



STUMPTOWN Scoop

City of Whitefish
PO BOX 158, Whitefish, Montana 59937

LETTER FROM THE CITY MANAGER

Season’s greetings from City Hall! As 2023 comes to an end, it is a great time to reflect on our successes and challenges during the past year.

Efforts to address our community housing needs continue to be the top priority for the City and the Whitefish Community Housing Committee (WCHC). Below are some of our housing accomplishments of 2023:

- We welcomed our new Housing Planner, Luke Sponable, to the City team.
- The City Council continued the 4-mill property tax levy to fund community housing projects and initiatives. Most recently, City Council committed \$200,000 to fund the first year of the Whitefish Workforce Assistance Program developed and managed by Housing Whitefish in partnership with the Whitefish Chamber of Commerce to provide rental assistance. More information about the new program can be obtained by contacting Housing Whitefish.
- The WCHC and City staff created the Whitefish Community Housing Plan: Resort Tax which details the history of resort tax as a funding mechanism, the proposed re-allocation and revenue projections for a 20-year term, and the recommended uses for community housing development and programs. Voters overwhelmingly approved the recommended re-allocation of resort tax to include 10% for the development of community housing and community housing programs during this year’s municipal election.
- The City submitted a \$1 million grant application for the Pathways to Removing Obstacles to Housing Grant to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. The grant, if awarded, will be used to assist in completing a series of studies to contribute to the ongoing work on the Vision Whitefish 2045 Growth Policy, including buildout analysis, utility capacity analysis, wildfire risk assessment, and additional recommendations on various efforts to promote affordable housing, such as a "no net loss policy" and identification of regulatory barriers.
- The WCHC also created various light deed restrictions for use in future adopted programs and policies, such as the ongoing project of developing an annexation policy to ensure the City maintains 70% of housing units used as primary residences, a metric identified in the Whitefish Community Housing Roadmap.
- City Council authorized the hiring of a Short-term Rental Code Compliance Officer to assist in the enforcement of our current short-term rental performance standards and address illegally operating short-term rentals.

The City Council adopted the Fiscal Year 2024 Budget keeping total property

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CITY HALL
418 E. 2nd St, Whitefish, MT

Customer Service 863-2400
Human Resources.....863-2407
Legal Services 863-2445
Parks & Recreation 863-2470
f @Whitefish-Parks-Recreation
Planning & Building 863-2410
Public Works/Streets..... 863-2460
f @WhitefishPublicWorks
Utility Billing 863-2457

EMERGENCY SERVICES CENTER
275 Flathead Ave, Whitefish, MT

Fire Department 863-2483
f @WhitefishFireDepartment
Municipal Court 863-2440
Police Department 863-2420

www.cityofwhitefish.org

LIBRARY 862-9914
9 Spokane Ave, Whitefish, MT
f @WhitefishCommunityLibrary or
whitefishlibrary.org

CITY COUNCIL
City Council Meetings: 1st and 3rd
Mondays of every month at 7:10 P.M. in the
Council Chambers (City Hall, 2nd floor). View
live stream meetings online at [youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com)
“City of Whitefish” channel.



Dana Smith
City Manager
City of Whitefish

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- DEPARTMENT DIRECTORS
- CITY MANAGER
Dana Smith
 - CITY ATTORNEY
Angela Jacobs
 - CITY CLERK
Michelle Howke
 - FINANCE DIRECTOR
Lanie Gospodarek
 - HUMAN RESOURCE DIRECTOR
Sherri Baccaro
 - FIRE CHIEF
Cole Hadley
 - LIBRARY DIRECTOR
Mary Drew Powers
 - MUNICIPAL COURT JUDGE
Honorable Caitlin Overland
 - PARKS AND RECREATION DIRECTOR
Maria Butts
 - PLANNING AND BUILDING DIRECTOR
Dave Taylor
 - POLICE CHIEF
Bridger Kelch
 - PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR
Craig Workman

IMPORTANT NEWS - BUSINESS REGISTRATION PROGRAM

Due to legislation at the State level, we have amended our business license ordinance to conform with the new legislative requirements. Eligible businesses will be required to complete a new Business Registration Form. The new registration form will be mailed by January 1, 2024, and due by January 31, 2024. Businesses that are not registered

by February 28, 2024, will be assessed a late registration fee. Learn more about the new Business License Registration program online: https://codelibrary.amlegal.com/codes/whitefishmt/latest/whitefish_mt/0-0-0-20529. We appreciate your patience and cooperation with this.

ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS - THE 2023/2024 LIHEAP PROGRAM

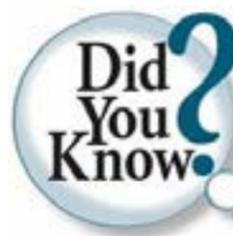


The Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) is a program

administered by the Community Action Partnership of Northwest Montana. LIHEAP helps pay a portion of the participants' primary heating costs during the Heating Season and can also help to offer a discount on

other utilities, check with LIHEAP for more information. Eligibility is based primarily on income and resources, and is offered on a first come, first served basis to qualifying applicants. Applications are available October 1st – April 30th.

For more information or to apply, visit their website: www.capnm.net. Questions? Please call their office at (406)758-5433 or send an email to liheap@capnwm.org.



We know you are busy, so let us help check one thing off your to-do list! The city offers two types of autopay to help you get your utility

bills paid without the hassle of having to remember to do it each month.

\$ACH – This option allows you to sign up, relax and know that your payment is being made on time every month. Access the [ACH sign-up form](#) on the City of Whitefish website. Download the online form and mail to: City of Whitefish, P.O. Box 158, Whitefish, MT 59937. You will need to provide either a voided check from a checking account or a bank letter with your banking information. ACH is

drafted around the 10th of every month for the balance that is due at that time. No late fees and no worries!

\$ Online bill pay– This option allows you to create an online account and either make a one-time payment or set up recurring payments using a credit or debit card. Payments can be made without the cost of a postage stamp! To access the bill-pay portal and create an account, go to <https://whitefish.billingdoc.net/login>.

If you have any questions or need any assistance, contact our Utility Billing Department by phone or email; they would be happy to help walk you through the process: (406)863-2456 (option #2) utilities@cityofwhitefish.org.

WHITEFISH ANIMAL GROUP (WAG)

WAG park had an extremely busy summer and fall season this year with the completion of projects that included the walking path in the south park and the water remediation and beautification of the front-end. The front-end redo included the planting of 5 new trees and 9 beautiful shrubs as well as a drainage system to help remove some of water we are plagued with in the spring. The winter months bring on a whole new set of challenges with snow removal being at the top of our list. We like to try and keep the main park area open all winter and the paths clear of snow for the dedicated patrons and their dogs. We would like

to ask that any park users lend a hand and grab one of the strategically placed snow shovels in any of the entrance bullpens and help shovel the entrances before they become snow packed. We do have a dedicated volunteer crew to do the snow blowing of the paths and every little bit of help benefits us all.

We also had another successful fundraising event with the Great Fish Challenge and would like to thank all the donors for their contributions to the park and making it possible to look down the road at two new projects. One being an extension to the obstacle course and second the addition of a memorial area where patrons will be

able to purchase a small memorial plaque and have it displayed in a unique natural rock sitting area.

We continue to get compliments from our regular users and many from visitors to our community on the beauty and uniqueness of our park and are thankful to all of you for supporting WAG Park!



YOUTH SCHOLARSHIP/DONATIONS

The Parks and Recreation Department's Youth Sponsorship Program strives to provide every child with the opportunity to participate in our programs. The Parks and Recreation Department annually applies for grants and holds fundraisers to support youth programs, but we need additional help from the community to ensure that all children can participate.

Please consider supporting youth

in our community by donating to the Youth Sponsorship Program. Donors will be recognized in our Summer/Fall Activity Guide, an annual publication distributed to local families and at key locations throughout the community and available online.

