

Winter Park Update

June through August 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

Welcome to the start of summer!

School is out, vacations are planned, and the grill is going. Summer really speaks to enjoying our freedom and community in so many ways. Of course there are the formal celebrations of Juneteenth and our city's Annual Fourth of July Celebration, both coming up soon. These are great opportunities to remember how we all got here as fellow citizens. Please access more information about all of these celebrations at cityofwinterpark.org/events.

Here in Winter Park, we celebrate summer in many other ways. If you have chosen Winter Park to live in or visit, you probably came for the sun, but also for the shade from our tree canopy. You probably chose Winter Park because of its arts and culture organizations (and in the summer because of their air conditioning). And you chose to live here because of the outstanding people that work here and help make our community great. Our commissioners and staff work hard to make sure we have a special place to live, work and play.

To make the most of both our sun and our shade, we recently committed to a comprehensive Sustainability Action Plan. One focus is on our tree canopy. Trees are so important – they keep us cool, drop the temperature about six degrees during the summer, and pump out fresh air. Our Urban Forestry team works hard to preserve trees and also plant new ones. In fact, on Earth Day in April alone, our team gave out 1,400 trees in celebration. We have also prioritized using the sun to generate power. By the end of 2025, the city will have a total of 20 megawatts of solar power to add to our electric utility's capacity. Our electric utility serves around 80% of our residents and has some of the lowest power costs in the area.

We also celebrate summer as a great time to cool off, indoors and outdoors. Winter Park is proud of its thriving museums, arts and culture organizations, library facilities, and of course, shopping. The new "Park Avenue District" has just been recognized as part of the Main Street America™ program. Outside, take a dip in the city pools at the Winter Park Community Center and Cady Way, or get out on a lake. And of course, we are well on our way with improving our two golf courses, our historic Winter Park Golf Course (WP9) and Winter Park Pines Golf Club (WP18), keeping the family feel but making each one better.

We also celebrate the people that make it all happen. We still have the best police and fire response times in the region. Our parks, lakes and urban forestry teams are outstanding. Our streets teams are working hard to make our roads safer...and for the brick streets...smoother! And our senior management and commissioners are doing the job within a balanced budget.

Years ago, our residents identified the top two character traits that make us special: **1** history & heritage & **2** small-town feel.

These values continue to drive our decisions.

Commissioners DeCiccio, Sullivan, Weaver, Cruzada and I wish you a wonderful summer. Stay cool, splash in the water, celebrate the shade...and don't forget to wear sunscreen!

Wishing you a safe and happy summer!

Sincerely, Mayor Phil Anderson

Quick Tip: City Hall will be closed

in observance of Juneteenth Day Monday 06.19.23

in observance of Independence Day Tuesday 07.04.23

We wish you safe & enjoyable holidays!

Seven Oaks Park groundbreaking

On April 13, city officials broke ground on the greenspace newly named Seven Oaks Park. This ceremonial groundbreaking marked the official start of construction at the corner of Denning Drive and Orange Avenue. The chosen name honors the seven large live oaks planted in March of last year and pays tribute to one of the city's most treasured assets, its urban forest.

The grand opening of this beautiful 2.4-acre Seven Oaks Park is expected in early 2024. To keep up-to-date on the city's newest extraordinary outdoor experience, please access cityofwinterpark.org/sevenoakspark.

Pour-over your thoughts at CoffeeTalk

Even if you've **bean** before, there's still a **latte** to learn. Let's not make the discussion **bland**, join your city leaders for a **robusta** cup of conversation and coffee at this year's CoffeeTalks. The coffee may be **roasted**, but not our guest speakers. **Affogoto** bring a cup? No worries, Barnies Coffee & Tea Co.® is donating their special **blend**.

brewing

Thursdays | 8:30-9:30 a.m.

Commission Chambers @ 401 S. Park Ave.

