

WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS REPORT AUGUST 28, 2020

City Manager

Reverse Osmosis Water Plant Ribbon Cutting – Former and current City Council members, Florida Department of Environmental Protection employees, South West Florida Water Management District and other officials were on hand for an official ribbon cutting at the City's new R.O. plant. A video highlighting the project is available at <https://youtu.be/kuSrtZfuqqg>.



- **Aug. 26 City Council Meeting** – City Council will meet on Aug. 26 at 9:00 a.m. at Historic City Hall. Decisions of interest included:
 - Comprehensive Plan 2040 update from staff. Dover, Kohl and Partners, LLP will have a draft of the Comprehensive Plan amendments to present to Council in the September/October timeframe, with an opportunity for public comment.
 - Award of a Specific Authorization to CPH, Inc. of Fort Myers, FL for professional engineering services to design the Virginia Avenue complete street improvements between US 41 northbound and Nesbit.
 - Parks and Recreation Master Plan update provided. Council directed staff to include a proposal to create a Parks and Recreation Division.
 - Utility Rate Study and Septic to Sewer Implementation Plan update. Council directed staff to develop an ordinance reflecting an increase in water and sewer rates at 3.75% to be evaluated annually. Impact fee recommendations include a decrease in the water impact fee of \$1,149 (reflecting the new RO plant partially funded by grants) and an increase in sewer impact fees of \$83 (reflecting the future wastewater treatment plant expansion project).
 - Historic District overnight parking restriction proposal. Staff was directed to create an ordinance restricting parking from 1 a.m. until 5 a.m. in the Historic District. This is to also include parking permits in the form of decals or placards for residents, guest parking and boater parking as well as a system to track those permits.

Next month, the Council will meet on Sep. 9 and 23. The meetings are also available live at https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC-Qo-k4PpXWo4IJQah6_Kqw.

Upcoming Events

- Fishermen’s Village Events – available at <https://www.fishville.com/events/>
- Military Heritage Museum Events – available at <https://freedomisntfree.org/upcoming-events/>.
- Punta Gorda Chamber of Commerce Events – available at <https://puntagordachamber.com/calendar-events/>
- Charlotte County Chamber of Commerce Events – available at <https://business.charlottecountychamber.org/events>

Lot Mowing Program

- The City has completed mowing the following areas:
 - Downtown and Historic District (W. Marion Ave., W. Olympia Ave., Shreve and Harvey St.’s)
 - East Side and the area behind Dunkin Donuts (E. Marion Ave, E Olympia Ave, Narranja St, E Henry St, and Cooper St).
 - Burnt Store Meadows (Areas of Tamiami Tr., N. Blue Sage, S. Blue Sage, Royal Poinciana, and Gold Tree).

Urban Design

- **Sign Code Survey** – City staff has been working to re-write the sign code in order to more fully comply with recent US Supreme Court and US District Court decisions regarding regulations on commercial speech and to ensure the sign code remains content-neutral. The working draft of the sign code was brought to City Council as a discussion item May 20. City Council directed staff to obtain input from the community and stakeholders regarding the proposed regulations. With COVID-19, public meetings can be challenging, therefore, staff created a survey to gather public input. The following is a link to the sign code survey. Please take a moment to take the survey and please distribute to your membership. The survey will be live Aug. 28 thru Sept. 30. After the survey closes, staff will tally the results and take to City Council for further discussion and direction. The survey can be accessed at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/7FGGS3M> and takes approximately seven to nine minutes to complete.

- **Planning Corner – Comprehensive Plan Elements Update** – During the [August 26th City Council meeting](#) City staff provided an update to the Council on the progress of the Comprehensive Plan project. A brief overview was given of major items for revision in each of the following five elements:

Future Land Use - Broadly sets development expectations

Coastal Management - Water dependent uses & environmental resilience

Housing – Population demographics & housing needs

Transportation - Safer streets for everyone

Historic - Preservation of built legacy



The [Future Land Use Element](#) governs the use of land within the City through a series of land use categories that are arranged on the [Future Land Use Map](#) as various colored areas. As directed by City Council at the time of acceptance of Plan Punta Gorda 2019, the Citywide Master Plan, the Future Land Use categories and map are being revised within the downtown and surrounding historic neighborhood areas (within the yellow outline on the maps below). The overarching goal of these revisions is to rationalize the Future Land Use categories and map to better accommodate the scale and types of development traditionally found within Punta Gorda. A mixture of commercial, artisanal production, institutional, and a wide array of residential types were found in and around Punta Gorda’s downtown area.

