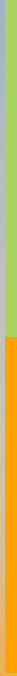


# 2024 ANNUAL REPORT



**CLEARWATER**  
BRIGHT AND BEAUTIFUL • BAY TO BEACH



The city of Clearwater is proud to present its Fiscal Year

# 2024

Annual Report, which covers Oct. 1 2023,  
through Sept. 30, 2024.





I am proud to present to you the city of Clearwater's annual report, a look back at our successes and progress from last fiscal year, Oct. 1, 2023, to Sept. 30, 2024.

Our community was ravaged by hurricanes Helene and Milton late in the fiscal year, and our city was significantly impacted by the storms. Some of our residents and businesses lost everything from flooding and storm surge, and city facilities and services were hugely impacted.

Clearwater is strong and resilient. We will work hard every day to help our community rebuild and to return our city to the bright and beautiful place where we live, work and play. Our collective, dedicated efforts will continue to make meaningful impacts.

Prior to the hurricanes, 2024 had been a year of progress as Clearwater continues to implement its strategic direction, which is the driving force behind our budget. It is our project roadmap, and the city council and I are committed to working with our community as partners in seeing through this important vision. Visit [MyClearwater.com/StrategicPlan](https://MyClearwater.com/StrategicPlan) and [MyClearwater.com/Budget](https://MyClearwater.com/Budget) for details.

Our hard work will continue toward rebuilding our community, which will take time. We also will focus on activating downtown, constructing the Clearwater Beach marina, supporting the North Greenwood CRA area, and focusing on economic development.

City leaders and I care very much about engaging with our residents and finding out what you think and need. Mayor Bruce Rector, the city council, and I want to make sure that you, our residents, feel connected to your city officials.

We invite you to attend city council meetings, reach out to the mayor and city council by calling 562-4050, emailing [City.Council@MyClearwater.com](mailto:City.Council@MyClearwater.com), attending your local neighborhood meeting, or reporting a problem through Clearwater Connect at [MyClearwater.com](https://MyClearwater.com).

I look forward to all that we will continue to accomplish together as a community!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jennifer Poirrier". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jennifer Poirrier  
City Manager

### About Our Bright and Beautiful City

Clearwater, Fla., is a progressive city that is committed to enhancing residents' lives while preserving a heritage that is rich in culture and exquisite in landscape. Here, you'll find everything you could expect from a tropical paradise.

Fort Harrison as a recuperation center for soldiers, and not as a defensive fort. It was located on the bluffs where Harbor Oaks neighborhood is located now. The fort was abandoned in 1841 and is commemorated by a plaque on Druid Road.



McMullen brothers: John, David, Malcom, William, Thomas, James and Daniel circa 1870

### Clearwater History

Literally translated "Clear Water" from the Native American "Pocotopaug," the area was named for its abundant fresh springs along the shore. Settled by colonists in the mid-1830s, it was not until the 1890s that Clearwater gained a reputation as a resort community.

When this area was home to only the Native Americans, clear springs gurgled from the banks into the bay. The springs, long since gone, were located along the high bluffs upon which Downtown Clearwater is now situated. Early settlers called it Clear Water Harbor, by which it was known until 1895, when Clearwater became one word. Harbor was dropped in 1906.

During the Seminole Indian Wars of 1835, the government built the original

James Stevens, the "father of Clearwater," and Samuel Stevenson were among the first settlers. After a visit in 1841, James Parramore McMullen and his six brothers settled in the Clearwater area. They and their descendants held many important governmental positions throughout the early years.

Clearwater grew steadily throughout the early part of the century. Tourists and settlers were drawn to the area because of the climate.

**1914:** Morton F. Plant, the son of well-known Henry Plant, donated and raised money for the first hospital.

**May 27, 1915:** The city of Clearwater was incorporated.

**1916:** The first library was built with a grant from Andrew Carnegie.



Construction of the Memorial Causeway bridge leading to Clearwater Beach.

