



City Manager's Update May 31, 2024



To: Fircrest City Council
From: Dawn Masko, City Manager
Date: May 31, 2024
Subject: City Manager's Weekly Update

Happy National Smile Day

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. Finance Director Recruitment

With the impending retirement of our long-time Finance Director, Colleen Corcoran, the City of Fircrest is actively seeking a successor. This crucial role, which oversees the Finance Department and plays a pivotal role in managing the City's financial operations, is now open for applications. The position is open until filled. The first review of applications has been extended until June 10th. For more information, including a comprehensive [position profile](#) and [job description](#), please visit the City's [Employment Opportunities webpage](#).

2. Council Meeting Agenda Items – June 11th, 2024 - Tentative

- Proclamation – Flag Day
- Proclamation – Ride Transit Month
- Motion – Approval of Centennial Celebration Logo
- Public Hearing – 6-Year Transportation Improvement Program
- Resolution – Fun Days Entertainer & Vendor Agreements
- Resolution – S. Orchard St. Grind & Overlay Contract
- Resolution – S. Orchard St. Water Main Upgrade Contract
- Resolution – Electron Way/Contra Costa Contract Amendment – tentative
- Resolution – Fircrest Park Maintenance Facility Contract – tentative

3. May 28th, 2024 – Council Meeting Recap

Action items at the Tuesday, May 28th regular City Council meeting included:

- Issued Proclamation recognizing Planning Commission Hamel for her public service.
- Issued Proclamation recognizing June as LGBTQ+ Pride Month.
- Discussed the Centennial Celebration Logo.

- Set a Public Hearing on the City's 6-Year Comprehensive Transportation Improvement Program for June 11th, 2024, at 7:15 PM or shortly thereafter.
- Received the Police 2023 Year-End Report.
- Approved a Resolution authorizing a grant agreement with the WA State Transportation Improvement Board for the Electron Way/Contra Costa Avenue Intersection Improvement project.
- Approved a Motion to display the Pride Flag for June.

4. Administration Update

Administration highlights include:

- City Manager Dawn Masko met with Court Administrator Samantha Olivarez and Municipal Judge Megan Foley to discuss the proposed photo enforcement program and court logistics.
 - Acting City Clerk Arlette Burkhart prepared summer hire application packets to assist with onboarding a Public Works seasonal hire.
 - Due to a family emergency affecting the City's Finance Director, City Manager Masko spent a significant amount of time reviewing the financial statements and updating the notes to them to ensure compliance with the state-mandated deadline of May 29th.
 - City Manager Masko held a final interview with Natasha Kolostyak, a Permit Coordinator/Assistant Planner applicant, and is pleased to report that she accepted the City's job offer. Her first day of employment will be June 17th.
 - City Manager Masko successfully secured a scholarship from the Association of Washington Cities, covering the registration fee, two nights of lodging, and mileage to and from the conference for a City Council member to attend the annual conference in Vancouver. This translates into savings for the City of over \$1,000.
 - City Manager Masko and Police Chief Ron Schaub met with the City's liaison from Pierce County Emergency Management to continue discussions regarding available resources, community outreach opportunities, employee training, and next steps moving forward.
 - The City Wellness "Trek Around Town" walking challenge was a success, with participants logging slightly under 1.3 million steps. Initiatives such as this play a pivotal role in the City's progress towards meeting the criteria to attain the AWC Well City Award. This accolade not only acknowledges the City's commitment to employee health but also translates into tangible benefits, such as a 2% reduction in health insurance premiums. The City's most recent Well City Application marked a significant achievement, boasting an impressive 88% staff participation rate, the highest recorded in the past 14 years!
 - The June Town Topics is in production and will be sent out in mid-June.
 - City Manager Masko also attended the Police team meeting, updated the Public Works Contract template language, met with the City's labor attorney, and began coordinating Planning Commissioner interviews.
 - In the last 30 days, the City's website has had 25,220 page views from 8,727 users. Sessions are up 31%, and users are up 34% from the previous 30 days.
 - Acting City Clerk Burkhart is on vacation until June 6th. She will also be out of the office from June 9th to June 14th, attending the Northwest Municipal Clerks Institute.
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5. Finance Department Update

- The Annual Report was filed with the State on May 29th. Staff will meet with Councilmember Karen Mauer-Smith next week to review the report. Up to two other Councilmembers are welcome to attend. Please get in touch with Accountant Julie Dunbar to do so.
- With the submission of the Annual Report now completed, Finance staff will return to month-end bank reconciliations, including implementing a new Court reconciliation process due to its conversion from the Judicial Information System (JIS) to the Enterprise Justice (EJ) system.
- Administrator training on the electronic timesheet program is scheduled for June 4th. All department directors and supervisors have been notified of this training.
- The network cutover from Rainier Connect to Comcast was completed on May 9th. System operations resumed on May 10th as planned. This effort brought over 4X the bandwidth to City Hall, Public Works, and the Community Center and a 10X bandwidth increase to the Police Department. A new firewall and new remote desktop gateway service to replace the previous VPN connection have also been installed.
- Staff are preparing the 2025 budget spreadsheets to begin the budget development process.

