



The Weekly Update – November 2, 2023

Attachments:

1. Journal of City Commission Work Session, October 17, 2023
2. City of Great Falls Total Cash and Investments as of September 30, 2023
3. Email from Cherilyn DeVries, Communications Manager for Montana Human Rights Network, follow up correspondence concerning White Lives Matter operatives in Missoula.

City Commission Work Session
Civic Center, Gibson Room 212

Mayor Kelly presiding

CALL TO ORDER: 5:30 PM

CITY COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT: Bob Kelly, Susan Wolff, Eric Hinebauch, and Rick Tryon. Commissioner Joe McKenney arrived at 5:36 p.m.

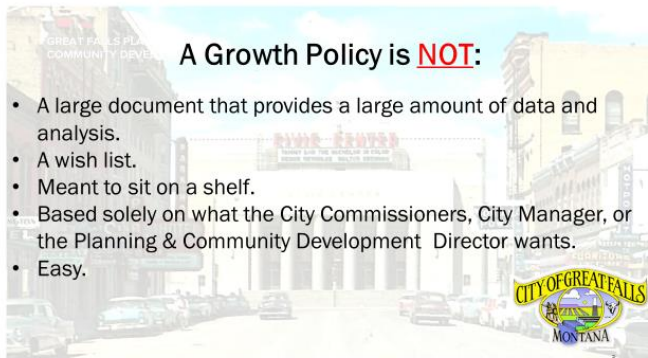
STAFF PRESENT: City Manager Greg Doyon and Deputy City Manager Chuck Anderson; City Attorney David Dennis; Finance Director Melissa Kinzler and Grant Administrator Tom Hazen; Public Works Director Chris Gaub; Planning and Community Development Director Brock Cherry, Deputy Director Tom Micuda and Associate Planner Sarah Doermann; Municipal Court Judge Steve Bolstad and Court Supervisor Morgan Medvec; Fire Chief Jeremy Jones; Police Chief Jeff Newton; and, City Clerk Lisa Kunz.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

1. GROWTH POLICY UPDATE.

Planning and Community Development Director Brock Cherry reviewed and discussed the following PowerPoint:



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So what about our Growth Policy?

- The City's most recent Growth Policy, "2025 Imagine Great Falls" was initiated on December 20th, 2011, and adopted on August 6th, 2013.
- The effort took approximately 19 ½ months.
- The update was also undertaken using an internal staffing model, meaning no third-party consultant was utilized.
- For the 24-25 Growth Policy Update, a consultant model will be utilized, consisting of direct coordination with Staff, but the Consultant performing most of the labor.



What does SB 382 mean for the Growth Policy update?

- SB 382: The Montana Land Use Planning Act, requires that the City provide:
 - Public Participation Plan
 - A Future Land Use Map
 - A review of the Growth Policy every five years to determine any updates need to be performed.
- Both the Growth Policy and related ordinance updates be completed by mid-2026.



Some of our Growth Policy Update Partners!

The People



So what is the Commission's role?

- Approve the Resolution to begin the Growth Policy Update
- Approve the Request for Proposals (RFP) – **Dec 2023**
 - Staff aims to have the RFP presented for Commission approval before the end of the year – **It is then expected that the RFP will be published from January – March 2024.**
- Award the RFP contract – **April 2024**



So what are the next steps?



Commissioner Tryon inquired what the citizens could expect with the updated Growth Policy.

Planning and Community Development Director Cherry responded that land use and local government are inherently tied together because the City operates from property taxes. Certain land uses have a different formula of how each of those uses are taxed, and there are certain figures - infrastructure, roads, sewer, water, and the cost of employees - which are always the same. If there is a disproportionate land use that is not supported by a healthy mix of other land uses, then things could be developed that will not ultimately be able to pay for themselves. The way the community was built using property tax alone is not able to pay for itself. In 20 years, we want to be able to say, not only did we grow the way we want,

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but also we were able to pay for it without being detrimental to the taxpayer, while still being in a place that is attractive for new business and new investment.