**1916:** The city built the first wooden bridge to Clearwater Beach, opening it up for development.

**1921:** The Capitol Theatre opened in Downtown Clearwater.

**1940:** The Philadelphia Phillies professional baseball team began spring training.

The population continued to steadily climb. After World War II, several soldiers who had trained here returned to live. From 1950, with 15,000 residents, the population continued to grow until it reached the number of citizens that we have today.



Capitol Theatre circa 1921

## Clearwater Today

Today, fun and sun lovers come to Clearwater from around the world. Although the city is a great get-away location, it's an even better place to live. Our community is friendly and socially responsive, and Clearwater is located on the highest coastal bluff in Florida. More than 117,200 residents call Clearwater home.

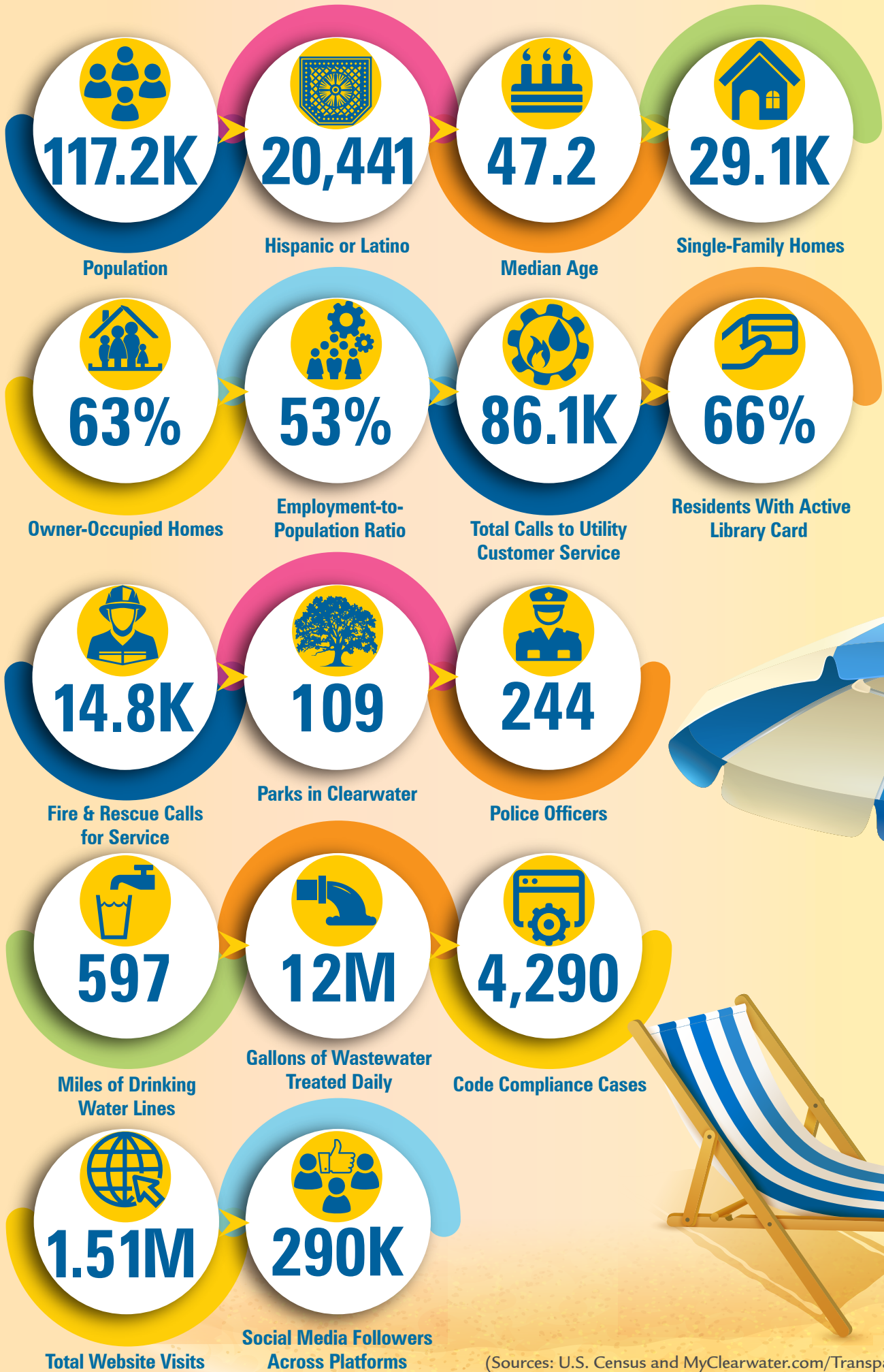
