

Weekly Highlights Report Sept. 9, 2021

City Manager

- **City Manager Column** – The Florida Department of Economic Opportunity administers a grant program entitled the Rebuild Florida General Infrastructure Program. This grant provides funding to units of general local government to implement innovative, collaborative, multi-jurisdictional, or large-scale mitigation activities. These must reduce previously identified hazard risks for local communities to withstand emergency-related challenges better. The regional investments include, but are not limited to, upgrading of water, sewer, solid waste, communications, energy, transportation, health and medical, and other public infrastructure projects that meet fiscal criteria. The City of Punta Gorda is applying for funding for the Boca Grande Storm Water Mitigation Project and the Historic Street Bricking and Utility Project.



The Boca Grande project aims to increase community resiliency and provide necessary flood control and water quality treatment of storm water runoff from the Boca Grande neighborhood in the City of Punta Gorda. The district currently experiences flooding, and the drainage conveyance system does not now provide a formal measure of water quality treatment. Drainage from this area ultimately outfalls to Charlotte Harbor. Charlotte Harbor and surrounding coastal regions could benefit from the project's treatment of impairments. Direct services provided to citizens once the storm water conveyance is constructed include improved life, health, and safety due to flooding reduction. Safer mode for transportation as the streets will not be underwater, reduction of property damage and protection from roadway deterioration, reduction of pollutants, improved water quality, and protection of the environment with the removal of contaminants entering State water resources.

The City's second project seeking funding through the grant program is entitled the Historic Street Bricking and Utility Project. The project neighborhood encompasses four city blocks in the Historic District. The Punta Gorda City Council adopted a resolution in 1988 to re-establish the local brick streets through renovation and restoration. The Community Redevelopment Area Plan has identified the streets as part of a vision to preserve the feel of the historic coastal downtown area. The streets are designated to be maintained as forever, "brick streets." The historic streets lined with antique brick that are the grant assistance application are portions of Palm, Chasteen Street, and Gill Street. These streets have failing subsurface utilities – water and sewer, roadway depressions, and lack sidewalks or have a sidewalk that is a non-ADA compliant walkway.

This Historic District neighborhood is subject to tidal waters, high water tables, and

flooding. The flooding leads to the potential for environmental concerns related to failing sanitary lines, potential water contamination, or other safety concerns to the general public in residential neighborhoods. Furthermore, there is the possible contamination of the pristine estuary of Charlotte Harbor. The bricking of streets is a valuable tool in flood control. Brick streets offer a porous surface. The roads will have a layer of filtration rock with loosely spaced-Bricks over the top, allowing for better drainage.

These projects are a part of almost 10 million dollars worth of grant applications the City has submitted this fiscal year. To learn more about the projects or provide comments, please visit <https://www.ci.punta-gorda.fl.us/government/legal-notices> before Sept. 10, 2021. Readers may reach City Manager Greg Murray at citymgr@cityofpuntafordafl.com or by calling (941) 575-3302.

- **City Council Meeting** – City Council and the CRA met on Sept. 8 at 9:00 a.m. Some of the actions include:

- Set fees solid waste removal
- Set water and waste water fees
- Denied a proposal to place Huey helicopter in Veterans' Park
- Charter review committee discussion including decision to have each Councilmember nominate one member from their district and provide two nominations for two at large seats. The Clerk's office will prepare a timeline.
- Vegetation at 201 Harvey Street discussion resulted in direction for staff to work with the homeowner to suggest installation alternatives at the homeowner's expense.
- Speed bump on W. Retta Esplanade by Gill Street will not be installed at this time. Planned changes to parking on W. Retta and possible intersection treatments may alleviate the issue.

- **Halloween in the Historic District** – It's that time of the year when people are beginning to focus on the Halloween celebration in Punta Gorda. Information about street closures will be featured in a future Weekly Update. Anyone wishing to help the City of Punta Gorda provide candy to all of our visitors can donate bags of candy at the Historic City Hall, the Public Safety Center, the Public Works Campus or the City Hall Annex.