6. Police Department Update

- Fircrest officers responded to 231 calls for service from 5/19/2024 to 5/26/2024, including 184 traffic stops, which generated 101 notices of infraction. The chart below provides additional information.

Police Officer Activity for 5/19/24 – 5/26/24			
Call Activity	Number of Calls	Call Activity	Number of Calls
Traffic Stops	184	Motor Vehicle Collisions	1
Notice of Infraction	101	Outside Jurisdiction Responses	3
Citations Issued	7	Parking Tickets	6
Misdemeanor Arrests	11	Reports Written	20
Alarms	4	Security Checks	10
Citizen Assists	3	Shoplifting	1
Community Oriented Policing	2	Subject Stops	5
Civilian Complaints	2	Suspicious Persons	2
Domestic Violence – Physical	2	Suspicious Vehicles	5
Driving While License Suspended	6	Theft	1
Follow-Ups	3	Unwanted Persons	2
Foot Patrols	9	Vehicle Prowls	8
Hit and Run	1	Welfare Checks	3
Legal Service	1	911 Calls – Unknown	5
Miscellaneous	6		

- Planning is officially underway for this year's National Night Out. National Night Out is Tuesday, August 6th, 2024.
- A Police team meeting was held today to discuss changes in the retention of body-worn camera (BWC) video of custodial interrogations. Discussion also occurred regarding BWC video classifications and how these can affect the retention schedule. City Prosecutor Will Gunderson also attended the team meeting to discuss the pursuit law changes that go live on June 6th.
- City Manager Masko and Police Chief Ron Schaub met with the Pierce County Emergency Management (PC DEM) Alert and Warning Coordinator Joshua Atkins to discuss how DEM can assist the City of Fircrest. Chief Schaub also participated in a PC DEM virtual meeting on May 28th regarding the Evacuation Levels Workgroup.
- A final interview is scheduled for early next week with a lateral police officer candidate.
- We are in the process of establishing a master list of ballistic vest expiration dates. This will ensure our replacement schedules are updated and with grant applications for replacement vests.

7. Planning & Building Update

- We are thrilled to announce that Natasha Kolostyak has accepted our offer for the Assistant Planner/Permit Coordinator position and will start work on June 17th. Natasha comes to us from WSDOT's North Central Region, where she worked as a Transportation Planning Technician. With a degree in Sustainable Urban Development, we know she will be a great asset to our department. In the meantime, we appreciate your continued patience while we are short-staffed.
 - The new [Middle Housing webpage](#) has launched! Please take a look at it and [sign up](#) to stay involved. Remember to attend the June 17th City Council study session, where our consultant will present on the Middle Housing strategy for Fircrest.
 - We know that summertime can be busy with vacations, holidays, and also home renovation projects. Just a friendly reminder to check with the Planning & Building Department ahead of time before you start construction on your new deck, covered patio, or accessory structure to first verify whether a permit is required. For new plumbing and mechanical work, a good rule of thumb is that a remodel permit will be required when any drywall is removed. Exposed framing, pipes, and insulation all indicate that a remodel permit is required, along with floor plans showing where the work is located. You can contact Community Development Director Mark Newman at 253-238-4129 or email at mnewman@cityoffircrest.net with any questions.
 - City staff processed six new permits this week. We continue to be busy issuing over-the-counter (OTC) building, mechanical, plumbing, and reroofing permits. Applicants receive same-day or one-business-day turnaround time for OTC permits. For larger projects and remodel permits, the turnaround time from the City's building reviewer is about 4-6 weeks. Please check in with our team for status updates and to ensure that your project stays on schedule.
 - The City received one new code enforcement request this week:
 - Concern over a residential property along the 1300 block of Aloha Street without permanent wall coverings/waterproofing. Staff reached out to the property owner and current residents with a notice letter and the next steps for compliance.
 - The City continues to monitor existing complaints and requests, but due to short-staffing, we have been unable to follow up on several requests.
 - CD Director Newman met with Kimley-Horn, the City's Middle Housing consultant, to further refine the public participation plan and briefing memo.
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- CD Director Newman attended the SS^{HA}3P CLIHP (Coordinating Low-Income Housing Planning) grant workgroup meeting, as well as a Pierce Transit Destination 2045 presentation.
- CD Director Newman submitted the Commerce Year 2 PUG Grant for Comprehensive Plan work so that the City can be reimbursed \$62,500.
- CD Director Newman wrote responses to the questions received during the 2024 Draft Comprehensive Plan Public Feedback survey. He will be sharing the feedback at a study session this summer.
- CD Director Newman updated Permit Center forms and added a new webpage for the [Four Corners/Thriving Communities update](#). The intersection of S. 19th Street and S. Mildred Street is expected to see growth in future years. By 2041, Sound Transit plans to extend the Tacoma Link light rail to this intersection, and new housing is already on the horizon. While these plans and associated development will bring exciting economic opportunities to the area, we also know that growth and change can be challenging for local businesses and residents. That's why a group of local partners, including Pierce Transit, Tacoma Community College, Tacoma Housing Authority, and the surrounding local cities, are coming together now in 2024 to think through a vision and alternatives for equitable transit-oriented development in the area. Share your hopes, vision, and concerns for the area in this survey <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/4CornersPC> and help us share this information with other community members.
- The Planning Commission will hold its regular meeting next Tuesday, June 4th, at 6:00 PM in City Hall Council Chambers. As always, the public is welcome to attend and provide public comment. Topics of discussion will include SB 6015, the Pierce County CLIHP grant award, input on Commerce's draft guidance to local governments for preparing empirical parking studies, and updates on the Comprehensive Plan, Middle Housing work, and annual docket request.