Great Falls Public Schools Superintendent Tom Moore introduced Business Operations Director Brian Patrick and School Board Trustee Bill Bronson.

Mr. Moore explained that in 2017, the School District hired Cropper GIS to do some work on redistricting and rebounding individual neighborhood schools. Over a year of bringing stakeholder groups together, their recommendations were considered and an attempt was made to implement them. This was done in isolation and not from a community perspective. There has been recession in some parts of the community and in the local schools; however, there has been growth in other areas. In order to predict what the school's needs are going to be in the future, the Growth Policy update needs to be done strategically and in conjunction with the City. The School District is ready to work with the City through the Growth Policy update process and would step up with resources when needed.

City Manager Greg Doyon explained that the delay in updating the Growth Policy was due to hiring a new Planning and Community Development Director. Although there would be outside partners, there are elements to the Growth Policy that need to be addressed by statute. Housing challenges, traffic congestion and the development of Malmstrom's Sentinel missile project affect the community.

Mayor Kelly requested that Director Cherry provide the Commission with feedback on the previous Growth Policy over the next couple of months.

Commissioner McKenney inquired about addressing housing needs now since the Growth Policy and related ordinances would not be updated until mid-2026. He further inquired if waiting might inadvertently put a stall on housing with developers.

Director Cherry responded that Planning and Community Development staff are currently working on ordinances, and could have those ready to go by the beginning of this upcoming year.

Manager Doyon added that the City does not want to get ahead of itself nor does it want to slow development. A brief prior revision of the Growth Policy and a Great Falls Development Authority Housing Study both indicated a need for housing in the community and housing should not be stalled. Even though the Growth Policy has not been updated, it does not remove the discretion of the Planning Board and the Commission to make appropriate decisions for the community based on the document's understanding that there probably have been some changes. There will be sufficient opportunity for the Commission to provide input on the next Growth Policy.

Commissioner Tryon inquired about the cost, where the money is being budgeted from and if the new Growth Policy will be a complete update.

Director Cherry responded that given the condition of the City's current plan, the Growth Policy merits an entire overhaul. The updated Growth Policy is a living document that must reflect today's needs and the voices of today's residents. The amount of \$300,000 has already been allocated for the Growth Policy

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update and it will be the future of the community and represent the will of the public.

Manager Doyon added that the legislature will be in session again next year. As the City embarks on an updated Growth Management Plan, staff will closely monitor any substantial changes after that session.

2. GREAT FALLS DOWNTOWN TIF ACTIVITY REPORT.

Planning and Community Development Director Brock Cherry expressed appreciation to Planning and Community Development Deputy Director Tom Micuda and Associate Planner Sarah Doermann for their efforts with regard to preparing the Great Falls Downtown TIF Activity Report.

Director Cherry reviewed and discussed the following PowerPoint:

Great Falls Downtown TIF Activity Report
City Commission Work Session
October 17, 2023

Downtown TIF

Projects using Downtown TIF funds

- ❖ Completed Projects
- ❖ Projects in Progress

Completed Projects

The Wild Hare
518 Central Avenue
Building Program

Façade: \$35,675
Env. Safety: \$2,500
Total: \$38,157

Completion Date:
February 2023

Completed Projects

The Sip 'n Dip
17 7th Street South
Building Program

Façade: \$50,000
Total: \$50,000

Completion Date:
February 2023

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Completed Projects



Roe River Realty
618 Central Avenue
Building Program

Façade: \$16,999
Env. Safety: \$2,371.50
Total: \$19,370.50

Completion Date: June 2023

Completed Projects



City Bar
705 Central Avenue
Building Program

Façade: \$22,879.19
Life Safety: \$25,541.50
Env. Safety: \$2,503.75
Total: \$50,924.44

