainly not limited to these venues.

All transient merchants doing business in Fircrest are required to obtain a City business license and apply for a transient merchant registration. Certain business activities are exempt, including newspaper vendors, nonprofit organizations, political candidates, campaign workers for ballot issues, persons soliciting signatures of registered voters on petitions, and vendors at city-sponsored events. A list of approved transient merchants is on the City website at [Active Transient Merchant List](#). Remember, if someone comes to your door soliciting business or selling items, you have the right to ask to see their approved registration. Additional information about the City's requirements for transient merchants is in the Fircrest Municipal Code, [Chapter 5.08 - Transient Merchant Registration](#).

5. Council Meeting Agenda Items – May 14th, 2024 – Tentative

- Fircrest Parks & Recreation Foundation Year-End Report
- Police 2023 Year-End Report
- Resolution – Postage Machine Lease Agreement
- Resolution – WA Dept. of Enterprise Service Master Contract Usage Agreement
- Ordinance – Salary Plan Amendment
- Designating AWC Annual Business Meeting Voting Delegates

6. Administration Update

Administration highlights include:

- The City Records Management Project kicked off on May 9th. A Washington State Archives consultant trained City department representatives on record management best practices, retention schedules, and proper destruction procedures. As part of this project, employees can request further training that best fits their respective departments' needs.
 - The Fircrest Civil Service Commission met on May 6th. The Commission reelected Commissioner Alex Koerger as Chair and Commissioner John Bechtholt as Chair Pro Tem for one-year terms. They were formally presented with proposed amendments to the Civil Service Rules and voted to reschedule their June meeting to June 17th due to scheduling conflicts. The Civil Service Commission meets at Fircrest City Hall on the first Monday of every month at 4:00 PM. Public participation is encouraged. Learn more at the [Civil Service Commission](#) webpage.
 - Civil Service Lateral Police Officer oral boards are scheduled for May 14th. There is currently one out-of-state candidate slated to be interviewed. Interested Lateral Police Officer candidates can apply at [Employment Opportunities - City of Fircrest](#).
 - City Manager Dawn Masko and Public Works Director Tyler Bemis conducted a second interview with a PW Office Coordinator candidate this past week. We are pleased to announce that Sherry Canavan has accepted the position. Her tentative start date is May 22nd. Sherry is a former Fircrest employee, and we are incredibly excited for her to hit the ground running with her institutional knowledge and passion for the City of Fircrest.
-

- The Centennial Celebration Historical Subcommittee met this past week with former Councilmember Blake Surina and Civil Service Commissioner John Bechtholt regarding volunteering, sponsorships, historical artifacts, and event ideas.
- City Manager Masko is preparing materials for the upcoming Finance Director recruitment.
- City Manager Masko is working on a market compensation study for non-represented positions.
- The City received five public records requests this week for a total of 111 requests in 2024.
- In the last 30 days, the City's website has had 20,170 page views from 6,337 users. Sessions are down 7%, and users are down 12% from the previous 30 days.
- Acting Clerk Arlette Burkhart will be attending the WA Association of Public Records Officers (WAPRO) virtual spring conference from May 15th to May 16th.

7. Finance Department Update

- Finance staff continue to work on the Annual Report, which is due to the State by May 29th.
- The City received the final payment of \$16,587 for the water meter grant.
- Gas cards were received for all City-owned vehicles, and the gas card policy was updated.
- The electronic timesheet program implementation is continuing to progress. A test file will be done soon, followed by department head training.
- Retail sales tax spreadsheets are being updated. The City's IT consultant, Locke Systems, was able to restore a missing file containing several years of retail sales tax information.
- The Equipment Rental & Replacement (ERR) maintenance spreadsheets are also being updated to incorporate the last 2-3 years of information.
- The month-end reports for March and April are on hold until the State reports are filed.

8. Information Technology Update

- Thank you to everyone for your patience these past two days while the City was undergoing network upgrades and maintenance. There are still some outstanding items to address, but generally speaking, most systems are back up and functioning.