8. Parks & Recreation Update

Park Projects

- Installation of the acoustic mats at the Fircrest Park Courts commenced on Thursday. Lead Maintenance Worker Bryce Wakefield and the PW crew installed six mats and are aiming to have the remaining 13 installed by the end of next week.
- The Fircrest Fun Days banner was installed across Regents Blvd. with the help of the Public Works crew.
- The Parks & Recreation staff have partnered with the Fircrest Kiwanis Club to refinish the Fred Flintstone carving at the Tot Lot. Fred was carved many years ago from the stump of a removed tree. The carving has severe rot and will require meticulous work to restore. He will need to be removed and moved to the maintenance facility for proper drying and further assessment. If everything goes as planned, we will refinish him and relocate him to a visible location in the Tot Lot.



Recreation Programs

- Youth Baseball – Youth baseball pictures were taken last week. The season continues to go well, with minimal interruptions from the rain.
 - Tot Story Time – We are planning a Teddy Bear Picnic on June 18th, featuring guest author Brandi Harrington. Murphy, the town mascot, will also make a special appearance!
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- Pickleball League – Our staff is currently planning an indoor summer pickleball league set to kick off in mid-July. We are working out the logistics to ensure a smooth and enjoyable experience for all participants. The league will feature a couple of divisions to accommodate different skill levels and provide opportunities for everyone to join in the fun. Stay tuned for more details and registration information as we finalize plans.
- Summer Day Camp Registration – Get ready for a summer full of fun and adventure! Registration for our Kids Summer Camp is now open. We are thrilled to offer six weeks of day camp this summer for kids ages 7-12. Sessions kick off on July 8th. The weekly price is \$165 for residents and \$195 for non-residents. Register at <https://fircrest.recdesk.com> or the Community Center. Our camps fill up quickly, so don't miss out on this opportunity to secure your spot for a summer filled with laughter and memories!

Aquatic Center

- We had a very successful opening weekend at the Edwards Family Aquatic Center. We continue to sell season passes and have currently sold 347 Family Season Passes.
- We had 440 visits to the pool over the opening weekend, with the following breakdown by day: Saturday – 113, Sunday – 64, and Monday – 263.
- Visit the Edwards Family Aquatic Center [webpage](#) for additional information on pool [admission](#), [schedules](#), [programs](#), and [rentals](#).

Community Events

- Community Yard Sale – We currently have 75 participants signed up for the Community Yard Sale happening on Saturday, June 15th, from 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM. The deadline to sign up to have your address included on the official yard sale list is June 6th. There is no cost to participate in this community-wide event. Register now at [2024 Fircrest Community Yard Sale Registration](#).



- Planning continues for the [Strawberry Festival](#), [Car Show](#), and [Fircrest Fun Days](#). We are working with our risk manager and insurance representative to ensure the receipt of hold harmless forms and insurance certificates from all of our entertainment vendors.