The Youth Sponsorship Form is available online at www.cityofwhitefish.org

JANUARY 2024: K – 4th grade basketball, and girl's 5th & 6th grade basketball Registration opens in December.

FEBRUARY 2024: Middle School Friday Night Ski Program Registration opens in January.

IMPORTANT DATES:
April 1, 2024: Summer Programs open for enrollment.

May 1, 2024: Scholarship applications are due.

To register, visit <https://secure.rec1.com/MT/whitefish-mt/catalog>.

VOLUNTEER HIGHLIGHTS: BAILEY KALLAL

Bailey Kallal, a Girl Scout in troop 3633, is earning her Gold Award in partnership with the City of Whitefish Parks and Recreation Department. Her project involves promoting bicycle safety and building a new bicycle rack in Memorial Park. Through her volunteerism, she has been promoting bike safety, evaluating bike parking in parks, and assessing safety for children walking and biking

to school. This fall, she was also elected as the High School Representative for the Pedestrian and Bicycle Path Advisory Committee with the City of Whitefish. If you would like to contribute to her efforts to install a bike rack in Memorial Park, please contact her at bakallal25@gmail.com. Thank you, Bailey, for contributing to a project that has long lasting benefit for the community!



Through private fundraising efforts, the Whitefish Skatepark Association along with Dreamland Skatepark completed an expansion of the Dave Olseth Memorial Skatepark

EMERGENCY SERVICES CENTER OPEN HOUSE

The Whitefish Fire Department hosted an Open House on October 15, 2023 during Fire Prevention Week. Kids of all ages were able to meet first responders and see equipment used by the Whitefish Fire and Police Departments, the ALERT Air Ambulance, and the Flathead County Sheriff's Department, including Flathead Search and Rescue, the K-9 Unit, and Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) Team.

Everyone enjoyed free hot dogs grilled by the retired firefighters. Kids of all ages were invited to have their faces painted with Dalmatians. Fire prevention safety information was available, and a drawing was held for six new fire extinguishers donated by local State Farm Insurance Agent Joe Akey. Our first responders are already looking forward to seeing you at next year's event!



THANK YOU WHITEFISH COMMUNITY!!

The Whitefish Firefighters Association would like to thank the community for its generosity during the 2023 Great Fish Community Challenge – a program of Whitefish Community Foundation. During the five-week campaign, the Whitefish Firefighters Association received \$22,345 in donations.

Whitefish Community Foundation

also provided a \$12,400 matching grant, bringing the total amount to \$34,745! These funds will be invested in tools, training, and technology to protect first responders, defend public safety, and manage critical resources at the scene of emergency incidents.

The Whitefish Firefighters Association is grateful to the Whitefish Community Foundation for organizing this amazing county-wide charitable campaign, which supported 77 Flathead Valley non-profit organizations this year!



FIRE CHIEF HADLEY



Fire Chief Cole Hadley began leading the City of Whitefish Fire Department at the end of August 2023. He has served the Flathead Valley since 2003, working at the Smith Valley and Evergreen Fire Departments. Chief Hadley began his career with the City of Whitefish in 2009 and has served as the C-Shift Captain since 2017.

FIREFIGHTER SHARP



We are happy to welcome Firefighter / Paramedic Robert Sharp to the Whitefish Fire Department family. Sharp was hired in September 2023 and has served the community since 2020 as a member of the Big Mountain Fire District

LET IT SNOW, LET IT SNOW, LET IT SNOW

A REMINDER TO ALL RESIDENTS AND BUSINESSES
For your own benefit and to help your neighbors and visitors pushing strollers, the accessible community of all ages, and bicyclists

