



Florida's Harborside Hometown

WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS REPORT OCTOBER 23, 2020

City Manager

On Oct. 1 Punta Gorda kicked off fiscal year (FY) 2021. The start to the year casts the focus on the implementation of the FY2021 Strategic Plan. A series of strategic priorities and goals have been mapped out by staff and approved by City Council. The areas of focus for FY2021 remain, financial/economic stability, infrastructure sustainability, partnerships/communications and collaboration, strategic communications positioning and quality of life. I'll share a brief synopsis of the work to be accomplished this year.



Under financial/economic stability the plan outlines many initiatives for financial sustainability to enhance the economic well-being of its residents. Two of the large projects being undertaken are the adoption on 2040 Comprehensive Plan amendments and the accompanying Land Development Regulations that will seek to encourage strategic commercial development while maintaining the historic charm and character of the community. The strategic plan also includes the adoption of flexible codes for areas where commercial development is recommended, and a proactive approach to annexation. All with the goal of reaching the national standard of 16.7% in reserves by increasing reserves 0.5% or more each year.

Infrastructure sustainability actions are planned to maintain and enhance the City's capital assets and quality municipal services. Much of this work includes the potential implementation of Sales Tax projects including sidewalk, crosswalk, ADA and safety enhancement improvements. The Utilities Division is taking on the challenge of negotiating a new land lease with Florida Fish and Wildlife for the Wastewater Treatment Plant and associated operations. Repairs at Ponce De Leon Park including the seawall, boardwalks and pier will continue as well as the review of alternatives for products and construction methodology for seawall maintenance. Approximately five miles of City streets will be resurfaced and approximately 75 repairs to improve drainage will take place. IT will be leading the City in moving financial systems into a vendor hosted model that eliminates the need to replace the AS/400 system and improves security, disaster recovery and systems maintenance.

Partnerships, communication and collaboration involves continuing to promote partnerships, communication and transparency with all stakeholders. With an emphasis in collaboration, City staff will continue to optimize relationships proactively with our partners and all levels of government. The Punta Gorda Police Department will continue hosting citizens advisory and business advisory councils to enhance communication and address issues as they arise. The Citizens Academy also remains a key strategic priority as it emphasizes transparency and gives residents the opportunity to see first-hand how the City operates.

Strategic communications positioning develops and promotes the City through creation of public/private partnerships that diversify the tax base, enhance the area as a visitor destination, and secure the future of the City's distinct quality of life through the introduction and consistent communication of the City brand. This includes production of a local information guide, advertising in partner publications and developing additional partnerships for marketing. Resident engagement remains a key focus and the public will see a new app designed to make communication with the City even easier.

Finally, quality of life initiatives that enhance and promote Punta Gorda's attractive neighborhoods and working environment, heritage tourism, cultural opportunities, healthy eco-system and outdoor lifestyle, and its vibrant, safe City status continue. Major focuses this year are the completion of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan and the prioritization of the Climate Adaptation Plan projects. Focus in this area also is to continue to maintain the City's high safety rating, emergency response times and storm preparedness. The City will promote housing alternatives that meet workforce needs by reviewing how the City may assist in creation of such housing to meet growing demand of workers in our area, by creatively offering developers assistance (i.e. utility incentives, etc.).

As you can see there is a lot of work to be done. With a staff of 292 working to deliver results through the actions of the strategic plan, residents will continue to see value to their investment and a continued commitment to preserving and enhancing Punta Gorda's identity as a vibrant waterfront community unique in character and history; as a desirable place to live, work and visit.

