

WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS REPORT April 7, 2023

City Manager

- As discussed last week, the City Council has five strategic priorities; financial/economic sustainability, infrastructure sustainability, partnerships communication and collaboration, strategic communications positioning, and quality of life. Infrastructure sustainability focuses on maintaining and enhancing the city's capital assets and quality municipal services.

Hurricane Ian put infrastructure sustainability to the test this past fall. As an older community with its own water and wastewater utility, canal/seawall system, and historic district, infrastructure takes on particular importance in Punta Gorda. While new infrastructure projects are well publicized and generally well received, ongoing maintenance of a city's assets is not very visible nor always appreciated. Maintenance is never a problem until it is. The city's insurable capital assets (i.e., infrastructure) are valued at \$125 million and consist of two components – city infrastructure and internal infrastructure.

A snapshot of the city's infrastructure includes 13 public buildings, including City Hall, City Hall Annex, Public Works/Utilities Campus, Public Safety, Fire Stations two and three, Water and Wastewater Treatment Plants, Bayfront Center, Freeman House, Cooper Street Center, Laishley Park Marina, and Herald Court Centre. One hundred twenty-one miles of streets, 2886 streetlights, including 1270 streetlights maintained by the City and 1616 FPL-maintained lights, 19 traffic signal intersections, four bridges, and 110 miles of seawall. Two hundred sixty nine miles of water mains, 209 miles of sanitary sewer, two storage tanks, a master pumping station, a booster pumping facility, 121 lift stations, and Hendrickson Dam (reservoir). Twenty-three parks totaling 130 acres and nine miles of Pathways (harborwalk, linear park, multi-use recreational trails). Two hundred eight motorized pieces of equipment (fleet, cranes, boats, compactors). Ninety six Windows Servers (90 virtualized), five virtual server hosts (five-node VMware ESXi cluster.), VMware Virtual Desktop Interface (VDI), four datacenter core switches, twenty-one end point access switches, eight firewalls (in four state of the art next-generation firewall high availability pairs), one Storage Area Network (SAN), one Networked Addressable Storage (NAS) array, fifty wireless access points, a VoIP phone system with 275 phone sets, three miles of dark fiber, two GB of Internet bandwidth, and a total of 320 PC's, laptops, and tablets.

To enhance and maintain the infrastructure in Punta Gorda, the City Council has developed a series of goals, including; Maintaining and enhancing the city's infrastructure to ensure efficient and effective service delivery and quality aesthetic appeal. Some examples include: completion of the 18-mile pedestrian/bicycle pathway connecting all neighborhoods through collaboration with applicable granting agencies and City investment in pathways by June 2024; maximizing the use of technology in applicable areas through capital budgeting



procedures and investment in learning opportunities for staff; Applying best management practices and systems in infrastructure maintenance for infrastructure sustainability; and, establishing a five-year capital improvements program that ensures infrastructure is in place to meet projected growth demands with annual updates.

Questions examined by City Council and staff include; How can the city best maintain its infrastructure stock and procure needed new assets? Does the city have a long-range plan that ensures infrastructure is in place to meet projected growth demands? How can the city fund maintenance of its open space (active and passive park system) and waterfront? What is a livable level of traffic, and how do new traffic-generating projects fit within the city's comprehensive traffic safety/circulation plan? What are new ways to connect the city to the community using the web and social media?

As we continue to work through the fiscal year 2024 strategic planning process, we encourage feedback and new ideas from residents. Input can be sent to the citymgr@cityofpuntagordafl.com email address.

- **No Boil Water Advisory** – There are no active Boil Water Notices for water customers of the City of Punta Gorda Utilities Department.
- **E-Notification Service** – Did you know that you can sign up to receive press releases and news from the City of Punta Gorda? Just visit <http://www.ci.punta-gorda.fl.us/i-want-to-advanced-components/misc-pages/enotification/e-notification-sign-up>. It is easy to sign up and you can opt out at any time.

