

# Winter Park Update

## March through May 2023

**vision** Winter Park is the city of arts and culture, cherishing its traditional scale and charm while building a healthy and sustainable future for all generations.

## Mayor's Message

A good friend from New York came to visit a few weeks ago. It was her first time here, and like so many others, she and her guest felt that they had found a place that felt like home, with a walkable downtown, a beautiful park, great weather and a gorgeous Rollins College campus steps away. We all love bringing friends and family into Winter Park to visit. In their heart, they share the community values that the residents of Winter Park share, but we get to live them every day.

Back in 2016, residents put those values into words. The top two values that make Winter Park special were our:

1. History & Heritage
2. Village Ambiance & Small-Town Feel

While Winter Park began its story as the "City of Homes," our history goes deeper. Creating a thriving community requires strong partnerships. This year, the Winter Park Chamber of Commerce celebrates their 100th year of being a partner with the city, bringing the local economy to our doorstep, and transforming Park Avenue into the experience it is today. Combined with the Winter Park History Museum's new exhibit, "Retailing Our Story," the community can celebrate our city's and the Chamber's years of commerce. There are many other events planned by the Chamber to celebrate this milestone.

Winter Park is also the "City of Culture and Heritage." Kicking off spring, the 64th Winter Park Sidewalk Art Festival will run from Friday, March 17, to Sunday, March 19. Thanks to the festival committee for hosting such a great event!

In February, I also had the honor to recognize Hal George with the Mayor's Founders' Award for keeping these values alive. Hal is well known for his tireless work with the Habitat for Humanity, Winter Park Housing Authority and with our Community Redevelopment Agency, all of which preserve our city's rich heritage. As a builder, he also epitomizes how we keep the new as charming as the old. Thank you, Hal, for your service to our community.

Your Commission has also been hard at work. Years ago, a Yale University study concluded that individuals who wrote down their life goals were **10 times** more financially successful than those who did not. Cities are not businesses, but I believe the principal is the same. Setting written goals can help us reach them. Your City Commission sets and updates goals every year.

Today, I can report that the most critical of those priorities have been completed or started:

1. Your taxes did NOT increase. Our financial reserves are in excellent shape, budget is balanced, and police and fire department response times continue to be the best in the region.
2. We are continuing the work to make Orange Avenue safer and to bring our newest park to life. With permits now in hand, we are beginning the roadway and parking changes, to be followed by the landscaping to complement the seven large Live Oaks that have been acclimating for the past year. With the new parking, Orange Avenue will be safer for shoppers and dining as we improve long term public parking adjacent to the park and off of busy Orange Avenue.

3. The city increased our commitment to our small businesses to ensure a successful holiday season with a tremendous holiday decoration package of lights and events on Park Avenue, Orange Avenue, New England Avenue and Morse Boulevard.
4. We continued the renovation of several of our playing fields and parks, expecting the major renovation of Martin Luther King, Jr. Park to be renovated in 2023 and 2024.
5. We continued our long-term 5- and 25-year strategic investment plans to make sure we balance the short- and long-term goals of the city. As part of that long-range planning, the city has funded traffic and connectivity designs and connected those plans with grant writing efforts to secure funding.
6. We are continuing the work of the "Smart Cities" task force to make sure we have better and more reliable internet services and advanced technology in place to service our homes and businesses in the future. During the pandemic, internet connections became as important as roads/highways for many of our residents.
7. The city completed a record year in 2021 of preserving our heritage by registering 12 homes on the Winter Park Register of Historic Places and continued the trend by registering four additional homes on the register in 2022.
8. In the past 12 months, the Commission has also worked to provide more greenspace and to make that space accessible to our residents. In April 2022, we closed on the acquisition of the 93-acre Winter Park Pines Golf Course. As an operating business, it pays for itself. First round improvements to the course and facilities have been completed, and now our blue-ribbon committee is planning the long-term future.
9. In January, after many years of hard work by our Keep Winter Park Beautiful and Sustainable Board, the City Commission adopted the Sustainability Action Plan, a framework for long-term sustainability. Having already shifted some of our electrical power generation to solar, we are continuing the process to determine how best to set and to move our energy goals forward.