❄️	BUSINESS DISTRICTS , our laws require all adjacent sidewalks and shared use paths to be cleared with a minimum width of five feet (5') from the right's accumulation if ice, snow, slush, or other impediments.	❄️	RESIDENTIAL DISTRICTS , it is the duty of the adjacent property owner or tenant to keep sidewalks and shared use paths free of all snow and ice accumulations with a minimum width of five feet (5') within twenty-four (24) hours of a snow event.
❄️	IT IS AGAINST THE LAW TO SHOVEL SNOW ONTO STREETS, ALLEYS, AND SHARED USE PATHS - Pile snow into your yard and boulevard.	❄️	Clear any snow and ice around FIRE HYDRANTS that are located on or near your property, to provide easier access for the Fire Department.
❄️	Shovel the sidewalks on all sides of your property down to the pavement.	❄️	Remove all ice from sidewalks and shared use paths. After the sidewalk and shared use paths is cleared, sprinkle sand or salt to prevent slipping.
❄️	You are responsible for clearing ice on your sidewalk, as well as snow. Ice can be more dangerous and intimidating than snow. The sooner and more completely you shovel, the less likely ice will form.	❄️	If snow and ice are not removed from sidewalks in a timely manner, property owners will receive a notice. Be sure to arrange for someone to shovel while you are on vacation. If not remedied quickly, the city may have the snow removed at the property owner's expense. If you are physically unable to remove snow, or you have other questions or concerns, please contact the City Planning Office at 406.863.2410 and we will assist you.
❄️	Corner properties need to clear curb cuts at the corners and crosswalks to the street gutter.		

Report areas needing snow removal on the City of Whitefish website, on the [Problem Reporter portal](#).



VIADUCT SNOW REMOVAL

The viaduct will be plowed early morning before school starts when we receive 2 inches or more of snow. City staff cannot control when the Montana Department of Transportation plows Baker Avenue and buries the walkways. Please be patient as we may not be able to plow again until after 1:00 p.m.

Please remember that snow removal equipment has the right of way. Pedestrians must yield to equipment when staff are actively plowing. Be aware of plowing activity before you walk over the viaduct as it is very difficult to reverse equipment.



HELP US REDUCE "FOG" - CAN THE GREASE!

What is FOG?

FOG refers specifically to fats, oils and grease entering the sewer system when poured down drains in homes, apartments, restaurants, industry and public facilities. As a byproduct of cooking, FOG is usually found in:

- Baking goods
- Butter, lard, shortening
- Cooking oil
- Fats and oil from cooked meats
- Food scraps
- Gravy
- Mayonnaise
- Salad dressings
- Sauces
- Sour cream

Why is FOG a problem?

Blockage can lead to sewer overflows. In severe cases, blockage can lead to sewers that overflow onto roadways

and property, eventually flow into local waterways, causing contamination. All too often, fats, oils and grease are disposed of improperly during food preparation and kitchen clean-up. When poured down the drain (sink or floor), FOG can build up, blocking sanitary sewer lines. This accumulation not only reduces the capacity of the wastewater collection system, but it also alters its effectiveness.

How can you help?

The easiest way to solve the grease problem and help prevent overflows of raw sewage is to keep this material out of the sewer system. Through education and by adopting certain habits, it is easy to minimize FOG sources at home.

In the kitchen, fats, oils, and grease (FOG) comes mostly from pre-rinsing

dishes or washing pots and pans. When cooking FOG is allowed to go down the drain, it cools in the wastewater system and sticks to pipes, creating FOG buildup. The buildup causes clogs and backups in homes and businesses, wastewater overflows, and spills onto private property, streets, and local surface waters. FOG buildup also increases the cost of maintaining wastewater treatment systems, hence effecting rates and can also create public health problems.



Tips to keep your drains fat-free:

- Pour cooled fats, oils and grease into a container and put the container in the trash. If you don't have a container, place tin foil into a coffee cup or similar, add FOG, allow to cool, and dispose.
- Before washing, use a paper napkin or paper towel to wipe FOG from dishes and dispose of it in the trash.
- Use sink strainers to catch food waste.
- Put food scraps in the trash, not through the garbage disposal.
- Restaurants and other commercial kitchens are required to have grease traps or interceptors installed.