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 Upcoming Events – Military Heritage Museum
- Apr 14-16, Punta Gorda Shrimp & Music Festival, Laishley Park, 96 Nesbit St, for more information contact events@paragonfestivals.com
- Apr 20, My Living History, local history performance and book signing with Martha Bireda and Jaha Cummings at Copperfish Books <https://www.copperfishbooks.com/event/martha-bireda-and-jaha-cummings>
- May 5-7, Hibiscus Festival, Gilchrist Park, 400 W Retta Esplanade, for more information [Hibiscus Festival | Hibiscus Festival - Punta Gorda, FL \(thehibiscusfestival.com\)](http://thehibiscusfestival.com)
- May 6, Girls on the Run, Laishley Park, 96 Nesbit St, for more information contact Kristen.manomat@girlsontherun.org
- May 20, Mental Health Walk, Gilchrist Park, 400 W Retta Esplanade, for more information [Mental Health Awareness Walk Saturday, May 30th | Charlotte Behavioral \(cbhcf.org\)](http://cbhcf.org)
- May 20, Moving Day – Walk for Parkinsons, Laishley Park, 96 Nesbit St, for more information contact michellemoenning@gmail.com

Urban Design

- **Lot Mowing Program** – The March mowing cycle is completed as of April 5.

- The following is all city lots completed:
 - 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).
 - Colony Point (Colony Point Drive, West Marion Avenue, Socorro Drive, and Coronado Drive).
 - PGI (Magdalena Drive, Via Vento, W Henry Street, Appian Drive, and Columbian Drive).
 - Burnt Store Isles (Monaco Drive, Tripoli Boulevard, Madrid Boulevard, and Macedonia Drive).
 - Burnt Store Meadows (Areas of Tamiami Trail, 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)
 - The area East of US41 and the area behind Dunkin Donuts (E. Marion Avenue, E Olympia Avenue, Narranja Street, E Henry Street, and Cooper Street).

The next mowing and trimming cycle will be a late April date TBD.

Planning Corner

- **Short-term/Vacation Rental Information** – The rental of an entire residential dwelling unit for any period of time is permitted within the City. Florida Legislature adopted legislation in 2011 that prohibits a municipality from adopting new regulations for short-term rentals. However this does not apply to a rental of a room or rooms, the rental of a room or rooms is considered a rooming and boarding house which is not permitted per Chapter 26 of the City’s Land Development Regulations. In order to operate a Rooming and Boarding house, the property must be located within either the General Multi-family or City Center zoning district, and Special Exception approval is required. All renters must abide by any codes in effect at the time of their rental. If an alleged violation (i.e. garbage cans left out, parking on the grass, boat parking, etc.) occurs during normal business hours, the complainant can contact the Code Compliance office, (941) 575-3352, however, the complainant needs to be aware that anonymous complaints can no longer be submitted, (Florida Statute 162, 162.06(1)(b) and 162.21(3)(b), adopted July 1, 2021). If the violation is after normal business hours, the non-emergency Police number can be used, (941) 639-4111. A Business Tax Receipt (BTR) is required if the rental is for less than 30 days or one month at a time more than three times per year.



Public Works

- **Channel Marker Replacements** – Channel Marker signs have been ordered, once the materials have been received a contractor will be hired to replace damaged channel markers.
- **Canal Maintenance Production** – Canal Maintenance crews produced 20 seawall panels; filled depressions at 28 locations and repaired seawall caps at three locations.

