

To: Whittier City Council
From: City Manager Jackie C. Wilde
Re: City Manager Report for April 2026 Council Meeting

The City of Whittier's April report captures significant progress and critical updates across multiple departments, showcasing the city's continued commitment to infrastructure development, financial accountability, and community engagement.

City Manager Office

Manager's Monthly Wilde Recognition

Andrew Castagno – Whittier Fire Department Youth Volunteer

This month, I would like to recognize Andrew Castagno of the Whittier Fire Department Youth Volunteer Program for his outstanding service and commitment to public safety.

Andrew recently volunteered 40 hours as an Emergency Trauma Technician (ETT) during the 2026 Anchorage Fur Rendezvous festival. Serving in a high-demand environment, Andrew demonstrated professionalism, strong clinical skills, and a willingness to step forward when his community needed him. His work helped ensure that festival attendees and visitors had access to capable emergency support, contributing to the overall safety and success of a major regional event.

What stands out most about Andrew is his dedication to learning, serving others, and representing the Whittier Fire Department with pride. His actions reflect the strength of our Youth Volunteer Program and the importance of investing in the next generation of first responders. Opportunities like this not only build skills, they build confidence, responsibility, and leadership.

Andrew's service is a reminder that even in a small community, our impact reaches far beyond our city limits. He represented Whittier well, and our community should be proud of the example he is setting.

Andrew, thank you for your commitment to service, your professionalism, and for being a strong ambassador for the Whittier Fire Department and the City of Whittier. We are proud of you and look forward to seeing your continued growth in public safety.

Alaska Railroad Corporation (ARRC) Land Sale-The City continues to work closely with the Alaska Railroad Corporation (ARRC), legislative leadership, and state agencies to advance the conveyance of non-operational ARRC lands to the City of Whittier. House Bill 216 advanced through the House with unanimous support, and coordination continues with legislative partners as the bill progresses through the Senate process. Administrative work on the Conditional Letter of Intent and Purchase and Sale Agreement continues, including refinement of survey boundaries and transaction terms. The City has confirmed support for legislative language authorizing a potential real estate exchange in addition to the straight cash sale to preserve long-term flexibility while maintaining forward progress on the current transaction. Achieving site control remains essential to securing funding opportunities, advancing infrastructure development, and supporting long-term economic stability.

DeLong Dock Project-Work continues to advance planning for the DeLong Dock replacement project. Staff recently met with an engineering firm to support development of the Project Information Planning Document, update existing data, and prepare refined cost estimates necessary for grant applications and phased construction planning. We also had the opportunity to host Maritime Administrator Captain Stephen M. Carmel in Whittier, where I provided a tour of the DeLong Dock project and several other City infrastructure priorities. The visit allowed us to highlight the importance of the dock to Alaska's supply chain, food security, and military readiness, and to reinforce the role Whittier plays as a critical transportation and freight hub for the State.

Shotgun Cove Road Project-The City continues to pursue phased funding opportunities for the Shotgun Cove Road extension. Current planning remains focused on advancing the next segment of roadway development to support access to construction materials and long-term infrastructure expansion.

Community Beautification and Micro Parks-We have started working with the Whittier School and community volunteers to begin beautification efforts at the Memorial Park located in the triangle area. This work will serve as the first step in developing one of three micro parks intended to create welcoming community spaces, improve the appearance of key areas in town, and encourage community involvement in maintaining our public spaces.

Shuttle Stop -We are working on establishing three designated shuttle stops to better organize visitor movement and improve safety and accessibility within the community. The proposed locations include the Triangle area, Whittier Falls Park as a trails stop, and the Museum. These stops are intended to support tourism operations, improve pedestrian flow, and provide clearer direction for visitors while protecting residential areas and critical infrastructure.

Public Safety Coordination-Public safety leadership continues to prepare for increased seasonal demand associated with tourism and community events. Coordination efforts include planning for emergency response readiness, community activities, and resource allocation to support safe operations throughout the summer season.

Administration remains focused on advancing infrastructure priorities, maintaining operational readiness, and supporting responsible growth while continuing to deliver reliable services to the community.