- **Comcast/FPL** – No report this week. If you have more than one pole in your front yard and an old pole that hasn't been taken down, if wires are hanging on the new pole or any other concern about this project, please email Mayor Matthews with your name, address, and contact phone and email WITH PHOTOS to support your request, and send to lmattthews@cityofpuntafordafl.com. The City Manager and Mayor Matthews share the emails with both companies, so all properties get restored.
- **Volunteers Needed** – The City of Punta Gorda is seeking applications from volunteers to serve on its advisory boards. All meetings are held in City Council Chambers located at 326 West Marion Avenue, Punta Gorda FL 33950. [Appointment Information Forms](#) and a resume should be submitted to the City Clerk's Office at the above address or via [email](#). For more information, please call (941) 575-3369.

Upcoming Events

- Charlotte Harbor Event Center, 75 Taylor St. For additional information, visit <https://www.charlotteharborecc.com/events>
- Fishermen's Village events can be accessed at <https://www.fishville.com/events/>
- Punta Gorda Chamber of Commerce events can be accessed at <https://puntagordachamber.com/calendar-events/>
- Charlotte County Chamber of Commerce events can be accessed at <https://business.charlottecountychamber.org/events/calendar>
- Military Heritage Museum events can be accessed at <https://freedomisntfree.org/#>
- Sept. 10, Recovery Candlelight Vigil, Laishley Park, 96 Nesbit St., for more information visit <https://www.cbhcf.org/events/>
- Sept. 16, PG Social House, Moonlight Market, 124 Cross St., for more information visit <https://rescue22foundation.org>
- Sept. 18-19, Sullivan Street Arts & Craft Fair, Sullivan St., for more information visit <https://puntagordachamber.com/>
- Oct. 2, Walk to End Alzheimer's, Laishley Park, 96 Nesbit St., for more information visit https://act.alz.org/site/TR/Walk2021/FL-FloridaGulfCoast?pg=entry&fr_id=14378
- Oct. 22, 23, 24, 29, 30, and 31, Haunting on the Harbor, 115 Tamiami Tr., aka City Marketplace property, for more information visit <http://www.puntagordahaunting.com/>
- Oct. 23, Out of the Darkness Suicide Prevention Walk, Laishley Park, 96 Nesbit St., for more information contact Tara Sullivan at tsullivan@afsp.org
- Oct. 28, Charlotte High School Homecoming Parade, downtown along Taylor St., for more information contact Emily Klossner at Emily.klossner@yourcharlotteschools.net
- Oct. 31, 1st United Methodist Church Trunk or Treat, 507 W Marion Ave., for more information visit <https://www.whatis1st.com/>
- Nov. 6, C.A.S.T. for Kids Charlotte Harbor, Laishley Park, 96 Nesbit St., for more information visit <http://castforkids.org/events/>
- Nov. 6, Punta Gorda Elks Lodge 2606 Veteran's Parade, 10 a.m. Taylor Rd to W. Retta Esplanade, for more information contact Charles Moore at cam4fire@yahoo.com
- Nov. 9, "The 5th Annual BOB" The Beyond Ourselves Bash benefitting Peace River Wildlife Center and the Homeless Coalition of Charlotte County, for more information visit https://www.pgica.org/Beyond_Ourselves

Lot Mowing Program

- The City has completed trimming the following areas:
 - Colony Point (Colony Point Drive, W. Marion Avenue, Socorro Drive, and Coronado Drive).
 - PGI (Magdalena Drive, Via Vento, W Henry Street, Appian Drive, and Columbian Drive).
 - PGI (Bal Harbor Boulevard, Deborah Drive, Ryan Boulevard, Suzi Street, and Casey Key Drive).
 - PGI Bird Section (Almar Drive, Albatross Drive, Whippoorwill Boulevard, and Turtle Dove Boulevard).

