

Winter Park Update

March through May 2024

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

One of the great privileges of being Mayor is the opportunity to speak to groups as they gather for important events. In January, I had the opportunity to speak at both the groundbreaking of the Unity Corner at Martin Luther King, Jr. Park and the International Holocaust Remembrance Day event hosted at the Winter Park Library. Both events were organized to remember our shared histories and humanity.

Remembering our history and our diversity is a part of what it means to be a community. Back in 2016, residents said that the top two values that make Winter Park special were our:

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

Established in 1882, Winter Park began its story as the "City of Homes," a place where people of all ethnicities and incomes could buy property and build a life. With the library created in 1885 and with "winning" the competition to create Rollins College also in 1885 (one of Florida's first colleges), we became a community that emphasized ideas and education. Winter Park, the City of Arts and Culture, grew with museums, performances and beautiful parks. While the area around us has grown, at our heart we are still a village. We try hard to keep the charm of a small town that feels safe and secure. Making that happen takes a lot of work from city staff and your City Commission. Over the past 12 months those efforts included:

1. A commitment to staffing our police and fire departments, with response times that continue to be the best in the region.
2. Keeping the city financially strong with a balanced budget, financial reserves higher than ever before, and all with no increase in our tax rates.
3. Focusing on our infrastructure with long-term engineering underway to improve our resilience to powerful storms, including better stormwater drainage.
4. Making our lives better with excellent parks and facilities, including (finally) the road and utility relocations needed to bring Seven Oaks Park to completion.
5. Keeping safety a priority as we create more parking off Orange Avenue, add turning lanes at Fairbanks Avenue and Denning Drive, and work closely with the Florida Department of Transportation to make Aloma Avenue (State Road 426) safer and slower.
6. Continuing our increased commitment to small businesses to ensure a successful holiday season with a tremendous holiday decoration package of lights and events on Morse Boulevard and Park, Orange and New England avenues.
7. Adopting policies to keep our electric rates some of the lowest in the area, even as we pursue sustainability goals to achieve most of our energy from renewable resources like solar power.

I thank Vice Mayor Sheila DeCiccio and Commissioners Marty Sullivan, Kris Cruzada and Todd 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.

With the mayoral election on Tuesday, March 19, this is my last newsletter as Mayor. It has been an honor to serve you. Some of you know that I collect meaningful quotes for all occasions! On this occasion, I would like to share two quotes from Maya Angelou:

Do the best you can until you know better. Then when you know better, do better.

...People will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.

The people that live, work and visit our little town of Winter Park are the best people in the world. I hope you feel that way, too.

Sincerely, Mayor Phil Anderson

Electric utility undergrounding stats

Miles completed 96.83 **percentage completed** 76 **miles remaining** 30.66
1,000 kWh Residential Bill Comparison: December 2023 informational graphic

It's time to spring forward

Daylight Saving Time begins **Sunday, March 10, 2024**

- » Move **clocks** forward one hour before bedtime.
- » Change the **batteries** in your smoke detectors.
- » Switch your **sprinklers** to two days a week.

Quick Tip: City Hall will be closed

in observance of Memorial Day Monday 05.27.24

Commissioner's Column

A message from Commissioner Todd Weaver

This year marks the 30th anniversary of the city's Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) Plan. The CRA encompasses the area that is more-or-less bounded by Fairbanks, Orlando (U.S. Highway 17-92), Webster and Interlachen avenues.

The original purpose of the CRA was to increase the services and infrastructure in areas that were struggling to evolve into beautiful, safe, valuable parts of the city. CRA improvements were and still are made possible by allocating county tax revenue to supplement city budget allocations for a specific list of improvement projects.

As a result of the formation of the CRA, three decades of **impressive projects** include:

- Central Park Main Stage
- Winter Park Community Center
- Winter Park Welcome Center

- Hannibal Square Heritage Center
- Winter Park Train Station
[part of total funding support]
- Railroad Avenue Apartments
[30 units of affordable housing]
- Over 180 home rehabilitations
[over 1/3 of all single-family homes in the CRA]
- Hannibal Square Community Land Trust homes
[20 units throughout Canton, Comstock, New England avenues, etc.]

Major streetscapes

- Webster Avenue
- Denning Drive
- New York Avenue
- Orange Avenue
- Pennsylvania Avenue
- Morse Boulevard [east & west]

Upcoming projects

- \$5 million for stormwater improvements to the Martin Luther King, Jr. (MLK) Park basin area.
- \$5 million for streetscape improvements to U.S. Highway 17-92 in concert with the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT).
- \$4+ million for MLK Park including new fields [completed], playground complex, restrooms, and the Unity Corner honoring Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s legacy.

As property values increase within the CRA, so do the funds passed back to us from Orange County. Since its formation in 1994, the CRA has been the recipient of county increment funds.

A critical CRA mission is to maintain affordable housing for local residents. The City Commission has discussed how to achieve some level of affordability with high land costs and will continue with this worthy goal.

