



# 2024

## ANNUAL REPORT

CITY OF FLAGLER BEACH



# City of Flagler Beach

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Flagler Beach Residents and Business Owners:

I hope that you take the time to read this inaugural Annual Report prepared by the City's Department Directors. The Directors have shared highlights of the previous fiscal year (Oct 1, 2023- Sep 30, 2024) as well as an outlook for this fiscal year and a glimpse into longer term efforts.

Since this is the first effort, it took some time to gather and appropriately format the information. The intent for future reports is to have the Annual Report published in late December.

City staff is proud to represent this wonderful community and the reports reflect their professionalism and dedication to Flagler Beach. Staff appreciates your support.

I welcome your comments about the report and look forward to an exciting year in Flagler Beach.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Dale L. Martin".

Dale L. Martin  
City Manager



Mayor Patti King



Scott Spradley



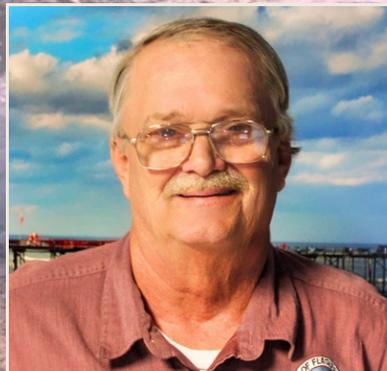
Eric Cooley



James Sherman



Jane Mealy



Rick Belhumuer



- Population (2022) 5,279
- Employees (Full-Time) 92
- Pier reconstruction cost: est. \$18 million (federal and state funds)
- Led staff support for Ad Hoc Parks Committee
- Created and managed City's Facebook page
- Coordinated beach renourishment efforts with contractor, County, and Federal staff
- Prepared and awarded \$ 745,000 grant from Flagler County (Tourist Development Council and Board of County Commissioners) for Pier enhancements

The past year was an exciting introduction to the City of Flagler Beach and established a strong foundation for future City efforts.

The preliminary budget for the fiscal year 2023-2024 was prepared by Interim City Manager Michael Abels and Department Directors. Minor revisions were made during the budget workshops and public hearings, and the budget was subsequently adopted in early October.

Key staff additions provided significant experience and depth to compliment current staff, and, in some instances, filled long-vacant positions. Ms. Katherine Monroy was hired to serve as the City's Executive Assistant, supporting both the City Manager and Human Resources departments. Ms. Hollie Harlan was appointed as the City's Finance Director, providing extensive accounting and audit experience to the Finance Department.

Mr. William (Bill) Freeman was appointed as the City Engineer position which had been vacant for several years, filling a key oversight role for increasingly complex City projects. Ms. Lupita McClenning joined the staff as the City Planner following the retirement of the previous Planner. The final senior staff addition was Mr. Scott Coster to lead the City's Information Technology efforts.

Several others were hired to supplement current staff. They lead the day-to-day efforts to keep the City functioning: operators at the Water and Wastewater plants; laborers to maintain the streets, stormwater system,

parks, and facilities; and Utility Billing clerks and Building/Planning Permit techs who often are the front-line contacts for residents and businesses.

Some of the notable efforts last year included a renewed emphasis on stormwater projects, continuing design efforts for the City's water and wastewater systems to improve reliability and capacity, and improvements to the historic Wickline building (housing the City's Building Department and Planning Department). The City Commission also began considerations to annex a significant area on the City's west side.

For the new budget year, the demolition and reconstruction of the City's historic Pier is the most significant project. Other enhancements to the Pier and area boardwalks, funded in part through tourism taxes, will also begin construction. Stormwater projects will remain a high priority to reduce flooding issues in several areas of the City. Improvements at Wickline Park will be jointly funded by the City and the State. Long overdue improvements at the Wastewater Treatment Plant will begin.

The most significant challenges over the next few years are the City's aging infrastructure- water and wastewater pipes, streets, and facilities. The community's quality of life is a continuing priority: beaches, parks, downtown, special events, and local businesses.



- Preparation of 95 meetings, which included agendas, minutes, live-streaming, advertising, public notices, filing, and managing documents
- Completion of 872 Formal Public Records Requests
- 41 Special Event Applications processed
- 600 Notify Me email groups
- 784 News Flash notifications sent
- 7,571 changes to the website

Many items were tackled this past year. The complete make-over of the City website, spearheaded by the Deputy City Clerk, was successfully integrated. The new website features a color palette that was chosen by the Commission, use of artwork provided by Flagler Beach Creates, and user-friendly and ADA compliant fonts and modules. Another major feature of the Clerk's Office includes the successful transition and upgrading of the Laserfiche document management system to a cloud-based database. This accomplishment required collaboration across multiple departments, extensive training, and attention to detail. As always, the Clerk's office played a key role in drafting, disseminating, and managing City bids.

The Clerk's office managed the 2024 Municipal Election. The process began with crafting candidate handbooks and ensuring information was accurate and current. Mayor Patti King succeeded Mayor Suzie Johnston, and incumbent Commissioner Eric Cooley was re-elected. Mayor King and Commissioner Cooley will serve three-year terms, expiring in March, 2027.

The City Clerk also coordinates travel and training for the elected officials. The elected officials visited the State Capitol during legislative sessions to share local concerns and seek funding support. Several elected officials also serve on state-wide policy committees, meeting two or three times annually to review proposed legislation. The most significant is

the Florida League of Cities Annual Conference, bringing local government officials and State leaders together.

A new agenda management software program was integrated this year. The program will enable the City Clerk's office to more easily prepare and manage the agenda packets for the City Commission, which often number several hundred pages.

After many years of serving as the Information Technology liaison, the Clerk's Office recently passed this responsibility to the newly hired Information Technology Coordinator. Staff still collaborates closely with the IT Coordinator- and with additional staff provided through an Interlocal Agreement with Flagler County.