- **City Council Recap** – City Council met on Oct. 21 with the following outcomes:
 - Approved the second reading of an ordinance amending the City of Punta Gorda Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map changing the Future Land Use Map designation from Highway Commercial Corridor to High Density Residential/City for 22.80 +/- acres located within the Loop Municipal Service area. This area was annexed into the City in 2015, and lies to the east of Burnt Store Rd. and north of Jones Loop Rd. The applicant is seeking to develop the property as an apartment community.
 - Approved the second reading of an ordinance of the City Council of the City of Punta Gorda, Florida, rezoning 22.80 +/- acres located within the Loop Municipal Service area from its current zoning classification of Highway Commercial/City to Planned Development Neighborhood/City.
 - Approved the first reading of a Planned Development amendment that allows the property at 900 West Marion Avenue, currently housing the Military Heritage Museum, to allow public use of the auditorium.
 - Approved the first reading of an ordinance amendment to permit planters to encroach up to two feet into the required rear yard and would be limited to a maximum of 29 inches lower than the elevation of the adjacent pool deck, patio or structure (home).
 - Approved an amendment to the Recycling Services contract with Waste Management, Inc.
 - Approved an award of contract to Palm Peterbilt for four refuse trucks.

Upcoming Events

- Oct. 24 and 30, Smuggler's Holiday Drive-in Movie Event, City Marketplace Property. For advance tickets and additional information, contact www.smugglersevents.com
- Oct. 24, Nov. 28, Dec. 12 and 19, Sip, Shop & Save at the Celtic Ray, 145 E Marion Ave. For additional information, contact theraypg3@gmail.com
- Oct. 31, Military Heritage Museum Car Show, 900 W Marion Ave. For additional information, visit www.freedomisntfree.org
- Oct. 31, First Baptist Church Drive-thru Trick or Treat, 459 Gill St. For additional information, contact (941) 639-3857

- Nov. 7, Punta Gorda Isles Civic Association Arts and Craft Fair, 2001 Shreve St. For additional information visit, <https://pgica.org/>.
- Nov. 14 and 14, MY Promotions Arts and Craft Show, City Marketplace Property. For additional information, visit www.mypromotions.com
- Nov. 28 and 29, Sullivan Street Craft Fair, Sullivan Street downtown Punta Gorda. For additional information, visit www.puntagordachamber.com

Lot Mowing Program

- The City has completed mowing the following areas:
 - PGI Bird Section (Almar Dr., Albatross Dr., Whippoorwill Blvd., and Turtle Dove Blvd.).
 - Downtown and Historic District (W. Marion Ave., W. Olympia Ave., Shreve St., and Harvey St.)
 - East Side and the area behind Dunkin Donuts (E. Marion Ave., E Olympia Ave., Narranja St., E. Henry St., and Cooper St.).
 - Burnt Store Isles (Monaco Dr., Tripoli Blvd., Madrid Blvd., and Macedonia Dr.).
 - Burnt Store Meadows (Areas of Tamiami Tr., N. Blue Sage, S. Blue Sage, Royal Poinciana, and Gold Tree).

Urban Design

- **The Planning Corner – Comprehensive Plan Elements Update** – Over the last few weeks the City has published the first drafts of the updated Future Land Use, Coastal Management, Housing, Transportation and Historic Elements of the City’s Comprehensive Plan to the [City’s website](#). This is in preparation for the Oct. 26 Planning Commission, and the Nov. 4 City Council meetings. These meetings will provide the public the opportunity to share their thoughts on the proposed changes. The changes within the updated elements are highlighted in a “~~strikethrough~~-underline” format. The complete draft elements are each published along with a companion document for the Goals, Objectives, and Policies (GOP). City Staff continues to seek public input from the community regarding the proposed changes. Please comment directly via either comment functions on the [City’s website](#) or by sending City staff an email directly at: urbandesign@cityofpuntagordafl.com.



Public Works

Canal Maintenance

- **Seawall Replacement Projects** – The seawall replacement contractor has one project under construction in Punta Gorda Isles. There are 26 seawall replacement projects scheduled for Punta Gorda Isles. There are no seawall replacement projects currently underway in Burnt Store Isles. Four seawall replacement projects scheduled for Burnt Store Isles later this fiscal year.
- **Mangrove Trimming on Ponce Inlet** – The contractor is scheduled to start mangrove trimming along the Ponce Inlet and the Sancho Panza Point this week and the work is expected to be completed by the end of Oct.
 - Crews filled depressions at 16 locations.
 - Crews performed three seawall cap and seam patches (66’ linear ft.).
 - Crews removed one piling from the canal.
 - Crews manufactured 60 seawall panels (10’ ft. each).