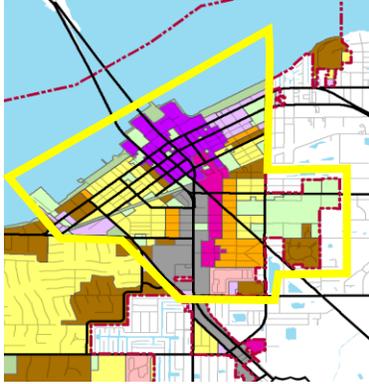


Figure 1: Current Future Land Use

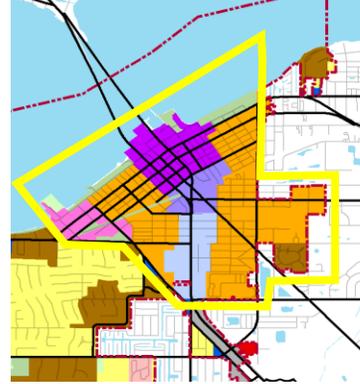


Figure 2: Proposed Future Land Use

A critical measure of residential development is density. Density is the number of residential unit permitted per acre of lot area. The table below documents some of the existing residential types found traditionally in the historic areas of the City.

			
Photo A Small Lot Detached Single Family 12 Units per Acre	Photo B Small Lot Two- Family Attached 22 Units per Acre	Photo C Small Scale Multi-Family 25 Units per Acre	Photo D Small Scale Multi-Family 32 Units per Acre

Figure 1: Images of traditional residential developments in historic neighborhoods in Punta Gorda.

Public Works

Canal Maintenance

- Dredging Bass and Snook Inlets** - Beginning the week of Aug. 31 through Sept. 18 (weather and equipment operation permitting), the Bass and Snook Inlets are scheduled to be dredged. The contractor will off load dredge material at the easterly end of Elizabeth Park and then the material will be transported to another location by dump trucks. Boaters are asked to please use caution in this area during construction. For additional information on this project, please contact Canal Maintenance Supervisor, Cathy Miller, Punta Gorda Public Works Department at (941) 575-5050 between the business hours of 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., Monday thru Friday.
- Seawall Replacement Projects** - The seawall replacement contractor has completed 30 seawall replacement projects in PGI and there are five projects under construction. Six seawall replacement projects have been completed in BSI and the work program for this fiscal year has been completed. A seawall replacement project is not considered complete until the sod has been placed.

 - Crews filled depressions at 22 locations.
 - Crews performed seven seawall cap and seam patches (63' linear ft.).
 - Crews conducted one berm depth survey in PGI.



Engineering

- **City wide Drainage Swale regrading** – During the week of Aug. 24, work near the intersection of Ryan Blvd. and Crooked Island Dr. continued. Weather permitting, the grading and sodding along the South side of Ryan Blvd. and the East side of Cooked Island Dr. will be completed this week. To date the contractor has completed work at 795 properties totaling 603,000 square feet of grading and sodding.
- **Cooper Street Recreation Center** – The ADA improvements near the tennis court, pavilion and basketball courts are scheduled to be substantially completed this week, weather permitting.
- **FDOT - US 41 Carmalita Street to Marion Ave. within City of Punta Gorda** - The Florida Department of Transportation's contractor, Highway Safety Devices, continues work to install new signals on US 41 from Carmalita St. to Marion Ave. The construction will take place Monday through Friday during daytime and nighttime/overnight hours, weather permitting. Lane closures may occur during daytime hours from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. For complete details, contact information and map <http://www.ci.punta-gorda.fl.us/government/public-works/engineering>.
- **Harborwalk (Gilchrist Gazebo to Berry St.)** - Irrigation, landscape trees and bushes have been installed, mulch is pending. Electrical bases and handhole installations are occurring with electrical work to install light pole assemblies and bollards through September. Grading and sod placement will continue. A site review and Project Progress meeting was held Aug. 26 to review some concrete remove and replace locations and discuss remaining work items to complete the project this fall. Pedestrians and cyclists are restricted from the work area during construction.