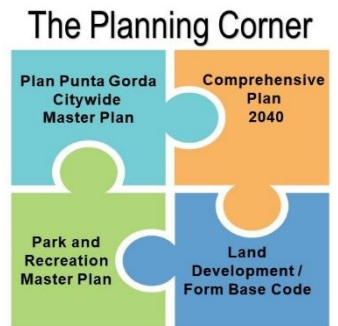
Urban Design

- **Punta Gorda in Bloom (PGIB)** – PGIB is an organization dedicated to beautifying downtown Punta Gorda, submitted a video to the America in Bloom organization. While PGIB’s current focus is on adding colorful planters, America in Bloom overall helps point the way to increase focus on environmental, cultural and heritage related impacts. PGIB is excited to share that the video is a finalist in the America in Bloom “People’s Choice Award” program. They are one of only seven cities nationwide vying for the top award. The winner is determined by which video gets the most online votes by the morning of Oct. 1. Voting is simple, just click here: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/AIB2021> and select Punta Pots. You can only vote once, but if you know others who’d be willing to vote, please consider forwarding this request to them. If you want to know more, visit their Facebook page at Punta Gorda in Bloom. The winner will be announced on Oct. 1 during the America in Bloom Online Symposium.



Planning Corner

- **Resiliency Planning** – Natural hazards take a high toll on communities, but the costs in lives, livelihoods and quality of life can be reduced by better managing disaster risks. Planning and implementing prioritized measures can strengthen the resilience of a community. So, what has the City done to be resilient? The City takes resiliency planning seriously and has implemented numerous comprehensive plan policies, accepted, updated the Climate Adaptation Plans (2009 and 2019), and has participated in the Hazard Mitigation Plan adopted by the County.



With regards to the City’s resiliency planning, relevancy differs from one community to another. The first resilient planning practice was included in the City of Punta Gorda Comprehensive Plan 2025, which provided a policy in the Conservation and Coastal Management Element that led to the development of the 2009 Climate Adaptation Plan. The importance of this document was that it included not only factors to address in the community planning process, but it was written by a community of stakeholders through the direction of the Coastal and Heartland National Estuary Partnership (previously known as the Charlotte Harbor National Estuary Program) and the Southwest Florida Regional Planning Council. This process was funded through a grant with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Over the last 10 years the City has implemented numerous strategies identified in the Plan resulting in the following outcomes:

- Sea grass acreage increased
- Fertilizer ordinance adopted
- Buyout of properties with flood damage
- Relocation of the City’s public works facility
- Construction of new Emergency Management Center
- Improvements to local building codes

As part of the Comprehensive Plan policies, the City is required to review and update the Plan every 10 years. In Oct. 2019, the City completed the 2019 Climate Adaptation Plan Update. A vulnerability assessment of the City was conducted to address public infrastructure within City limits, with an emphasis on coastal flooding impacts to critical facilities and historic properties. Upon preliminary completion of the vulnerability analysis, the City again engaged stakeholders and citizens to help inform and prioritize vulnerable regions (focus areas) for the development of adaptation strategies. Currently, the City is actively working on fulfilling the recommendations identified in the Plan by seeking grant funding. For more information on the Climate Adaptation Plan Update visit <https://www.ci.punta-gorda.fl.us/home/showpublisheddocument?id=9987>

Public Works

Canal Maintenance

- **Seawall Replacement Projects** – There are 26 seawall replacement projects scheduled for Punta Gorda Isles this fiscal year, however another site was added due to a seawall failure. The seawall replacement contractor has one project under construction and 26 projects completed in Punta Gorda Isles. All seawall replacement projects are completed for Burnt Store Isles. A seawall project is not considered complete until the sod has been placed.
 - Crews filled depressions at 25 locations.
 - Crews patched/repared 109’ linear feet of seawall cap/seam.
 - Crews assisted Sanitation Department with trash pickup and disposal.
- **Seawall Replacement Schedule** – Wondering if your seawall is on the list to be replaced in the next fiscal year? The annual Seawall Replacement Work Program can be found on the City of Punta Gorda website under Canal Maintenance <https://www.ci.punta-gorda.fl.us/home/showpublisheddocument/12550/637643718591830000>. Every year the City replaces approximately 8,000 lineal feet of seawall. By utilizing the Seawall Assessment Data, the seawall replacement program is planned a year in advance (unexpected seawall failures or seawalls that are inspected and found to be at extreme risk of failure are given top priority and may bump planned projects to the following year).