Completion Date: July 2023

Completed Projects



Columbia Grain
120 1st Avenue North
Building Program

Façade: \$25,000
Life Safety: \$24,999
Total: \$49,999

Completion Date:
February 2023

Projects in Progress



Arvon Block
Alley Storm Drain

Approved Funds: \$90,000

Work completed in
September, pending final
payout to contractor

Projects in Progress



7th St. Streetscape
Between Central Avenue and
1st Avenue South

Approved Funds:
\$243,000

Project in design

Goal: Construction 2024
Partnership with Sip N
Dip

Projects in Progress



ADA Ramps on
Central
Between Park Drive and
6th Street

Approved Funds: \$31,052

Project in design

Goal: Construction in 2024-2025
Financial partnership with MDT
(required 13% match)

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Projects in Progress



BID Alley Mural Lighting

Approved Funds: \$150,000

Lighting design in progress



Projects in Progress



**Public Works
Downtown Storm
Drain**

Approved Funds: \$2.5 million
over 5 years

Phase I - on going

Projects in Progress



**Kellergeist
Pub Theater
111 Central Avenue**

Approved Funds:
\$263,500

Permit submitted and
under review

Projects in Progress



**Mountain Wave
Distillery
313-315 Central
Avenue**

Approved Funds:
\$68,650

Construction in
Progress

Projects in Progress



**400 Block Storm
Drain – Alley
between Central
and 1st Ave N**

Approved Funds:
\$18,000

Work completed,
pending final payout
to contractor

Projects in Progress



**Economic Vitality
Transformation
Strategy**

Approved Funds: \$10,000

Consultant selection in
process

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Projects in Progress



Boulevard Tree Work in the Business Improvement District

Approved Funds: \$125,000 over 5 years

Year 3 of tree work - completed

Projects in Progress



**Civic Center
2 Park Drive South**

Approved Funds:
\$5,900,551.75

Project nearing completion



Projects in Progress



**Baatz Building
400 2nd Avenue South
Building Program**

Facade: \$50,000
Life Safety: \$75,000
Env. Safety: \$5,000

Building permit approved
Interior demolition in progress

Downtown TIF Program Investment 2021 - 2023

- Façade Program:
 - \$150,603
- Life Safety:
 - \$125,540.50
- Environmental Safety:
 - \$12,374.75
- General TIF Investment:
 - \$3,346,202
- Bond Investment:
 - \$5,900.551.75

Downtown TIF Program Investment Continued

- Funds obligated to debt service and projects:
 - \$5,131,586
- Funds Available:
 - \$4,482,000, pending December increment
- Future Funds:
 - \$1.6 million est. for 2024

Questions and Discussion

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Mayor Kelly expressed appreciation to urban renewal agencies for their efforts with regard to making great use of TIF funds.

DISCUSSION OF POTENTIAL UPCOMING WORK SESSION TOPICS

City Manager Greg Doyon reported that a development review update will be a topic for November 7, 2023. An EMS transportation contract will be a topic for the November 21, 2023 work session.

ADJOURN

There being no further discussion, Mayor Kelly adjourned the informal work session of October 17, 2023 at 6:26 p.m.



Finance Department Memorandum

To: Greg Doyon, City Manager; City Commission; Members of the Investment Committee

From: Kirsten Wavra, Deputy Finance Director

Date: October 17, 2023

Re: Total Cash and Investments as of September 30, 2023

The City of Great Falls' total cash and investments at the end of September 2023 was \$101,973,982.89. This included cash in bank accounts totaling \$13,592,180.79. Total cash and investments decreased from \$105.2 million in August to \$101.2 million at the end of September. This amount fluctuates from month to month depending on payments made on large capital projects and funds received from utilities, taxes, and grants, for example. The General Fund cash balance decreased from \$5.8 million in August to \$4.4 million in September. This amount will continue to decrease until tax payments are received, usually in December. The General Fund balance also includes a CARES Act balance of \$3,379,830. The graphs for the City's total cash and investments as well as the General Fund, specifically, are on the next pages. All cash balances are monitored on a monthly basis.