## Our Form of Government

The city of Clearwater is governed by a council/manager form of government with the city council serving as the governing body. The city council is comprised of the mayor and four councilmembers, who each serve four-year terms. The policy-making body of the city is responsible for approving the budget and determining the ad valorem tax rate on all real and personal property within Clearwater city limits.

In addition, councilmembers evaluate the job performance of the city manager and the city attorney, attend city council meetings and special workshops, address topics and initiatives of community interest, serve as the city liaison for county and state boards, and represent the city at ribbon cuttings, opening day festivities, and other events.

The Clearwater City Council offices are located at One Clearwater Tower, sixth Floor, 600 Cleveland St.



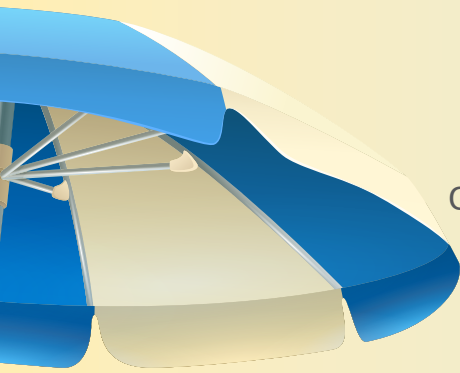
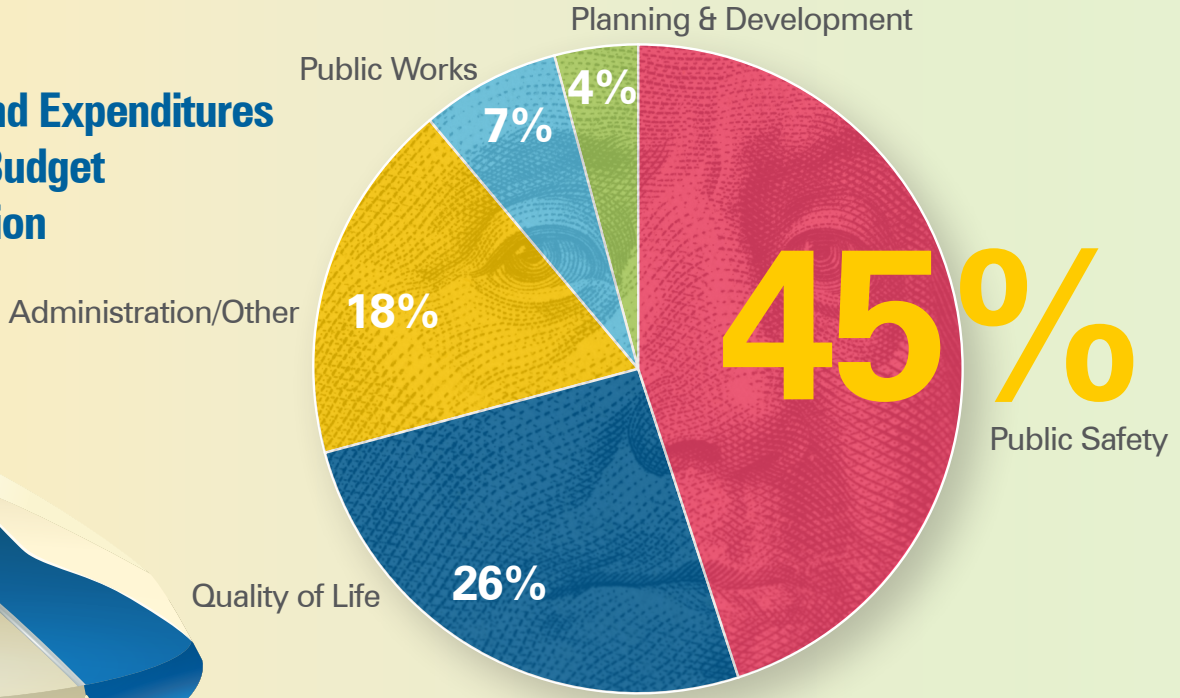