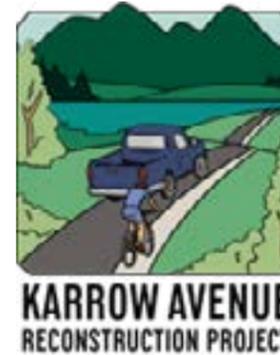
Employee Parking Permit Program

The Employee Parking Permit Program (a.k.a. Parking Pilot Program) is in full effect. Business owners and employees can purchase permits for \$20 a month on a month-to-month, or 12-month basis, per license plate, per permit. Permit holders will receive a 5% discount for purchase of 12-months. Permits are valid Monday - Friday, 6am - 6pm in the following parking lots: 1) East 3rd St./Central Avenue; 2) East 1st St/Spokane Avenue; 3) directly south of the Whitefish Community Library, western most portion; and 4)

(uncovered) third floor of the City Hall Parking Structure. The number of permits have been increased from 85 permits to 100 permits. Permits can be purchased online <https://www.cityofwhitefish.org/478/Online-Payments>. One license plate per permit holder



SUPPORTED BY RESORT TAX FUNDS



The City of Whitefish is planning to reconstruct Karrow Avenue, from 2nd Street to 7th Street. The City has selected the engineering firm of Robert Peccia & Associates (RPA) to assist them with project management, public involvement, surveying, and civil engineering. The project will generally include roadway reconstruction, a bicycle/pedestrian path, utility

improvements, decorative street lighting, and drainage improvements.

Construction is anticipated to take place from May - October of 2024.

The first public meeting was held on September 28, 2023. The presentation can be found at <https://www.cityofwhitefish.org/660/Karrow-Ave-Reconstruction>.

Communication is Key

We want to communicate with all property owners and residents within the vicinity of Karrow Avenue. E-mail is a great tool for distributing information. To be included in our e-mail distribution, please provide your name, address, and e-mail

address to: apauley@rpa-kal.com or call (406) 752-5025.

Citizen Questionnaire #1

Enclosed with newsletter #1, which can be found at the website listed above, is a general information questionnaire for residents within the project area. Please complete this questionnaire and return to Austin Pauley with RPA. The goal of the questionnaire is to solicit information from property owners about their property and to obtain general project feedback. Data from this questionnaire is very valuable to the Design Team; especially for properties directly adjacent to Karrow Avenue.

ARE YOU READY FOR WINTER?



Your water pipes and water meter may be at risk of freezing during prolonged periods of bitter cold. This is especially true if you have had issues with frozen water lines in the past.

How to prevent frozen water pipes and water meters.

- Pipes nearest a wall, door, window and along the floor are most likely to freeze.
- Open doors to rooms where the pipes and water meter are located, and open cabinet doors below sinks to allow warm air to circulate.
- Wrap pipes and meters with insulation or heat tape. Fill cracks in walls and around windows. These items can be purchased at a local home improvement store.
- If your kitchen or bathroom sink is against an outside wall, insulate the wall

to prevent pipes from freezing.

- Eliminate drafts by closing off crawlspace vents and doors.
- Turn off the water to outside faucets, remove hoses and drain the pipes.
- If the water meter is in an outdoor pit, check to make sure the lid fits properly and there are no cracks into which cold wind could blow or snow to fall in the pit.
- If you have an irrigation meter that has its own curb stop, you can contact the Utility Billing Department to have a technician turn the water off for the winter (406)863-2456 (option #2).



SAFE STREETS FOR ALL

The city received \$160,000 in federal funding to complete a Safe Streets for All (SS4A) Action Plan. The plan is intended to improve roadway safety by significantly reducing or eliminating roadway fatalities and serious injuries. The plan will focus on all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, public transportation users, motorists, micro mobility users, and commercial vehicle operators. The City of Whitefish is currently seeking a qualified professional engineering firm to provide professional engineering services.