Police Department

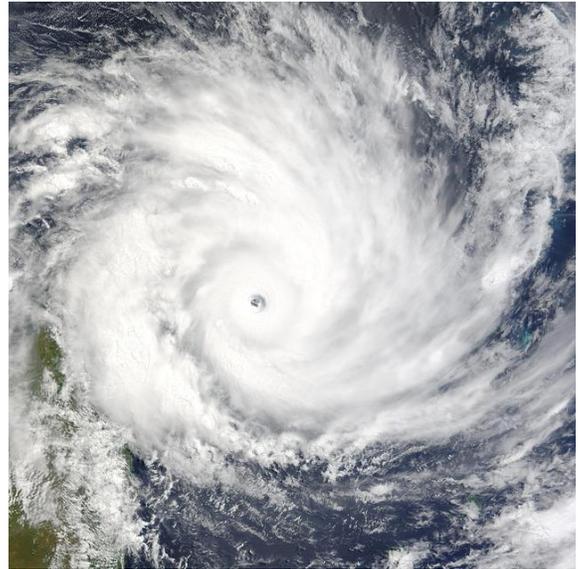
- **Gift Card Scams** – We have recently seen an increase in the number of gift card scams. In these scams, the scammer will call the victim saying they are with a certain organization or business (often the IRS) and tell the victim that they owe money. The scammer will then instruct the victim to go to a store, purchase gift cards, and provide the gift card numbers to the scammer as payment. Once they have the gift card numbers they will immediately drain the gift card balance online. Tracing online purchases made with gift cards is difficult, if not impossible, and often the victims are unable to recover their money. **Remember** that no legitimate business or organization will ever ask you to pay a debt using gift cards. If someone instructs you to purchase gift cards and provide numbers, end the conversation or contact the police department by calling (941) 639-4111.
- **Police Officer Testing** – The Punta Gorda Police Dept. is currently accepting applications for the position of Police Officer. Testing will be held on Jan. 11 with oral board interviews scheduled on Jan. 12 and Jan. 13. Currently we are only accepting applications from candidates who are currently certified, Equivalency of Training (EOT) eligible, or law enforcement academy students.



- **Public Safety Dispatcher Testing** – The Punta Gorda Police Department is currently accepting applications for the position of Public Safety Dispatcher. Testing will be held on Sept. 21.
- **Internship Program** – The police department is currently accepting internship applications for the Spring Semester of 2021. Our internship program is open to college students and high school seniors interested in gaining educational experience in law enforcement, criminal justice, and small government administration. To apply for any of these positions or for more information please visit www.pgdjobs.com (941) 575-5571 or employeedevelopment@pgorda.us for additional information or to have an application package sent.

Fire Department

- **Preparing for a Hurricane** –
 - ✓ **Prepare for a hurricane**: Take basic steps now to ensure your safety should a storm hit.
 - ✓ **Get emergency supplies**: Stock your home and your car with supplies. Give yourself more time than usual to prepare your emergency food, water, and medicine supplies. Home delivery is the safest choice for buying disaster supplies; however, that may not be an option for everyone. If in-person shopping is your only choice, take steps to **protect your and others' health** when running essential errands.
 - ✓ **Make a plan**: Create a family disaster plan.
 - ✓ **Prepare to evacuate**: Never ignore an evacuation order. Pay attention to local guidance about updated plans for evacuations and shelters, including shelters for your pets.
 - ✓ **Protect older adults**: Understand older adult health and medical concerns.
 - ✓ **Protect your pets**: Ensure your pet's safety before, during, and after a hurricane.
 - ✓ When you check on neighbors and friends, be sure to follow social distancing recommendations (staying at least 6 feet from others) and other CDC recommendations to protect yourself and others.