(Sources: U.S. Census and MyClearwater.com/Transparency)

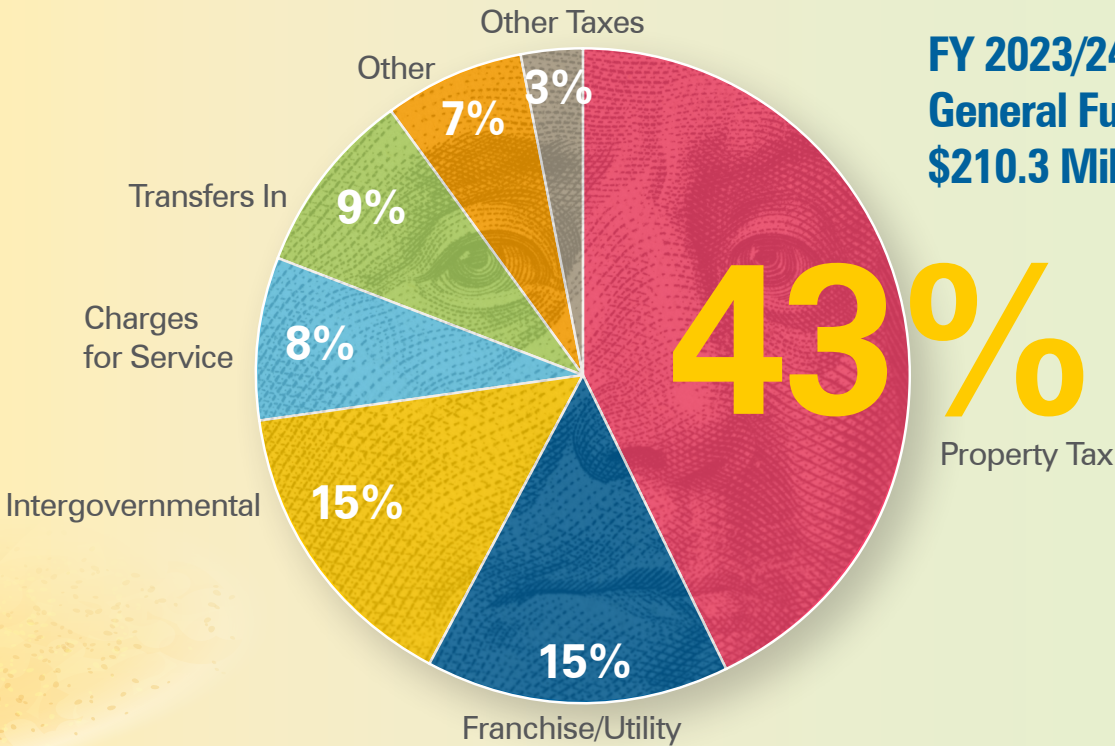
# WHERE THE MONEY GOES

The 2023/24 General Fund budget reflected revenues of \$210.3 million and expenditures of \$210.3 million. The city's approved millage rate is 5.885 mills.