This project was largely about building a better IT foundation for the City moving forward, but there are also some immediate benefits. Internet bandwidth has quadrupled at City Hall, Public Works, and the Community Center compared to last year. Internet bandwidth at the Public Safety Building is ten times greater than it was on May 8th! New Wi-Fi networks are simplified and more secure, with the new guest Wi-Fi now allowing for roaming between City buildings without having to reenter passwords. Our virtual networks have also been streamlined for better management. Thank you to IT Coordinator Chris Bunger and IT consultants Locke Systems for their hard work and effort these last few days to upgrade our infrastructure and enhance our operational capabilities.

9. Police Department Update

- Sergeant Gollinger attended the FBI-LEEDA Supervisory Leadership Institute Training this week in Lake Stevens.
 - Chief Ron Schaub attended the Pierce County Law Enforcement Memorial on Thursday night to honor law enforcement officers killed in the line of duty and those who continue to serve.
-

- Officer Lease arrested a person attempting to steal a car.
- Community Service Officer Selena Byrd attended regional records training in Tukwila this week.
- Officer Garcia assisted Wainwright Intermediate School with traffic control this week for a field trip to TAPCO Credit Union and Tacoma Community College.
- On April 29th, the Pierce County Police Chief’s Association submitted a letter to the three radio system owners supporting a single radio system and requesting that agencies that can switch between systems be allowed to do so. Pierce County Executive Bruce Dammeier responded to the letter, stating that Pierce County, Puyallup, and Tacoma are continuing to review options for implementation of a single countywide radio system and “are working to develop concepts that include interim, phased, and long-term models for ownership. Any concepts developed will be shared with stakeholders and customers for feedback.”
- Fircrest officers responded to 166 calls for service from 4/28/2024 to 5/5/2024, including 121 traffic stops, which generated 68 notices of infraction. The chart below provides additional information.

Police Officer Activity for 4/28/24 – 5/5/24			
Call Activity	Number of Calls	Call Activity	Number of Calls
Traffic Stops	121	Motor Vehicle Collisions	1
Notice of Infraction	68	Outside Jurisdiction Response	2
Citations Issued	6	Parking Tickets	3
Misdemeanor Arrests	11	Reports Written	22
Alarms	1	Security Checks	4
Community Oriented Policing	3	Subject Stops	2
Domestic Violence – Verbal	3	Suspicious Vehicles	6
Follow-Ups	5	Vehicle Prowls	8
Foot Patrols	3	Welfare Checks	3
Medical Aid	7	911 Calls – Unknown	3
Miscellaneous	4		

10. Planning & Building Update

- The Planning & Building Department is currently short-staffed as it searches for a new Permit Coordinator/Assistant Planner/Code Enforcement Officer. Interviews are tentatively scheduled for May 16th. We appreciate your patience during this transition.
 - We continue to be busy issuing over-the-counter (OTC) building, mechanical, plumbing, and reroofing permits. Applicants are receiving same-day or one-business-day turnaround time for OTC permits.
 - CD Director Newman is working with the Department of Commerce on a contract amendment in order to receive our Year 2 grant reimbursement for the Comprehensive Plan Update grant.
-

