



# DEPARTMENT UPDATES

SEPTEMBER 20, 2023

## A TWICE-MONTHLY SUMMARY FROM YOUR CITY OF GIG HARBOR LEADERSHIP TEAM

These department updates are an effort to increase our internal and external communication initiatives, to provide the mayor and city councilmembers with the information they need to serve the public and make informed decisions, and just as importantly, to share citywide information and updates with all staff and residents. Please feel free to send any questions, suggestions, or concerns about this document to [communications@gigharborwa.gov](mailto:communications@gigharborwa.gov).

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### ADMINISTRATION

#### [City Administrator Katrina Knutson](#)

**What's Up, Downtown?** Mayor Markley, City Administrator Knutson, Community Development Director Carl de Simas, and Public Works Director Jeff Langhelm attended the Downtown Waterfront Alliance (DTWA) monthly downtown business meeting. City Administrator Knutson provided a general city update and discussed upcoming events geared toward the review of permitting processes. Director Langhelm provided an update on capital projects that will impact downtown. DTWA Executive Director Carrienne Ekberg updated the group on fall and winter events including the much-anticipated Sip and Stroll (10/14), Halloween Trick or Treating Downtown (10/31), and Girls Night Out (11/9). There are also exciting new stores to check out, so please head on down!

**Legislative Agenda Preparation:** The city is busy preparing for the upcoming 2024 state legislative session. Similar to the 2023 legislative priorities, public safety and local control in land use decision-making are expected to again be priorities and the city council will discuss this at their September 28 work session. City Administrator Knutson and Mayor Markley continue their involvement in the Pierce County Coalition of Cities (Mayors/City Managers) seeking to have a unified voice in Olympia in pursuit of additional reform to laws involving public safety. City Administrator Knutson met with the city manager subcommittee to collaborate on draft legislative measures regarding police pursuits, police recruitment/retention/training, and juvenile access to counsel. Once draft priorities are finalized by this group, the coalition will meet again to share the collective priorities with all state representatives and state senators serving Pierce County.

**Washington City/County Manager Association (WCMA):** City Administrator Knutson was nominated by her peers to serve on the board of the WCMA. After all the ballots were cast statewide, she was elected to serve on this statewide body for a term of 2023-2027. Founded in 1959, WCMA is a non-profit association governed by a Board nominated and elected by the entire membership. WCMA is an affiliate of the International City/County Management Association, an organization devoted to enhancing the proficiency of city managers, county managers, and other municipal administrators, and strengthening the quality of an urban government through improved professional management.

The mission of WCMA is to advance the profession, support local government managers, and promote excellence in local government management. City Administrator Knutson is excited to not only represent Gig Harbor through this statewide opportunity, but also to advance leadership growth in emerging leaders!

**Business Listening Session:** The city’s first “Business Listening Session” has been scheduled for November 1 from 4-5:30 p.m. at the Civic Center. The purpose of this meeting is to hear from local businesses on the quality, efficiency, and effectiveness of the services we offer, particularly permitting processes. More information will be available about this opportunity soon on our website, city Facebook account, and in the Gig-A-Byte. Those listening to feedback offered will be Mayor Markley, City Councilmembers, City Administrator Knutson, Public Works Director Jeff Langhelm, and Community Development Director Carl de Simas.

**Kudos to the Public Works Crew:** If you’ve driven around the city or been to a city park this summer, you’ve no doubt seen our Public Works crew hard at work maintaining our infrastructure! From patching potholes to weed-whacking planter strips and maintaining stormwater ponds, the PW crew has done an excellent job. Please join us in thanking them for continued excellence in serving our city.

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## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

### [Community Development Director Carl de Simas](#)

The department is staying very busy working through the culmination of two long range plans – the Urban Forest Management Plan and Climate Action Plan – as well as continuing work on some code updates – Title 15: Building Code, Code Enforcement. Additionally, the city council recently adopted Ordinance 1516. This ordinance institutes interim zoning controls clarifying and correcting the provisions for processing site-specific rezones and height restriction area amendments and variances. State law requires that the city council hold a public hearing within 60 days of adopting interim zoning controls. This hearing is scheduled for October 9.

We are also working on the city’s first ever HOA Fair. This will be an open house whereby HOA boards, the business community, and the public can come to the Civic Center and receive information from various city departments and divisions. Information will vary from standard operating procedures, new standards, and where city resources can be accessed. The event will be held the evening of October 16 in Council Chambers with light refreshments provided.

Improvements, improvements, and more improvements! In our effort to offer the best service possible to the public, the city is working with the State Auditor’s Office and their Lean Services Department to look at some of our permitting processes. As stated on the Auditor’s website, *“Lean is a methodology applied to process improvements for all kinds of work. It leads to innovative ways of making existing work more efficient, services more customer-focused and change more empowering for staff.”* To this end, we have formed a team made up of staff from both Community Development and Public Works Engineering who will attend a three-day kaizen (process improvement workshop) event that will help us drill down to the heart of some of our permitting processes and highlight areas where we can improve. The kaizen event will take place October 3 – 5 and will encompass a good portion of those days. We feel it will be time well spent.

Big kudos to the Wellness Committee for all their hard work in planning Spirit Week this week. We really appreciate all that you do for us and for keeping our work place a fun and collaborative environment!

## PLANNING

Senior Planner Roxy Robles will present the Climate Action Plan and Urban Forestry Management Plan to city council for discussion at the September 21 study session. Both plans will inform changes to our Comprehensive Plan and zoning code over the coming year.

The input received from the community during the three Housing Element Workshops will be presented to the city council over the next two weeks. The community feedback will be very helpful as we transition from establishing the community's vision into crafting specific policy options to comply with the Department of Commerce's housing requirements.

