

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

The City of Whittier's March 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

Legislative Affairs- Work continues on legislation related to the proposed land conveyance from the Alaska Railroad Corporation under HB 216 / SB 191. Staff remain engaged with legislators and stakeholders as the bills move through the legislative process. Planning also continues for infrastructure and development opportunities that would follow legislative authorization.

Capital Projects-DeLong Dock Replacement- Staff continue advancing planning and funding strategies for the DeLong Dock replacement project. The existing facility has reached the end of its service life and replacement remains a priority for maintaining critical port infrastructure that supports cargo operations, marine services, and regional transportation activity. Staff continue coordinating with state and federal partners regarding funding opportunities and next steps.

Shotgun Cove Road Extension - Staff submitted updated funding requests to support the next phase of the Shotgun Cove Road Extension project. This phase represents approximately \$10.3 million in construction and would expand access to developable land while supporting future housing and economic development.

Administration: Due to scheduled travel to Washington, D.C. for the National League of Cities conference, staff are coordinating with Council regarding potential adjustments to the May Council meeting and Board of Equalization schedule.

Economic Development and Partnerships: Staff continue discussions with tourism and transportation partners regarding infrastructure needs and community impacts related to visitor activity in Whittier.

Land Allocation and City Lands Planning- A joint work session between the City Council and Planning and Zoning Commission is being scheduled for April to review land allocation strategies and planning tools that may be needed as the City works toward expanded land ownership. Staff are also working with a surveyor regarding planning and evaluation of city lands.

Finance Department Report

This report reflects an abbreviated look at finance-related *activities* through the end of February, 2026, with financial statements through January, 2026. Through December, 8.33% of the fiscal year has elapsed.

FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS THROUGH DECEMBER

GENERAL FUND: Cash Balance in the General Fund at January 31 is \$1,960,872. Based on 2026 Budgeted expenditures of \$5,589,040, that level of cash is sufficient to cover 4.2 months of operations. The City's budget policy reflects the goal of establishing a reserve of between nine (9) and twelve (12) months; to fall within the policy bands, reserves will need to increase by at least \$372,602. Revenues through January are at 2.4%, or actual of \$108,224 versus budget of \$4,608,378. Overall, reported Tax Revenues are at less than 1% of the annual budget due to the timing of collections of all taxes later in the year. Licenses and Permits are at 15%, largely due to a rise in collections of ambulance fees. There have been no receipts of Intergovernmental Revenues (revenue sharing, payments-in-lieu-of-tax, or grants) in January. Lease revenues are at \$10,901, or 3% of budget, primarily due to the timing of billings. Miscellaneous revenues (includes interest and Girdwood Police Contract) are at 6.2% through January.

General Fund expenditures are at 10%, or slightly over the year-to-date budget. The items exceeding the year-to-date budget but within the annual budget include the purchase of capital assets of \$57,612 related to the replacement of boilers at the Public Safety Building; \$170,512 in future community support contributions related to a \$50,000 refund to Norwegian Cruise Lines, \$103,490 for future BTI infrastructure to likely serve as the City's match toward asbestos mitigation, and \$17,022 for future Whittier Manor infrastructure. In addition, \$4,748 in Fire Department equipment for the purchase of SMRT battery pack replacements for the battery-powered ambulance cot. All General Fund departments are at or under year-to-date budget except for the Council and Public Facilities Department due to the purchase of capital assets early in the year.