Within the past year, our city has been working with Orange County on an application to expand the area of our CRA and extend the timeframe in which the CRA remains active. The city's original proposal included the Lee Road and Fairbanks Avenue corridors out to Interstate 4, and the Orange Avenue corridor from Pennsylvania Avenue to U.S. Highway 17-92. Orange County is considering allowing the CRA to expand down West Fairbanks Avenue for the agency to make needed transportation, housing and stormwater improvements to this important corridor. Sometime this year, we should learn whether the county will approve the CRA expansion and extension of time.

I wish you all a safe and pleasant Winter Park spring.

Sincerely, Commissioner Todd Weaver

Vizion Zero Winter Park

The city is participating in a regional, planning initiative aimed at enhancing transportation safety by drafting its own **Vizion Zero Action Plan**. This plan will strengthen the safety elements included in the city's Transportation Master Plan that was adopted by the City Commission in August 2023.

Vizion Zero is funded by a \$3.79 million federal grant that was awarded to MetroPlan Orlando. Winter Park is one of several jurisdictions in the MetroPlan region that supports and commits to MetroPlan Orlando's initiatives. Vizion Zero seeks to eliminate traffic fatalities and severe injuries on the transportation system by providing a data-driven, proactive, and preventive approach to identify

safety improvements. **Its primary objective is to eliminate traffic deaths on all roadways for all users.**

This plan is a critical step in identifying projects and funding for future transportation improvements throughout the city. Learn about Vision Zero and share your feedback through participation in our outreach and engagement efforts:

- **Saturday, March 23 | 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.**
Winter Park Farmers' Market @ Central Park West Meadow
- **Tuesday, March 26 | 5:30 to 6:30 p.m.**
City Hall Commission Chambers @ 401 S. Park Ave.

For more information, please access cityofwinterpark.org/visionzerowp.

City Manager's Report

2023 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 Sandra, Jack and Kaitlin for living out our employee mission to "Make Every Day Exceptional" for all that we serve.

Sandra Brown Permit Technician | Building & Permitting Services

Sometimes people perform extraordinary, heroic acts during their every day job functions. In 2023, Sandra Brown, Permit Technician, was diagnosed with stage three cancer and faced with undergoing chemo followed by radiation. At the time of her diagnosis, Building & Permitting Services was already under some strain due to various health-related issues affecting employee attendance.

However, going above and beyond throughout her cancer treatments, Sandra never missed work unless it was absolutely necessary. She knew that her colleagues were spread thin and she made it very clear she had a strong desire to contribute. On many days, Sandra would arrive to work with crackers and ginger ale to help make it through her shift. Although there were times she was sent home because she was too ill to work, she never wanted to leave.

Throughout her treatments, Sandra continued to present a professional image on behalf of the department and the city. As she maintained her positive attitude and continued to perform all work duties, Sandra became an inspiration to her colleagues. Although she moved forward as though nothing was wrong, her team knew there were struggles. As the treatments continued affecting her energy and physical appearance, Sandra persevered, never losing her sense of humor or strong work ethic. And when her treatments were complete, several city staff members were at her side when she rang the bell, signifying she had crossed the finish line.

Thank you, Sandra, for inspiring us to never give up. Congratulations!

Jack Timmes Firefighter

Firefighter Jack Timmes consistently displays outstanding dedication, exemplary service, and a resolute commitment to the Fire-Rescue Department. His strong work ethic and the way he leads by example both contribute to the superior service the department provides to city residents to keep our community safe. In addition to being a team player, he also cultivates a spirit of collaboration with his crew members, ensuring seamless cohesiveness and timely completion of station tasks.

Jack's positive influence extends beyond day-to-day operations, significantly elevating morale among his colleagues. His strong work ethic with respect to each of his duties fosters camaraderie among his peers as he exemplifies professionalism.

As a dedicated public servant, Jack has proven to be an invaluable asset to the department as a whole. His contributions have raised department standards and had a positive impact on the mindset of his team.

Thank you, Jack, for your continued commitment to excellence and service to the Winter Park community. Congratulations!

Kaitlin Gonzalez Master Police Officer | Training Unit

Master Police Officer (MPO) Kaitlin Gonzalez is recognized for her dedication and service to the citizens of our community as well as her fellow law enforcement officers. She maintains a drive and determination in training both current and next generation law enforcement officers in first aid, defensive tactics, and taser and firearms. In addition, as the range master at Winter Park firearms range, she provides a new perspective to training and citizen firearms safety courses which are thoughtfully planned and enthusiastically presented.

Kaitlin is also an instructor at the basic law enforcement academy at Seminole State College and Valencia School of Public Safety, as well as a member of the Critical Incident Stress Management team. She makes herself available to law enforcement officers and civilian employees during the aftermath of highly stressful and emotional police incidents to ensure they have the ability to debrief and decompress.

Kaitlin's prior experience as an undercover narcotics investigator at the Metropolitan Bureau of Investigations, a school resource officer in the Community Policing Unit, and her tireless determination make her an invaluable member of the department. She leads with a professional, polite and courteous manner towards our citizens, serving as an outstanding example to her colleagues.

Thank you & congratulations, Kaitlin!