Pre-application appointments continue to fill up with two appointments last week (residential remodel and new firehouse) and two more commercial applications under review later this month.

## BUILDING

Over this past reporting period, the Building Division has received applications for 16 new permits including those for the fire systems at the Public Works Operations Center and the gallery enclosure at the Harbor History Museum. Additionally, we've issued 29 permits, including those for Emerald Therapy & Massage and new offices at the Veterinary Clinic on Burnham. The 25 finalized projects include Little Gym and the pier and float system at Hennington Place Condominiums.

Building Code Update: The State Building Code Council voted on September 15, to delay the effective date of the 2021 Washington State codes. The new code effective date will be March 15, 2024. The previous effective dates were October 29, 2023 and July 1, 2023.

## CODE ENFORCEMENT

- *Pumpkin Spice Invasion*
- Fence Height Inquiry
- Design Review Inquiry
- Sign Code Violations
- Tree Removal Inquiry
- Abandoned Home Inquiry
- Illegal Parking
- Nuisance Noise Inquiry
- Code Compliance Process Improvement Updates and Code Updates

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## COURT

### [Court Administrator Stacy Colberg](#)

No updates this week but stay tuned!

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## FINANCE

### [Finance Director Dave Rodenbach](#)

**Banking Services RFP Update:** On August 15, the Finance Department issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) to qualified financial institutions to provide banking services to the City of Gig Harbor. The city's contract with Columbia Bank, now Umpqua Bank, has expired and we are seeking a new banking relationship for a four-year contract period.

Qualified financial institutions must operate a full-service branch within the city limits, be designated as a qualified public depository by the Washington Public Deposit Protection Commission, and have at least two years of experience providing municipal banking services. Thirteen banks were invited to submit proposals.

Proposals were due September 8. The following banks submitted proposals and are under consideration for the new contract:

- Chase Bank
- Commencement Bank
- First Financial NW Bank
- Kitsap Bank
- Umpqua Bank
- Home Street Bank
- Heritage Bank
- Timberland Bank

We are hopeful a contract can be in place by the end of October.

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## HUMAN RESOURCES

### [Human Resources Director Shannon Costanti](#)

#### ADVANCE YOUR CAREER

Are you looking to grow in your career? There are a variety of opportunities currently available throughout the city. [Take a look](#) and apply today! If you know someone who would be a great fit, please be encouraged to tell them about it!

POSITION	TYPE	STATUS
Police Officer - Entry Level	FT	Open until 10/31
Police Officer - Exceptional Entry	FT	Continuous
Police Officer - Lateral Entry	FT	Continuous
Housing, Health & Human Services Program Manager	FT	Closed - Shealynn Smiley starting 10/2
Laborer	FT	Closed - Jesse Savage starting 9/25

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## ITS

### [Information Technology Services Manager Keith Smith](#)

No updates this week but stay tuned!

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## POLICE

### [Police Chief Kelly Busey](#)

**Hiring Update:** We have one lateral police officer candidate in the final elements of the background investigation process and hope to announce his hiring date soon. Additionally, we have one entry level candidate in the background process and hope to have him enrolled in the academy before the end of the year.

We will be conducting more lateral officer interviews on September 28 and 29 and are hopeful to find some more terrific candidates in that pool.

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## PUBLIC WORKS

### [Public Works Director Jeff Langhelm](#)

**Civic Center Carpet Cleaning:** It has been many years since the carpets at the Civic Center have had a deep cleaning and thanks to Rob Davis it is happening again this September. Rob has scheduled a cleaning company to come in after-hours on three different days (one day for each building) to complete this work. Staff working in the Civic Center have helped Rob prepare for this monumental task by clearing floors and computer accessories.

**Electric Vehicle Charging Station Study and Grants:** Our newest Associate Engineer, Chloe Wisner, has taken on the budgeted EV Charging Station Study and associated grant applications. This has Chloe working with Operations Staff, Peninsula Light Company, the Downtown Waterfront Alliance, Chamber of Commerce, Charge Point representatives, and various grant agency staff. The study will focus on sites across downtown Gig Harbor where public parking already exists and where it is relatively easy to connect to existing power supplies.

**Wastewater Operations Updates:** The wastewater department is performing annual maintenance on the treatment plant generator in preparation for the fall and winter seasons. Department staff are also working with Branom Instrument to calibrate process flow meters throughout the treatment plant. Nancy and Chuck are finalizing bid specifications to purchase number 2 of 2 influent screens as budgeted. Staff will be working with E-Squared Systems to test smoke detectors and fire alarm systems at the treatment plant and lift stations 4b and 12a. Routine maintenance at the plant and lift stations will also continue through the week.

**50th Street Crosswalk:** This project is now complete thanks to the collaborative effort by the Operations Division, Engineering Division, and our consultant, 3Js Engineering. This work allows staff to utilize their many skills, including electrical and concrete finishing.

**Sports Complex Updates:** Phase 1B – A State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) determination was issued on August 28, which is followed by a comment period and an appeal period. The project is getting very close to permit issuance, at which point the city will be ready to go out to bid for the project. Phase 2 & 3 Feasibility Study – BCRA Consultants have taken feedback from user groups, the YMCA, and the public and are refining their designs for the feasibility study. The next steps will be to bring the revised designs to stakeholders for further comment, hold another public open house, and bring the designs and cost estimates to a city council study session.



**Commercial Fishing Homeport:** Mayor Markley, City Administrator Knutson, Public Works Director Langhelm, and Parks Manager Haro met with representatives from the Gig Harbor Commercial Fishermen’s Civic Club on September 14 to discuss the Commercial Fishing Homeport project. The project is included in the 2023-2024 budget and will add moorage for 17 fishing vessels off the pier at Ancich Park. The city council will discuss the project at its September 28 study session.