The Clerk's Office serves as the repository of documents and information for other departments. The Department provided guidance for new executive leadership and even seasoned employees. The staff shared Florida State Statutes, City Ordinances, and County regulations for projects and initiatives.

Given the number of newly hired employees, especially those whose duties require record management, the Clerk's Office plans to develop records management training as part of welcoming new staff. This training would cover public records requests, record management best practices, retention schedules, and include any updates to the Code of Ordinances.



- 101 full-time employees
- 10 part-time employees
- 21 seasonal employees
- 27 vacancies filled this past year
- Average tenure of employees: 6 years
- Average age of employees: 51
- Turnover rate: 13.5%
- Oversees City's Risk Management and insurance programs

In alignment with the Commission's One-Year goals for Fiscal Year 2023-2024 of achieving full staffing, the Human Resources Department has made significant progress in recruitment. Key roles, including Finance Director, Engineer, Planner, and IT Coordinator were filled, enhancing operational capacity, leadership capability, and expertise to support the Commission's initiatives. Other critical hires strengthened the City's workforce, such as a Meter Reader, Building Permit Technician, Water Plant Operators, Public Works Laborers, Utility Billing Clerks, Grounds Keeper, and a part-time Librarian Assistant. Seasonal hiring efforts included twenty-one lifeguards in late spring.

Staff reviewed the Personnel Policy, resulting in revisions that reflected current best practices and legal requirements. A dress code was implemented, bereavement leave was expanded, and the City adopted a tobacco-free policy. The City will continue to review its policies and bring improvements this next coming year.

To better navigate the complexities of labor and employment law, the Commission approved retaining an attorney specialized in such area in August. This partnership will provide the City with expert legal guidance, ensuring compliance and minimizing risk for the City.

Multiple trainings and conferences were attended by staff members, including the Florida Public Human Resources 2024 Conference and Preferred Members Day.

These efforts reflect a commitment to maintain a knowledgeable and prepared workforce.

Looking ahead, Human Resources Department staff will develop a structured orientation process for new hires and implement training opportunities for all employees. The Human Resources Director will collaborate with the City's new Information Technology Coordinator to implement mandated cybersecurity training, which is crucial for protecting the City's systems and networks. An annual training plan is under development, encompassing both mandatory programs and opportunities for professional growth across all departments.

Efforts to stay compliant with records management and retention will continue. This initiative includes reviewing, scanning, archiving, and eliminating duplicate records as well as ensuring data accuracy and accessibility.

As the Human Resources Department staff plans for the future, priorities include recruiting and retaining high-quality talent to sustain and strengthen the City's workforce. Succession planning will be emphasized to ensure leadership continuity. An important aspect of this effort will be a comprehensive review of all job descriptions and classifications, ensuring alignment with current organizational needs. By fostering professional development, staff is dedicated to prepare for future challenges.



- 2,200 bank deposits recorded
- 47 new hires processed
- 26 payrolls processed
- 40,975 utility bills distributed
- 559 golf cart registrations processed
- 101 new water meters connected
- 40 water meters replaced
- 167 trash carts sold

With the hiring of an experienced Finance Director and fully-staffed department, completion of critical items and delayed issues were accomplished this year.

The Department reviewed and improved outdated policies and ordinances, created new budget templates, and streamlined processes for audit and budget preparation. Staff members participated in trainings to enhance and clarify duties. The City's procurement ordinance and policy was recently updated and approved by the City Commission, a notable feat for the Finance Department.

New initiatives were pursued with the development of the Finance Department, including debt collection, updating utility billing processes, policies, and procedures, and training. Multiple trainings were held for other City departments to review procurement, software, and financial policies. The Meter Reader Technicians successfully replaced all electronic reading devices that have failed since original installation in Phase I and II of the City-wide meter replacement project. Phase III installations has now started.

When identifying this year's objectives, completing the City's audit by the end of March 2025 stands out. To achieve this goal, the Department will have to meet specific milestones leading up to March 2025, including creating reports and gathering internal data.

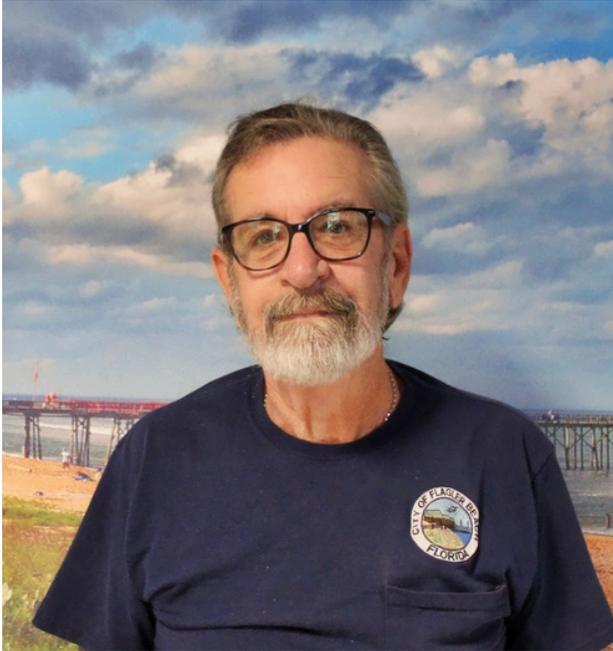
Another project this year is transitioning to a new bank. The Department will adapt to different check processing, daily deposits for

utility billing, communication requirements, wiring of payments related to payroll, and cancellation and issuance of new credit cards changes to name a few of the necessary tasks.

Utility Billing will prioritize the debt collection process for outstanding utility bills, through engagement with a debt collection company, drafting letters for remaining balances due, and consistent follow through. The Department as a whole will be tackling more financial policies and ordinances to review and update.