Finance Department Report

This report reflects an abbreviated look at finance-related *activities* through the end of March, 2026, with financial statements through February, 2026. Through February, 16.66% of the fiscal year has elapsed.

FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS THROUGH FEBRUARY

GENERAL FUND: Cash Balance in the General Fund at February is \$1,672,719. Based on 2026 Budgeted expenditures of \$5,136,920 that level of cash is sufficient to cover 3.9 months of operations. The City's budget policy reflects the goal of establishing a reserve of between nine (9) and twelve (12) months, or between \$3,852,690 and \$5,136,920. The current level of cash is lower

than the 9-month goal by \$2,179,971. Revenues through February are at 5.1%, or actual of \$235,749 versus budget of \$4,372,629. Transfers between Funds have yet to be recorded for January and February. Overall, Taxes are at 1.7%, with Property Tax at 0% of budget and sales tax at 5.7%, as little tax is generated and reported early in the calendar year. The new Water-Borne Transportation Fee is reported in the Harbor Major Repair and Replacement Fund #73 and through February, passenger fees total \$3,744. These water-borne transportation fees are used for capital assets and infrastructure in the harbor, benefitting the payers of the fee.

License and Permits are at 17% through February, largely reflecting collection of \$10,866 in ambulance fees. No Intergovernmental Revenue (from state and federal sources) have been generated through February. Lease Revenues are at 5.7%, or \$19,522 actual versus a budget of \$324,406 and will be further adjusted at year-end to reflect the GASB87 accounting treatment for leases. A complete picture of lease revenues also requires examining lease interest (account 01-360-4903) which is budgeted at \$370,188. Investment earnings have not been recorded for January or February as staff focus on year-end audit preparation.

General Fund expenditures are at 12.7%, or under budget by 4% or <\$195,109> through February. Transfers between Funds have not been recorded through February. All General Fund departments are under budget through except for City Council/City Clerk and Property and Facilities. The largest budget overage is in community support, where contributions toward BTI/Whittier Manor capital repairs have been recorded as future liabilities, increasing actual expenses early in the year. Property and Facilities budget is higher than year-to-date estimates due to payment for boiler repairs at the Public Safety Building totaling \$57,612.

WATER AND SEWER FUND: The Cash balance in the Water and Sewer Fund (the “operating fund”, Fund 50) is \$689,484 in addition to cash available in the Water and Sewer Major Maintenance and Repair Fund (the “capital fund”, Fund 75) of \$1,077,582. Based on 2026 Budgeted Expenses (excluding depreciation) of \$380,511, cash reserves available in the operating fund are sufficient to cover 21 months of expenses. Cash reserves available in both the operating and capital funds, are sufficient to cover 55 months of operations. Water and Sewer Fund revenues through February are at 7.6% of the budget. The Water and Sewer Fund revenues are largely seasonal and will increase during the busier summer months. It is not anticipated that the community’s largest seafood operator will be open for business in 2026; this is not expected to have a large impact on revenues since it was foreseen that the seafood industry would not contribute significantly to water/sewer revenues in the coming year. Investment income has not been recorded for January and February, nor has the one-time cash transfers from the General Fund of \$23,341, in repayment of a short-term loan for the purchase of a loader.

HARBOR FUND: The Cash balance in the Harbor Fund (the “operating fund”, Fund 51) is \$1,302,929, in addition to cash available in the Harbor Major Repair and Replacement Fund (the “capital fund”, Fund 73) of \$674,939, at February 28. Based on 2026 Budgeted Expenses (excluding depreciation) of \$2,026,967, cash reserves available in the operating fund are sufficient to cover 7.7 months of expenses. Cash reserves available in both the operating and capital funds (total \$1,977,868), are sufficient to cover 11 months of operations. Harbor Fund Revenues for the Harbor

Fund are at 39%, as the largest source of revenue, preferential (annual) moorage, is brought in early in the year. Transfers-In and Transfers-Out have yet to be recorded for January and February. Overall, Charges for Services (includes moorage, utilities, wharfage, launch, parking, etc) are at 43%; Lease revenues appear higher than they actually are, as they reflect the full amount of lease billings through January, but have yet to be offset by payments to the Alaska Railroad representing 40% of Railroad master lease revenues. Investment income has not been recorded for January and February.