- **Dockside Dredging** – Property owners that are listed on the Hurricane Ian Seawall Damage list will not be allowed to have dockside dredging performed adjacent to the seawall until the seawall has been repaired. Any kind of dredging along the damaged seawall may cause further damage.
- **Stabilizing Erosion** – Just a friendly reminder for property owners to regularly check the condition of their tarps or plastic that is protecting the eroded areas. Tarps and plastic tend to become brittle in the sun and may start falling apart. Our area is still experiencing rain events and plastic will help keep the soil in place preventing further erosion.
- **Canal Maintenance Seawall Failure Update** – Bids have been received and opened, the contract is expected to be reviewed by City Council on April 19, for approval. Upon approval, a Notice to Proceed (NTP) will be issued and contractors have 20 calendar days to start work. Once schedules are submitted and approved they will be advertised on the website. Approximately 7.25 miles of the seawall were impacted by the storm – 6.50 miles in Punta Gorda Isles and .75 miles in Burnt Store Isles. Failed seawalls have been classified as either HIGH PRIORITY (failed seawall with severe erosion or erosion close to structures); MEDIUM PRIORITY (seawall standing but not functioning with some erosion) and LOW PRIORITY (seawall has minor damage and functioning with little to no erosion). Maps indicating the location and classification can be found on the Canal Maintenance website. Note: When reviewing the address list on the city's website for seawall failures there are two columns of addresses per page. <https://www.ci.punta-gorda.fl.us/government/public-works/canal-maintenance>
- **Canal Debris Cleanup** – The contractor has completed their initial sweep through the canals. They will still be in the Charlotte County area for a few more weeks if anything has been overlooked. Crews are still using the boat ramp at Ponce de Leon Park for off-loading of debris from barges.
- **FEMA Update** – The City continues to work with FEMA to provide them with the information they are requesting. FEMA has tentatively scheduled the start of the property inspection to begin on Apr 11. It is unknown at this time how long the inspections will take. Property owners that have damaged seawalls as a result of Hurricane Ian can expect to see City representatives along with FEMA inspectors walking through their yards to inspect and collect data for the damaged infrastructure.
- **Dock Match Program** – The Punta Gorda and Charlotte Harbor Boaters Alliance has created a program that connects boat owners that need a temporary relocation of their boats with owners that have available dock space. This information can be found at [Punta Gorda Boaters Alliance \(boat2puntagorda.org\)](http://PuntaGordaBoatersAlliance(boat2puntagorda.org)) click on the Dock Match button for information.
- **Vessel Speeds** – Canal Maintenance is asking people to be mindful of the current situation in the canals with seawalls being damaged. City code states that the operation of vessels in the canals shall be Slow Speed Minimum Wake in the waterways within the City limits. The speed and operation in the Ponce Inlet, Pompano Inlet, Bass, and Snook Inlet are Idle Speed and No Wake. Wakes from watercraft can cause additional erosion and damage to seawalls already compromised.

Engineering

- **Swale Regrading** – The swale contractor has completed the swales on North Plum Tree, Scarlet Sage, Panarea Dr. and Madrid Blvd. They will be watering these four locations for the next 30 days until the sod gets established. They have excavated approximately 15,500 square feet of material and re-sodded all areas with sod. The next swale to be re-graded

will be on Tripoli Blvd. They will be excavating approximately 5750 square feet of material and re-sodding these areas at the proper elevations. Once Madrid Blvd. is completed the next location will be on South Crete Ct.

- **Hounds of Henry Dog Park** – Work has begun this week to increase the area of both the large and small dog park areas. At this point in time the work will be outside the limits of the current dog park fence so there should be no impact to the dog park. There will be construction equipment and dump trucks in the area so please use caution when visiting the area.