Engineering

- **Adrienne Street Pier** – The pier is partially open to the public at this time. The tee at the end of the pier remains closed until further repairs can be made. The City contractor is tentatively scheduled to mobilize in Sept. to make repairs to the end tee.
- **Boca Grande Drainage Improvements** – Bi-weekly 60% to 90% design project update meetings continue. The eminent domain process is in progress for the final acquisitions. Coordination with the permitting agencies continues as part of the design phase.
- **Henry Street Sidewalk** – All Surveying information has been received and the design will continue. Coordination continues with FDOT on work within their drainage easement and the sidewalk connection at US41.

Parks and Grounds

- **Laisley Park Interactive Fountain Closed** – Laisley Park Interactive Fountain will be closed until further notice for repairs.

Right-of-Way

- **Maypole/Merry-Go-Round Pole Relocated** – City staff relocated the Maypole from its original location at the corner of Dupont St. and Charlotte Ave. to Cooper Street Recreation Center. The pole dates back to the 1940’s and was used as a recreation center (aka “The Rec”) by the Black community. The Rec was used until Hurricane Donna destroyed it in 1960. The only remaining portion of “The Rec” is the Maypole, which may have originally been part of the merry-go-round on that site of land.



Police

- **VIP Marine Patrol** – The VIP (Volunteers in Policing) Marine Patrol is currently looking for new members. To qualify volunteers must provide documentation showing that they are either Coast Guard Auxiliary-certified coxswain or crew, recently U.S. Coast Guard sea duty rated, recently U.S. Navy sea duty rated, licensed by the U.S. Merchant Marines for operator or Uninspected Vessel or higher, previously experienced in law enforcement marine operations, or that they have ten years of boating experience and have completed a Florida boating certification as approved by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (prior to end of training). VIP Marine Patrol members must also complete a training course with the department and must demonstrate proficiency in boat operations and general knowledge of our local waters. If you are interested in joining the VIP Marine Patrol, please call 941-575-5536 or email vip@pgorda.us. Applications are also available online by visiting www.puntagordapolice.com or in the Punta Gorda Public Safety Complex located at 1410 Tamiami Trail, Punta Gorda, Florida.



- **Police Officer Testing** – The police department conducts new hire testing continually in order to be prepared for future openings. We are currently accepting applications for the position of Police Officer. We will be holding a virtual testing process in Oct. Applications must be received by Oct. 14. The written exam will be completed online anytime between Oct. 15 and Oct. 20, with a virtual oral board exam conducted via Zoom on Oct. 26. We are currently only accepting applications from candidates who are currently law enforcement certified or Equivalency of Training (EOT) eligible.
- **Public Safety Dispatcher Testing** – The police department conducts new hire testing continually in order to be prepared for future openings. We are currently accepting applications for the position of Public Safety Dispatcher. Testing will be held on Jan. 31.
- **Internship Program** – The police department is currently accepting internship applications for the Spring and Summer Semesters of 2022. 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. Spots fill up quickly and the selection process can be competitive, so we encourage potential interns to apply today! The deadline to apply for the Spring Semester of 2022 is Oct. 15.
- **Volunteers in Policing (VIP) Program** – The police department has an active and diverse volunteer program including vehicle patrol, bike patrol, marine patrol, community services, and more. We are always looking for dedicated volunteers. Members of the community interested in volunteering are encouraged to contact the Volunteer Staff Coordinator at (941) 575-5536 or by emailing vip@pgorda.us. **To apply for employment or for more information, please visit www.pgpdjobs.com or contact our Employee Development Coordinator at (941) 575-5571 or by email at employeedevelopment@pgorda.us.**