DELONG DOCK: The Cash balance in the Delong Dock Fund is \$1,509,012 at February 28. These reserves are intended for future use as matching funds for the replacement of the dock. Delong Dock actual revenues reflect only a single permit for the use of the dock in the coming year. Otherwise, revenues are not expected to be recorded until the summer season. Interest revenues have not been recorded for January or February. There are only \$484 in expenses recorded through February, related to electricity.

HARBOR MRRF: The Cash balance in the Harbor MRRF Fund is \$674,939 to be used for the repair and replacement of major Harbor capital assets. This Fund accounts for the Water-Borne Passenger Fee which was implemented in January, 2025, and which accounts for per-passenger fees of \$8 set aside entirely to pay for capital asset and infrastructure replacement in the Harbor, to benefit payers of the fee. Revenues through February are entirely related to the Water-Borne Passenger Fee collections of \$3,744.

COMMERCIAL PASSENGER VESSEL TAX FUND: The City received payment related to cruise ship head taxes for the calendar year 2025 amounting to \$1,445,005 which, when added to available reserves, brings total cash in this Fund to \$1,645,600. Monies in this Fund are entirely to be used for purposes consistent with the State's Commercial Passenger Vessel Tax program, including services and amenities serving the cruise ships and their passengers. In 2026, the Administration will propose the City Council assign use of the lion's share of these Funds to building a modern year-round restroom facility with flush toilets and public showers to replace the end-of-life seasonal vault-style forest service outhouse facilities in the harbor which are wholly inadequate to service the needs of thousands of visitors.

GRANTS: Since the previous months' report, staff have successfully secured the following new grants: 1) \$406,299 in additional US DOT Western Federal Land funds for Shotgun Cove Road extension; 2) \$28,035 in DOT/NHTSA funding to outfit police vehicles with TraCS system which allows for computer devices to be installed in police vehicles; and 3) \$3,599 in Fish Disaster Funding through the Pacific Marine Code Fisheries Commission for cod disaster funding. We submitted one grant in April for EMS transportation equipment (\$250,000) through the Rural Health Transportation Program, and a request for a wastewater inundation planning grant. We are currently preparing grant applications for ALPAR funding, accessible pocket parks, and Delong Dock replacement through MARAD. We failed to be awarded a \$2.5 million 2025 FLAP grant related to Shotgun Cove Road.

OTHER: Staff are busy preparing for the annual audit with pre-audit work taking place between

now and the first week of May, and audit fieldwork taking place starting May 11.

In State legislative matters, the Senate Finance Committee has adopted an amendment to HB 78 – the bill that proposes to return Alaska to a Defined Benefit pension with the goal of encouraging staff retention. The bill would increase the cap on employer contribution rates from 22% (in place since 2007) to 24% at an added cost to Whittier of an estimated \$40,586, raising the City’s costs from the current \$446,447 to an estimated \$487,033.

City Clerk/Assistant City Manager Report

Buckner Building & Whittier Brownfields Program

The Request for Proposals for a Qualified Environmental Professional (QEP) and Project Manager to support implementation of the EPA Brownfields Multipurpose Grant has closed. Staff completed evaluation and scoring of five proposals and is presenting a recommended award for Council approval. This contract will support environmental assessment and cleanup planning for the Buckner Building and other priority sites.

Lease Administration

Significant staff time this month was dedicated to developing a comprehensive understanding of the City’s lease portfolio and strengthening administrative controls.

- **Lease Extensions:** Prepared amendments to extend four leases expiring March 31, 2026 for an additional six months. These are presented for Council consideration at this meeting to maintain continuity while broader policy direction is finalized.
- **Land Allocation Plan:** Work on the plan has been intentionally paused. In coordination with legal, an ordinance has been drafted to suspend the requirement through December 2027. This allows the City to proceed with ongoing negotiations with the Alaska Railroad Corporation, as potential land acquisitions would materially impact future land allocation decisions.
- **Lease Compliance Audit:** Initiated a methodical review of all lease files to ensure compliance with lease terms and Whittier Municipal Code requirements. Current focus is on verifying insurance coverage for each leaseholder and documenting compliance.