MEET YOUR POLICE DEPARTMENT



Thorin Wilson was born in Oregon where he was raised in the outdoors hunting, fishing, and horseback riding. He attended Southwestern Oregon Community College where he wrestled and majored in criminal justice. After graduating college, he moved to Missoula Montana in 2017 and began his carrier in law enforcement as a Detention Officer for the Missoula County Detention Center. After three years in Missoula, Wilson was hired as a Whitefish Police Officer which he has worked for three years. Wilson enjoys spending time outside hunting, camping, and spending time with his wife.

VEHICLE SAFETY CHECKLIST

As winter approaches, Whitefish Police Department would like to remind residents and visitors to travel safely and be prepared when you travel. Winter driving conditions come and go throughout the winter months and drivers are encouraged to prepare early and plan for winter conditions through spring.

GET YOUR CAR SERVICED

Make sure your vehicle’s maintenance is up to date per your manufacture’s recommendations

- ✓ When the temperature drops, so does battery power. Have your mechanic check your battery, charging system, and belts, and have them make any necessary repairs or replacements. For hybrid-electric vehicles, keep gasoline in the tank to support the gasoline engines.
- ✓ Check your headlights, brake lights, turn signals, emergency flashers, and interior lights. Check the brake lights and turn signals on pull trailers.

- ✓ Make sure you have enough coolant in your vehicle. See your vehicle owner’s manual for specific recommendation on coolant. Check the cooling system for leaks, test the coolant, and drain or replace old coolant as needed.
- ✓ Ensure your vehicle’s windshield wiper reservoir is full of high-quality “winter” fluid with deicer.
- ✓ Make sure defrosters and windshield wipers, both front and rear, work and replace any worn blades. You may also want to consider installing heavy-duty winter wipers if you live in an area that gets a lot of snow and ice.

TIRE SAFETY

As the outside temperature drops, so does tire inflation pressure. Make sure each tire is filled to the vehicle manufacturer’s recommended inflation pressure, which is listed in your owner’s manual and on a placard located on the driver’s side door frame, NOT the number listed on the tire. Be sure to check the tire’s air pressure when they are cold, when the car hasn’t been driven for at least three hours. Read through for safe tire tips:

- ✓ Regardless of season, inspect your tires at least once a month and before long road trips. Don’t forget to check your spare tire.
- ✓ Check the tread and sidewalls for any cuts, punctures, bulges, scrapes, cracks or bumps. If you see any damage, take your vehicle to a tire service professional for further inspection
- ✓ Install snow tires in the fall. Studded tires are permitted in Montana from October 1 – May 31.
- ✓ Replace tires that have uneven wear or insufficient

tread. Tread should be at least 2/32 of an inch or greater on all tires.

- ✓ Check the age of each tire. Some vehicle manufacturers recommend that tires be replaced every six years regardless of use but check your owner’s manual to find out.
- ✓ Fore more information on tire safety, visit NHTSA’s Tires page at www.nhtsa.gov/tires.

STOCK YOUR VEHICLE

Stock your vehicle with common winter driving supplies you might need in an emergency

- ✓ Snow Shovel and ice scraper
- ✓ Sand or kitty litter in case your vehicle gets stuck
- ✓ Jumper cables, flashlight, and warning devices
- ✓ Blankets for protection from the cold
- ✓ A cell phone with charger, water, food, and any necessary medicine

Vision Whitefish 2045, Growth Policy Update

The City of Whitefish is in the process of updatng its Growth Policy.

A Growth Policy (also known as a Comprehensive Plan) represents our community’s vision of how we want to grow and change. This includes where future development or redevelopment should occur, where housing could locate, and how we can contnue to provide roads and public utilities, protect natural areas, and meet other objectves while still preserving its community character. A Growth Policy provides the legal basis for adoptng or updating zoning regulatons, which can be used to achieve the goals of the Plan. The last comprehensive update to the Growth Policy occurred in 2007 although recent

corridor Plans and other specific plans (such as the downtown master plan) are considered “updates” to the growth policy.