As we all know, 2022 brought its own surprises and new goals. Some of these unwanted surprises include the high fuel costs and supply chain issues still resulting from the pandemic. In addition, we experienced unprecedented flooding issues from the torrential downpour of Hurricane Ian and Tropical Storm Nicole. Even now some of our residents are still recovering from the flooding. Our city team worked hard to put measures in place to reduce the financial impact to our residents and responded to the storms by restoring power and answering distress calls. We are continuing our work to refine our hurricane preparedness plan to anticipate BOTH high winds and newly understood flood possibilities.

I thank Commissioners Sullivan, DeCiccio, Cruzada and Vice Mayor Weaver for their teamwork. And especially, I thank the city staff that has made all of this possible. If you have thoughts and ideas on your priorities, please let us know.

In the meantime, it's always good to take time to enjoy the charming reasons we live in beautiful Winter Park. I hope to see you at the annual Winter Park Sidewalk Art Festival on March 17-19 in Central Park or enjoying the new exhibit at the Winter Park History Museum.

Sincerely, Mayor Phil Anderson

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## **No election needed March 7**

Every municipal election offers a qualifying period for interested candidates. Because there were no new candidates that submitted paperwork by the January deadline, Commissioners Marty Sullivan

(Seat 1) and Sheila DeCiccio (Seat 2) were unopposed. Therefore, there will not be a general election held Tuesday, March 7.

Commissioners Sullivan and DeCiccio official Oath of Office will be performed during the **Wednesday, March 22**, City Commission meeting **at 3:30 p.m.** in City Hall Commission Chambers located at 401 S. Park Ave. This will also be live-streamed at [cityofwinterpark.org/meetings](http://cityofwinterpark.org/meetings) and [facebook.com/winterparkfla](https://facebook.com/winterparkfla).

Congratulations, Commissioners, we look forward to your next terms of service.

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## Celebrating our history

Earlier this year, two historic landmark signs were installed as part of the Historic Preservation Board's efforts to celebrate our city's history. These signs are similar to those seen in many historic cities across the nation. The two newest ones were installed in January with Central Park's history showcased just north of the Central Park Main Stage and the other paying tribute to Winter Park's history just beside the Veterans Fountain also in Central Park.

Residents and guests to the Barbour House at Casa Feliz and the Albin Polasek Museum & Sculpture Gardens can also learn about its history from the signs installed within the past two years. More signs will be installed to continue sharing the historical significance of important locations such as Hannibal Square, Eastbank House, North New York Avenue (in commemoration of the original Winter Park Telephone Company site), Winter Park Farmers' Market, Dinky Dock, Orwin Manor in honor of its 100th Anniversary, and the Winter Park Golf Course, to name a few.

If you are interested in designating your home or property on the Winter Park Register of Historic Places, please access the city's Historic Designation Application at [cityofwinterpark.org/historicpreservation](http://cityofwinterpark.org/historicpreservation). Applications are accepted year-round.

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## Quick Tip: City Hall will be closed

**in observance of Memorial Day** Monday 05.29.23

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## Quick Tip: It's time to spring forward change clocks, check batteries & adjust sprinklers

Daylight Saving Time begins **Sunday, March 12**

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## What time is it?

Find out at the newest timepiece installed on Park Avenue just east of the Veterans Fountain located in Central Park. In February, the city dedicated this beautiful clock, generously donated by two city residents, Gail and Michael Winn, to honor our city's history and heritage.

This clock is the third one of its kind that joins the two other stately timepieces located adjacent to the Winter Park Golf Course pro shop and at the intersections of Orange and Minnesota avenues and Denning Drive.

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## Residents: your city needs you!

- Q Are there aspects of your neighborhood or community that you would like to enhance?
- Q Is there something happening in the city that you wish you could change?
- Q Are you looking to make a positive impact in your city government?
- Q Are you simply looking for ways to become more involved and engaged?

If you answered yes [or even maybe] to any of these questions, find out which advisory board is best for you! Please access [cityofwinterpark.org/board-app](http://cityofwinterpark.org/board-app) to submit a Citizen Board Application. The City Commission appointment date will be [Wednesday, April 26](#), but applications are accepted year round.

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## City Manager's Report 2022 Employees of the Year

Each year we celebrate three city employees as our Employees of the Year. These three individuals represent the 500+ city family members that are committed to providing high-quality city services to our residents and community. Thank you to Stephanie, Travis and Kyle for living out our employee mission to "Make Every Day Exceptional" for all that we serve.