Finance staff have been working with Ground Transportation companies to register for collection of the new ground transportation fee, including updating business licenses, software modifications related to recording reporting form data in Caselle software, and distribution to registered companies of Ground Transportation Stickers. Each registered vehicle will place a sticker in the driver's side window to indicate the vehicle is authorized to operate in Whittier and is registered to collect the new fee. Similar to the Harbor's water-borne transportation stickers, the program will allow other operators to ensure that competitors are also registered, ensuring a level playing field. A new Frequently Asked Questions document has been posted on the City's website under Documents, answering many of the most commonly asked Ground Transportation Fee questions. Staff are also training to implement a new payment portal to allow customers to conveniently pay online for leases, accounts receivable, utilities, sales tax, property tax, and ground transportation fees. The portal will improve efficiency, allow for real-time payment posting to customer accounts, and offer a much more convenient payment method for customers. Convenience fees will be paid by customers, who will have the option to submit payment by check to avoid fees. Staff are preparing for year-end including account reconciliation, closing grant files, preparing grant and banking confirmation letters, and other related audit prep activities. The annual audit is scheduled for the week of May 11.

WATER AND SEWER FUND: The Cash balance in the Water and Sewer Fund (the "operating fund", Fund 50) is \$699,825 in addition to cash available in the Water and Sewer Major Maintenance and Repair Fund (the "capital fund", Fund 75) of \$1,077,582; combined total available cash is \$1,777,407. Based on 2026 Budgeted Expenses (excluding depreciation) of \$392,525, 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 54 months of operations. Water and Sewer Fund revenues and transfers-in through January are at 4.0%. The opening of Great Whittier Seafood (replacing Whittier Seafood) is expected to have a positive impact on the water/sewer utility in the coming year.

Investment interest has not yet been recorded for January. Expenses for January are at 6.6% excluding depreciation, with most line items well under budget. The Directors of Public Works and Finance have secured all remaining funds to proceed with the Water Well Replacement Project, with bids on that project expected to be advertised in March. Preparation for this funding involved completing a Financial Capacity Assessment for the utility. The assessment was conducted by a third-party and recommends the City pursue an enterprise fund rate study, since the City has not had an independent rate review in more than a decade. A separate grant application is being prepared to seek funds to address improvements to the wastewater system from storm inundation. In a separate utility project, the backup generator for the Water System has been ordered and expected delivery is within the next two months. The ADEC Lift Station Replacement Project loan has been closed out with loan repayment to begin in July 2026, with the grant portion of the project expected to be finalized in early Spring.

HARBOR FUND: The Cash balance in the Harbor Fund (the “operating fund”, Fund 51) is \$1,115,417 in addition to cash available in the Harbor Major Repair and Replacement Fund (the “capital fund”, Fund 73) of \$960,228, at January 31. Based on 2026 Budgeted Expenses (excluding depreciation) of \$2,026,967, cash reserves available in the operating fund are sufficient to cover 6.6 months of expenses. Cash reserves available in both the operating and capital funds (total \$2,075,645), and are sufficient to cover 12 months of operations. Harbor Fund Revenues are at 38%, exceeding the year-to-date budget. Overall, Charges for Services (includes moorage, utilities, wharfage, launch, parking, etc) are at 43%; Lease revenues at 72%, exceed the annual budget but will be downward adjusted when the City records a contra-expense related to forwarding payment to the Railroad -- representing 40% of the lease revenues on Railroad land -- in accordance with the Master Lease. It is common for a large portion of harbor revenues to come in early in the year due to the pre-payment of annual moorage and waiting list fees. Investment interest has yet to be recorded for January. Expenses through January (excluding depreciation) are at 4.6%, below the year-to-date budget. Bank services charges are at 42% reflecting credit card fees charged on customer payments for annual moorage and waiting list fees. Harbor Finance staff are investigating the option to allow payments by portal given the harbor’s migration to cloud-based processing, which would allow the City to pass the cost of convenience fees on to customers. This would save the Harbor more than \$20,000 per year.

DELONG DOCK: The Cash balance in the Delong Dock Fund is \$1,509,496 at January 31. Delong Dock actual revenues are \$3,000, reflecting annual permit fees. Revenues are not expected in this Fund until fish processing begins. Through January, expenses are at less than 1%. Staff are working with Solstice Alaska Consulting to prepare a PIDP grant application, seeking funding to replace the Delong Dock. The intent is to eliminate the current dock and replace it with sheetpile-wall infrastructure and creation of expanded uplands. The project offers an important opportunity to expand and create redundancy in southcentral Alaskan freight handling, including opportunities to enhance food security, offload military equipment, and increase freight hauling through Whittier into southcentral Alaska. With daily freight service between Whittier and Anchorage year-round, the replacement of Delong Dock offers strategic advantages in a year-round deep-water port that are not available from other ports cut off from year-round rail transport due to heavy snowfall, or the uncertainty related to dredging requirements, which are not present in Whittier.