## FY 2023/24 General Fund Expenditures Operating Budget \$210.3 Million



## FY 2023/24 General Fund Revenues \$210.3 Million





# CITY OF CLEARWATER STRATEGIC PLAN

The city of Clearwater's work is driven by our strategic plan with established priorities. Everything we do fits into this work plan.

## VISION

A community that thrives from Bay to Beach.

## MISSION

Clearwater is committed to quality, sustainable, cost-effective municipal services that foster and sustain a healthy residential and economic environment.



## HIGH-PERFORMING GOVERNMENT

Deliver Effective and Efficient Services by Optimizing City Assets and Resources

### OBJECTIVES

- 1.1 Provide evidence-based measurement tools to continually guide municipal performance and promote accountable governance.
- 1.2 Maintain public infrastructure, mobility systems, natural lands, environmental resources, and historic features through systematic management efforts.
- 1.3 Adopt responsive levels of service for public facilities and amenities, and identify resources required to sustain that level of service.
- 1.4 Foster safe and healthy communities in Clearwater through first-class public safety and emergency response services.
- 1.5 Embrace a culture of innovation that drives continuous improvement and successfully serves all our customers.



## ECONOMIC & HOUSING OPPORTUNITY

Foster a Prosperous and Enduring Economy That Promotes Opportunity for All

### OBJECTIVES

- 2.1 Strengthen public-private initiatives that attract, develop, and retain diversified business sectors.
- 2.2 Cultivate a business climate that welcome entrepreneurship, inspires local investment, supports eco-friendly enterprises, and encourages high-quality job growth.
- 2.3 Promote Clearwater as a premier destination for entertainment, cultural experiences, tourism, and national sporting events.
- 2.4 Support equitable housing programs that promote household stability and reduce the incidence of homelessness within Clearwater.
- 2.5 Facilitate partnerships with educational and research institutions to strengthen workforce development opportunities.





## COMMUNITY WELL-BEING

### Ensure Exceptional Communities and Neighborhoods Where Everyone Can Thrive

#### OBJECTIVES

- 3.1 Support neighborhood identity through services and programs that empower community pride and belonging.
- 3.2 Preserve community livability through responsible development standards, proactive code compliance, and targeted revitalization.
- 3.3 Promote marketing and outreach strategies that encourage stakeholder engagement, enhance community education, and build public trust.
- 3.4 Inspire citizen participation through civic engagement and volunteerism to build strong, inclusive, and engaged communities.



## ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

### Implement Proactive Solutions and Emerging Technologies for a Sustainable and Resilient Community

#### OBJECTIVES

- 4.1 Support proactive climate resiliency strategies based in science to protect natural and built environments from impacts associated with sea-level rise.
- 4.2 Adopt renewable resource usage and waste reduction practices to ensure a vibrant city for current and future generations.
- 4.3 Protect the conservation of urban forests and public green spaces to promote biodiversity and reduce our carbon footprint.
- 4.4 Develop accessible and active transportation networks that enhance pedestrian safety and reduce citywide greenhouse gas emissions.



## SUPERIOR PUBLIC SERVICE

### Promote a Diverse and Talented Workforce Through Competitive Opportunity, Employee Wellness, and Rewarding Career Growth

#### OBJECTIVES

- 5.1 Attract and retain top-quality personnel through the maintenance of a competitive compensation program.
- 5.2 Encourage professional development through employee educational opportunities, skills-based training, and leadership succession planning.
- 5.3 Generate organizational success through collaborative engagement and inclusive decision-making to create shared value outcomes.
- 5.4 Enhance employee health and productivity through a holistic approach to workplace wellness and benefit resources.

OUR

TOP

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

AS THEY TIE INTO THE CITY'S STRATEGIC PLAN.



**Hurricane Response and Recovery Efforts**

The city of Clearwater coordinated preparedness and emergency management responses and recovery efforts to Tropical Storm Debby and hurricanes Helene and Milton.

