

Weekly Highlights Report Dec. 3, 2021

City Manager

- **City Manager Column** – The City of Punta Gorda was honored to receive sixth place in the 2021 Digital Cities Survey hosted by the Center for Digital Government for cities up to 75,000 in population across the US. The second-highest ranking for any Florida city in this category. The survey recognizes cities using technology to tackle social challenges, enhance services, strengthen cybersecurity, and more. This is the seventh consecutive year that the city has placed in the top 10.



At the heart of all of our technology resources is the city's website. The website serves as a direct link to our residents. Citizen engagement is shared across all levels and departments of the city. Each area is empowered to add content and develop new digital tools to drive citizen engagement and reach their intended audiences. The City Manager's office works closely with the individual departments to help them achieve their outreach goals. Visit the city's website at www.cityofpuntagordafl.com.

Emergency communications regarding the health and safety of our residents is also a critical digital focus this year. The emergency public notification system Alert Punta Gorda continues to provide helpful alerts to residents that sign up. The service allows the City of Punta Gorda to contact the entire community or target specific areas in an emergency or urgent situation that requires the public's immediate attention. This includes natural disasters, man-made disasters, search and rescue situations, sexual offender alerts, etc. Sign-up is available at <https://bit.ly/2U9HYOm>.

We continue to innovate and develop new ways to get residents the information needed and answer questions as quickly and efficiently as possible. This year the TextmyGov application was launched. TextmyGov allows communication with residents that use a mobile phone's regular messaging service. It is a way for residents to relay information to the city and get information about city services. This tool makes it easier to report issues, find information, and request permits. This automated system can be reached by texting hi to (941) 347-0747.



Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and related technologies are also rapidly transforming business processes and workflows throughout the city. From the mapping of water valves, inventory of street signs, and cataloging of seawalls, GIS is making the city's operations more efficient.

Being recognized by the Center for Digital Government is an honor and connects directly to key values of the city for maintaining a culture of community engagement, teamwork, partnerships, transparency, respect, customer service, and stewardship. Our goal is to continue making government efficient, effective, and responsive. The city is working hard to earn the number one spot in 2022.

Overall, all of this technology is great, but it doesn't replace the value of a real conversation. I have had the pleasure of speaking directly with many residents and invite you to call me directly with any questions or feedback you wish to share at (941) 575-3302. Your opinion is important and helps provide valuable perspectives to help guide decision-making and enhance our community. Readers may reach City Manager Greg Murray at citymgr@cityofpuntafordafl.com or by calling (941) 575-3302.

- **City Council** – City Council met on Dec. 1 at the Historic City Hall, some of the items of interest included;
 - Continuance of an variance request for 410 Bal Harbor
 - Approved a fence for 1385 Elizabeth Street
 - Approved transmittal of the Property Rights Element of the Comprehensive Plan
 - Established the Charter Review Committee

Urban Design

- **Design Studio** – Did you know that Urban Design offers a unique service called Design Studio? This *free* service is available to both residents and developers. The purpose of a Design Studio meeting is to assist the resident or developer in the best possible way in deciding if the proposed project meets guidelines in accordance to the Land Development Code prior to submitting any development or building permit application. If you have questions prior to submitting an application, visit <https://www.ci.punta-gorda.fl.us/services/design-studio> to schedule a Design Studio appointment
- **Guest Lecture** – On Nov. 30, the City's Principal Planner provided a lecture to Senior Civil and Environmental Engineering students of the Whitaker College of Engineering, at Florida Gulf Coast University. The lecture provided a brief history of land use and transportation planning in North America and current practice of city and regional planning in the United States. This guest lecture is part of growing partnership that the City has formed with the Whitaker College of Engineering dating back to 2015. This partnership includes guest lectures and providing sample projects and mentorship to student teams during their senior year capstone engineering design course. Past student teams have worked on conceptual designs for city parks, streets and other city infrastructure including concepts for Ponce de Leon Park, Royal Poinciana extension of the Punta Gorda Pathways, and a roundabout design for the intersection to Taylor Road at Cooper Street.