For the long term, the Finance Department will continue to train staff members for the diverse operational responsibilities of the Department. The Finance Director will become familiar with the annual tasks completed by the Assistant Finance Director as well as implement strategies to streamline quarterly financial and budget reports. The Utility Billing Cashier will learn the duties associated with the Utility Billing Manager role. The training will provide staff skill growth, coverage related to anticipated daily absences, vacation scheduling, and unexpected emergencies. Another goal is to offer more training to other directors, including capital asset management, procurement, City credit card guidelines, and responsibilities associated with budget and audit preparation.

The Finance Department staff wants to ensure that the City's funds are well-maintained and reported to stakeholders on a routine basis.



- City facilities include City Hall, Wickline Campus (3 buildings), Police Department, Fire Department, Streets Department, Facilities Department, Wastewater Treatment Plant, Water Treatment Plant, Sanitation, Pier, and Ocean Rescue facilities
- City parks include Veterans Park, Wickline Park, Pal Parker Preserve, Silver Lake Park, Venice Park, Custer Park, Oceanwalk Park, and dune walkovers

The Facilities Maintenance Department, formerly known as Building and Grounds Maintenance, is responsible for maintaining the City's properties, both structures and parks. Other duties include preparation for City Hall meetings, including City Commission meetings, committee meetings, public workshops, and various City staff meetings.

The routine maintenance for City facilities includes minor repairs, landscaping, and office configurations for staff. Each facility has several flagpoles which require attention: raising, lowering, and replacing flags when appropriate.

The most frequent task in City parks for the Department staff is tending to landscaping and equipment: trees, tables, benches, swings, pavilions, etc. Department staff also addresses overgrown right-of-way vegetation, especially in the downtown area.

The parks often host special events for which the Department staff prepares. Some of those efforts include erecting tents, installing lights, placing barricades, and hanging signs.

The staff also conducts daily inspections of the highly visible and popular City dune walkovers and boardwalks along the beaches. When needed, the staff also completes small-scale repairs to the dune walkovers.

The Public Works Division has been re-organized under the leadership of the City Engineer. The newly designated Facilities

Maintenance Department now reports directly to the City Engineer (along with other Department Directors associated with City infrastructure). Part of the reorganization includes re-defining and clarifying responsibilities and duties. Job descriptions will be refined and training and certification for tasks will be emphasized.

This year, the City will explore the cost and possibility of contracting for both large scale landscaping maintenance of key City facilities such as City Hall, Veterans Park, and Wickline Park. The parks especially are a critical quality of life component for residents and additional support and services may be needed to keep those areas attractive. City Hall draws dozens of daily visitors, so the landscaping appearance for that building should be aesthetically pleasing, too.

The Department will also assist in the re-configuration of an existing structure near the Wastewater Treatment Plant to serve as a sign shop. The sign shop will provide for local production of many of the signs needed regularly throughout the community.

A comprehensive building assessment was completed for several City facilities. Planning and action will be necessary over the course of the next year (and beyond) to address these aging facilities. These facilities- buildings, structures, and parks, represent the Flagler Beach community and deserve care and pride.



- 16 Patrol Officers
- 5 civilian staff members
- 3 Victim Advocates
- One additional Patrol Officer position budgeted
- Facebook Followers: 17,500
- X Followers: 2,000
- Hurricane Milton related posts received well over 300 shares

The Flagler Beach Police Department's mission is to serve and protect the citizens, businesses, and visitors by providing professional, competent law enforcement. During Calendar Year 2023, the Department received and responded to 27,688 calls for service. Officers issued 873 parking citations, 2,132 traffic warning citations, and 432 State traffic citations. During January 1, 2024 through September 6, 2024, Officers responded to 16,732 calls for service, conducted 1,911 traffic stops, and provided 408 written warnings for parking violations.

A key Department goal is to be approachable and interactive with the community. Wellness Walk Wednesdays offer citizens the opportunity to engage with first responders in an informal, healthy, and scenic manner. The Police Department's annual Toys for Tickets traffic safety campaign started on November 22, 2023 and concluded on December 31, 2023. The program educates motorists that have been stopped by Flagler Beach Officers for non-criminal traffic infractions and parking violations by providing them a Toy Voucher with their written warning. The Toy Vouchers give information regarding the violation and ask those who receive it to pay it forward during the holiday. Motorists can drop off new, unwrapped toys at the Police Department, which are donated to Christmas Come True, a community partner, to donate to local families in need. Several hundred toys have been donated through this program. Trunk or Treat is a Halloween-themed event

typically scheduled on the Saturday before Halloween. Multiple community members, civic organizations, and City staff display their spooky trunks for residents and other visitors.

The Police Department's Facebook page is one of agency's strongest assets. The page is frequently used to educate, engage, and update residents and visitors alike. Highest performing posts are community-related and education based. In the past year, the Police Department's Facebook page reached 705,400 users and over 85,200 interactions. The Department will maximize its reach by launching monthly educational campaigns. The first, planned for the month of November 2024, will promote the speed limit changes within the City.

A longstanding objective has been to be a State Accredited Police Department through the Commission for Florida Law Enforcement Accreditation, Inc. The accreditation ensures accountability and transparency to enhance confidence and trust in Law Enforcement. In June of 2024, the Department officially applied for State Accreditation. The Department anticipates full accreditation by June of 2026.

Other long-term projects include the installation of additional cameras throughout the City to assist with crime prevention. Acquiring and maintaining critical equipment (radios, body armor, body cameras, weapons, and vehicles) will continue to be costly, but such investments help ensure the safety of the Flagler Beach community.



- Call volume increased by 13.3% over previous year
- 15 station tours
- Purchase of two fire engines from Flagler County Fire Rescue (for reserve status).
- 1,665 calls for service
  - 916 Fire-related calls
  - 749 EMS-related calls
  - October 2024 highest incident rate
- 50 homes were serviced with the Battery Replacement program

Celebrating its ninety-eighth year, the Flagler Beach Fire Department has accomplished multiple goals, from retaining high quality staff, to professional development of staff, and community engagement. Though two part-time positions remain vacant, the Fire Department has fully staffed its full-time staff and gained a volunteer.