HARBOR MRRF: The Harbor Major Repair and Replacement Fund (Fund 73) exists to ensure funding stability for repair and replacement of major harbor capital assets and infrastructure. The source of funding for this Fund is the Water-Borne Passenger Fee which was implemented in January, 2025, where

the payers of the fee are the direct beneficiaries of harbor capital assets and infrastructure to serve them and their customers. The cash balance in this fund at January 31 (also discussed above in the Harbor Enterprise Fund) is \$960,228. This Fund's cash is primarily used to pay debt service on replacement of existing harbor floats and replacement of capital assets; cash is transferred each year from this Fund to the Harbor Enterprise Fund (Fund 51) exactly equal to the annual debt service on float replacement projects. There are no revenues in January related to water-borne passenger fees. In addition to transfers to the Harbor Fund to pay debt service, all proceeds from this fee are used to pay for other harbor capital assets and infrastructure.

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. To ensure consistency in accounting treatment, these revenues are recorded in 2026. This amount reflects an increase of 24.9% (\$288,270) from the 2024 collections totaling \$1,156,735. The 2023 collections totaled \$1,052,310. The increase in cruise passenger tax revenue in 2025 reflects an approximate increase of 57,654 passengers from the previous year. Glacier Creek Development's new cruise ship terminal (owned by Huna-Totem Corporation) opened in 2025 and transited approximately 66,000 passengers. Revenues of \$1,445,005 are lower than the budgeted \$1,625,000 by \$179,995, equal to 36,000 fewer overall passengers than estimated in the budget. Passenger numbers were estimated at 325,000 and came in at 289,000, for a reduction of 11% from budget. The City has not received information or a request from Holland America Princess related to their shore power project, for which funds were set aside and lapsed, in 2025.

ACTIVE AND RECENTLY COMPLETED GRANTS:

GRANTS MANAGEMENT STATUS REPORT				
	Updated:	3/7/2026		
Updates since last month are in red				
Granting Agency	Grant Amount (or Request)	Grant Purpose	Left to Spend	as of
IN PROGRESS:				
US DOT FHWA	9,500,000	Shotgun Cove Road construction	5,598,006	1/31/2026
Denali Commission	926,000	Shotgun Cove Road Match/Gap Funding	926,000	1/31/2026
SOA DOT	4,500,000	Harbor Float & Pilings Replacement	3,453,488	1/31/2026
US EPA	800,000	Buckner Bldg Multipurpose and Cleanup	\$ 794,998	1/31/2026
US EPA	5,000,000	Buckner Bldg Hazard Materials Mitigation	5,000,000	1/31/2026
US DOT Safe Streets For All	81,600	Transportation Safety Action Plan	46,799	1/31/2026
SOA - DHSEM	107,307	Cyber Security Plan, multi-factor, network e	27,098	1/31/2026
Backup Generator for Water System	75,000	Backup Generator for Water System	75,000	1/31/2026
SOA DEC - VSW	325,000	301H waiver - Sludge removal, test, dispose	202,920	1/31/2026
	\$ 21,314,907		\$ 16,124,309	
GRANT AWARDED / PROJECT PENDING:				
US EPA	1,230,000	Water Well Replacement Project	1,230,000	1/31/2026
ADEC State Revolving Fund	3,500,000	Water Well Replacement Project	3,500,000	1/31/2026
USDA	2,012,809	Water Well Replacement Project	2,012,809	1/31/2026
USDA Rural Community Facilities (CDS)	310,000	Asbestos abatement - BTI	310,000	1/31/2026
	\$ 7,052,809		\$ 7,052,809	
APPLICATIONS SUBMITTED, AWAITING DECISION:				
ALPAR - 2026	3,500	Litter Prevention and Recycling	-	Pending
AARP Parks & Rec Grant	10,000	Accessible Pocket Parks	-	3/4/2026
DOT/NHTSA	32,779	Outfitting police vehicles w TraCS system	-	3/3/2026
US DOT FHWA	2,500,000	Shotgun Cove Road - 2025 AK FLAP		11/13/2025
	\$ 2,546,279		\$ -	
GRANT APPLICATIONS BEING PREPARED:				
MARAD Port Infrastructure Develop Program		Delong Dock Replacement Project		App Pending
SOA DEC		Wastewater Inundation Planning grant		App Pending
		Sub-Total Funded Projects Remaining:	\$ 23,177,118	
		Sub-Total Grant Requests not yet awarded:	2,546,279	
		Total Funding + Requests:	\$ 25,723,397	
2025 COMPLETED GRANTS:				
Alaska Police Standards Council	3,598	Police APSC Recert Training	-	1/31/2026
Alaska Energy Authority	48,000	Energy Efficiency Lighting upgrades	-	1/31/2026
US DOT	15,573,869	Shotgun Cove Road construction	-	1/31/2026
US EPA / Village Safe Water	1,580,000	Lift Station No. 5 - Grant	-	1/31/2026
SOA DEC	820,000	Lift Station No. 5 - Loan	-	1/31/2026
USDA Forest Service	6,232	Forestry emergency response equipment	-	1/31/2026
US Dept Homeland Security	37,791	P25 Portable Radios	-	1/31/2026
	\$ 18,069,489		\$ -	

City Clerk/Assistant City Manager Report

Buckner Building & Whittier Brownfields Program

Work this month has been heavily focused on advancing the Buckner Building and broader Whittier Brownfields Program.

- The Community Involvement Plan (CIP) for the EPA Multipurpose Grant has been finalized, published, and distributed. This document outlines how the City will communicate with and receive input from the public throughout the assessment and planning process.
- The Request for Proposals (RFP) for a Qualified Environmental Professional (QEP) and Project Manager has been posted. Proposals are due March 27 at 2:00 p.m. View it online at <https://www.whittieralaska.gov/projects/page/request-proposals>.

- Work continues on the Congressionally Directed Spending (CDS) Work Plan, with ongoing coordination and revisions in collaboration with EPA to finalize scope and compliance requirements.

Beautification Matching Grant Program

At the request of Councilmember Pinguoch, a draft Beautification Matching Grant Program has been developed. The draft program is currently under review by City Manager Wilde. Once finalized, it will be brought forward for Council consideration.

Lease Administration & Land Allocation

Four City leases expire on March 31. Administration is recommending six-month amendments to extend these leases while the City completes work on the Land Allocation Plan. The Land Allocation Plan will provide Administration with Council’s direction on how specific properties should be used and whether competitive processes are required.

Standardized lease templates, as required by the Whittier Municipal Code, are being presented at this meeting for Council approval. These templates are the result of significant collaborative work by Finance Director Erchinger, City Manager Wilde, and legal counsel.

Administration has also initiated a comprehensive audit of lease files. Requests for updated documentation have been sent to leaseholders as part of this effort.

Transportation & Safety Planning

Work continues on both the Whittier Transportation Master Plan (Whittier Moves) and the City’s Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) Safety Action Plan.

A summary of the recent Safety Summit has been published on the project webpage:

<https://www.whittieralaska.gov/projects/page/whittier-safety-action-plan>

Consultants are currently developing the “Safety Improvement Opportunities and Potential Projects” document, which will outline potential capital and policy actions for future Council consideration.