Alaska Infrastructure Development Symposium

Attended the Alaska Infrastructure Development Symposium and engaged with federal and state agency representatives.

Three primary takeaways:

1. **Project Readiness Drives Funding Success**
Agencies consistently emphasized the importance of “shovel-ready” projects. Communities that invest early in planning, environmental review, and design are significantly more competitive for funding and can move quickly when opportunities arise.

2. Lifecycle Thinking is Essential

Long-term operations, maintenance, and climate resilience must be considered upfront. Deferred maintenance and unclear ownership models create substantial future liabilities, while early investment in preventative maintenance and design durability reduces lifecycle costs.

3. Projects Must Be Tied to Community Priorities

Successful projects are clearly aligned with community goals and supported by strong stakeholder relationships. Trust, coordination, and clearly defined project “champions” are critical to advancing complex infrastructure efforts.

Operational & Administrative Support

- **IT & Risk Reduction:** Assisted with deployment of six replacement workstations across departments and submitted documentation to maximize reimbursement through APRA’s Loss Control Incentive Program. Continued to refine the cybersecurity policies.
- **PFAS Training:** Attended a technical training covering evolving regulatory frameworks, destruction and disposal methods, treatment technologies, and case studies. This information will inform future decision-making related to environmental risk and compliance.
- **Safety Action Plan (SS4A Grant):** Continued coordination with the City’s consultant; reviewed draft materials and provided feedback to ensure alignment with City priorities.
- Continued coordination with legal counsel to refine the **Council Operations Manual**, with the goal of presenting a finalized draft for Council consideration at the May regular meeting.
- **Ongoing Duties:** Continued processing land use permits, responding to public records requests, and supporting day-to-day administrative operations.

Harbor Department Report

Admin Report: All preferential, annual and waitlist renewals are completed for the 2026 season. Aniva is working on stall assignments for the upcoming season. This year we had 16 stalls released. Our migration/transition over to the cloud-based computer programs (Quickbooks and MarineGo) is almost complete and all appear to be running well. We continue to back up with our legacy desktop systems to ensure consistent data/financial records as a check. This was important with the upcoming audit having that historical data available. Sandra has done an outstanding job going through and archiving the entirety of our harbor files. These archived files will be placed in the city archive file room for safe keeping.

Harbor Operations: Phase III is winding down. Global Diving has completed the anode installation of the piles. All that remains is testing of the water systems. The concrete float surface anomalies continue to be investigated. Preliminary results indicate clay type product that was not fully integrated in the portland mix and these “clumps” retained moisture which froze upon colder weather. Official report of finding and options to address were not available at the time of this report. The east launch ramp float that was damaged will be replaced the week of 4/13. There is still a light pole that needs

to be replaced on the East Ramp as well. Seasonals will start the week of 4/13 to start the summer season preparations.

Police Department Report

Calls by Service Area

Service Area	Calls
Whittier	78
Girdwood Service Area	194
Other	3
Total	282

Narrative Summary

In March 2026, WPD handled 282 calls for service. Excluding Security Checks, Whittier accounted for 28 and Girdwood 59 calls. Serious incidents stood out, including Theft/Burglary (4), Suicidal / Mental Health (4), MVA/Accident (1), Alarm (1). Jurisdictional mix: Whittier 27.7%, Girdwood 68.8%, Other 1.1%.

Bullet-Point Summary

- Whittier: 78 calls. Top types: EMS/Fire (9), Parking Problem (4), Disturbance (3).
- Girdwood: 194 calls. Top types: Traffic (20), Welfare Check (4), Reddi (4).
- Other: 3 calls. Top types: Reddi (1), Agency Assist (1), Traffic (1).