Also on the next page is the summary of the City's total cash and investments. The Investment Committee met in April to determine investment strategies in the current market. The committee decided to invest \$30.0 million in short-term US Treasury Bills. Out of total invested, \$20.0 million matured on August 15, 2023. The remainder will mature in October. The City's investment policy specifies the percentage the City of Great Falls must have of the different types of instruments allowed by state statute. The chart below lists those percentages compared to the City's investments as of September 30th. The investments in the Montana Board of Investments (STIP) and US Bank Insured Cash Sweep (ICS) are liquid and may be called at any time.

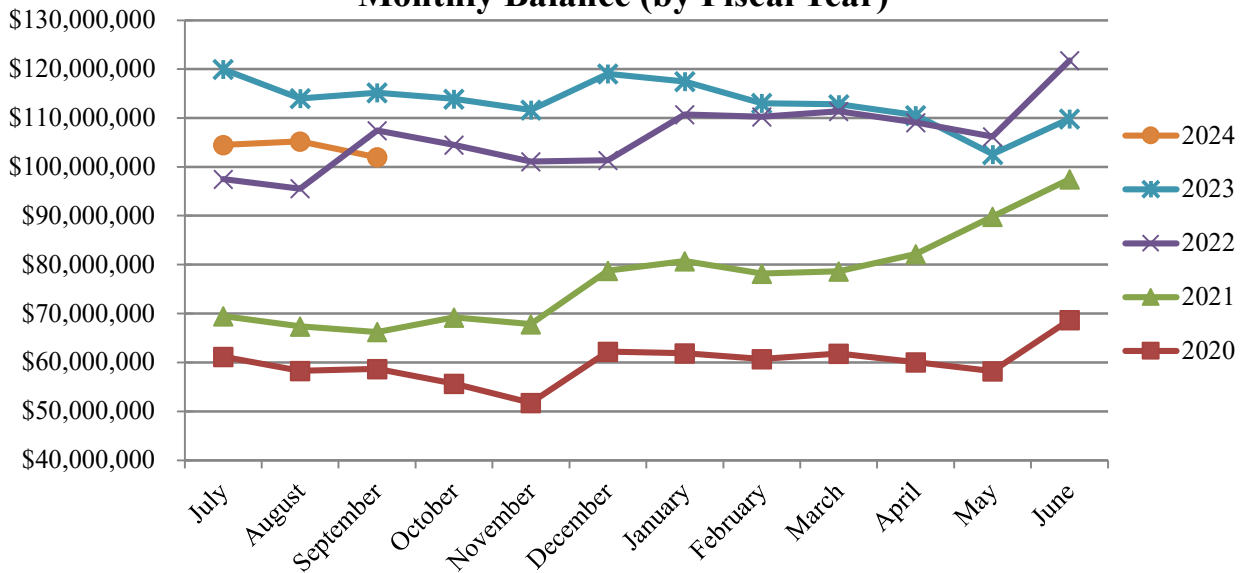
Issuer category	Minimum %	Maximum %	City's Investments % as of September 30, 2023
Master, savings, and ICS accounts	20% combined	100%	90.41%
Montana Board of Investments STIP		100%	
Money Market/Repurchase Agreements		100%	
Direct Obligations of the U.S. which includes Treasury Notes and Bills	0%	80%	9.59%
Obligations of agencies of the U.S.	0%	30%	0%