Engineering

- **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Improvements City Hall Annex** – The contractor is preparing the counter tops and hardware for submittal approval prior to installation. The restroom shower floor drain and ADA access for compliance has been reviewed and approved by the architect. Construction continues. The project is scheduled to be completed in Nov.
- **Sullivan St. Renovation to Historic Bricks** – The asphalt placement is complete in preparation of historic street brick placement. Sand delivery and bricking has commenced. For details on the Sullivan Street project, visit the City website. <http://www.ci.punta-gorda.fl.us/Home/Components/News/News/3231/17>
- **Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) - US 41 Carmalita Street to Marion Ave. within City of Punta Gorda** - FDOT contractor, Highway Safety Devices, continues work to install new signals on US 41 from Carmalita St. to Marion Ave. The construction will take place Monday through Friday during daytime and nighttime/overnight hours, weather permitting. Lane closures may occur during daytime hours from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. For complete details, contact information and map <http://www.ci.punta-gorda.fl.us/government/public-works/engineering>.
- **Gilchrist Park Pier Replacement** – The Purchase Order has been issued to the contractor. A pre-construction date is to be determined upon delivery schedule.
- **Harborwalk (Gilchrist Gazebo to Berry St.)** – Construction is complete.
- **Laisley Park Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Ramp** - The new concrete ADA ramp has been poured. Work to install the railing will begin next week.
- **Ponce De Leon Park Seawall Repairs** - Construction is set to begin early Nov. During construction the beach area as well as the seawall between the beach and fishing pier will be closed. The contractor will accommodate the public by leaving sections of the beach area open when possible. Construction is anticipated to be completed in Mar. 2021.



Parks and Grounds

- **History Park Supplemental Planting** – The project has been completed.



Police Department

- **International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) Conference** – Chief Davis and members of her staff attended the IACP, which was held virtually this year due to the pandemic. These conferences provide educational workshops and seminars on topics critical to the policing profession hosted by experts and police leaders from all over the world.
- **Police Officer Testing** – The Punta Gorda Police Dept. is currently accepting applications for the position of Police Officer. Testing will be held on Jan. 11 with oral board interviews scheduled on Jan. 12 and Jan. 13. Currently we are only accepting applications from candidates who are currently certified, Equivalency of Training (EOT) eligible, or law enforcement academy students.
- **Public Safety Dispatcher Testing** – The Punta Gorda Police Department is currently accepting applications for the position of Public Safety Dispatcher. Testing will be held on Jan. 19.



- **Internship Program** – The police department is currently accepting internship applications for the Spring Semester of 2021. Our internship program is open to college students and high school seniors interested in gaining educational experience in law enforcement, criminal justice, and small government administration. To apply for any of these positions or for more information please visit www.pgdjobs.com (941) 575-5571 or employeedevelopment@pgorda.us for additional information or to have an application package sent.