Departments across the board were involved in preparing facilities, assessing damage, communicating with residents, restoring operations and serving our community's recovery needs. Clearwater's public safety staff rescued more than 550 residents from The Standard Apartments, one of the biggest rescue efforts in Pinellas County ever. More than 4 million pounds of sand was collected for evaluation and cleaning so it could be returned to the beach. Hundreds of trees were cleaned up following storms, and barrier island stormwater pipes were cleaned of significant sand infill. Parks teams cleared roads, and several different teams worked together to restore our city's services. (1.2, 1.4, 2.3, 3.2, 5.3)

**Beach Marina Construction**

Construction has begun on the Clearwater Beach Marina, and the reconstruction project was approved by the City Council earlier in summer 2024. (1.2, 1.3, 1.5, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3)





### Wastewater Collections System Improvements

Clearwater Public Utilities improved the overall efficiency of the city’s wastewater collections system. More than 6 miles of pipes and 175 sewer laterals were lined, and crews inspected one and two-thirds miles of sewer using specialized cameras that enter sewer pipes. The utility made 65 repairs, coated 367 manholes, and smoke-tested 226 miles of pipe to keep the system operating as efficiently as possible. (1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 3.2 and 4.2).

### Public Transparency Dashboards

The city successfully developed nine departmental public transparency dashboards and published them to the city website. Dashboard topic areas include the City Work Plan, City Housing, Utility Customer Service, Public Communications, Library, Permitting, Code Compliance, Human Resources, and Budget. This effort reflects our commitment to enhancing transparency and efficiency across departments on an ongoing basis. (1.1 and 1.5)

### Sale of Propane Operations

Clearwater Gas System sold its propane gas operations to Suburban Propane for \$4.25 million, which was \$1.85 million (or 175%) more than the business valuation of \$2.4 million. (1.2)

### Water Safety Lessons

In partnership with the Juvenile Welfare Board, Clearwater For Youth and Pinellas County Schools, the city provided a total of 3,828 water safety lessons to 839 students across four Clearwater elementary schools as part of their physical education curriculum. (1.4, 2.5)

### Clearwater Gas Milestone

The city celebrated 100 years of the Clearwater Gas System’s success, and we launched a rebrand to celebrate this important milestone. (1.2)

### Fire Station 46

The city completed construction on and opened new Fire Station 46 on Clearwater Beach. (1.2)

### North Beach Stormwater Improvements

The Public Works Department successfully developed and implemented a temporary stormwater pump system and a multitude of stormwater system improvements on North Clearwater Beach to reduce flooding issues during rain events. (1.2 and 3.2)





### Coachman Park and The BayCare Sound Successes

The city successfully managed a full year of events and programs at Coachman Park and the music venue, and we secured a 10-year naming rights sponsorship agreement with BayCare for The BayCare Sound. Clearwater approved the first amendment to our Ruth Eckerd Hall agreement for venue management, and we executed an agreement with The Market Marie to introduce monthly revenue-generating programming at Coachman Park. In addition, the city was honored with awards from CREW Tampa Bay for our reimagining of Coachman Park. The awards were in the categories of “Industry Excellence in Design” and “Industry Excellence for Community Impact.” (2.1, 2.2, 2.3 and 5.3)





### **Economic Development Opportunities for Our City**

The city sponsored the Florida West Coast Certified Commercial Investment Members monthly board meeting, which drew 50 elite commercial real estate brokers to BayCare Ballpark to hear the mayor share about redevelopment and business site location opportunities in Clearwater and view the city’s conceptual U.S. 19 redevelopment video created in 2023. The city’s economic development team also led the Pinellas Realtor Organization’s bus tour, which provided the opportunity to showcase Clearwater’s mix of residential, retail and employments assets for future investment, business recruitment, relocation, and expansion opportunities to 40 commercial real estate brokers (2.1, 2.3, 3.3).