City of Great Falls
Total Cash & Investment Summary
September 30, 2023

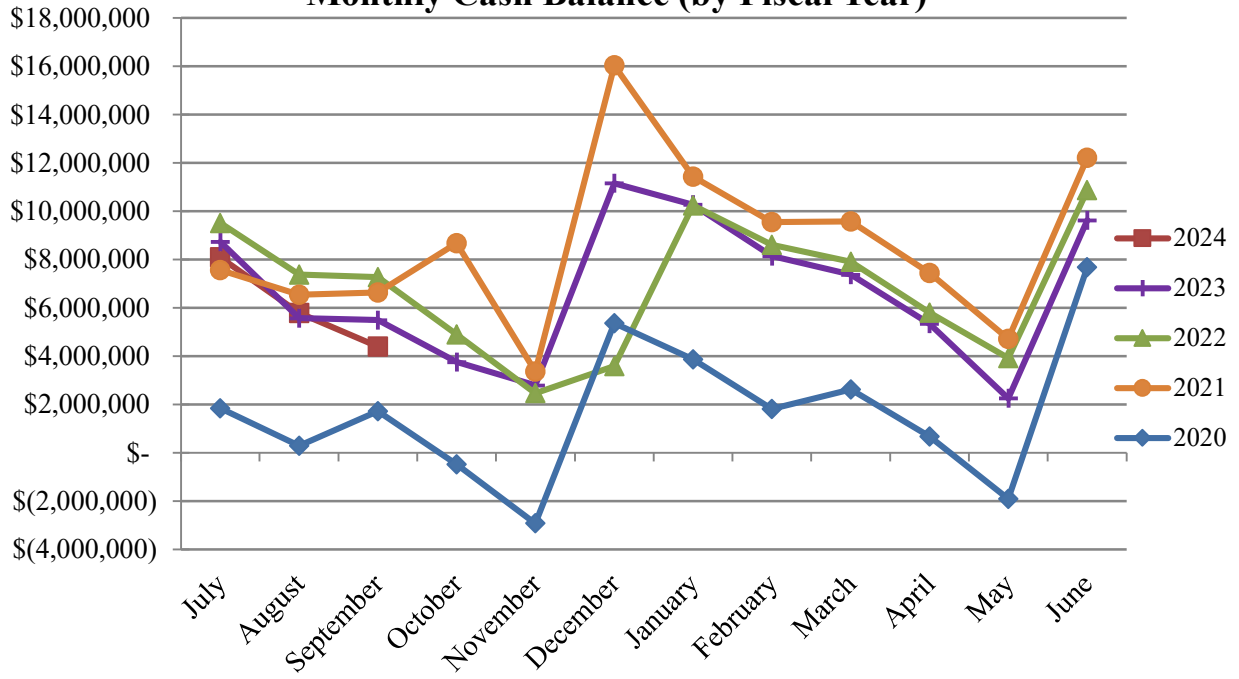
Description	Rate	Due Date	Principal Cost	Market Value
US Bank Investments				
US Treasury Bill	4.820%	10/5/2023	9,776,405.56	9,991,254.00
Insured Cash Sweep	4.450%		31,628,324.04	31,628,324.04
Total US Bank Investments			41,404,729.60	41,619,578.04
State of Montana Short Term				
Investment Pool (STIP)	5.406%		46,977,072.50	46,977,072.50
Total Investments			88,381,802.10	88,596,650.54
Cash on Hand, Deposits in Bank			13,592,180.79	13,592,180.79
Total Cash and Investments			<u>\$101,973,982.89</u>	<u>\$102,188,831.33</u>

Compared to previous years, total cash and investments are still at a higher level. The higher levels can be attributed to receipt of American Rescue Plan (ARPA) funding and bond funding from the Park Maintenance District and Downtown Tax Increment District. These monies originally accounted for over \$35 million included in our total cash and investments and are being spent down as the Civic Center façade and new recreation center construction is completed. The ARPA funding is being spent down as it is allocated on a project-by-project basis.

Total Cash & Investments
Monthly Balance (by Fiscal Year)



General Fund Monthly Cash Balance (by Fiscal Year)



If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (406) 455-8423 or kwavra@greatfallsmt.net.