### **Stephanie Silva** Events & Marketing Coordinator | Communications

Hired in 2019, Events & Marketing Coordinator Stephanie Silva brings an energetic and fresh perspective to our city family. Her "can do" attitude, self-motivation, likeable personality, and expertise in marketing and social media has made her an invaluable team member of the Communications Department. Whether she is filming city employees to show the high-quality work they do, or managing special event logistics and promotions, she continues to excel.

Stephanie teaches colleagues the most current social media features and assists in overseeing all city social media accounts. She ensures messaging is on point, keeps up with the trends, adheres to city protocol, and presents positive and current information.

Stephanie also began taking the lead on event-related city press releases, official letters and proclamations. One of her greatest contributions is her creative video production skills, which have resulted in over 30 fun, informative videos that promote city services and feature city staff.

The city is not the only organization that has recognized her talents. In 2021, Stephanie was awarded the "Shining Star Award" by the Florida Municipal Communicators Association.

Thank you, Stephanie, for working so hard to be a shining example for others. Congratulations!

### **Travis Tacner** Firefighter/Engineer

A native central Floridian, Travis Tacner began his career with the Fire-Rescue Department (WPFDD) in 2007 as a Firefighter/Paramedic. In 2017, he was promoted to Engineer and shortly after, obtained his state instructor certificate which allowed him to be involved with the department's training division.

Most recently, Travis has taken the lead in revising the department's driver/pump operator handbook which serves as the "how-to" manual for drivers. He also serves as a lead instructor for driver training and pump operations classes. This is no small task as both technologies and techniques are forever evolving. Travis has developed a unique way of adapting the manual material into real life situations in Winter Park and his instructing style is well received by all students. Travis is also an integral part of fire apparatus build teams which are responsible for ensuring that apparatus purchased are best suited for the city and WPFDD.

Travis strives to be the very best firefighter, paramedic and engineer. His drive for greatness is evident in how he teaches and mentors his fellow firefighters. New and veteran firefighters alike learn from his work ethic and the professional image he continually displays.

Thank you for your commitment to saving lives and serving our community! Congratulations, Travis!

### **Kyle Burkhardt** K-9 Officer | Traffic Enforcement

Officer Kyle Burkhardt operates the only K-9 team in the department and fully embodies one of the most fundamental law enforcement skills of conducting traffic enforcement. Not only does this assure our citizens that officers are actively patrolling the city to ensure safety, but it is an important tool that helps with investigating criminal activity.

During 2022, Officer Burkhardt made several significant arrests, located numerous stolen vehicles, seized 1,500 grams of cannabis and other drugs, and removed four firearms from convicted felons. In July 2022, one of his most significant cases occurred when he conducted a traffic stop and the driver fled on foot. Officer Burkhardt was able to apprehend the suspect and make an arrest. A search of the vehicle resulted in the recovery of a stolen firearm, and confiscation of over 1,000 grams of cannabis, 70 grams of ecstasy, and \$23,311 in drug money. To prosecute this case, he worked directly with the United States Attorney's Office and an agent with the Department of Homeland Security. Due to the solid case that he compiled, the defendant received 82 months in federal prison. Officer Burkhardt regularly volunteers for outreach programs, bringing his K-9 partner Wyatt to meet the children. He is an active member of the Metro SWAT Team and competed in the 2022 SWAT Roundup International. He and Wyatt are exemplary employees and great assets to the department. Congratulations, Officer Burkhardt (and Wyatt)! Thank you for keeping us safe!

Please help me congratulate these outstanding city employees!

Sincerely, Randy B. Knight, City Manager

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## Significant Parks Projects

### Coming early 2024

Construction on the city's newest outdoor experience at the corner of Orange Avenue and Denning Drive is scheduled to begin this March. Updates and renderings for the new park can be accessed at [cityofwinterpark.org/progress-point](http://cityofwinterpark.org/progress-point).

### Shady Park upgrades

The Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) and the Parks & Recreation Department are working on improvements to Shady Park in Hannibal Square, located adjacent to the Winter Park Community Center at 721 W. New England Ave. These improvements include new fixtures, hardscapes and landscapes, and the installation of a new art piece. After a "Call to Artists" process, the selection committee which includes representatives from the public, and Community Redevelopment, Public Art and Parks & Recreation advisory boards, chose George Gadson as the artist to create the work. This creation may take 12-14 months, and upon completion, will be a welcomed sculpture to the neighborhood and city's public art collection. Park improvements are scheduled to begin spring 2023.

