

CALL TO ORDER, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE, AND ROLL CALL

Mayor Pro Tempore Nikki Bufford called the regular meeting to order at 7:00 P.M. and led the Pledge of Allegiance. Councilmembers David M. Viafore, Brett L. Wittner, Karen Mauer-Smith, Hunter T. George, Jim Andrews, and Mayor Shannon Reynolds were present. Mayor Shannon Reynolds and Councilmember Hunter T. George attended the meeting virtually.

PRESIDING OFFICER'S REPORT

Mayor Pro Tempore Bufford stated that the August 18, 2025, Study Session had no items for discussion and asked the Council to consider canceling the meeting. Councilmember Viafore asked if the 2026 preliminary budget discussion was scheduled. City Manager Masko stated that it would occur at a future meeting.

Councilmember Wittner MOVED to cancel the August 18, 2025, Study Session; seconded by Councilmember Mauer-Smith. Mayor Pro Tempore Bufford invited Councilmembers' comments; none were provided. Mayor Pro Tempore Bufford invited public comment; none was provided.

The Motion Carried (7-0).

CITY MANAGER COMMENTS

City Manager Dawn Masko reported that Danielle O'Galleher began her role as Permit Coordinator/Passport Specialist on August 5, 2025, and is currently training with staff, and that passport hours will be temporarily adjusted. Mrs. Masko announced that today was Community Service Officer II/Police Records Technician Selena Byrd's last day and wished her well.

City Manager Masko reported that the Tacoma Fire Chief hosted a meeting to discuss a Regional Fire Authority Cooperative Services Feasibility Study. Tacoma Fire will contract with Emergency Services Consulting International to conduct the study, and it is expected to take up to nine months. A potential ballot measure could be considered in 2027. The City will continue to take part in project team meetings.

Councilmember Viafore asked for Whittier Elementary School Replacement Project updates. City Manager Masko stated that the Tacoma Public Schools District is working with the project team and planning consultant, and the project is still on schedule.

Councilmember George joined the meeting in the Council Chambers at 7:09 P.M.

DEPARTMENT HEAD COMMENTS

- Police Chief Victor Celis reported on several items, including staffing updates, wished Selena Byrd farewell, and stated that Community Service Officer I/Police Records Technician John Truong will temporarily fill the CSO II role. He also reported on officer training requirements. Chief Celis provided current departmental statistics and thanked Selena Byrd and Police Sergeant Gollinger for their efforts with the National Night Out event. Lastly, he reported that the Whittier Elementary School principal delivered a thank-you card to the department.
- Parks and Recreation Director Jeff Grover reported on the upcoming Concert and Market at the Park, adult swimming lessons, and pool staffing. Mayor Pro Tempore Bufford stated that she was excited to see the return of adult swimming lessons.

COUNCILMEMBER COMMENTS

- Councilmember Andrews; no comment.
- Councilmember George thanked the Police Department for the National Night Out event, gave best wishes to Selena Byrd and John Truong, congratulated Mayor Reynolds on her acceptance to medical school, and asked the Mayor about her schedule. Mayor Reynolds stated that she would be “hyper commuting”.
- Councilmember Wittner commended the National Night Out event and thanked the meeting attendees for their participation.
- Councilmember Mauer-Smith thanked Chief Celis for the National Night Out event.
- Councilmember Viafore provided kudos to Chief Celis for the National Night Out event and stated that Selena Byrd's departure leaves “big shoes to fill”.
- Mayor Reynolds; no comment.
- Mayor Pro Tempore Bufford gave kudos to the Police Department for the National Night Out event and expressed appreciation for Selena Byrd’s service.

PUBLIC COMMENTS FOR ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA

Mayor Pro Tempore Bufford invited public comment. The following individual provided comment:

- Vince Navarre, Del Monte Ave resident, thanked the Council for their service and requested consideration of additional swings at the Fircrest Tot Lot.

COMMITTEE, COMMISSION, AND LIAISON REPORTS

A. Administration

Councilmember Viafore stated that he did not have a report due to the City Manager’s vacation and reported that she still worked during her vacation time.

B. Built Environment, Planning, and Building

There was no report.

C. Finance, and Information Technology

There was no report.

D. Other Liaison Reports

Centennial Committee

Mayor Pro Tempore Bufford reported that the Committee met on August 8, 2025, and finalized the Centennial birthday week schedule and logistics, including the Fircrest Night at the Tacoma Rainiers event.

CONSENT CALENDAR

Mayor Reynolds requested that the City Clerk read the Consent Calendar:

- A. Approval of Check No. 14513 through 14514 in the amount of \$9,358.75
- Approval of Check No. 223277 through 223358 in the amount of \$827,303.94
- Approval of payroll electronic funds transfer in the amount of \$1,718.03
- Approval of payroll electronic funds transfer in the amount of \$217,162.85

Approval of payroll electronic funds transfer in the amount of \$215,938.69

Approval of payroll electronic funds transfer in the amount of \$18,984.62

Approval of payroll electronic funds transfer in the amount of \$6,199.09

- B.** Setting the 2026 City Council Study Session meetings on January 20, February 17, March 16, April 20, May 18, June 15, July 20, August 17, September 21, October 19, November 16, and December 21, starting at 6:00 P.M. at Fircrest City Hall

- C.** Approval of July 21, 2025, Special Meeting minutes

Councilmember Wittner MOVED to approve the Consent Calendar; seconded by Councilmember Mauer-Smith.