- CD Director Newman continues to work with a permit applicant to review planning and stormwater comments related to a new single-family residential home and ADU on the 1200 block of Arondale Drive.
 - Thank you to everyone who took the time to submit comments on the [2024 Comprehensive Plan](#). The City received 26 online submissions. The feedback, data, and responses to questions will be provided as an update tentatively scheduled for the June 25th City Council meeting and will be posted on the City website.
 - The City received one new code enforcement request this week:
 - A request to investigate a potential sign code violation along the 200 block of Regents Boulevard. Staff reviewed the request and confirmed there was no violation of the sign code.
 - 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. Staff sent out a notice of violation letter, but due to short staffing, we have not been able to follow up on this request yet.
 - 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 City has not yet received a response from the property owner. Due to short-staffing, we have been unable to follow up on this request.
 - Concern over a residential property along the 200 block of Contra Costa Avenue that is accumulating trash and does not have an active Westside Disposal account. City staff sent a notice of violation to the property owner to activate a solid waste disposal account and keep the property clean. CD Director Newman has also requested a list from Public Works of all properties in the City that do not currently have active accounts with Westside Disposal and will send them a letter stating that it is a code requirement to have trash service.
 - There is concern over an unpermitted structure built in the backyard of a residential property along the 1200 block of Palm Drive. City staff reviewed the structure and confirmed that a building permit is indeed required. They have reached out to the property owner to begin the permitting process.
 - The Fircrest Planning Commission met for its regularly scheduled meeting on Tuesday, May 7th. There was robust public attendance and comment, with citizens most concerned about the new middle housing laws and how they will affect the City's character as a small, walkable community. CD Director Newman and the Planning Commission addressed the public's concerns by explaining the laws and design controls available to the City to maintain its cherished character. They also invited the public to the June 17th Study Session, where the City's consultant, Kimley-Horn, will give a presentation on the Middle Housing work plan. CD Director Newman is also working on creating a new webpage specifically for Middle Housing to keep the community informed and updated.
 - CD Director Newman assisted the Finance Department with reviewing a refund request related to permit fees.
 - On April 30, 2024, the Department of Commerce released a draft of the 2024-2029 State Homeless Housing Strategic Plan. The draft is available on Box at [Plan Update Materials](#) or [Draft Plan \(PDF\)](#). Commerce is inviting interested parties to provide public comment. Comments can be submitted by attending an online listening session, filling out an [online web form](#), or by [email](#). Per [Chapter 42.56 RCW](#), all comments submitted are public records and may be subject to public disclosure. More information can be found on the [Commerce website](#).
-

11. Parks & Recreation Update

Park Projects

- Whittier Park Master Plan – The [Whittier Park Master Plan webpage](#) has been updated with the revised site concepts, survey, and comment form link. Fircrest citizens are invited to review the two preferred plans presented on April 25th and leave comments by clicking the [link](#). The comment period will conclude on May 17th. AHBL will then tabulate all comments for review and utilization as they develop the final plan. The final draft of the Whittier Park Master Plan will be presented to the Fircrest City Council at an upcoming regular City Council meeting or a City Council study session.

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-ups are now underway to be included on the list of participating homes. There is no cost to participate in this community-wide event. Register now at [2024 Fircrest Community Yard Sale Registration](#). The registration deadline is June 6th.



This year, we've added some yummy food options to add to the Fircrest FUN and energize our shoppers. We're excited to welcome Boss Mama's Kitchen, Makin' lil Donuts, Starvin' Marvin, and Teresaita's Kitchen food trucks, which will be at Fircrest Park from 11:30 AM to 2:30 PM.

- The 2024 Let's Go Wild Mom & Son Dance was an absolute blast! From the lively music to the engaging games, delicious treats, and creative crafts, it was a night filled with excitement for everyone! We're thrilled to share the highlights video, capturing the fun night. A huge thank you goes out to our generous title sponsor, Berkshire Hathaway South Sound Properties Services, and our supporting sponsors: BLISS Creamery, Maggie Magee's Bake Shop, and the Waffle Stop. We couldn't have done it without their support. Special recognition goes to our AMAZING TEAM of volunteers who played a crucial role in bringing the magic to life.



- Fircrest Fun Days – The planning team is hard at work to ensure that this year's event is bigger and better than ever! We've reached out to our 2023 Kraft Makers and Junior Bake-off participants with all the details to sign up for this year's event. Our Beer Garden team is gearing up to ensure everything's ready, the Regents Boulevard banner has been ordered, and the Beat Frequency Band has been confirmed for some awesome entertainment. It's shaping up to be an unforgettable event! Visit our [Community Events webpage](#) for more information.

Recreation Programs

- Day Camp planning is in full swing, and we're excited to announce that we're gearing up for six weeks of day camp fun this summer! Sessions start on July 8th and will run Monday through Friday at the Pool Party Room. Stay tuned for more details and registration information, which will be available next week. We can't wait to share all the exciting plans with you!