Sanitation

- **Construction Debris** – Construction Debris is NOT collected by the City of Punta Gorda and must be hauled away by the owner or contractor to the Charlotte County Landfill [Charlotte County Landfill | Charlotte County, FL \(charlottecountyfl.gov\)](https://www.ci.punta-gorda.fl.us/government/public-works/sanitation). Construction and demolition debris waste including but not limited to, steel, glass, brick, concrete or clay or asphalt roofing material, pipe, gypsum wallboard, and lumber, resulting from the construction or destruction of a structure, and includes rocks, soils, the tree remains and vegetative matter which results from land clearing or land development operations for a construction project.
- **How to Request a Special Yard Waste Pile Pick-Up** – Residents can request the special pick-up by calling the Public Works Department (941) 575-5050 or completing the online web request <https://www.ci.punta-gorda.fl.us/government/public-works/sanitation>. Staff will review the request and the qualifying request will be done in the order in which they are received.
- **Whole Tree Removals and Lot Clearing** – Whole Tree removal and lot clearing are NOT part of your regular service. The owner or contractor performing the work is responsible for the clean-up and removal of the Charlotte County Landfill [Charlotte County Landfill | Charlotte County, FL \(charlottecountyfl.gov\)](https://www.ci.punta-gorda.fl.us/government/public-works/sanitation).

- **Loose Yard Waste** – In order for the yard waste pile to be eligible for the clamshell truck it must meet the following requirement:
The yard waste must be at least one cubic yard (3'x3'x3') or approximately two 96 gallon trash cans). If the pile exceeds five Cubic yards (5'x5'x5') the resident will be required to have the debris removed by a private hauler. Whole tree removals are not included in the regular yard waste service, the owner or contractor is responsible for the clean-up and removal of debris. Please do not place piles near or under power lines or trees, utility boxes, mailboxes, fire hydrants, etc.

Fire

- **Fire Prevention** – A major responsibility of the City Fire Marshal's Office is fire prevention. One method employed to reduce the number of fires is by conducting fire and life safety inspections. Staff inspects business and multi-family structures in accordance with federal and state regulations as well as the NFPA 101 Life Safety Code. The goal is to reduce the number of deaths, injuries and amount of property loss from fire. We want to work with you to ensure that if a fire were to occur, the damage is limited as much as possible and firefighters can operate efficiently and safely. Think of it as an investment in the safety of you, the building and premises and the general public. You are encouraged to accompany the inspector during his/her visit. For more information, please contact the department at (941) 575-5529.