### MLK improvements

The CRA and the city's Parks & Recreation Department have been working on the Martin Luther King, Jr. (MLK) Park enhancement project. This includes the installation of new sodded sports fields, a Community Playground renovation bringing it up to today's safety standards, and development of the MLK Park Memorial Corner. This corner will honor and depict Dr. King through public art, a memorial wall and hardscape/landscape improvements. The "Call for Artists" to develop the work has been issued and the selection committee, which also includes representatives from the public, and Community Redevelopment, Public Art and Parks & Recreation advisory boards, will begin reviewing the submissions this spring.

Updates to this project can be found at [cityofwinterpark.org/mlk-project](http://cityofwinterpark.org/mlk-project).

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## Undergrounding update

Undergrounding the city's overhead electric power lines continues to be a top priority for the Electric Utility Department. Due to the impact of the recent pandemic and the nation-wide supply chain issues that have developed, the undergrounding timeline and project schedule originally proposed prior to the pandemic has changed. The revised expected completion date for the overall undergrounding has been adjusted from 2026 to 2030.

Once material availability returns to a more dependable status, the department will be able to adjust its schedule and continue its work to underground the remainder of the overhead lines. During this time, emphasis will be placed in the service conversions (undergrounding the power line from residential homes to the pole) until supply issues are resolved.

Winter Park is one of the lowest cost utilities in Florida and continues to reinvest its profits into its infrastructure and undergrounding efforts. [Printed version includes a graph showing Winter Park's electric bill rates compare with other municipalities.]

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## Improvements to your utility bill

Based on customer feedback, the following changes have been made to your utility bills:

- Changed [Read Code](#) with [Days](#) (billed in bill cycle)
- Changed [Total Current Billing](#) to [Total Charge Amount](#)
- Changed [Past Due Balance](#) to [Previous Balance](#)
- Changed [Less Payments Received](#) to [Payments Received](#)

The city has received additional customer feedback requesting the return of other elements that were previously displayed on the bill. In the coming months, the following will be re-incorporated into the bills:

- Graphs that provide 12 months of history for water and electric usage
- Adding the kWh tiers for residential customers (1st 1,000 kWh and kWh over 1,000) along with the rates for each tier
- Showing the water meter size
- Including the number of days in the billing cycle
- Adding the unit of measure for usage (thousands of gallons, kWh, KW, etc.)
- Providing a clear delineation of the categories of charges (water, sewer, electric, garbage, etc.)

These elements will help customers better understand, plan and adjust their consumption. Thank you for your patience as we continue to make improvements to your utility billing experience. If you have any questions, please contact [customer\\_service@cityofwinterpark.org](mailto:customer_service@cityofwinterpark.org) or [407-599-3220](tel:407-599-3220).

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## Quick Tip: Gas-powered leaf blowers prohibited July 2024

Please remind your landscaping companies of [Ordinance #3230-22](#) requirements:

- As of January 12, 2022, all internal combustion engine or motor leaf blowers are limited to **7 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday through Saturday**, and **noon to 6 p.m., on Sunday**.
- Any debris blown into the public right of way **must be removed within 30 minutes**.
- Beginning July 2024, **all internal combustion engine or motor leaf blowers will be prohibited** within the city.

Access the complete ordinance at [cityofwinterpark.org](http://cityofwinterpark.org) under [Government » Ordinances & Resolutions](#).

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## Becoming a smart city

The City Commission appointed a Broadband & Smart City Ad Hoc Committee that has been meeting since September 2021. The purpose of the committee was to evaluate smart city technologies to foster continuous improvements in service and advance broadband standard of service, technology, choice and availability to residents and guests of the city.

A “smarter” Winter Park will use sensors and systems to improve interactions with customers, improve efficiencies across all city departments, optimize traffic flow in Winter Park, enhance public safety; and act as a platform for next-generation economic development. It is Winter Park’s goal to assure that every resident, business and visitor has the connectivity needed to live in today’s digital world.

The city has recently engaged a consultant to develop a multi-year vision for these master plans in close coordination with city leadership and develop key projects and initiatives that the city can work towards deploying in the near future. More information regarding this effort will be provided as the study develops.

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## Save these dates

### Saturday, March 4

- what** household hazardous waste + e-waste dropoff
- when** 8 a.m. to noon
- where** Orange & Cypress avenues
- info** [407-599-3364](tel:407-599-3364) | [cityofwinterpark.org/events](http://cityofwinterpark.org/events)

RESIDENTIAL ONLY – NO CONTRACTORS.