Harbor Department Report – No written report provided

Police Department Report

Whittier Police Department
Monthly Activity Report – February 2026

Calls by Service Area

Service Area	Calls
Whittier	50
Girdwood Service Area	129
Other	4
Total	189

City Manager Report | March 2026

Narrative Summary

In February 2026, WPD handled 189 calls for service. Excluding Security Checks, Whittier accounted for 27 and Girdwood 44 calls. Serious incidents stood out, including MVA/Accident (4), Assault (1), Theft/Burglary (1), Suicidal / Mental Health (1). Jurisdictional mix: Whittier 26.5%, Girdwood 68.3%, Other 2.1%.

Bullet-Point Summary

Whittier: 50 calls. Top types: EMS/Fire (10), Disturbance (5), Phone Call Request (2).

Girdwood: 129 calls. Top types: Traffic (22), MVA/Accident (4), Disturbance (2).

Other: 4 calls. Top types: Motorist Assist (1), Theft/Burglary (1), Agency Assist (1).

Call Types by Jurisdiction

Call Type	Whittier	Girdwood	Other	Total
Security Check	23	85	0	108
Traffic	0	22	1	23
EMS/Fire	10	0	0	10
Disturbance	5	2	0	7
MVA/Accident	0	4	0	4
Citizen Assist	2	1	0	3
Parking Problem	1	2	0	3
Abandoned Vehicle	1	1	0	2
Paper Service	0	2	0	2
Phone Call Request	2	0	0	2
Suspicious	0	2	0	2
Unspecified in CAD	1	1	0	2
Agency Assist	0	0	1	1
Assault	0	1	0	1
Community Relations	1	0	0	1
Dui	0	1	0	1
Fraud	0	1	0	1
Minor Consuming	0	1	0	1
Motorist Assist	0	0	1	1
Protective Services Report	1	0	0	1
Public Assist	1	0	0	1
Reddi	0	1	0	1
Suicidal / Mental Health	1	0	0	1
Theft/Burglary	0	0	1	1
Training	1	0	0	1
Trespassing	0	1	0	1
Wildlife Violation	0	1	0	1

Citation Information

Category	Whittier	Girdwood Service Area	Other	Total
Speeding	3	5	0	8
Other Traffic	0	2	0	2
Other	2	0	0	2
Total	5	7	0	12

Unknown address needs to be manually set — see Validation Document.

Fire Department Report

During the month of February, Whittier Fire / EMS responded to 11 calls for service.

Call Breakdown

- **8 EMS Calls**
- **2 Fire Calls**
- **1 Rescue Call**

During the Harbor Clean Up, Medic 51 and Rescue 51 were on scene to provide medical standby and a place for participants to warm up if needed.

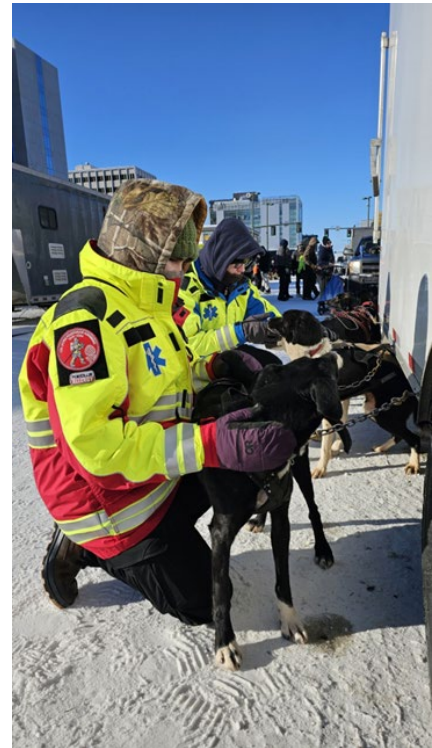
Youth volunteers provided first aid services in Anchorage during the 91st Anchorage Fur Rondy. Way to go Andrew Castagno and Cooper Jaujou!

We continue to partner with Children’s Lunchbox to help provide meals for children and members of our community in need.

Individuals can stop by the fire station **between 9:00 AM and 5:00 PM** for a meal.