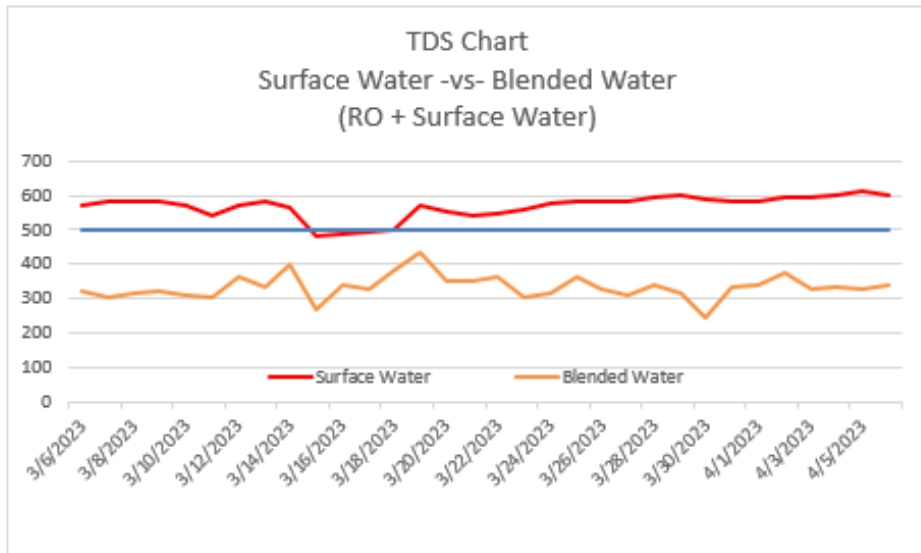
Police

- **Nation Telecommunicators Week** – Next week is National Public Safety Telecommunicators Week where we recognize the unseen heroes of public safety. Please help us in thanking the awesome men and women of our Communications Section!
- **Away from Home Program** – The Away from Home Program is an invaluable courtesy service offered by the Punta Gorda Police Department to its residents. The primary purpose of the Away from Home Program is to offer vacationing, seasonal, and year-round residents the reassurance that if a problem exists at their property such as suspicious activity, utility emergencies, or other emergency conditions, the resident or their designated key holder can be contacted expeditiously. Members of the Punta Gorda Police Department's Volunteers on Patrol may also conduct periodic House Checks on your home while you are away and immediately notify you or your designee of any problems or concerns at your residence. Participants can provide contact information for themselves or a key holder which will enable the Police Department to more quickly remedy emergency situations. It is important to note that the Away from Home Program is not intended, or designed, to replace home security systems or other security services. Rather, it is a courtesy service designed to further protect your home and enhance the Police Department's ability to rapidly respond to, and remedy, an emergency at the homes of our residents. Residents can sign up for the Away from Home Program by visiting www.PuntaGordaPolice.com.
- **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 June. Applications

must be received by June 26. The written exam will be completed online anytime between June 30 and July 7, with virtual oral board exams conducted via Zoom on July 24. We are currently only accepting applications from candidates who are currently law enforcement certified or Equivalency of Training (EOT) eligible.

Utilities

- **R.O. Plant**



Water Treatment Plant Operations

- 66.0 MG delivered to the distribution system with a 9.4 MG daily average
- Installation of the new sludge press continues. Plant maintenance staff have received and set the new shed for the press control panel and polymer feed system.
- Peace River Manasota Regional Water Supply Authority Emergency Interconnect – Receiving 800 gallons per minute from the new Interconnect (Phase 1 Pipeline). Sending 800 gallons per minute from the tank on 17 (Phase 1A Pipeline).
- Rainfall Mar. 2020 .50" Mar. 2023 0.48" April 2022 2.95" April 2023 0.00"
- Hardness is a measurement of calcium and magnesium ions naturally occurring in the raw water. Currently "moderately hard" – Grains of Hardness 11 ppm –Total hardness 188 ppm
- TDS April 6 – Current 337 ppm, Low 279 ppm, High 649 ppm, 13 Year Avg. 478 ppm
- Reservoir April 30 – Current 4.98', Record Low 4.87', Record High, 5.80' 58 Year Average 5.17'

Lawn Watering Schedule/Times – Lawn watering is limited to twice per week (if needed) by property address. Before 10 a.m. or after 4 p.m. Hand watering and micro-irrigation of plants (other than lawns) can be done on any day and at any time using a shut-off nozzle on their hose, so water isn't wasted. [Water Restrictions | City of Punta Gorda, FL](#)

Lawn Watering Schedule Table

Addresses	Current Watering Day	May Also Water
Ending in 0 and 1	Monday	Thursday
Ending in 2 and 3	Tuesday	Friday
Ending in 4 and 5	Wednesday	Saturday
Ending in 6 and 7	Thursday	Sunday
Ending in 8 and 9	Friday	Tuesday
Addresses that end with a letter instead of a number will water on:	Friday	Tuesday

- Water Disinfection** – City of Punta Gorda Utilities in conjunction with the Peace River Manasota Regional Water Supply Authority, will temporarily change the disinfection process for its potable (drinking) water supply. Now through May 14, the water will be disinfected with free chlorine rather than chlorine combined with ammonia (chloramines). This conversion to free chlorine from chloramines allows the utility to perform a distribution system purge as recommended by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection for water utilities using chloramines as their primary disinfectant. A "free chlorine conversion", as it is known, is a common practice by public water systems that use chloramines to periodically increase the level of disinfectant residual throughout the distribution system. The City of Punta Gorda Utilities water will REMAIN SAFE TO DRINK throughout this process and boiling water is not necessary. Customers may notice a change to the taste and smell of the water. The water may discolor laundered clothes. Homeowners should flush any cloudy or discolored water that may enter the plumbing by running a faucet for several minutes or until the water runs clear. For information on preventing waterborne germs, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/healthywater/drinking/preventing-waterborne-germs-at-home.html>. Customers on kidney dialysis who use a proportioning machine to prepare dialysate at home are advised to contact their physician or equipment supplier to obtain the appropriate steps to accommodate the change in water disinfection and to install the proper filtering devices, if needed. Customers using the water for aquariums should monitor the chlorine residuals and are advised to contact a professional aquarist to ensure proper pretreatment of the water before adding or changing the water in the tank to avoid any problems associated with chlorine. The utility will flush the water distribution system in conjunction with this change in the process. The flush will allow the free chlorine to move quickly throughout the distribution system. For information on the "free chlorine conversion" contact the Florida Department of Environmental Protection Brooke.Keck@FloridaDEP.gov