On August 24, 2023, the City held a very well-attended Growth Policy Kick Off Meeting of more than 125 people. Following the kick-off, visioning sessions will be scheduled this winter. Visioning is a process by which a community forms a mental picture of the future it wants. This includes working together to recognize shared values and defining what makes Whitefish special and how to protect valuable assets. Staff intends to have many visioning sessions throughout the plan update, including sessions specific to individual

neighborhoods in the community.

Staff has recently developed a public engagement website to be the all-in-one resource for informaton and input related to the Growth Policy. Signing up and subscribing to the site will allow you to participate in all online surveys and other engagement tools, and receive notfications and updates, including upcoming events and meetngs. This engagement site can be found at:

www.engagewhitefish.com

We encourage you to be involved in the growth policy update! Any questions or comments can be directed to Alan Tiefenbach, City Long Range Planner, at 406-863-2413 or atiefenbach@cityofwhitefish.org

2022 Whitefish Community Housing Roadmap - 1 Year of Progress

Affordable Housing continues to be a challenge for the Whitefish community as rent and purchase prices continue to outpace local wages. The most recent housing plan, the 2022 Whitefish Community Housing Roadmap, was adopted in November 2022 as an update to a series of housing needs assessments and strategic plans over the years. As we reach the one-year anniversary of its adoption it is worth highlighting the progress made in a range of efforts spearheaded by the city and the many community stakeholder organizations.

The roadmap identified 15 priority actions which are to be started in the short-term (1 year) timeframe) while another 7 are slated for the mid-term (2-5 year) or long-term (5+ years) timeframe. We are pleased to report that 10 of the 15 actions have notable progress towards completion in serving the housing needs of the community.

A few of these are highlighted below. This progress is in no small part due to the efforts of engaged stakeholders including the Whitefish Housing Authority and Housing Whitefish, among many others.

Construction

Two housing projects are in the planning process but nearing construction.

1. Depot Park Townhomes, a project by the Whitefish Housing Authority, is 22 for-sale townhome units which are targeted at an average of 120% AMI. A groundbreaking ceremony was held in late October and utility work is now underway in the old snow lot site.
2. Housing Whitefish is in the final stages of developing Alpenglow II, an 18-unit apartment complex just north of the existing Alpenglow apartment

project. The majority of rents will serve the 95% or lower AMI range with a cap of 120%. Groundbreaking is tentatively estimated for late 2024/early 2025.

Program Funding

Securing additional funding to support community housing efforts is a top priority. For the past year the primary sources of funding are the mil levy, voters approved a resort tax reallocation which dedicates 10% of the 3% resort tax to community housing projects and programs. An estimated 27 million dollars would be generated over the next 20 years, starting in early 2025. The Whitefish Community Housing Committee completed a Community Housing Financing Plan to specify the uses and goals for the Affordable Housing allocation.

In addition, the City of Whitefish

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tax revenue set at the same amount as the prior year. This decision effectively provided relief to our taxpayers for another year as the same amount of revenue is shared among current and newly taxable properties for Fiscal Year 2024.

In partnership with the Whitefish School District, a second School Resource Officer position was added to the Whitefish Police Department and is expected to start in early 2024. The City successfully secured a \$125,000 U.S. Department of Justice COPS Grant to cover a portion of the cost for the next three years.

The City Council adopted the

Whitefish Fire Department Strategic Plan in October 2023, setting prioritized goals with defined objectives, timelines, funding, and assigned responsibilities, as recommended in the Long-Range Whitefish Fire Department Master Plan.

Vision Whitefish 2045, an update to the City's Growth Policy, kicked off with a public meeting in August 2023. Your voice is important as this plan will guide our community through growth and change for the next 20 years! You can learn more and stay informed about upcoming meetings by visiting: www.engagewhitefish.com/vision-whitefish-2045.

While these highlights reflect our

most significant projects, there is a lot more that goes on behind the scenes. From our dedicated city staff to the invaluable time spent by our many volunteers like Mayor Muhlfeld, City Council, and numerous community members serving on our boards and committees, I am honored and filled with gratitude to work with such a great team and community. Together, we can continue to make our community a special place to live and work for years to come. Wishing everyone a safe and fun-filled winter!