From: [Cherilyn DeVries](#)
To: [Dani Hess](#); [council@billingsmt.gov](#); [BPD](#); [Commissioners](#); [BSB LED](#); [Gallagher, J.P.](#); [kukulskic@billingsmt.gov](#); [nelson@belgrademt.gov](#); [mmeis@belgrademt.gov](#); [rmattimoe@belgrademt.gov](#); [kmenicucci@belgrademt.gov](#); [jdoyle@belgrademt.gov](#); [jsimon@belgrademt.gov](#); [jguffey@belgrademt.gov](#); [generalinfo@belgrademt.gov](#); [Ask GFPD](#); [Krista Artis](#); [publiccomment@kalispell.com](#); [jvenezio@kalispell.com](#); [helenapolicedepartment](#); [Wilmot Collins](#); [edean@helenamt.gov](#); [slogan@helenamt.gov](#); [mreed@helenamt.gov](#); [ashirtliff@helenamt.gov](#); [council@ci.missoula.mt.us](#); [mayor@milescity-mt.org](#); [mhowke@cityofwhitefish.org](#); [nicosias@cityofcolumbiafalls.com](#); [staalandb@cityofcolumbiafalls.com](#); [cfchiefpeters@colfallsmt.com](#); [jbattlesward1@gmail.com](#); [tdurbinWard2@gmail.com](#); [redlodgeward2@gmail.com](#); [sdanielsward3@gmail.com](#); [heatonward1@gmail.com](#); [ronningward3@gmail.com](#); [gsrock@cityofredlodge.com](#); [agenda@bozeman.net](#)
Subject: Follow-up concerning White Lives Matter operatives in Missoula
Date: Wednesday, October 25, 2023 2:49:51 PM
Attachments: [White Lives Matter October 2023.pdf](#)

Dear city officials across Montana,

MHRN has additional information to share with you about the appearance of White Lives Matter members and other White nationalists in the Pacific Northwest. We should all be concerned about their collaboration and their decision to harass Jewish, immigrant, and Muslim communities in one day. Earlier this year, WLM members aggressively targeted LGBTQ+ events in Montana, which means that the number of people they are trying to intimidate in Montana is quite large.

In the face of this hostility, we repeat our recommendation for local leaders to publish public statements that speak up for community values and denounce discrimination, racism, and divisiveness. People in the targeted groups would like to know that their elected officials understand their concerns and openly reject the activity of literal neo-Nazis in their town.

The attached letter provides more information. Please feel free to reach out if you have any questions or you would like support crafting a statement.

Cherilyn

Cherilyn DeVries

she/they
Communications Manager
cherilyn@mhrn.org



October 25, 2023

Dear city officials across Montana,

In August, we warned you about the activity of White Lives Matter in your communities and urged you to make a public statement denouncing their racist, dehumanizing messages and attempts to start violent confrontations in your community. On Saturday, these neo-Nazis appeared in person at a synagogue and other locations in Missoula with other White nationalists from the Pacific Northwest.

Many of us might not fully understand how horrifying it would be to drive up to our houses of worship and see masked people holding hostile signs and know that they both celebrate the deaths of our ancestors and deny the Holocaust. MHRN received many photos of these extremists from Missoula residents who were appalled at the message that the neo-Nazi groups were trying to send.

White Lives Matter and other neo-Nazi groups are appearing in our communities to create conflict and intimidate people who have repeatedly faced discrimination over generations. **We again ask you to prepare a public statement, so residents understand that the intimidation, bullying, dehumanizing rhetoric, and racism that violent extremist groups amplify do not define your town.** I have attached materials that may help you draft a statement for your city.

More information on White nationalists' visit to Missoula

It appears that Montana WLM members collaborated with other neo-Nazis in the Pacific Northwest in order to appear more powerful. Here's more information about the Northwest Nationalist Network, known as 3N, from our colleagues at the [Western States Center](#).

- Many of the groups involved in the counter-protests are members of a newly formed neo-Nazi coalition in the Pacific Northwest called the Northwest Nationalist Network (3N). 3N is part of the bigger "[Active Club](#)" movement that centers around combat sports and preparing for political and racially motivated violence.
- 3N officially formed in February of 2023 and consists of multiple groups: The Rose City Nationalist Club around the Portland area, the Evergreen Active Club in Eastern Washington, the Big Sky Active Club in Montana, White Lives Matter Montana, the Rainforest Active Club on the Pacific Coast and the Vinland Rebels.