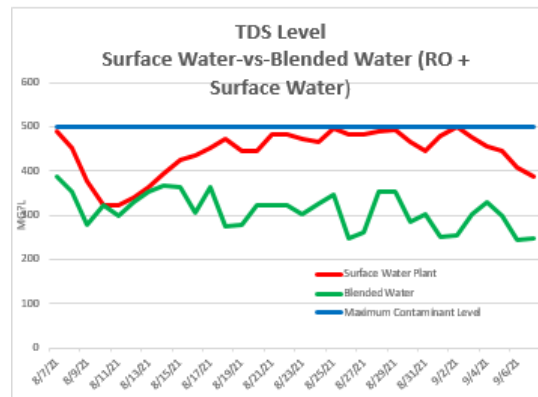
Fire

- **You've heard of rescuing cats from trees, but have you ever heard of birds in trucks?** – Punta Gorda Fire Department's T-1 crew stepped into action to help save a vulture that had been hit by a truck while driving down the highway. Lieutenant Alex Davenport and Fire/Medic Josh Roebuck donned some structure gear and gloves and were able to safely free the birds' wing that was stuck in the trucks front bumper. Members from the Peace River Wild Life Sanctuary came and picked up the bird for further examination and rehabilitation. Great Job!



Utilities

Groundwater R.O Construction Update –



Water Treatment Plant Operations

- 48.1 MG delivered to the distribution system with a 6.9 MG daily average
- Peace River Manasota Regional Water Supply Authority Emergency Interconnect – Receiving 1,200 gallons per minute from the new Interconnect (Phase 1 Pipeline). Sending 1,250 gallons per minute from the tank on 17 (Phase 1A Pipeline).
- Rainfall Sept. 2020 8.10" and Sept. 2021 1.50"
- Hardness is a measurement of calcium and magnesium ions naturally occurring in the raw water. Currently "hard" – Grains of Hardness 4 ppm –Total hardness 76 ppm
- TDS Sept. 9 – Current 201 ppm, Low 195 ppm, High 359 ppm, 12 Year Avg. 278 ppm
- Reservoir Sept. 9 – Current 5.41', Record Low 5.02', Record High ', 6.78 Year Avg. 5.64'

Wastewater Treatment

- **Maintenance** – The City's contracted vendor has completed the repairs on the sludge tanker. The City's contracted vendor continues to work on the coating at the south tank at the Master Pumping Facility. Maintenance crews continue to mow and trim the plant and remote station grounds. A crew member has continued the process of spraying the hay fields with a selective weed killer. Three hundred and eighty total acres have been sprayed to date.
- **Operations** - The average daily flow for the past week was 2.49 million gallons for a total of 17.44 million gallons of wastewater being treated this week.
Rain totals MPF = 01.53 Plant = 0.67

City Clerk

Current Board and Committee Vacancies (Volunteer Appointment Information Form)

- **Board of Zoning Appeals** – (three regular and two alternates) Meets the fourth Tuesday at 4 p.m. in City Council Chambers. City residency is required. Seven-member board with two alternate members. Three-year terms, maximum of three terms or partial term plus two more terms. Financial disclosure required. Makes recommendations to City Council on variances to City Code.

- **Code Enforcement** – (two regular and two alternate) Meets monthly on the fourth Wednesday at 9 a.m. in City Council Chambers. City residency required. Seven-member board with two alternate members. Three-year terms. Maximum of three terms OR partial term plus two more terms. Financial disclosure required.
- **Punta Gorda Isles Canal Advisory Committee** – Meets the third Monday at 1:30 p.m. in City Council Chambers. Must be a resident of Punta Gorda Isles. Seven member board. Three year terms – maximum of three terms. Makes recommendations to City Council on effective maintenance of existing canals, waterways and navigable channels within the district, together with the maintenance and reconstruction of seawalls. Holds public hearings and makes final decision on petitions for special permit to the provisions of Section 6-6(c) of the City Code of Ordinances.