To keep up to date on City news, please visit our website at www.cityofwhitefish.org, create an account, and sign up for email notifications.

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submitted a grant application for \$1 million from the HUD Pathways to Removing Obstacles to Housing (PRO) Program for the purpose of supporting Growth Policy research and data gathering efforts, creating a Community Housing Development Plan, and a Zoning for Affordability/No Net Loss Policy study.

Programs

Housing Whitefish is in the final stages of a Tenant Assistance Program based on a program in Winter Park, CO. The program is expected to begin accepting application in early 2024. The Chamber of Commerce is hoping to raise \$100k from the business community and the City of Whitefish has committed \$200k

from the affordable housing fund.

Policies

The City of Whitefish is well underway with multiple policy updates which will benefit community housing efforts. The largest of which is the Growth Policy, called Vision Whitefish 2045. Long Range Planner, Alan Tiefenbach is leading the efforts and will be soliciting community input during multiple stages of the growth policy. See engagewhitefish.com to subscribe to updates and engage in the process.

Other updates include the creation of deed restrictions and recommendations for an annexation policy currently being discussed by the Whitefish Community Housing Committee.

The deed restriction "light" can be used to limit occupancy of a property to "qualified occupants", typically residents, employees of local businesses or retirees. This allows housing to be reserved for these groups and restricts it from being used as a short-term rental or a vacation home. A final draft is expected to be presented to City Council in early 2024.

The city is committed to continue to address community housing needs in partnership with stakeholders and the community. Look forward to more in the coming years as the mid-term priority actions are addressed based on the foundation and momentum of the successes of this first year.

WHITEFISH COMMUNITY LIBRARY (WCL)

The Library has a revamped Children's area. Youth Services Librarian Gina Schiff has been busy building a play cubby full of STEM activities including a felt board, sensory wall, magnetic whiteboard, and Lego table. More opportunities to build, explore and create happen every Friday after Story Circle at 11 a.m. Come join us!



Felt Board



Story Circle



Giraffe Legs



Story Circle

Board of Trustees

Jessica Tubbs
Chair

Deb Bond
Tamarack Federation
Representative

Trevor Gonser
Treasurer

Kelly Peppmeier
Trustee

Sarah Ericson
Vice Chair

Mary Drew Powers
Director/Secretary

Whitefish Community Library
9 Spokane Ave
Whitefish, MT 59937
(406)862-9914

<https://whitefishlibrary.org/>

Library Hours
Monday: 10 a.m. - 7 p.m.
Tues - Thurs 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.
Friday: 11 a.m to 5 p.m.
Saturday 12:00 p.m. - 5 p.m.
Sunday: Closed

Follow us on Facebook for updates:
[@ Whitefish Community Library](https://www.facebook.com/WhitefishCommunityLibrary)

Volunteers serve an important role in our Parks and Recreation programs. Here are a few highlights from 2023:

- The youth basketball program had 20 volunteers who contributed 420 volunteer hours coaching.
- The youth flag football program had 17 volunteers contributing over 500 hours towards coaching.
- Whitefish Animal Group volunteers contributed 450 hours maintaining the WAG Dog Park.
- The Volunteer to Ski program had 8 youth volunteers contributing 160 hours maintaining parks.
- The Food Bank coordinated 30 volunteers to harvest city fruit trees and collected 1,300 pounds of fruit.
- Three Middle School classes volunteered to clean up parks during a service day project this spring.

The City is
HIRING!

The City of Whitefish is a professional organization providing many valuable municipal services to residents and visitors of the City. We have temporary, seasonal and full-time positions available. Not only does the City offer an attractive benefits package, holidays, and vacation, it also provides an

opportunity to work with an amazing group of individuals who are professional and caring of their co-workers and the citizens of Whitefish. Visit our website for positions that are available. <https://www.governmentjobs.com/careers/whitefish>



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