Senior Programs

- May Senior Trip – There are only a few spots left for the Tuesday, May 21st senior trip. Don't miss out on a guided tour of the [LeMay Collections](#) at Marymount. A guide will lead the tour 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!
- June Senior Trip – Registration is now open for the June Senior Trip to a [Tacoma Rainiers](#) baseball game on Tuesday, June 4th. The \$40 registration fee includes transportation to the game, a reserved seat, a ballpark meal of a hot dog, chips & water, as well as a signature Rainier's hat. The day starts at 10:30 AM, and attendees should be finished around 3:00 PM. Visit [Senior Trip - Tacoma Rainiers Baseball Game](#) for more information and to register.

Aquatic Center

- Pool employees had this first training session on May 5th.
- The Edwards Family Aquatic Center's 2024 season kicks off on Saturday, May 25th. Information on pool [admission](#), [schedules](#), [programs](#), and [rentals](#) is available on our [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."

12. 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

We appreciate your continued patience as Public Works is operating short-staffed. The PW Office Coordinator position is vacant, and a Facilities Maintenance Worker and two Utility Workers are currently off work.

Utilities – Water, Sewer, Streets, and Stormwater

- Summer hire applications are being reviewed, with plans to hire 2 - 4 Utilities summer hires. The [job posting](#) will remain open until all positions are filled.
 - The contractor is tentatively scheduled to pull the pump at Wellhouse #9 the week of May 13th to inspect and repair or replace it as needed.
 - The replacement pump for The Commons Lift Station is expected to arrive by the end of June.
 - The fire hydrant at El Dorado and Regents Blvd. was repaired on April 16th. The final asphalt patching and concrete curb repair will occur soon.
-

- The “Sidewalk closed” barricades near the Claremont rock wall failure site have been removed following the removal of the wall's height. The property owner is currently performing the repairs and continues to keep Public Works informed.

Maintenance – Parks & Facilities

- Citywide irrigation repairs are being completed, and startup is 90% complete in preparation for this weekend’s warm weather forecast.
- A broken toilet was replaced in one of the exterior public bathrooms at the Pool House.
- Summer hire applications are being reviewed with plans to hire one summer hire for Facilities/Parks.

Project Updates

- Wellhouse #7 (Claremont)
 - The notice to proceed to commence construction is being prepared.
- Fircrest Park Maintenance Facility Structure Upgrade
 - Staff are preparing a Request for Proposals for posting.
- 44th Street West & 67th Ave West Lift Station Upgrade
 - The contractor is procuring equipment and materials in preparation to start construction, with Public Works staff continuing to review material submittals.
 - Tree removal is being coordinated to begin the site prep process.
- Stormwater 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 56%.

TOTAL BY YEAR	
	Total
2019	11
2020	143
2021	444
2022	283
2023	296
2024	173

PROJECT UPDATE	
Total City Meter Connections	2,402
New Meters Installed	1,350
Remaining Meters to be Installed	1,052
Percentage of Completion	56%

- Electron and Contra Costa Intersection Improvement – Legislative Funds
 - City Council approved the design contract on April 23rd.
 - We applied for additional funds from TIB on April 26th.

- Claremont Street Grind & Overlay TIB Grant
 - Design is in process.
- South Orchard Street Grind & Overlay – TIB Grant Funded
 - Design is in process for construction in 2024.
 - We are planning to advertise for construction bids the week of May 13th.
- South Orchard Street Water Main Upgrade – Ramsdell Street to Holly Drive
 - Invitation to Bid was sent out to five contractors selected from the MRSC Small Works Roster. Bids are due on May 31st.

13. National Police Week

National Police Week is our time to support and recognize law enforcement communities while honoring officers who have lost their lives in the line of duty for the safety and protection of others. Since the first recorded death in 1786, over 24,000 law enforcement officers in the United States have made the ultimate sacrifice and been killed in the line of duty. May 15th is designated as Peace Officers Memorial Day in honor of all fallen officers and their families. Please join me in saluting the service of law enforcement officers in our community and across the nation.