Please help me congratulate the 2023 outstanding city employees!

Sincerely, Randy B. Knight, City Manager

New bike racks

The Public Works & Transportation Department has installed new bike racks along Park Avenue. If you see an area that could use one, please email transportation@cityofwinterpark.org.

Crosswalk updates

The intersection of Park and Lyman avenues received an update to the crosswalks. A pedestrian countdown system was implemented to show the time remaining to cross, allowing pedestrians to decide whether they should cross or wait for the next cycle. This pedestrian enhancement is similar to several other major intersections throughout the city.

Friendly reminder: Drivers must yield to pedestrians in the crosswalk.

Pet decals available

WinterParkLostPets (WPLP), in partnership with the Winter Park Fire-Rescue Department, recently released pet notification decals. They are FREE to Winter Park residents and available at the three Winter Park fire stations.

In addition to the fire station locations, WPLP has partnered with “pawsitively” friendly establishments who can also provide a decal. For a complete list or to become a distribution location, please access winterparklostpets.com.

Vote

Mayor & Commission Seat 2

general election » Tuesday, March 19

run-off election » Tuesday, April 16 [if necessary]

additional info » cityofwinterpark.org/elections | cityclerk@cityofwinterpark.org | [407-599-3277](tel:407-599-3277)

parks projects

City breaks ground for Unity Corner

On January 15, the city held a groundbreaking ceremony of the Unity Corner on the northeast corner of Martin Luther King, Jr. Park near the intersection of Denning Drive and Morse Boulevard. In addition to city and community leaders, the ceremony included remarks from sculpture artist, Andrew Luy, designer of the larger than life-size bronze statue of Dr. King. The installation will be titled “Ripple”, just as a single drop of water creates multiple expanding waves, so too does Dr. King’s influence. The Unity Corner is scheduled for completion early fall 2024.

Honoring our early pioneers

Coming spring/early summer Shady Park will showcase four of Winter Park’s earliest pioneers: Mary Lee DePugh, Gus Henderson, Frank R. Israel and Walter B. Simpson. These historical figures’ likenesses will be captured by artist George Gadson as he creates artistic busts in their honor.

This project helps to preserve the art, culture and rich history of Hannibal Square through outdoor art and monuments. For more information, please access cityofwinterpark.org/shady-park this spring.

Save these dates

Saturday, March 2

what st. patrick’s day parade

when 9 a.m.
where along Park Avenue
info [407-579-3168](tel:407-579-3168) or [321-303-5218](tel:321-303-5218)

Sunday, March 3

what **spring pops concert**
when 7 p.m.
where Central Park
info [407-599-3342](tel:407-599-3342) | cityofwinterpark.org/events

Saturday, March 9

what **household hazardous waste + e-waste dropoff**
where 8 a.m. to noon
where Cady Way Park @ 2525 Cady Way
when 10 a.m. to noon [both events]
info [407-599-3479](tel:407-599-3479) | cityofwinterpark.org/hhwd

Friday-Sunday, March 15-17

what **winter park sidewalk art festival**
when 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. F|S & 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sun
where Central Park
info [407-644-7207](tel:407-644-7207) | wpsaf.org

Saturday, March 30

what **easter in the parks**
where **Martin Luther King, Jr. Park,
Phelps Park & Ward Park**
what **easter at the market**
where **Winter Park Farmers' Market
Central park West Meadow**
when 10 a.m. to noon
info [407-599-3342](tel:407-599-3342) | cityofwinterpark.org/events

Saturday, April 27

what **run for the trees**
when 7:30 a.m.
where **Ward Park @ 250 Perth Lane**
what **ward & wellbeing earth day block party**
when 8 to 11:30 a.m.
where **Ward Park and Center for Health &
Wellbeing @ 2005 Mizell Ave.**
info [407-599-3450](tel:407-599-3450) | cityofwinterpark.org/earthday

Tuesday-Tuesday, March 19-26

- what** election sign drop off
- where** Fire Station 64 @ 1439 Howell Branch Rd.
- info** sustainability@cityofwinterpark.org

Thursday or Friday, May 2 or 3 & May 9 or 10

- 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 2 or 3**}
south of Fairbanks/ Aloma avenues corridor {**may 9 or 10**}
- info** [407-774-0800](tel:407-774-0800)

for more things to enjoy, please access cityofwinterpark.org/events

prevent auto theft ad

Dinner on the Avenue ad

Selling your home?

Are you are planning to sell or currently have your home on the market? If the answer is yes, thecity is asking you to consider selling it to the City of Winter Park or Habitat for Humanity® to offer more affordable housing opportunities for new residents wanting to call Winter Park home. For questions and additional information regarding this effort, please contact:

- Jeff Briggs
Planning & Zoning Department
jbriggs@cityofwinterpark.org
[407-599-3440](tel:407-599-3440)
- Habitat for Humanity of
Winter Park-Maitland
director@habitatwpm.org
habitatwpm.org/contact-us

Free Trees ad

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 del 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
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
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 found at cityofwinterpark.org/contact

outages

Power & Street Light Outages	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