City Clerk

- **Candidate Packets Now Available** – Candidate packets for the 2023 City General Election are now available for pick up at the City Clerk’s Office, currently located at 117 Herald Court Centre, Unit 112. Candidate forms can also be obtained online from the City’s website at <https://www.ci.punta-gorda.fl.us> as well as from the Division of Elections website at <https://dos.myflorida.com/elections>. The 2023 General Election will take place on Nov. 7 and will include City Council Districts three and five. Councilmembers serve a two (2) year term and are elected at-large. Only opposed candidate races will appear on the ballot. If more than two candidates seek election for any one district seat, a primary election must be held on Aug. 22 (11 weeks prior to the General Election). Qualifying for the 2023 General Election cycle begins Jun. 12 at noon and ends on Jun. 16 at noon. For information or questions regarding qualifying, please contact Karen Smith, City Clerk, at (941) 575-3369 or email pgclerk@cityofpuntagordafl.com. Questions regarding voter registration, vote-by-mail ballots or precinct and polling information should be directed to the Charlotte County Supervisor of Elections Office at (941) 833-5400.
- **Current Board and Committee Vacancies** – If you are interested in serving on a board or committee, please visit our online portal to complete an online application at <https://www.ci.punta-gorda.fl.us/government/boards-committees>
 - **Code Enforcement Board** – (two regular and two alternates) 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.
 - **Planning Commission** – (one alternate) Meets the fourth Monday at 2 p.m. in City Council Chambers. Must be City resident. Seven member board with two alternate members. Three year terms – maximum of three terms. Makes recommendations to City Council with regard to amending, extending or adding to the comprehensive plan for the physical development of the City, platting or subdividing land within the City and adopting and amending a zoning ordinance.
 - **Punta Gorda Housing Authority** – (two regular) Meets the third Thursday at 8:30 a.m. at the PGHA Community Room, 340 Gulf Breeze Avenue, Punta Gorda. Must be a resident of Charlotte County. At least one commissioner shall reside within the Housing Authority's jurisdiction and receive rent subsidy through a program administered by the Authority. Seven member board. Four-year terms – no maximum. Financial disclosure required. The mission of the Housing Authority is to provide decent, safe and sanitary affordable housing.
 - **Historic Preservation Advisory Board** – (two alternates) Meets the fourth Thursday at 9 a.m. in City Council Chambers. Must be City resident. Seven-member board with two alternate members. Three-year terms – maximum of three terms. Identifies for the City Council historically significant structures and sites that should be considered for designation as a "Local Historic Landmark" or be nominated for listing on the Florida Master Site File and the National Register of Historic Places. Makes recommendations of the policies for the protection of historically significant structures and sites. Makes recommendations to staff with regard to certificates of appropriateness for any demolition, variance, sign or

relocation of structures. Promotes public awareness of historic archaeological preservation and its community benefits.

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:
 - Charlotte Harbor Massage, 25166 Marion Avenue, Suite 116
 - Fun in the Sun Travel, 739 Monaco Drive
 - GRN Real Estate Holdings LLC, 2214 Cassino Court
 - Leroy's Southern Kitchen and Bar, 201 W Marion Avenue
 - Maurer Vacation Rental, 328 Goldstein Street