14. Professional Municipal Clerks Week

This week, May 5th –11th, is Annual Professional Municipal Clerks Week – a time to recognize and appreciate the invaluable contributions of municipal clerks to our communities. Municipal clerks provide an essential service, serving as custodians of official public records and typically being the initial point of contact for citizens seeking assistance and information. Beyond meticulously recording meeting minutes, they uphold the transparency and integrity of governmental processes. They act as conduits between local governing bodies and the public, ensuring the smooth flow of information. I want to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to Arlette Burkhart, our Acting City Clerk, for her unwavering commitment to the City of Fircrest and for her assistance in helping our city run efficiently and effectively. Thank you, Arlette!

15. Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive

This Saturday, May 11th is the annual [Letter Carriers' Stamp Out Hunger](#) Food Drive, the nation's largest one-day food drive. This drive helps to fill the shelves of food banks in cities and towns throughout the United States. Leave your donation of non-perishable food in a bag near your mailbox, and your letter carrier will do the rest.

16. Summer Planning Academy

The Puget Sound Regional Council is accepting applications for its Summer Planning Academy (SPA), which will be held in August 2024. SPA is a free leadership development opportunity for students interested in learning about city planning. SPA can also help young people map out the required steps toward a career in the planning field. Upon successful completion of the academy, students are eligible to receive a \$500 scholarship. Local high school students must live in King, Kitsap, Pierce, or Snohomish County and be able to attend in-person sessions in Seattle. Applications are due on May 15th. For more information, visit [Summer Planning Academy \(SPA\) | Puget Sound Regional Council](#). Additional information is also available by downloading the [2023 Summer Planning Academy Handbook](#).

17. Habitat Stewardship Training

The Pierce Conservation District is holding its first Habitat Stewardship training in 3 years. The Habitat Stewardship Program works with volunteers to maintain open space sites in Fircrest and Puyallup. As a Habitat Steward, you can take ownership of a site, develop an annual work plan and goals, and lead monthly volunteer work parties. This three-part training series, with two online portions and one field training, will be held on May 15th and 22nd online from 5:30 – 7:00 PM and on May 18th with field training from 9:00 AM—12:00 PM. There are limited spots available, so sign up soon. If the May training fills up, you will be put on a waitlist for future training. Visit [Habitat Stewardship Training](#) for more information and to sign up.

18. West Pierce Fire Youth Academy

Applications are now open for the [West Pierce Fire & Rescue Youth Academy](#). The two-day academy is an excellent way for students ages 14-18 to experience what it's like to be a firefighter. The academy is being held on June 22-23 from 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM each day at West Pierce Fire & Rescue Station 21, located at 5000 Steilacoom Blvd SW in Lakewood. Applications are being accepted until 4:30 PM on May 15th and must be completed [online](#). There is no cost to attend. All equipment, gear, and meals will be provided. Attendees **must live or attend school** in Lakewood, University Place, or Steilacoom, must be able to participate in both days of the academy, and must be able to attend orientation on June 20th. Additional information can be found at [Youth Academy](#).

19. Free Community Resource Fair

A free Community Resource Fair will be held on Saturday, May 11th, from 1:00 to 3:00 PM at the TACID Center, 6315 South 19th Street in Tacoma. This event is intended to promote the vast array of support, services, and community groups in Tacoma/Pierce County that are available for people with disabilities of all kinds, including behavioral health needs and challenges. For additional information, email Matt Santelli at matthew.santelli@piercecountywa.gov.

20. Reduced Pet Adoption Fees

The Humane Society for Tacoma & Pierce County is partnering with [BISSELL Pet Foundation](#), a national animal welfare organization dedicated to ending pet homelessness, for its spring Empty the Shelters adoption promotion. From May 1-15, the shelter will be offering reduced adoption fees sponsored by BISSELL Pet Foundation: \$50 for dogs, \$25 for cats, and \$5 for critters (puppies and kittens excluded). To view adoptable pets, visit [Adopt Now - The Humane Society for Tacoma & Pierce County](#).