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/#>
- [Punta Gorda Isles Civic Association, 2001 Shreve Street, for all community event and class information visit https://pgica.org/.](https://pgica.org/)

- Dec. 3, Light up the Nights Christmas Celebration and Tree Lighting 5:30 p.m. until 9:30 p.m. Downtown Punta Gorda.
- Dec. 3-4, Premier Auto Auction, Charlotte Harbor Event and Conference Center. For information visit <https://www.charlotteharborecc.com/events>
- December 3-4 - Holly Days Garden Tour, various locations, 10 to 4. For information, visit <https://pggc.org/home-tour/>.
- Dec. 11, Charlotte County Chamber Annual Christmas Parade, downtown Punta Gorda. For more information, visit <https://business.charlottecountychamber.org/events/calendar>.
- Dec. 11-12, Blue Ribbon Events Holly Jolly Market, Gilchrist Park, for more information, visit <https://daniellesblueribbonevents.com/>.
- Dec. 12, Local Ladies Social Network Craft Fair, Laishley Park, for more information, visit <https://www.llsnevents.com/>.
- Dec. 18, CHNEP Audubon Christmas Bird Count Volunteer Event, 9 a.m. at Ponce de Leon Park. <https://www.chnep.org/monthly-volunteer-events>.
- Dec. 24, Christmas Eve Services, Laishley Park, for more information, visit <https://deepcreekcommunitychurch.com/>
- Dec. 31, Punta Gorda Isles Civic Association, New Year's Eve Gala, 8:30 p.m., 2001 Shreve Street, sponsorship opportunities available, for more information or tickets visit <https://pgica.org/>.
- Dec. 31, New Year's Eve Celebration, Fishermen's Village. For more information, visit <https://www.fishville.com/events/>.

Lot Mowing Program

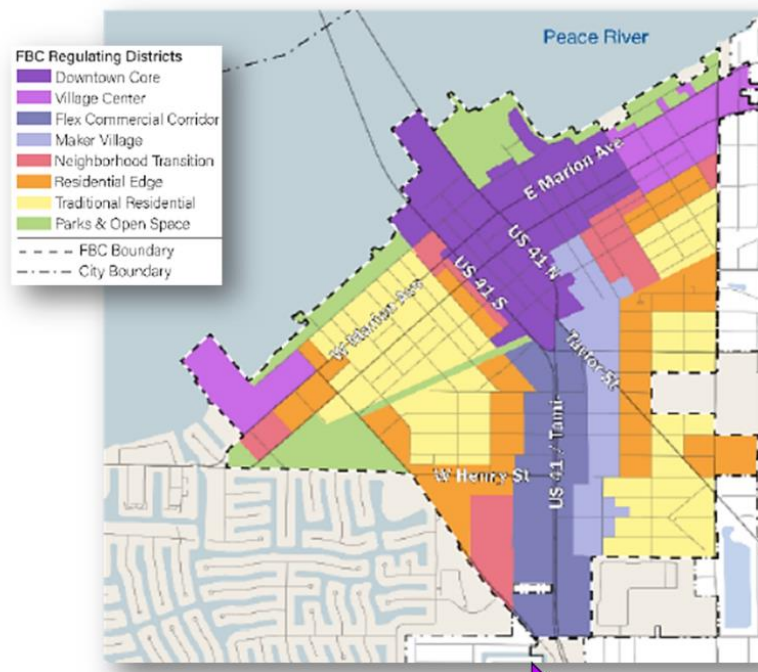
- The City has completed mowing the following areas:
 - Burnt Store Isles (Monaco Drive, Tripoli Boulevard, Madrid Boulevard, and Macedonia Drive).
 - Burnt Store Meadows (Areas of Tamiami Tr, N. Blue Sage, S. Blue Sage, Royal Poinciana, and Gold Tree).
 - Downtown and Historic District (W. Marion Avenue, W. Olympia Avenue, Shreve Street, and Harvey Street).
 - East Side and the area behind Dunkin Donuts (E. Marion Avenue, E Olympia Avenue, Narranja Street, E Henry Street, and Cooper Street).
- The City has completed trimming the following areas:
 - Colony Point (Colony Point Drive, W. Marion Avenue, Socorro Drive, and Coronado Drive).
 - Burnt Store Isles (Monaco Drive, Tripoli Boulevard, Madrid Boulevard, and Macedonia Drive).
 - Burnt Store Meadows (Areas of Tamiami Tr, N. Blue Sage, S. Blue Sage, Royal Poinciana, and Gold Tree).
 - Downtown and Historic District (W. Marion Avenue, W. Olympia Avenue, Shreve Street, and Harvey Street).
 - East Side and the area behind Dunkin Donuts (E. Marion Avenue, E Olympia Avenue, Narranja Street, E Henry Street, and Cooper Street).