Continual training and education are paramount for the agency's responsibilities. Opportunities are offered online, through internal practical training, and technical/facility training across the State and, for some specialized training, elsewhere in the country. Staff focused on completing State Certified Fire Officer Classes, a Department goal. One firefighter is enrolled in paramedic school and another two senior members attended a Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) funded Hazardous Material Training in New Mexico. Multi-agency trainings include Live Fire, Downed Firefighter, Flash-over Simulator, and Active Shooter trainings. Due to new federal mandates, the Department's drone operators completed drone training.

Staff members frequently attended community events, offered base-line vital checks at the stationhouse, and conducted welfare checks for local residents. Complimentary fire safety inspections and fire alarm battery replacement are conducted for residents. All supplies are acquired through grants and donations. Due to the high interest,

a goal is to expand the program to service more Flagler Beach residents.

Station tours increased this year with multiple groups being interested in fire safety. During the summer, the Fire Department hosted the Smokey Bear Reading Challenge event in conjunction with the Library. The event was well attended, and readers were toured the station and learned about fire safety.

The fire hydrant system has transition to the responsibility of the Fire Department. Collaboration with Public works will be necessary to make minor repairs and conduct a replacement of outdated hydrants. Staff will share information and provide consistent updates when work is being conducted.

Looking to the future, the addition of a full-time Fire Marshal is a likely consideration due to the growing need for fire inspections. Budget allocations towards equipment reserves will continue to prepare for City for necessary equipment replacement and acquisitions over the next few years. The Fire Department vehicles and equipment must continue to meet rigorous annual testing and safety standards: breathing equipment, masks, gear, hoses, pumps, and ladders are vital to ensure firefighter safety and enable Fire Department personnel to protect City residents and property.

The members of the Flagler Beach Fire Department are proud to represent this community.



- Code Enforcement cases opened (2023/2024): 96
- Code Enforcement cases closed: 89
- Magistrate hearings: 11
- Planning and Architectural Review Board meetings: 11
  - Commercial site plan reviews: 5
- Variance requests: 2

The Planning Department experienced a transformational year. After years of relying on outside consultant, a City Planner was hired, and the Department restructured: the City Planner oversees Planning, Business Licensing, and Code Enforcement with the support of two staff members.

The Planning and Architectural Review Board (PARB) reviews proposed regulations, proposed site plans, and variance requests, subsequently presenting a recommendation to the City Commission. The Department directly supports the PARB.

A Master Planned Development (MPD) zoning district was adopted into the Land Development Regulation. This new district encourages innovative land planning that achieves a mix of residential and nonresidential land uses in the same development.

GRIDICS, an online zoning and Geographic Information System (GIS) platform, further enhanced City operations. The system enables City staff, residents, and others to easily research City zoning codes and regulations.

The Planning Department also played a key role in introducing the annexation of the Veranda Bay development, a proposed mixed-use project encompassing 900 acres. Extensive staff work related to the City's Future Land Use Map, the City's Land Development Regulations, and a proposed Master Planned Development agreement will be required to provide the City Commission (and applicable State agencies) with an appropriate

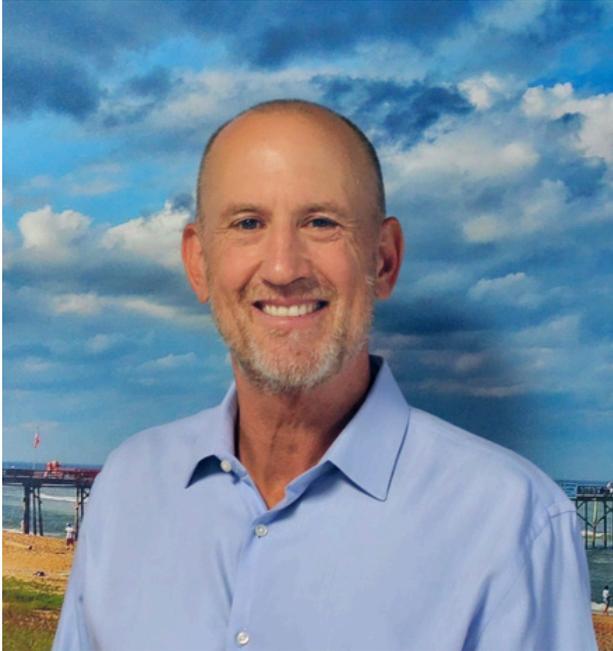
supporting documentation on which to base its decision to annex the properties.

In the coming year, Planning Department staff will look to improve code compliance throughout the City. With an additional Code Enforcement Officer budgeted, the Department will promote educational outreach and conduct proactive enforcement.

To further improve development coordination, the Planning, Building, and Public Works Departments will organize a Technical Review Committee (TRC). Composed of the City Engineer, City Planner, City Building Official, Fire Marshal, and other staff as needed, the TRC will meet monthly to review development plans and ensure compliance with the Land Development Regulation. The TRC review will streamline permit processing, as well.

In the current absence of a Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) Executive Director, the City Planner will also provide professional support for the CRA, the City's principal downtown economic development arm. The CRA funds several downtown projects such as parking facilities, streetlamps, and park improvements. A significant project, the Compass by Margaritaville hotel, is expected to open in 2025.

While the primary focus remains on immediate goals and statutory compliance, the Planning Department staff aims to foster sustainable and innovative development to enhance a vibrant and thriving Flagler Beach!



- Completed 90-day assessment of challenges, risks, and opportunities
- Developed initial strategic IT roadmap
- Developed short- and long-term staffing and supplier strategy
- Implemented tools and processes to strengthen the Cyber Security Program
- Implemented a mobile device management software resulting in improved asset management

2024 marked the first year the City of Flagler Beach invested in internal and dedicated staff to advance Information Technology (IT). Previously, the City contracted all parts of IT to Flagler County. After a number of budgetary discussions, the City moved to have hybrid IT structure. The newly formed IT Department provides support to City staff with continuous improvement and an integrated technology experience for both internal city operations—and for the citizens of Flagler Beach.