A total of 16 meals were provided this month.

Thank you to our volunteers and community partners for helping support Whittier Fire EMS.



City of Whittier
Fire/EMS Department
Yearly Statistics
2026



	Jan		Feb		Mar		Apr		May		Jun		Jul		Aug		Sep		Oct		Nov		Dec			
	Time		Time		Time		Time		Time		Time		Time		Time		Time		Time		Time		Shift			
	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B
EMS/Medical	4	1	2	6																						
Fire	2	2	1	2																						
Rescue	2			1																						
Walk-In			1																							
Transport out of Whittier	1		1	5																						
After hrs call duty phone				2																						
Out of Service Area																										
Sub-total	2	8	2	2	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Totals	12		11		0		0		0		0		0		0		0		0		0		0			
Community Outreach																										
	Jan		Feb		Mar		Apr		May		Jun		Jul		Aug		Sep		Oct		Nov		Dec			
	Time B		Time B		Time B		Time B		Time B		Time B		Time B		Time B		Time B		Time B		Time B		Time B			
Station Tours			1																							
Meals Provided	30		16																							
Other			1																							
Totals	30		18		0		0		0		0		0		0		0		0		0		0			

2026 Calls
23 Total calls for service
Calls for cruise ship related calls
0% of all calls cruise ship related

Time
A - 0000-0800
B - 0800-1800
C - 1800-2400

Public Works Monthly Report

During the past month, the Public Works, Water, and Wastewater Departments focused on winter operations, equipment maintenance, staff training, and planning for upcoming capital projects.

Public Works

Public Works staff completed APRA annual training and continued organizing the shop in preparation for the upcoming summer season. The department also worked on organizing documentation and archiving outdated plans and specifications to improve accessibility and long-term record management.

Fleet and Maintenance

The City mechanic and Public Works staff completed a range of fleet maintenance and equipment repairs. Work included troubleshooting parasitic electrical draws on Police vehicles and performing a field repair on a Police vehicle at the Girdwood station. Repairs were completed on the Fire Engine, including brake replacement and repair of the cab lift cylinder, along with the annual NFPA operational inspection and associated repairs. Additional work included installing updated radios in the Public Works fleet for interoperability, repairing heaters on the Water Truck and a Harbor vehicle, repairing a blower shaft, and performing preventative maintenance, oil changes, and inspections on Police, Public Works, Water, and Harbor vehicles.

Wastewater Department

The Wastewater Department submitted a \$100,000 ADEC State Revolving Fund (SRF) planning grant to evaluate sewer system infiltration and inflow related to Whittier's extreme rainfall and localized flooding conditions. Results are expected in June 2026, and if awarded, the study will position the City for future construction funding opportunities. The department also continues work on the 301H waiver. A draft Sludge Management and Secondary Treatment Plan has been submitted to ADEC and SRF for review and collaboration, and the City is awaiting their response.

Water Department

The Water Department responded to four emergency shutoffs due to freezing conditions and began preparing for seasonal system startup, including inspection and testing of seasonal meters. Staff are also preparing plans and specifications to bid the Well Field Improvement Automation Project. Funding will be provided through Congressional Directed Spending (CDS) and the State Revolving Fund (SRF) Loan Subsidy Program. Construction is anticipated to begin in summer 2026, with commissioning planned for winter 2026. The Finance Department is finalizing the SRF subsidized loan documentation.

The Water Department also submitted Whittier's drinking water to the National Rural Water Association "Best Tasting Water in the Nation" competition after being selected "**Best Tasting Water in Alaska 2026.**" The department has received this distinction twelve times over the past twenty-six years, reflecting long-term excellence in water quality and operations. Whittier did not place nationally this year.

Shotgun Cove Road

The Shotgun Cove Road project remains in winter shutdown, with construction expected to resume in late April 2026 and completion anticipated in fall 2026. A FLAP grant application has been submitted for the next phase of construction, with results expected in summer 2026. The City continues pursuing additional federal and state funding sources.