There are a few themes with regards to the targeting of these events:

- The targeting is not being publicly discussed by members of the 3N coalition on their social media channels. This targeting is happening without prior warning.
 - Members of the coalition are traveling across state lines to engage in these mobilizations and are working with other white nationalist groups like the Montana Chapter of White Lives Matter.
 - The Oregon-based Rose City Nationalists were in Centralia for the June 10 protest.
 - 3N teamed up with the Wyoming Active Club and Patriot Front for the Lander mobilization.
 - It appears the same racist banner was used in multiple mobilizations including the Lander, Bozeman, and Spokane mobilizations.
-

- The mobilizations are designed to intimidate Pride attendees with bigoted signs and rhetoric espoused via megaphone. 3N members also film any interactions and post videos later on.
- 3N groups are attempting to get as close as possible to Pride attendees, which has led to occasional violence. In Bozeman, one Pride attendee was attacked with pepper spray by several of the neo-Nazis. In Oregon City, 3N members engaged in a brawl with Proud Boys who also showed up to counter-protest Pride.

One more pattern that may not be directly related, but to keep an eye out for:

- During the weekend of June 24th - 26th, homophobic vandalism was carried out in both Lewis County and the Spokane area, two locations where Pride events were previously targeted by 3N.

And here's how Pride organizers have successfully protected their events:

- In Centralia, Washington, organizers made sure 3N members were physically separate from Pride attendees and ensured that bars across the county were aware that 3N had tried to go out drinking before their attempt to disrupt Lewis County (WA) Pride. 3N subsequently was thrown out of several bars they tried to enter.
- In Spokane, event organizers and allied organizations quickly shared information on social media about 3N, informing Pride attendees about the group's track record, advising Pride attendees not to engage with the group, and letting attendees where they could go for help or to find a safe space. They quickly mobilized members of Free Mom Hugs – Eastern WA to create more separation between Pride attendees and the 3N protesters. They also connected with nearby bars and restaurants to warn them that 3N might try to come in. 3N left after just two hours of attempting to intimidate Pride attendees.

Professional researchers that we work with are very concerned about these groups' willingness to collaborate and drive long distances in order to bully people, get attention for themselves, and incite violent confrontations. However, they tell us that these groups are not cohesive. Infighting, problems with law enforcement, and difficulties recruiting new members are keeping them small.

When these operatives show up to harm our communities, we have an opportunity to educate people about the trouble they are intentionally trying to cause and reinforce the shared values like kindness, safety, opportunity, equality, and understanding that make our communities stronger.

We hope this information helps you respond to the threats in your area and create a statement that reflects your community's values.

Cherilyn DeVries
Communications Manager

SUPPORTING MATERIALS – White Lives Matter incidents

Examples of effective statements against White supremacist activity

[Police investigating flyers left in Folsom neighborhood as hate crime](#)

“The City of Folsom condemns any discrimination based on a person’s race, as well as racially motivated messaging and hate crimes that seek to divide us rather than unite us,” said City of Folsom officials.

[Racist flyers found in Rocky Hill: police](#)

“It doesn’t uphold the values that we have here in Rocky Hill. We’re very inclusive, we show a lot of respect for all of our community members, and that’s why I believe this is so outrageous,” said Rocky Hill Police Sgt. Foss-Rugan.

[What can police do when racist pamphlets are distributed?](#)

“The Springfield Township Police Department condemns any message promoting the KKK, anti-Semitic commentary, and any other statements that promote hatred. We encourage residents to contact the police department if there is a recurrence of hateful fliers distributed on their properties, and we will respond and investigate the incident.”

[Hampton and FBI investigating distribution of racist flyers](#)

“The city of Hampton is disgusted by and condemns the actions of those responsible for the distribution of these hateful leaflets throughout our city,” the statement read. “They are in no way representative of our city, our citizens, or our values. The Hampton Police Department, in conjunction with the Atlanta field office of the FBI, is investigating this matter.”