Call Types by Jurisdiction

Call Type	Whittier	Girdwood	Other	Total
Security Check	50	135	0	185
Traffic	1	20	1	22
EMS/Fire	9	1	0	10
Disturbance	3	4	0	7
Reddi	1	4	1	6
Agency Assist	1	2	1	4
Information	1	3	0	4
Parking Problem	4	0	0	4
Suicidal / Mental Health	0	4	0	4
Theft/Burglary	1	3	0	4
Welfare Check	0	4	0	4
Animal	1	2	0	3
Community Relations	2	0	0	2
Motorist Assist	2	0	0	2
Unspecified in CAD	0	2	0	2
911 Abandoned Call	0	1	0	1
Abandoned Vehicle	1	0	0	1
Alarm	0	1	0	1

Citizen Assist	0	1	0	1
Criminal Mischief	0	1	0	1
Found Property	0	1	0	1
Juvenile Problem	0	1	0	1
MVA/Accident	0	1	0	1
Phone Call Request	0	1	0	1
Protective Order	0	1	0	1
Sexual Abuse Of A Minor	0	1	0	1
Training	1	0	0	1

Citation Information

Category	Whittier	Girdwood Service Area	Other	Total
Parking	3	0	0	3
Speeding	0	7	0	7
Total	3	7	0	10

Training- Officer Tim Sampson, Lt. Jerry Herrod and Chief Andre Achee attended the Law Enforcement Management Institute (LEMI) sponsored by Alaska Police Standards Council and Alaska Public Risk Alliance in Anchorage, Alaska. Officers received 32 hours of training in various areas of police liabilities.

We have continual training scheduled for our police personnel throughout the year, including first line supervisor training, advance supervision training, and Field Training Officers Certifications

Personnel-We are proud to announce we have one officer to fill one of our two vacancies. This will be the first time in eight years that Whittier Police Department has hired a recruit police officer. The officer, Alex Huffman, will be attending the Law Enforcement Training Academy (UAF) in Fairbanks, Alaska for approximately 4 months. Upon completion of the academy the recruit will start their three-month formalized Field Training Program with Whittier Police.

Officer Lloyd Willis received his Alaska Police Standards Council Intermediate Police Certificate in March 2026.

Modernization Projects The Whittier Police Department has multiple projects in our queue to help modernize and enhance our agency to better serve our community.

National Highway Safety grant for Tracs software, laptops and bar code scanners to assist in traffic accident investigations and digital citation processing.

Policy Review and Implementation of updated police policies and procedures manuals. Assessment of modernization of our police fleet to include in-car recording.

Event Update-Whittier Police are currently preparing and planning for upcoming Slush Cup activities in Girdwood, Independence Day activities in Girdwood and Whittier to include Forest Fair. And lastly preparation for our annual in-service training in the Fall of 2026.

Fire Department Report

Call Volume Summary- During the month of March, Whittier Fire/EMS responded to a total of 10 calls for service, consisting of 9 Emergency Medical Service (EMS) calls, 0 fire calls, and 1 rescue call.

Community Support and Outreach- The department continues its partnership with Children's Lunchbox to support children and community members experiencing food insecurity. Meals are made available daily at the fire station between 9:00 AM and 5:00 PM.

Total Meals Provided: 127

Operational Highlights-Throughout the reporting period, personnel remained actively engaged in both emergency response and community-based initiatives. Staff visited community elders receiving medical care in Anchorage-area hospitals, coordinated and delivered food to the local school, conducted school outreach and engagement activities, and supported community prescription drug disposal efforts.

Whittier youth EMS volunteers also supported the Anchorage Fur Rendezvous. Great job to Emergency Trauma Technician Andrew Castagno and Basic First Aid volunteer Cooper Jaujou for their service and representation of the Whittier Fire Department.

Administrative and Personnel Updates-Recruitment efforts for seasonal Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) positions remain ongoing.

In Memoriam- Whittier Fire/EMS respectfully acknowledges the passing of Miliama Suli, a pillar of the Whittier community. Her contributions and presence had a lasting impact, and she will be remembered with great respect. The department extends its sincere condolences to her family and loved ones.

Summary-Department operations during the month remained steady, with continued emphasis on emergency medical response, community outreach, and public service. Whittier Fire/EMS remains committed to supporting both residents and visitors while maintaining operational readiness in preparation for increased seasonal demand.

Public Works Monthly Report – No Written Report Provided