### **Clearwater Gardens Affordable Housing**

The city partnered with Archway Partners to host a groundbreaking celebration for Clearwater Gardens, which will transform the site of a former dilapidated inn into an 81-unit affordable apartment community. The \$32 million project is funded, in part, by Clearwater Community Redevelopment Agency and the city’s SHIP and HOME loans administered by the Clearwater Economic Development and Housing Department. Upon completion, Clearwater Gardens will be a four-story midrise apartment building consisting of one- and two-bedroom units that provide high-quality housing to households whose incomes range from 30 to 80 percent of the area median income. (2.4)

### **‘Take Stock In Children’ Program**

The Clearwater Public Library System partnered with the Pinellas Education Foundation and Pinellas County Schools in the “Take Stock in Children” program to assist 20 students from the Clearwater East Community Library to win scholarships for two prepaid years at a Florida college or university. (2.5)





### **North Greenwood Community Redevelopment Area Support**

The city of Clearwater has been working with the North Greenwood community in recent years to support the establishment of the North Greenwood Community Redevelopment Area, which will allocate additional resources to better serve its residents. This fiscal year, the first North Greenwood Citizen Advisory Committee meeting was held, and the city launched an array of grants to support the community. These include residential and commercial grants for those in the CRA. (3.2 and 3.4)

### **New Art and Murals**

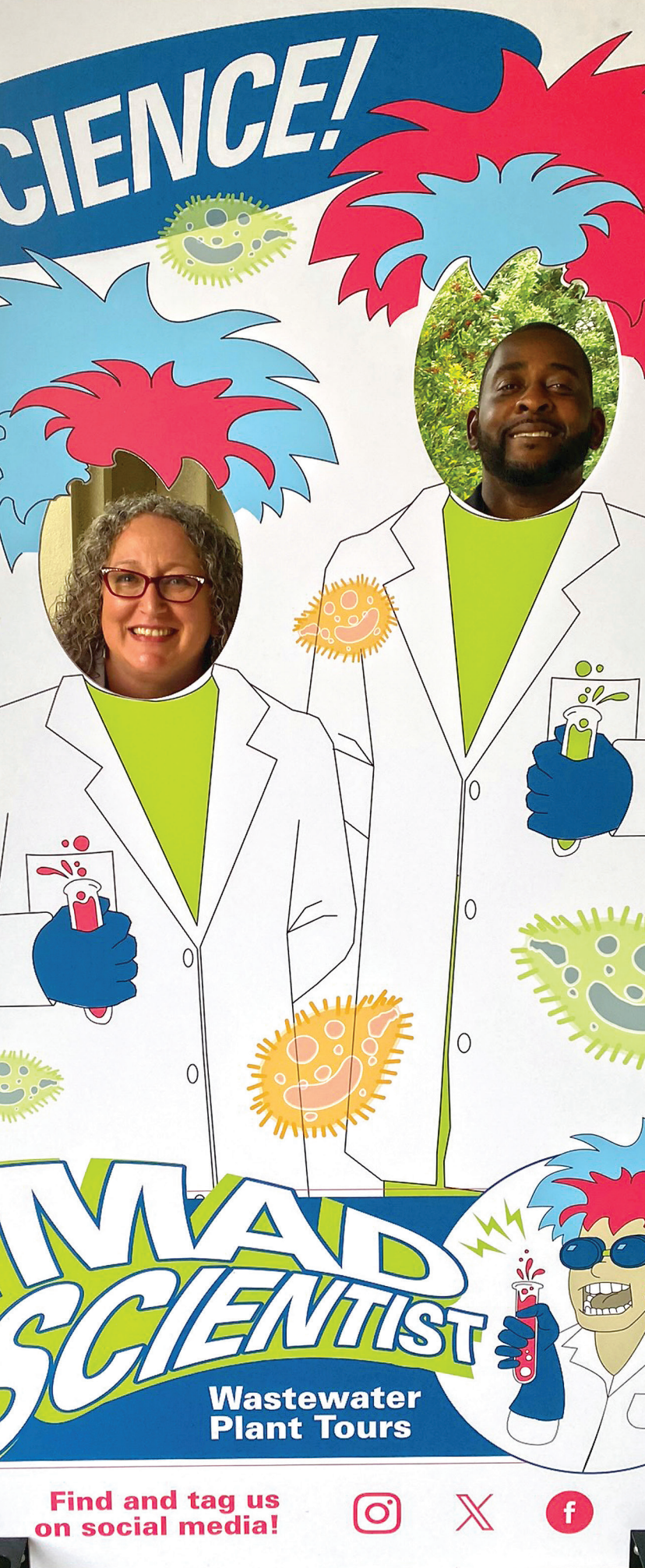
Several new art installations were commissioned across the city. Art called “Florida Fauna” replaced 25-year-old art on the Municipal Services Complex parking garage. Three new murals were unveiled at Coachman Park, and “The Wave” was dedicated at Fire Station 46 on Clearwater Beach. And finally, the city received a \$30,000 grant from The National Endowment of the Arts, which was used to commission “Tailing,” which is a mural painted on two large Clearwater water tanks along State Road 580. (3.1)