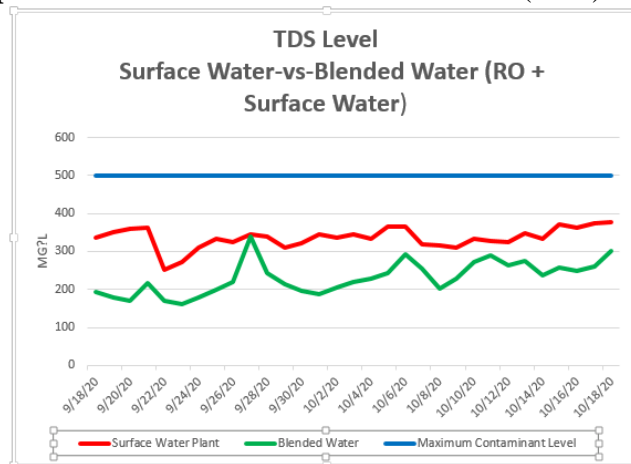
Fire Department

- **Rapid Intervention Team Training (RIT)** – All Fire department members participated in Rapid Intervention Team (RIT) training this week. RIT is a firefighter team that is assigned on any structure fire that utilizes specialized equipment to rescue a lost or injured firefighter inside of a burning structure. The training included search patterns, thermal imaging camera operations (TIC) and supplying air to a located victim. The training took place at the departments training facility. A fire training fog machine was used to create a zero visibility atmosphere to simulate a smoke filled room.



Utilities Department

- **Ground Water RO Update** – Maximum total dissolved solids (TDS) allowable is 500.



Water Treatment Plant Operations

- 42.2 MG delivered to the distribution system with a 6.0 MG daily average
- Peace River Manasota Regional Water Supply Authority Emergency Interconnect – Receiving 250 gallons per minute from the new Interconnect (Phase 1 Pipeline). Sending 350 gallons per minute from the tank on 17 (Phase 1A Pipeline).
- Rainfall in Oct. 2019 5.02” Oct. 2020 0.80”
- Hardness is a measurement of calcium and magnesium ions naturally occurring in the raw water. Current Condition “moderately hard” – Grains of Hardness 7 ppm – Total hardness 120 ppm
- TDS for Oct. 22 – Current 293 ppm, Low 293 ppm, High 428 ppm, 12 Year Avg. 355 ppm
- Reservoir Oct. 22 – Current 5.32’, Record Low 5.02’, Record High 6.00’, 55 Year Avg. 5.28’

City Clerk

Current Board and Committee Vacancies ([Volunteer Appointment Information Form](#))

- **Board of Zoning Appeals** – (Two alternates) Meets the fourth Tuesday at 4 p.m. in City Council Chambers. City residency required. Seven member board with two alternate members. Three year terms - maximum of three terms. Financial disclosure required. Makes recommendations to City Council on variances to City Code.
- **General Employees Pension Board** – Meets quarterly and as called in Council Chambers. Five members – two City residents, two general employees and one at-large as appointed by the Board. Four year terms – no maximum. Financial disclosure required. Charged with management of the General Employees’ Pension Fund.
- **Building Board** – (One alternate) Meets the fourth Tuesday at 9 a.m. in City Council Chambers – City residency not required. Seven member board with two alternate members. Three year terms – maximum of three terms. Four members must be involved with the building industry and three members must be consumer advocates who are not, nor ever have been, involved with building industry. Makes recommendations to City Council on the minimum qualifying requirements for obtaining Certificates of Competency in the various construction trades and the fees for same. Periodically reviews and holds public hearings on all building, electrical, plumbing, housing, gas, fire prevention and other related codes. Reviews enforcement of all codes relating to construction standards and acts as condemnation board in matters of violation of minimum standards. Hears alleged complaints against contractors.
- **Utility Advisory Board** – Meets the fourth Monday at 9 a.m. in City Council Chambers. Must be City resident. Seven-member board. Three-year terms – maximum of two terms. Makes recommendations to City Council with regard to, but not limited to, revisions to the utility construction standards, alleged billing discrepancies and review of utility specifications.

New Businesses

- All persons, firms or corporations engaging in business or occupation within the City of Punta Gorda are required to obtain a Local Business Tax (LBT) Receipt in accordance with Chapter 12 of the Punta Gorda City Code. As part of our effort to promote economic development and vitality in our area, we offer the following list of new or transferred business within our community this week:
 - Lori Ann Rainer, 309 Tamiami Tr., Suite 6
 - Lutz, Bobo and Telfair PA, 407 E Marion Ave., Suite 101A
 - S. Sense Design, LLC, 1505 San Marino Ct.