Senior Programs

- July Senior Trip – Registration is now open for the July 25th trip to Downtown Gig Harbor. Explore waterfront shops, indulge in lunch at the infamous Tides Tavern, and peruse the Waterfront Farmers Market. The cost is \$30 per person, which includes transportation. Visit [Senior Trip - Downtown Gig Harbor](#) for more information and to register.
- August Senior Trip - Registration is also open for the August trip to [Lakewold Gardens](#). Seniors will enjoy the enchanting beauty of this breathtaking property, filled with vibrant flowers, serene ponds, and stunning landscapes. After working up an appetite while exploring the gardens, lunch will be at Carrs Restaurant before heading back home. The cost is \$30 per person, which includes transportation. [Senior Trip - Lakewold Gardens](#) for more information and to register.

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 summer operating hours are 7:00 AM to 3:30 PM.

This week's highlights include:

- We are still seeking applicants for our summer hire positions. Information and the online application link is available on the City's [Employment Opportunities](#) webpage. The [job posting](#) will remain open until all positions are filled.

Utilities – Water, Sewer, Streets, and Stormwater

- Flags were installed on Regents Blvd. and at the intersection of Alameda and Emerson last Friday. Utility Foreman Jeff Davis is contacting vendors and coordinating tree trimming work in preparation to return flags and flower baskets on up to 17 light poles on Emerson Street.
- Hanging flower baskets were delivered on May 28th and hung throughout the City on May 29th.
- The replacement pump for Wellhouse #9 has been ordered, and we are awaiting confirmation of the delivery date.
- Communications are continuing with The Lookout developer and City of Tacoma staff regarding ADA work being performed at Stanford Street and South Orchard Street. Discussions continued regarding potential traffic impacts when the contractor grinds and paves the intersection. This work is now tentatively scheduled for next week.
- We received the replacement pump for The Commons Lift Station on May 29th and are tentatively scheduled to install it on Monday, June 3rd.
- Final asphalt patching at the site of the damaged fire hydrant at El Dorado and Regents Blvd. is tentatively scheduled for next week.

Maintenance – Parks & Facilities

- The facilities staff is currently operating down one Maintenance Worker.
- Facilities staff have not installed six sound-dampening mats at the Fircrest Park Courts. The process is working well, and the remainder are being prepped for installation.
- One of the two pool heaters at the swimming pool is not working. Staff identified the need to replace the motherboard, which has been ordered. The other heater is currently maintaining the pool's temperature.

Project Updates

- Wellhouse #7 (Claremont)
 - The notice to proceed to commence construction is being prepared.
 - Fircrest Park Maintenance Facility Structure Upgrade
 - Construction bids are due on June 7th.
 - A site walk-through with five prospective bidders was conducted on May 29th.
 - 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.
 - Stormwater Pre-Treatment Outfall Grant Project – Emerson Street & Estate Place
 - Final close-out Progress Reports and Payment Requests are in progress.
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- Emerson Street Sidewalk Extension (south side) – Woodside Drive to 67th Ave West
 - The engineering design is being submitted for the required National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) review.
- Regents Blvd (west) Grind & Overlay – Alameda Ave to 67th Ave West
 - We are working with WSDOT to prepare a Notice to Proceed.
- Electron and Contra Costa Intersection Improvement – Legislative Funds
 - Design is in process.
 - The City was notified on May 17th that we were awarded \$11,954 in additional TIB funds. Council approved accepting the additional TIB grant funds on May 28th.
- Claremont Street Grind & Overlay TIB Grant
 - Design is in process.
- AMI Water Meter Exchange Program
 - Meter exchanges are in progress, with program completion currently at 57%.
 - Meter boxes prep continued in preparation for installs in the area of Alameda and Regents Blvd.

TOTAL BY YEAR	
	Total
2019	11
2020	143
2021	444
2022	283
2023	296
2024	199

PROJECT UPDATE	
Total City Meter Connections	2,402
New Meters Installed	1,376
Remaining Meters to be Installed	1,026
Percentage of Completion	
	57%

- South Orchard Street Grind & Overlay – TIB Grant Funded
 - Construction bids were opened on May 28th. A responsive low bidder was identified, and the notice to proceed is in progress.
- 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.

10. Whittier Park Work Party

The next Whittier Park Work Party will be held on Saturday, June 1st, from 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM. Activities will include caring for existing plants and removing invasive species such as Himalayan blackberry and thistle. This work supports water quality, our local wildlife, and pollinators. Email BryanM@piercecd.org at Pierce Conservation District for more information. Sign up for the work party at [RSVP here](#). The exact meeting location will be provided after signing up.