Planning

- **City Council Workshop** – Continuing the discussion from the Public Workshop held on Nov. 19, regarding the proposed changes to the City of Punta Gorda, Code of Ordinances, Chapter 26, Land Development Regulation. Urban Design staff provided a presentation focusing specifically on Building Height, Community Benefits Program, Architecture and Implementation. You can view the presentation and listen to discussion at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bj3rsgGxv-8>

Does the new FBC completely replace the current zoning regulation?

Form Based Code (FBC) covers only a small geographic area of the City. The major neighborhoods of Punta Gorda Isles, Burnt Store Isles, and Burnt Store Meadows will see no changes to the current development allowances and requirements. The map below illustrates the area that the proposed FBC would cover:



How is Building Height measured?

Current allowable building height in the “proposed Form Based Code (FBC)” is limited to between 35 to 60 feet by Zoning Classification. Building height is measured from based flood elevation (BFE) as to not penalize property owners for building flood resilient structures. Per Section 8.3, there are some permitted exclusions to building height. These exclusions are limited to 20% of the maximum height limitation. These exclusion area are not intended for human habitation and include elevator/stair towers, antennas, roof top pools and other similar features. Below is an example of how building height is measured.

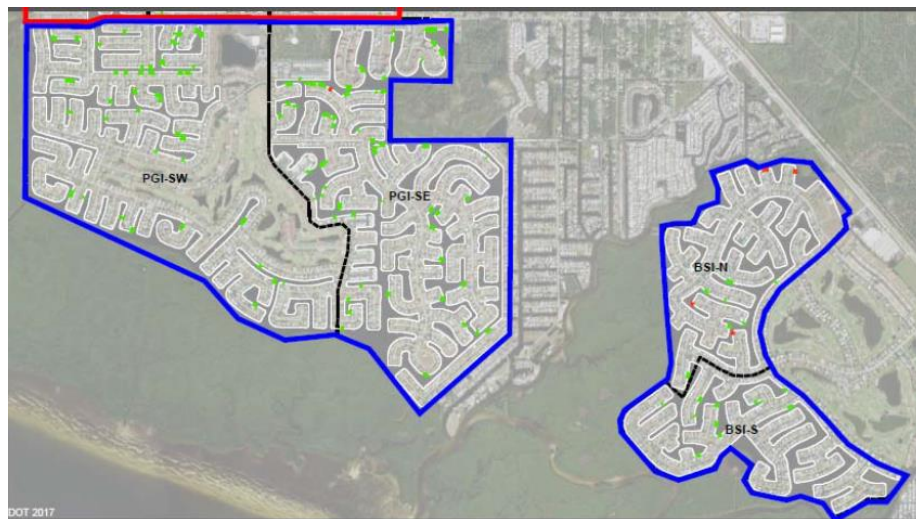


Bayfront Medical Office, Development Review – 2005

Public Works

Canal Maintenance

- Canal Odor** - Don't be alarmed if you have noticed an odor floating up from your canals. The water in our canals and ponds is on the move - vertically! The surface water, which was warmed by the hot summer sun, has been cooling down as the temperatures drop causing the water to 'flip' or 'turn'. This means that the bottom (including silt, decomposing plant material and miscellaneous debris) comes to the surface bringing with it a smell of stagnant water, while the surface water goes to the bottom. This is a natural occurrence and typically lasts approximately two weeks then returns to normal.
- Seawall Assessment** City staff is currently performing the Annual Seawall Assessment during low tide periods through March. City staff will be inspecting seawalls in the southerly half of Punta Gorda Isles and all of Burnt Store Isles (blue zone) from the waterside while traversing canals in a boat. Residents may see city staff in a boat close to their seawalls while inspecting the condition of seawalls.