### Saturday, March 10-12

- what** green business recognition program citywide cleanup
- when** self-directed | time is up to you
- where** registration required for location list
- info** [407-599-3364](tel:407-599-3364) | [kwpb@cityofwinterpark.org](mailto:kwpb@cityofwinterpark.org)  
[natural-resources-sustainability.eventbrite.com](http://natural-resources-sustainability.eventbrite.com)

### Saturday, April 8

- what** easter in the parks
- where** neighborhoods & parks throughout the city
- what** easter at the market
- where** Winter Park Farmers’ Market Central Park West Meadow
- when** 10 a.m. to noon [both events]
- info** [407-599-3342](tel:407-599-3342) | [cityofwinterpark.org/events](http://cityofwinterpark.org/events)

### Saturday, April 22

- what** run for the trees
- where** Ward Park @ 250 Perth Lane
- when** 7:30 a.m
- what** ward & wellbeing earth day block party
- where** Ward Park and Center for Health & Wellbeing @ 2005 Mizell Ave.
- when** 8 to 11:30 a.m.



**info**     [407-599-3450](tel:407-599-3450) | [cityofwinterpark.org/earthday](http://cityofwinterpark.org/earthday)

**Thursday or Friday, May 4 or 5 & May 11 or 12**

**what**     **spring cleanup**

**when**     after 5 p.m. the evening before your 2nd regularly scheduled trash pickup day

**where**     north of Fairbanks/ Aloma avenues corridor {**may 4 or 5**}  
south of Fairbanks/ Aloma avenues corridor {**may 11 or 12**}

**info**     [407-774-0800](tel:407-774-0800)

**for more things to enjoy, please access [cityofwinterpark.org/events](http://cityofwinterpark.org/events)**

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**City Commission**

Mayor Phil Anderson, Commissioner Marty Sullivan, Commissioner Sheila DeCiccio, Commissioner Kris Cruzada and Commissioner Todd Weaver.

City Commission meetings are held monthly on the second and fourth Wednesdays.

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**Who to contact**

**commission & administration**

City Commission	<a href="tel:407-599-3234">407-599-3234</a>
City Manager   Randy Knight	<a href="tel:407-599-3235">407-599-3235</a>
Assistant City Manager   Michelle del Valle	<a href="tel:407-599-3236">407-599-3236</a>
City Clerk   Rene Cranis	<a href="tel:407-599-3277">407-599-3277</a>
City Information	<a href="tel:407-599-3399">407-599-3399</a>
Fire-Rescue Non-Emergency	<a href="tel:407-644-1212">407-644-1212</a>
Police Non-Emergency	<a href="tel:407-644-1313">407-644-1313</a>

**department directors**

Building & Permitting Services   Gary Hiatt	<a href="tel:407-599-3237">407-599-3237</a>
Communications   Clarissa Howard	<a href="tel:407-599-3343">407-599-3343</a>
Electric Utility   Dan D’Alessandro	<a href="tel:407-599-3294">407-599-3294</a>
Finance   Wes Hamil	<a href="tel:407-599-3292">407-599-3292</a>
Fire-Rescue   Chief Dan Hagedorn	<a href="tel:407-599-3297">407-599-3297</a>
Information Technology   Parsram Rajaram	<a href="tel:407-599-3432">407-599-3432</a>
Natural Resources & Sustainability   Gloria Eby	<a href="tel:407-599-3471">407-599-3471</a>
Parks & Recreation   Jason Seeley	<a href="tel:407-599-3334">407-599-3334</a>

Planning & Zoning | Jeff Briggs [407-599-3440](tel:407-599-3440)

Police | Chief Tim Volkerson [407-599-3272](tel:407-599-3272)

Public Works & Transportation | Charles Ramdatt [407-599-3233](tel:407-599-3233)

Water & Wastewater Utilities | David Zusi [407-599-3219](tel:407-599-3219)

Email addresses can be found at [cityofwinterpark.org/contact](http://cityofwinterpark.org/contact)

## **outages**

Power & Street Light Outages [1-877-811-8700](tel:1-877-811-8700)

## **helpful info**

The Winter Park Update is published quarterly with a circulation of approximately 16,500, including both residents and businesses. To suggest article ideas, please contact [407-599-3343](tel:407-599-3343) or [choward@cityofwinterpark.org](mailto:choward@cityofwinterpark.org).

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