AUG 03 City Manager Randy Knight & Assistant City Manager Michelle del Valle

SEP 21 Vice Mayor Sheila DeCiccio

OCT 05 Commissioner Marty Sullivan

NOV 02 Commissioner Kris Cruzada

DEC 07 Commissioner Todd Weaver

JAN 11 Mayor Phil Anderson

2024

City Manager's Report

Becoming a smart city

The City of Winter Park and its consultant, Magellan, will host a community meeting **Thursday, June 15, from 5:30 to 7 p.m.**, at the **Winter Park Country Club** located at 761 Old England Ave. The meeting will be structured in an open-house style where attendees can easily stop by and talk with representatives about the new ways the city can become "smarter" through the use of new technologies and data analysis. With the proper infrastructure in place, connectivity of these technological advancements can allow the city to optimize transportation, deliver municipal services, and provide next-generation utilities, all while improving the quality of life for its residents, businesses and guests.

The city is asking for input related to the various types of smart city improvements that are being considered. In addition, the city will explore opportunities to improve high-speed internet access and connectivity to support these smart city initiatives. Whether it is the installation of fiber to homes/businesses, addition of new electronic devices such as digital signage, strategic placement of sensors and cameras, or implementation of digital infrastructure improvements such as incident/outage management technology or 2-way citizen communications, the city is seeking feedback on the following four smart city pillars identified within its vision:

intelligent transportation Measures, monitors and controls the flow of traffic through the city by reducing congestion, optimizing routes, detecting accidents, avoiding idling pollution, as well as detecting and communicating available parking.

utilities Offers next-generation utility services that are reliable, efficient, secure and sustainable with exceptional customer service.

public safety Equips first responders with the tools, technology and training to plan for and respond to emergencies swiftly and effectively, while balancing the public good with individual privacy.

quality of life Fosters a welcoming environment that thrives on technical innovation and modern conveniences.

Beginning Thursday, June 1, you can learn more about the city's smart city efforts and share your input by accessing cityofwinterpark.org/smart-city. The online feedback form will be accessible until Thursday, June 22.

Sincerely, Randy B. Knight, City Manager

Ready for fun summer activities?

The Winter Park Library's Summer Reading Challenge is back with exciting classes and incentives for all ages. Our *All Together Now* theme celebrates community, and we have fun and enriching activities scheduled through July 29.

This year, we are challenging Winter Park to read 18,000 books! Plus, the more you read, the more chances you have to win prizes! Register at the Library or online by accessing winterparklibrary.org/summer-reading.

Commissioner's Column

A message from Commissioner Todd Weaver

Greetings friends and neighbors,

This quarter I am honored to host the Winter Park City Commissioner's Column. I wanted to address a subject that is top of mind for all of us at this time of year: stormwater and how we deal with it.

When we have heavy rains, our lakes are the primary recipients of stormwater, but they are not the only ones. The water comes not just from the rains, but also from runoff from our streets and landscape.

One path for stormwater to drain into the aquifer is our greenspaces – our parks, lawns and gardens. Our non-paved, non-built areas are vitally important to allow rain to naturally absorb into the soil and reach the aquifer. This is why your City Commission is committed to closely following our building codes.

Another way for this water to drain is through a system of strategically placed drain wells. These drain wells are vertically connected directly to the Florida aquifer via pipes that are 6" to 24" in diameter. You might call them "rapid aquifer recharge systems."

Some of the drain wells were built in response to Hurricane Donna in 1960. Donna was similar in many ways to Hurricane Ian. She blew in on a path through central Florida and traveled north, causing widespread flooding of the entire St. Johns River basin from Orlando to Jacksonville.

While neither Donna or Ian set records for rainfall in a day (Tropical Storm Fay in 2008 dumped some 25" of rain on us in a 24-hour period), what was so devastating was that stormwater from both Donna and Ian created a complete blockage to the normal flow of our main drainage outlet, the St. Johns River. This prevented floodwater from escaping from our area into the Atlantic Ocean. As a result, the floodwaters were trapped in central Florida for days, providing plenty of time to cause major damage.

The state no longer allows new drain wells. This means we have to find other ways to safely hold stormwater, divert it, and/or proactively open the drain wells several days before we know a major storm will arrive.

Our city staff is working with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), other government agencies, and consulting professionals on engineering upgrades and compiling new best practices for stormwater infrastructure maintenance.