- **Seawall Replacement Projects** - Punta Gorda Isles has 42 seawall replacement projects scheduled for this fiscal year and the seawall replacement contractor has six projects under construction. Burnt Store Isles has seven seawall replacement projects scheduled for this fiscal year and at this time none are under construction. A seawall replacement project can consist of multiple properties. A seawall project is not considered complete until the sod has been placed.
 - Crews filled depressions at 17 locations.
 - Crews patched and repaired 155' linear feet of seawall cap/seam.
- **Seawall Replacement Schedule** – 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 12,000 linear 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

- **Boca Grande Drainage Improvements** – Bi-weekly design is approaching 90 percent review. The engineer of record continues to prepare plans and application documents for the Environmental Resource Permit.
- **Henry Street Sidewalk** – Final construction plan revisions and drainage calculations are being completed. Coordination will continue with FDOT on work within their drainage easement and the sidewalk connection at US41.
- **Paving Program Street Resurfacing** – Harborside Ave. milling and resurfacing is complete. The contractors continue with paving on Almar Dr. and Muscovie Ct. Striping is scheduled within the next two weeks. The paving program can be found on the City of Punta Gorda website under Engineering [Paving Program | City of Punta Gorda, FL \(punta-gorda.fl.us\)](https://www.ci.punta-gorda.fl.us/home/showpublisheddocument/12550/637643718591830000). For additional information please contact Linda Sposito, Sr. Project Manager, Punta Gorda Public Works at (941)575-5060.



- **Harbor Walk West End Lighting** – The installation of five additional decorative lights street between Shreve Street and the tidal bridge at the west end of Retta Esplanade is nearing completion. The lights have been installed and are operational. Final site cleanup will be completed by the end of next week.

Police

- **Underage Alcohol Sales Sweep** – The Punta Gorda Police Department and the Division of Alcoholic Beverages & Tobacco (ABT) Bureau of Law Enforcement teamed up for an enforcement sweep targeting the sales of alcoholic beverages to minors. Seven of the eight establishments checked were in compliance with the law.
- **Stay Updated on PGPD News** – Did you know that you can sign up to receive press releases via email from the Punta Gorda Police Department by visiting www.pgpdfnews.com? You can also see our press releases newsfeeds on Facebook or Twitter by following us on those platforms (@pgpdfl).
- **Family Fun Day** – The Punta Gorda Police Department and the Punta Gorda Fire Department will be holding our second annual Family Fun Day on Dec. 4, from 11 a.m. until 3 p.m. at the Punta Gorda Public Safety Complex, located at 1410 Tamiami Trail (across from the Golden Corral). There will be a bounce house, dunk tank, crafts, lunch, and more! The entire community is invited to come out and enjoy this completely free event!



- **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.
- **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 January. Applications must be received by Jan. 5. The written exam will be completed online anytime between Jan.7, and Jan. 13, with virtual oral board exams conducted via Zoom on Jan. 24, and Jan. 25. We are currently only accepting applications from candidates who are currently law enforcement certified or Equivalency of Training (EOT) eligible
- **Internship Program** - The police department is currently accepting internship applications for the Summer Semester and Fall Semester 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 Summer Semester of 2022 is March 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.**