To help achieve its goals, the IT Department partners closely with key IT suppliers, government agencies, and local and state government IT teams to ensure the City leverages all available professional assets.

Since the creation of the Department, cybersecurity has been the initial priority of staff efforts. Spam, phishing, and malware has become extremely well-developed, requiring greater attention by users of electronic systems, such as City staff. New software has been integrated to protect City systems and data.

For the new fiscal year, the Department will focus on some exciting and ambitious short- and long-term initiatives. Staff will develop a secure, web-based “Citizen’s Portal” to enable online and personalized self-service capabilities. By collaborating with other departments, frequently asked questions, requested forms, and even training will be available on the portal. The web-based information will reduce paper and improve

productivity through digital workflow automation. The creation and launching of the City intranet is expected to take a few months. Maintenance will be routine to ensure relevancy.

Modernizing and standardizing audio and video platforms to improve internal and public meeting experiences is another focus for the IT Department. With close collaboration with the Clerk’s Office, staff plans to reduce technological glitches.

The migration of core systems to the “cloud” will improve reliability, security, accessibility and establish tighter data integrations. The transition will be comprehensive and likely take a few years. Staff will work across other departments, especially Finance and Human Resources, to achieve this ambitious goal.

As the future continues to be more and more digital, the City will explore a number of innovative ways to increase efficiency and promote community engagement. Development of a mobile app for citizens to interact with the City will be examined and likely developed. Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) has increased daily productivity throughout the world, and the Department will begin to review its applications to City operations. To ensure safety and privacy, an AI policy will be produced.

The IT Department is excited for technology to be a greater focus in the future for the City of Flagler Beach!



- 749 new members
- 1,223 books circulated on average each month
- Acquired 1,198 new books, 42% of which were donations
- Inventory:
  - 23,091 Volumes
  - 36 Magazine subscriptions
  - 2 Daily newspapers
- Programs: Writer's Group, 2 Adult Book Clubs, 1 Children's Book Club, Storytime for Pre-Schoolers, Knitting Group, Card-Making Group.

This past year, the Library launched a new eBook application, Boundless, a user-friendly platform that unlocks more literature for patrons. With over 661 titles to choose from and a three-week borrowing period, Boundless provides visitors with greater access to digital reading. 460 checkouts took place from 247 active users.

The Book Sale held in February was a success. The three-day event generated \$674 from over 500 books being sold. An additional \$830 were generated throughout the year by the Sale Section within the Library.

The Library's book circulation increased to 14,676 this past year. Favorite fiction genres include Mysteries, Thrillers, and Historical Fiction. Popular authors for the Library are James Patterson, Harlan Coben, and CJ Box. For non-fiction, Ecology, Military History, and Biography books were highly circulated. Amongst children, the Diary of a Wimpy Kid series, Investigators series, Dog Man, and Cat Kid were favorites.

During the summer, the Library organized a literacy program that promoted reading and fire prevention. The Smokey Bear Challenge was held in cooperation with the Fire Department. Over six weeks, participants were challenged to read three books or more and complete multiple hands-on activities in order to win prizes. The Finale Event took place at the Fire Department, where

firefighters spoke on fire prevention and safety. All participants received prizes provided by local sponsors.

The Flagler Beach Library remains committed to maintaining a high level of visitor satisfaction through its programs, interactions, and literacy education. City-wide information (such as community events and local services) is consistently communicated to residents by way of personal interactions, its many bulletin boards, and chalkboards.

With a new dedicated email address for remote printing, the Library has increased printing service accessibility to its patrons. Regularly scheduled programs will continue to meet at the Library. Special presentations, such as the Flagler Audubon discussion and Bird-walk, are slated to take place this coming January. A board game presentation is expected to take place next year as well. A large book sale is planned for February, and a summer reading program will be announced by late spring. Renovations to the Flagler Beach Library's bathrooms are part of this fiscal's year Capital Improvement Plan. The Department will be collaborating with the Engineering and Building Departments to ensure the success of the renovations.

Although no specific projects are currently planned, the building will be evaluated for electrical updates in the interest of safety and energy efficiency.



- 21 seasonal employees
- Seven City parks: Veterans Park, Wickline Park, Silver Lake Park, Pal Parker Preserve, Venice Park, Custer Park, and Oceanwalk Park
- Two County parks: Wadsworth Park, Betty Steflik Park
- Served 120 youths through summer programs
- Introduction of the New Year's Eve Surfboard Drop and Fireworks
- Wickline Park improvement grant: \$170,000

The start and completion of the 2024 Beach Nourishment Project resulted a wider beach for residents and visitors to enjoy while providing critical protection for the City's coastline and infrastructure. Staff assisted curious visitors and concerned residents who were interested in Beach updates.

"First Fridays" continue to energize Veterans Park every month, with lively local music in the downtown area. Every event offers local businesses, organizations and other government agencies the ability to engage and inform visitors. Last year's New Year's Eve celebration welcomed the inaugural "dropping" of the Surf Board (mimicking, on a smaller scale, New York's Times Square event) in Veterans Park at midnight. Plans are underway for the second New Year's Eve event this year.

The City rekindled and rebranded its past popular program, Movies in the Park, to Friday Family Flicks. On the last Friday of several months, the Recreation Department will present a movie feature within the City. In the past, the movie was displayed at Wickline Park; now, the movie will travel to areas all around Flagler Beach in an effort to promote local businesses. The movies will be presented during spring and fall months.

The Department provides Ocean Rescue coverage near the Pier. During the peak season, roughly April to October, the City employed twenty-one seasonal lifeguards to protect over 125,000 visitors to the beach. Lifeguards participated in daily training and

were involved in other events, such as Junior Lifeguard Camps.

Through the Junior Lifeguard Summer Camp Program, over 120 youths have been taught about ocean safety and preserving the natural environment. Junior Lifeguard Summer Camps took place through late May and late July.