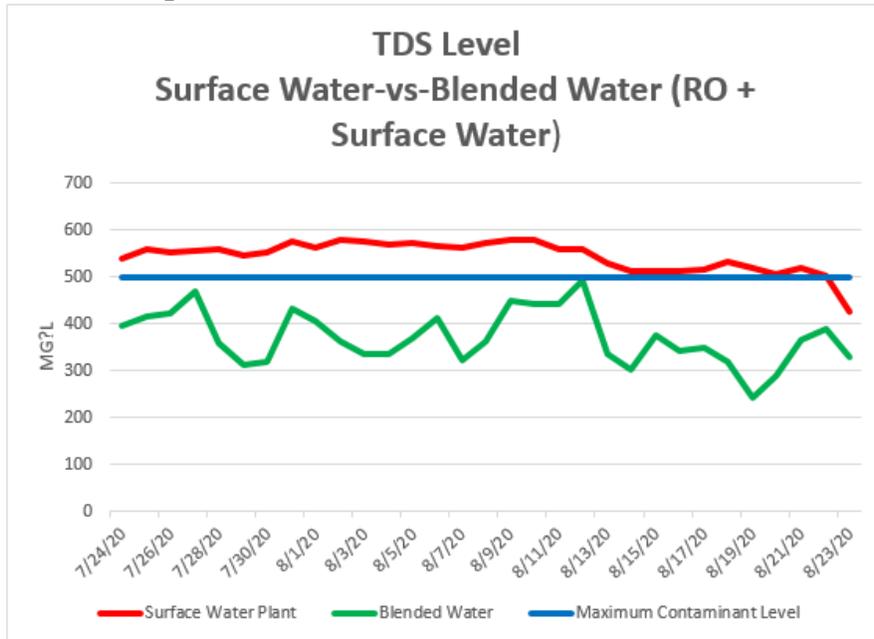
Utilities Department

Utilities Administration

- The City flushes fire hydrants throughout the service area when required for the following:
 - Routine maintenance and testing
 - Adhere to strict regulations from regulatory agencies.
 - Help find weaknesses in the water system
 - Improvement of water quality
 - Taste and Odor issues
 - Water Sampling

The time involved in flushing can vary from a few minutes to several hours depending on the circumstances.

- **Ground Water RO Update**



500 is the maximum contaminant level allowable by law.

Water Treatment Plant Operations

- 44.1 MG delivered to the distribution system with a 6.3 MG daily average
- Peace River Manasota Regional Water Supply Authority Emergency Interconnect – Sending water at a rate of two million gallons per day, started July 13.
- Rainfall in Aug. 2019 8.26” Aug. 4.40”
- Hardness is a measurement of calcium and magnesium ions naturally occurring in the raw water. Current Condition “hard” – Grains of Hardness 5 ppm – Total hardness 86 ppm
- TDS for Aug. 27 – Current 251 ppm, Low 189 ppm, High 424 ppm, 12 Year Avg. 318 ppm
- Reservoir Aug. 27 – Current 5.56’, Record Low 5.08’, Record High 7.53’, 55 Year Avg. 5.65’

City Clerk

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

- **Board of Zoning Appeals** – (One alternate) Meets the 4th Tuesday at 4 p.m. in City Council Chambers. City residency required. Seven member board with two alternate members. Three year terms - maximum of three terms. Financial disclosure required. Makes recommendations to City Council on variances to City Code.
- **Building Board** – (One alternate) Meets the 4th Tuesday at 9 a.m. in City Council Chambers – City residency not required. Seven member board with two alternate members. Three year terms – maximum of three terms. Four members must be involved with the building industry and three members must be consumer advocates who are not, nor ever have been, involved with building industry. Makes recommendations to City Council on the minimum qualifying requirements for obtaining Certificates of Competency in the various construction trades and the fees for same. Periodically reviews and holds public hearings on all building, electrical, plumbing, housing, gas, fire prevention and other related codes. Reviews enforcement of all codes relating to construction standards and acts as condemnation board in matters of violation of minimum standards. Hears alleged complaints against contractors.

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:
 - Punta Gorda Symphony, Inc., 6210 Scott Street, #213