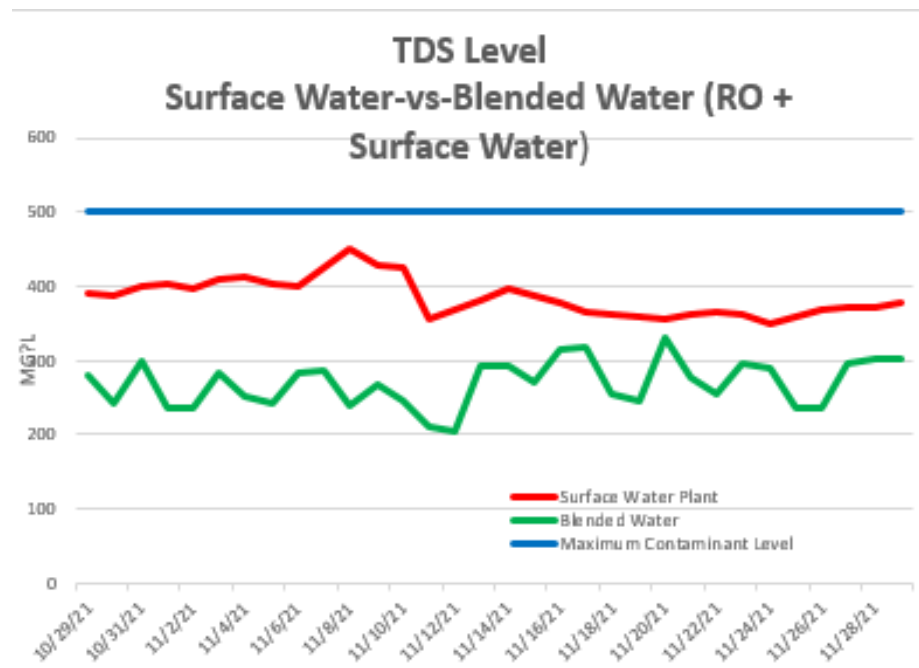
Fire

- **Training** – Fire Department and IT staff participated in a mock emergency management exercise. The exercise involved a severe weather event that closed both North and South bridges. The exercises involved evacuation of one of our assisted living facilities. The exercise is one of several that occur throughout the year. These exercises give local resources the opportunity to work together as well as working with regional and state agencies.



Utilities

Groundwater R.O Update



Water Treatment Plant Operations

- 52.6 MG delivered to the distribution system with a 8.8 MG daily average
- Peace River Manasota Regional Water Supply Authority Emergency Interconnect – Receiving 750 gallons per minute from the new Interconnect (Phase 1 Pipeline). Sending 750 gallons per minute from the tank on 17 (Phase 1A Pipeline).
- Rainfall Nov. 2020 4.70” Nov. 2021 3.95” “Dec. 2020 2.80” “Dec. 2021 0.00”
- Hardness is a measurement of calcium and magnesium ions naturally occurring in the raw water. Currently "moderately hard" – Grains of Hardness 7 ppm –Total hardness 128 ppm
- TDS Dec. 02 – Current 263 ppm, Low 222 ppm, High 546 ppm, 12 Year Avg. 414 ppm
- Reservoir Dec. 02 – Current 5.22', Record Low 4.90', Record High, 5.63' 56 Year Avg. 5.15'

Wastewater Treatment

- **Maintenance** – Team members have finished tightening the thousands of nuts and bolts on the new Filter Press building and the County inspectors are proceeding with all necessary inspections. The contracted vendor continues to remove the old interior coating from the North tank at the Master Pumping Facility. Team members were able to haul and inject 259000 gallons of bio-solids to field two this week. Maintenance staff has taken possession of a new 15 foot wide batwing mower and started the process of mowing fields 1, 3, and 5. A problem with the Plant's generator was found at the startup of its monthly exercising run. The contracted vendor was called in to order the parts needed and to make the repairs.
- **Operations** – The average daily flow for the past week was 2.51 million gallons for a total of 17.56 million gallons of wastewater being treated this week.

City Clerk

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

- **Board of Zoning Appeals** – (two alternate) 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.
- **Code Enforcement** – (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.

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:
 - Ichi Hibachi LLC, 312 W Marion Ave
 - SK-Creations by Katonya, 501 Shreve St
 - Tamiami Tavern, 10361 Tamiami Tr
 - Unwined Wine and Beer Bar LLC, 525 E Olympia Ave, Suite 3