The Motion Carried (7-0).

PUBLIC HEARING

There was no public hearing scheduled.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was no unfinished business.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Motion: Department of Commerce Middle Housing Appeal Response

City Manager Masko briefed the Council on the proposed motions and highlighted that the Department of Commerce has issued a response to the appeal. She outlined three options for Council consideration. **Councilmember Wittner MOVED to withdraw the City's appeal to the Department of Commerce and authorize the City Manager to take all steps necessary to facilitate this action; seconded by Councilmember Mauer-Smith.**

Mayor Pro Tempore Bufford invited Councilmember comments. Councilmember Wittner stated that he would like to hear from the former Ad Hoc Committee members about their opinion on the matter.

Mayor Pro Tempore Bufford invited public comment.

- Frank Landberg, Ad Hoc Committee co-chair, commented on the committee's work over the past year to address infrastructure concerns relating to the sewer capacity. He highlighted issues with pump stations and the long-standing agreements with the City of Tacoma. He referenced the Department of Commerce's response to the appeal and stated that it allowed the submission of additional materials if the appeal is dropped. Mr. Landberg stated that the committee's work would help resolve long-term infrastructure challenges and help with the middle housing development.
- Jim Ottness, 973 Altadena Drive, commented on potential avenues to address the sewage problems, such as amending the agreement with the City of Tacoma to adjust pump capacity, adding infrastructure improvements, and identifying cost estimates. He stated that addressing infrastructure issues, such as sewer and groundwater, is critical before implementing House Bill 1110 requirements.

Mayor Pro Tempore Bufford invited Councilmembers' comments.

- Councilmember Andrews thanked the committee members for their efforts and highlighted the community middle housing survey, which received over 600 responses, opposing middle housing in their neighborhoods. He expressed support for dropping the appeal and submitting additional materials and highlighted that the work was being done by volunteers at no cost to the city.
- Councilmember Viafore commented on his experience with the City's sewer agreement and stated that the sewer capacity issues with Tacoma continue to resurface. He expressed concern about the capacity issues and transmission challenges and highlighted the need to explore viable solutions. He also expressed concerns about the City's Capital Facilities Plan and long-term infrastructure planning. He supported option 2 to withdraw the appeal and allow for 45 days to submit additional information.
- Mayor Reynolds supported the withdrawal of the appeal to continue to gather information to address infrastructure gaps and serve the community.

Mayor Pro Tempore Bufford requested a roll call vote: Andrews – Nay; George – Aye; Mauer-Smith – Aye; Viafore – Nay; Wittner – Aye; Reynolds – Nay; Bufford – Aye;

The Motion Carried (4-3), with Councilmembers Andrews and Viafore, and Mayor Reynolds dissenting.

B. Ordinance No. 1742: Automated Traffic Safety Cameras

City Manager Masko briefed the Council on the proposed ordinance and highlighted that the ordinance would authorize and regulate the use of automated traffic safety cameras. **Councilmember Wittner MOVED to adopt Ordinance No. 1742, enacting Fircrest Municipal Code Chapter 16.56, authorizing and regulating the use of automated traffic safety cameras; seconded by Councilmember Viafore.** Mayor Pro Tempore Bufford invited Councilmember comments. Council discussions included the placement of speed cameras, support for camera placement near Whittier Elementary due to higher pedestrian traffic and safety concerns, and recent lawsuits regarding the administration of traffic camera programs. NovoaGlobal Representative Heidi Traverso stated that the City may install multiple school zone camera systems as needed and explained that recent state law requires equity studies to ensure fair placement. She also highlighted that violators receiving state assistance are eligible for a 50% fine reduction under the new law. Additional discussions included camera placement concerns on Columbia Avenue, the importance of using current traffic data, and the need to proceed cautiously to avoid overwhelming the court and police department. Mayor Pro Tempore Bufford invited public comment; none was provided.

The Motion Carried (7-0).

CALL FOR FINAL COMMENTS

Councilmember Viafore requested that the City administration provide a recruitment timeline for current staff vacancies and proposed that the Council consider establishing a subcommittee to review the Tacoma-Fircrest sewage treatment MOU and explore potential options. He also reported that City staff have begun itemizing all City assets near Whittier Park, including drainage and water

infrastructure, relating to its use for the Whittier Elementary School Replacement Project. City Manager Masko stated that the construction timeline and development agreements are in progress.

Councilmember George thanked Police Chief Celis for the increased police presence and visibility.

Councilmember Andrews expressed disappointment over the loss of volunteer support for the Department of Commerce appeal and highlighted that the responsibility will now shift to City staff.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 8:13 P.M., Mayor Pro Tempore Bufford reported that the Council would take a five-minute recess and convene into Executive Session, not to exceed ten (10) minutes to review the performance of a public employee, pursuant to RCW 42.30.110(1)(g).

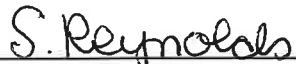
At 8:23 P.M., Mayor Pro Tempore Bufford reported that the executive session will be extended by an additional ten (10) minutes.

The Council reconvened at 8:33 P.M.

ADJOURNMENT

Councilmember Mauer-Smith MOVED to adjourn the meeting at 8:33 P.M., seconded by Councilmember Wittner.

The Motion Carried (7-0).



Shannon Reynolds, Mayor



Arlette Burkhart, City Clerk