Some of the federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds Winter Park received were allocated to dredge the Venetian Canal (which connects Lake Osceola to Lake Maitland), as well as the Fern Canal (which connects Lake Virginia to Lake Osceola). Those canals were impacted with sediment buildup which impedes boat navigation from one lake to another. This buildup also slows stormwater flow to the lower Howell Creek basin. The dredging began in mid-April and is expected to be completed over nine weeks, weather permitting.

We were fortunate to have received a grant from the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). This funding will support several projects which have been introduced as a result of the storms of 2022. A few of these projects will include dredging of the drainage ditches and ponds throughout the WP18 Golf Course, restoration of the embankments of Howell Creek in Mead Botanical Garden and in the Howell Branch Preserve, dredging of many stormwater outfalls throughout the city, and restoration of the 9th Grade Center retention pond. The first project will be dredging at the WP18 Golf Course.

Thanks to everyone for your patience, especially those of you who had flood damage to your homes. City staff, advisory boards and the City Commission have made our storm preparedness a priority, so that we are ready with a robust response when Mother Nature strikes again.

Sincerely, Commissioner Todd Weaver

Events calendar

For things to enjoy, please access cityofwinterpark.org/events

Quick Tip: Public Boat Ramp Updates

Dinky Dock Park public parking lot: **OPEN**

Fort Maitland Park public boat ramp: **OPEN**

Save these dates

Saturday, June 19

what juneteenth in winter park

when 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Remembering Rosewood

[curated by Barbara Chandler in partnership with the Hannibal Square Heritage Center]

2:30 to 4:30 p.m.

educational seminars

[presented by the Equity Council Corp.]

5 to 10 p.m.

A Night Under the Stars: Jazz & Jubilee

[presented by the Equity Council Corp.]

where Winter Park Community Center & Shady Park in Hannibal Square
721 W. New England Ave.

All festivities in partnership with the city's Parks & Recreation Department.

Monday, July 4

what 4th of July Celebration

when 9-11 a.m.

where Central Park & Park Avenue

Enjoy carnival games, bounce houses, Bach Festival Brass Ensemble & Choir performances, refreshing treats and more!

Saturdays [once a month]

what dock party [**distributingourcityknowledge**]

when 9-11 a.m.

where **June 24 @ Lake Bell** 1051 Lake Bell Drive

July 29 @ Lakes Knowles & Wilbar Lake Knowles Circle

August 26 @ Lakes Osceola & Maitland Kraft Azalea Garden

info [407-599-3463](tel:407-599-3463)

Family-friendly neighborhood events where residents get to meet city lake experts, learn valuable lake info, and enjoy breakfast bites, beverages, sustainable giveaways, a raffle and more!

Quick Tip: July Parks & Recreation Month!

To find ways you can celebrate, access cityofwinterpark.org/parks.

It's time to update our Comp Plan

Per the requirements of Chapter 163 of the Florida Statutes, the city is updating its Comprehensive Plan (Comp Plan). This update will reflect any changes that have occurred since the adoption of the 2017 Comp Plan and will not be a complete re-write. Although a majority of the Comp Plan will remain unchanged, the data and analysis sections that direct the policies of the plan will be updated. The Planning & Zoning Board (Local Planning Agency) and City Commission will hold a series of work sessions and public hearings for citizen input, with a goal to complete the updates before the end of 2023. As more specifics are determined, the schedule of these public meetings will be accessible at cityofwinterpark.org/comp-plan as well as via a citywide notice.

It's all about community

Playground update

Over the past year, city staff and members of the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board (PRAB) and Community Redevelopment Advisory Board (CRAB), along with city consultants, Dix Hite, have held several community input meetings related to the renovations of the Community Playground (also known as Castle Park) at Martin Luther King, (MLK) Jr. Park. After decades of wear and tear, the playground is in need of renovations, including improvements to bring the playground into compliance with today's safety standards.

A conceptual design was brought forward at a joint CRAB/PRAB meeting in April. It presented a good balance of preserving key structures and the identity of the current playground while also adding updates and improvements, such as better visibility, water features, accessibility, line of sight adjustments, inclusiveness and modern safety standards.