2025 also marks the Centennial year for the City of Flagler Beach. Flagler Beach Celebrates, the non-profit organization working on a Centennial Celebration, will work with the Recreation Department to offer support and access to City resources.

Games on Green, a new community engagement initiative, began this year. On the third Tuesday of every month, Veterans Park will set up a backyard game for visitors to enjoy. In November, Shuffleboard will be available to play. The goal of the event is to encourage foot traffic in downtown and increase community interactions.

Many large-scale projects are impending. Along with the construction of a new pier, the beginning construction phases of restroom facility, and beach board walk improvements will take place in the heart of Flagler Beach. The Flagler Beachwalk, which is scheduled to be constructed in 2025/2026, will open opportunities for beach and community events.

Wickline Park will have several improvements, as well. Those improvements will be based upon interests expressed by the community. Fun times in Flagler Beach!



The Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) plays a vital role in enhancing the economy and aesthetic of the City's downtown area. Funding for the CRA is through "Tax Increment Financing," an alternative method of distributing tax revenues from properties located within the CRA district. Last year, the CRA focused on a number of infrastructure improvements.

Salt, sun, and sand continue to challenge the appearance and functionality of CRA infrastructure, particularly street lighting. Staff developed a preliminary decorative light inventory and addressed broken lights. Four decorative lights and arm fixtures were replaced- at the corner of A1A and South 3rd Street, behind the City Hall parking lot, at the corner of south 3rd Street and S. Central, and at the Corner of State Route 100 and South Daytona. Stop bars and crosswalks were repainted, addressing fading that had developed over time.

Additionally, the CRA began conceptual planning for improvements to City parking facilities, beginning with the facility at S. 8th Street and S. Central Avenue. These improvements are expected to be completed in early 2025. CRA funding replaced deteriorating garbage cans with a different material to extend the lifetime of the containers.

The CRA also provided funding to improve lighting for sea turtle protection. Nineteen white lights along A1A were replaced with

- 12 Small Redevelopment Grants awarded
- \$23,753 in grants awarded to Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) businesses awarded.
- Ongoing beautification and safety improvements
  - Dead tree removal
  - Streetlamps inventoried/replaced
  - Crosswalks/stop bars painted
- Planned parking facility improvements:
  - S. 8th Street St./S. Central Ave.
  - N. 5th St./N. Central Ave.
- \$170,000 redevelopment grant for Wickline Park.

amber lighting to reduce disruption to sea turtle nesting.

The CRA fostered civic pride and engagement by kicking off of the Downtown Playbook Leadership Team in July, based upon principals advocated in a book, *Your City is Sick* (Jeff Sigler). Composed of interested resident volunteers, the group meets once a month to discuss community engagement. The Downtown Leadership Team led park clean-up efforts to raise awareness of the importance of community aesthetics.

In the coming year, the CRA will prioritize replacing additional decorative street lamps, many of which are over thirty-years-old and nonfunctional or constructed from outdated white concrete poles. The goal of the replacement effort is to create and implement a streetlamp standard that will remain consist for many years.

The Florida Recreation Development Assistance Program awarded the CRA \$170,000 grant to improve the Wickline Park playground. The City's Parks Ad-Hoc Committee will work with a professional parks consultant to seek community input for park amenities.

Additional improvements to City parking facilities will continue. With the construction of the Margaritaville hotel and ongoing infrastructure improvements, the future of the CRA looks bright. Not to mention, Flagler Beach celebrates its incorporation centennial in 2025!



- 5,075 inspections conducted
- 1,608 building permits processed and issued
- 33 Stop Work Orders posted
- 81 Certificates of Occupancy issued
- 172 renovation permits issued
- 60% increase of Single-Family Residence permits issued over previous year

The Building Department has made significant strides to improve internal operations this past fiscal year. To modernize and expedite building inspections and permitting practices, all building inspectors were equipped with field laptop computers. This initiative has enhanced efficiency by reducing errors and accelerating processing times. Additionally, new computers were purchased for all Department staff, streamlining tasks that were previously slowed by manual paperwork and filing.

During budget discussion, the need for additional personnel to address increased permitting demands was identified. The new positions in this year's budget are a Permit Technician, a Building Inspector, and a Building Official. The additional staff will be funded solely through permit fees, not property taxes.

Staff development goals remains a priority to ensure efficient and professional customer service in anticipation of upcoming development. This year, the Permit Coordinator will pursue the Permit Technician Certification through the International Code Council, enhancing customer service proficiency in building codes and permitting. Similarly, Building Inspectors will obtain certifications to expand their expertise and improve inspection procedures.

Preparations for the possible Veranda Bay annexation will begin this year, as the new development is expected to increase

workload for staff. The Department will establish administrative processes to manage this influx, including integrating new addresses into the Department database to facilitate permit applications and inquires. The Department will fill the newly budgeted position of Building Inspector to increase staff capacity.

Efforts to fully digitize the permitting processes will continue, reducing waste and increasing operational efficiencies. Research and acquisition of suitable permitting software will play a key role in this transition. Online permit tracking is also being explore to provide applicants with clear updates on their permit status.

To further improve service quality, the Department aims to establish a more formal feedback system for residents and contractors, possibly through an online platform. This system will complement existing surveys by fostering responsiveness and continuous improvement in customer interactions.

The building industry is constantly evolving. To keep up with change, the Department's long-terms goals include professional staff development. By providing continuous learning opportunities for both Inspectors and Permit Technicians, the Department will boost processes, tasks, and work culture. The Department will continue to embrace technology and enhance service deliver to meet the demands of future growth.