More information regarding the Community Playground and other enhancements to MLK, Jr. Park can be accessed at cityofwinterpark.org/mlk-project.

Lakes news & info

Keeping our lakes clean

helpful hints

- Always follow the label directions when using any pesticide.
- Never use pesticides within 30 feet of a lake, ditch or stream.
- Check weather forecasts before applying any outdoor pesticides; refrain from using if windy conditions exist or rain is expected within 24 to 48 hours.
- Clean up spills immediately & always dispose of unwanted pesticides at an approved household hazardous waste facility.

fertilize responsibly

- Use a phosphorus-free fertilizer with time-released nitrogen & spray shields to keep fertilizers off of paved surfaces.
- Do not apply fertilizers within 15 feet of a lake or any other waterway.
- Do not apply fertilizers containing nitrogen or phosphorous from June 1 through September 30.

For more information on fertilizing responsibly, access cityofwinterpark.org/lakes under Fertilize Wisely. You can also sign up to receive email notifications about your lake, herbicide irrigation restrictions, and other important lakes news, access cityofwinterpark.org/lakes.

So how do we rate?

When compared to Orlando Utilities Commission (OUC), Duke Energy and other municipally-owned utilities (5,000-100,000 customers), Winter Park continues to offer one of the lowest residential electric utility rates in the state. [Printed version includes a graph showing the 1,000 kWh Residential Bill Comparison as of March 2023.]

Hurricane information

Below are all the ways the city communicates storm preparation, management and recovery accessible on your electronic devices. While the weather is currently calm, please make sure to prepare as well as like, follow or subscribe to one or more of the tools below so you can stay informed.

Hurricane Preparedness Guide

- cityofwinterpark.org/emergency
hard copies are available at City Hall, Community Center, Public Safety Facility & Winter Park Library

Emergency Operations Center [available upon activation of EOC]

- Non-emergency information line [407-599-3494](tel:407-599-3494)
- Message Center email MessageCenter@cityofwinterpark.org

Report Outages

- Electric Utility Department [1-877-811-8700](tel:1-877-811-8700)
- Water & Wastewater Utilities Department [407-599-3219](tel:407-599-3219)

Website & social

- cityofwinterpark.org/hurricanes
all hurricane-related information & updates will be posted here
- cityofwinterpark.org/citEnews subscribe & receive city info via email
- cityofwinterpark.org/outreach the city's emergency alert system
[sign up to receive a phone call, text or email]
- facebook.com/WinterParkEmergencyInfo [@WinterParkEmergencyInfo]
- twitter.com/WinterParkFla [@WinterParkFla]
- nextdoor.com sign up for neighborhood-specific info

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.

Who to contact

commission & administration

| | |
|--|---|
| City Commission | 407-599-3234 |
| City Manager Randy Knight | 407-599-3235 |
| Assistant City Manager Michelle de Valle | 407-599-3236 |
| City Clerk Rene Cranis | 407-599-3277 |
| City Information | 407-599-3399 |
| Fire-Rescue Non-Emergency | 407-644-1212 |
| Police Non-Emergency | 407-644-1313 |

department directors

| | |
|---|---|
| Building & Permitting Services Gary Hiatt | 407-599-3237 |
|---|---|

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|---|---|
| Communications Clarissa Howard | 407-599-3343 |
| Electric Utility Dan D'Alessandro | 407-599-3294 |
| Finance Wes Hamil | 407-599-3292 |
| Fire-Rescue Chief Dan Hagedorn | 407-599-3297 |
| Information Technology Parsram Rajaram | 407-599-3432 |
| Natural Resources & Sustainability Gloria Eby | 407-599-3471 |
| Parks & Recreation Jason Seeley | 407-599-3334 |
| Planning & Zoning Jeff Briggs | 407-599-3440 |
| Police Chief Tim Volkerson | 407-599-3272 |
| Public Works & Transportation Charles Ramdatt | 407-599-3233 |
| Water & Wastewater Utilities David Zusi | 407-599-3219 |
| Email addresses can be accessed at 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.

City of Winter Park | [401 S. Park Ave.](http://401.S.Park.Ave.) | [Winter Park, FL 32789](http://Winter.Park,FL.32789)