- 4 lift station designs completed
- 50 manhole covers replaced
- Critical equipment (screw press) acquired for renovated Wastewater Treatment Plant
- 8 alleyway aprons paved
- 19 backflow preventers installed along Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway
- Completed State-mandated Vulnerability Assessment and Action Plan (required to pursue State grant funding)
- Assessed condition of key City facilities

With the hiring of the new City Engineer in June, restructuring within the City has occurred to better fit the current needs of the City. The Public Works Division includes several subordinate departments: Administration, Streets/Stormwater, Utilities Maintenance, Facilities, Water Treatment Plant, and Wastewater Treatment Plant. Though staff had been maintaining daily operations remarkably well, long-term planning to address the City's aging infrastructure had been neglected. New leadership has allowed the City to refocus and prioritize efforts to address critical challenges identified by City Commissioners and residents.

The Division is led by the City Engineer with the support of a Project Manager. The Project Manager coordinates management of all capital improvement projects within the City. Additionally, a temporary worker has joined staff to import data into the City's geographical information systems (GIS) map.

Last year, staff managed many tasks, including delivery of the long-delayed equipment for the Wastewater Treatment Plant; contracting for the repainting of City-wide stop bars and crosswalks; coordinating the demolition of an obsolete storage tank at the Water Treatment Plant; overseeing the installation of backflow valves to reduce flooding along with the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway; and assessing key City facilities. The City also reinvigorated its efforts to address flooding from stormwater.

The Public Works Division also manages the City's Community Rating System (CRS) program. Through public outreach and capital improvements, the CRS program provides for discounts to residents purchasing flood insurance. Staff is utilizing several tools to ensure accurate data collection in an effort to improve the City's CRS rating.

This year, the City will implement many short-term flood prevention projects. Such efforts include the installation of additional backflow valves, the addition of new protective measures at critical City facilities on S. Flagler Avenue, and swale restoration and improvements on South Daytona and South Flagler Avenues. Additionally, with the assistance of a specialized engineering consultant, the City will complete its Stormwater Master Plan, which will serve to guide the community's and staff's stormwater efforts.

Other projects include improvements to the sanitary sewer system, replacing old water mains, and coordinating the design of a second water main across the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway. Preparing for the renovation and expansion of the City's Wastewater Treatment Plant is a key priority.

Long-term projects under consideration are increasing water capacity with additional wells, developing a comprehensive street/pavement management plan, and preparing for compliance with State mandates related to operations at the Wastewater Treatment Plant.



- City Wellfield (in Palm Coast): 4 Wells operating (one additional Well under construction, two additional Wells planned)
- 212,728,000 million gallons pumped in 2024
- ~583,000 million gallons pumped daily
- 200+ tests per day conducted on raw and finished water to ensure compliance
- 6 licensed operators, 1 trainee

The Water Treatment Plant prepares and delivers high quality drinking water to residents and maintains compliance with state and federal regulations. Over the past year, significant preparations made to for future needs.

The Department applied for and received a grant from the Florida Rural Water Association to conduct a Lead Service Line Inventory (required by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection). The inventory, completed in two months by Sensible Water Solutions, inspected service lines for homes built before 1983. The inventory reported no lead or copper service lines, but the system does contain some older galvanized steel pipes.

After successfully testing and meeting training hours requirements (2080 hours of experience in a water treatment facility), a Department Trainee received his Operator C License and was promoted. The Department also recruited two additional trainees and another certified Operator C.

The City demolished obsolete and out-of-use storage tanks to make space for future expansions, including a new 1-million-gallon storage tank. Additionally, the Department is planning to increase the City's water capacity from 2 million gallons/day to 4 million gallons/day by constructing a new well (designated Well No. 16).

The Department is also designing a new sixteen-inch water main, which will run north

on Lambert Avenue. A subsequent project will be to extend the new water main under the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway and connect to existing infrastructure on the east side of the Intracoastal. These extensions are needed for redundancy purposes: currently, all water east of the Intracoastal is delivered through only one water main, making the entire system vulnerable to disruption.

Another benefit of the Lambert Avenue extension and the Intracoastal crossing will be "looping" the water system infrastructure. When a system is not looped, "dead ends" in the system contribute to the deterioration of water within the mains, requiring water to be periodically discharged. This contributes to inefficient operations as treated water is simply released. Many thousands of gallons are currently released every month.

Another project this year is the repainting of the elevated the South Tank. This task is performed every fifteen years.

Departmental retention and recruitment for highly specialized and certified Operators will continue to be a challenge. Current Operators are being encouraged to seek advanced certification (B License and A License).

With increasing demand, the Department is planning to construct additional wells, with the goal of doubling the current capacity of the City's system. Departmental staff is committed to providing exceptional water to residents and businesses.



- Treated 283,024,000 gallons of wastewater last year
- Daily average of 775,000 gallons treated
- 426.74 tons of sludge removed from plant
- Tests conducted for:
  - Iron
  - Sulfide
  - Chloride
  - Nitrate
- Highly discourage use of “flushable wipes” which clog pipes and pumps!

The Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) has served the City for nearly forty years. The treatment process utilized at the WWTP is technologically obsolete and labor intensive. Sludge, the residual from the treatment process, is spread into holding areas to dry, but once spread, it is susceptible to the impacts of Florida weather (high humidity, frequent rain, occasional storms). When adequately dried, the sludge is manually transferred to containers and transported for disposal. This process is also vulnerable to overflows during significant rainfall events. Such overflows resulting from Hurricane Ian and Tropical Storm Nicole necessitated the City to enter into a Consent Agreement (December, 2023) to improve the City’s wastewater collection and treatment systems.

Other factors that contribute to systemic challenges are inflow and infiltration. Inflow is stormwater that flows into the wastewater (sanitary sewer) system through ineffectively sealed manholes; roof and foundation drains improperly connected to the sanitary sewer system; and other connections to the system. Infiltration is groundwater seeping into pipes cracks, holes, and failed joints. The water entering the system through inflow and infiltration is relatively “clean” water, but it still flows through the WWTP and is treated. The cost of wastewater treatment is directly related to the volume of water flowing into the WWTP: reduce or eliminate inflow and infiltration and the WWTP can operate more

efficiently, both operationally and financially. Additionally, by eliminating the excess water, the occurrence of overflow events should be reduced.

The WWTP has a capacity of 1,000,000 gallons daily. Due to community growth, daily demand continues to increase: sludge production has more than doubled since 2011. For obvious public health reasons, the City WWTP must be modernized and expanded.

The first upgrade will begin this year. The City will introduce a “screw press” into the treatment process. This piece of equipment presses the water from the sludge, enabling the sludge to be disposed of more quickly. Additional design efforts have begun to expand the capacity of the WWTP and to implement Advanced Wastewater Treatment processes, improving the treatment and disinfection of wastewater.

The WWTP discharges nearly 800,000 gallons of tested and treated water into the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway daily. By 2032, though, new regulations will prohibit this discharge, requiring the City to develop and distribute “re-use water,” which will typically be used for irrigation purposes. It is not too far off to imagine treated wastewater to be clean enough for use in households and businesses.

WWTP operations are a critical public health component in Flagler Beach. With changing regulations and continued growth, the maintenance and expansion of the system is a costly, but necessary, effort.



- Collection fleet of seven vehicles
- Twice-weekly solid waste collection for approximately 3,200 residences.
- Additional weekly collection services include yard waste and bulk waste (additional fee).
- Weekly recycling collection for cardboard, glass, aluminum, and tin.
- “Big Blue” glass crusher prevented 219.5 tons of glass being hauled to landfills.

Flagler Beach provides a service to its residents that is becoming rarer for many local governments: public solid waste collection. More and more communities are contracting with private companies for this critical public health and quality of life component.

The Sanitation Department is funded through fees collected on monthly utility bills. Property tax revenues are not used to pay for sanitation operations. Operations include staffing, vehicle maintenance, fuel, and disposal costs.

In addition to regular City staff (Director, Recycling Coordinator, drivers), the City hires day laborers (commonly referred to as “throwers”) to collect the trash. These laborers are dedicated to their efforts, working throughout the changing weather conditions. Some of the laborers have worked for the City for many years.

The trash is not only collected from residences and businesses, but also common areas such as City parks and at many beach locations. The special events conducted throughout the year often require additional services, including preparation before the event and collection during/after the event.

To assist with collection efforts, the City offers totes (“tippy carts”) for solid waste and recycling (\$90.95 each). Smaller bins for recycling are also available at no cost for residents.

Glass collected through community recycling is run through “Big Blue”, the City’s glass

crusher. The glass is pulverized into two products: glass gravel and glass sand. These products are available for sale and can be used for many projects: landscaping, firepits, decorative sidewalks and driveways.

The garbage collection landscape continues to change due to economic and environmental factors. Post-pandemic costs have risen significantly, for both labor and operations. The cost of new garbage trucks has almost doubled and once ordered, take nearly a year to acquire. Heavy maintenance on the trucks is somewhat specialized, meaning the trucks travel to Jacksonville for dealer-based maintenance. The local transfer station (where trash is taken to be unloaded and then trucked to a landfill) was recently acquired by a private contractor. The contract with that site will undoubtedly be reviewed and likely revised.

The City has retained a financial consultant to review the historic and projected sanitation costs. The consultant’s report will be used to establish the rates to be charged for residential and commercial collections and services.

At this point, City leaders and residents prefer the local service provided, and appear to be willing to pay a slightly higher rate for that service. The economics of garbage collection may, however, lead to future consideration of private collection services.



- 37 miles of paved street managed
- 1,077 street signs
- 148 State street lights (A1A, Moody)
- Average elevation in City: 5.27 feet.
- Property parcels within FEMA 100-year floodplain: 2,061 (45% of 4,567 total parcels)
- Major weather events: Hurricanes Debby and Helene (minimal property damage suffered in either storm)

Special projects within the Department have begun to address critical infrastructure problems. Eight alleyway aprons were paved, spanning South 22nd Street to South 12th Streets between A1A and Central Avenue. Decorative crosswalks within the Community Redevelopment Area and stop bars throughout the entire City were repainted to address severe faded improving visibility and safety. Missing signage was replaced and speed limit signs were updated late in the year. The Vacuum Truck, purchased this year, has been used regularly to clean and clear stormwater drains, maintaining the City's drainage system.

The Department completed maintenance and partial replacement of fire hydrants before transferring responsibility for ongoing hydrant maintenance to the Fire Department. Streets and Stormwater staff will continue to provide support as needed in the transition.

The acquisition of advanced technology, including the Roadbotics pavement management software and GIS Diamond Mapping will significantly enhance the Department's capabilities. Roadbotics will enable staff to better prioritize day-to-day maintenance, and create long-term plans for street improvements, while the GIS Diamond Mapping software will provide comprehensive and centralized mapping for all city utilities (water, sewer, and stormwater systems) and other assets such as signs. This technology will improve documentation, maintenance, and

enhance planning efforts.

Collaboration with McKim and Creed, the City's stormwater consulting engineering firm, has progressed to Phase 2 of the City's Stormwater Master Plan. Staff identified and initiated several small-scale projects, including swale reclamation in problematic areas, storm drain maintenance, and culvert pipe replacement. These efforts address immediate concerns while building a foundation for more comprehensive future improvements.

The Department has plans to develop an older City building (located near the Wastewater Treatment Plant) into a dedicated Sign Shop. Renovations and installation will commence early next year. The facility will streamline the process of repairing and replacing City signage, reducing reliance on external procurement for minor improvements. Additionally, funds have been allocated to address sidewalk construction and repair, and the replacement of the 8-inch watermain on South Central Avenue.

The Department plans to produce long-term plans for its aging infrastructure. These efforts include pavement of city-wide alleyway aprons, sidewalk repairs, and converting older water lines to blue polyethylene pipe. To support these efforts, the Department will evaluate current staff capabilities and responsibilities.

The Streets and Stormwater Department staff remains committed protecting and improving Flagler Beach.























PREPARED BY EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT KATHERINE MONROY.  
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