### **Planning Comprehensive Plan**

The Planning and Development Department developed and implemented Clearwater 2045, the city’s new comprehensive plan, which was adopted this fiscal year.

### **Water and Wastewater Plant Tours**

Teams engaged with the city’s utility customers by opening the city’s water and wastewater plants to our public. Utilities crews hosted three themed open-house and tour events at the city’s water facilities: RO1’s 20th birthday in fall 2023, “Mad Scientist” at the Marshall Street WRF in spring 2024 and “May the 4th Be With You” in summer 2024. The Clearwater Main Library provided Star Wars-themed crafts and water facts for the summer event, and librarians coordinated a visit from fully-costumed members of the Rebel Legion/501st Legion Star Wars charity costuming group. About 400 members of the public attended all three tours combined (3.3 and 3.4).



### Recycling Successes

The city continued to see successes with its reformed recycling program. From Oct. 1, 2023, through Sept. 30, 2024, solid waste and recycling crews collected more than 8,856 tons of single-stream recyclables from our customers and processed it through Waste Connections. The city earned revenue sharing with our recycling processor, yielding a rebate/credit of more than \$173,040 between December 2023 and mid-August 2024. The city also secured a contract with WestRock in March 2024 for the recycling of our old, corrugated cardboard, which resulted in more than \$117,262 of funds that went back into the recycling fund. (4.2, 1.1, and 1.3)

### Solar Energy Progress

The city retired its second batch of more than 10,530 renewable energy certificates through Duke Energy's Clean Energy Connection Program. This allowed for some of the city's operating electricity to be powered by solar, equivalent to about 10.5 million kilowatt hours. The sustainability and General Support Services teams selected the first municipal solar installations sites at Morningside Recreation Center, General Services Complex, Solid Waste Transfer Station and Clearwater Gas Complex to be installed with just over \$2 million of American Recovery Plan Act funds. And in addition, the city's support of the Pinellas Solar Co-op 2023 program enabled more than 28 Clearwater homes to go solar (or be in the process to), along with other co-op members. This effort also involved educating residents and small business owners about solar energy through workshops, outreach events and digital media. (4.2, 1.2, 1.5, 3.3 and 5.2)

### Vulnerability Assessment

A citywide vulnerability assessment was completed with funding from a Florida Department of Environmental Protection grant. A digital twin of Clearwater was built to identify risks related to flood and heat in the years ahead, and it will generate recommendations for mitigation and adaptation. (4.1 and 1.1)

### Community Rating System Score Improvement

The city reduced its Community Rating System score to 5, which provides residents a 25 percent savings on flood insurance. (4.1 and 1.4)



### Investment in Our Employees

- Successfully implemented a formal classification and compensation study for Classified Non-SAMP (formerly CWA) and SAMP employees.
- Reported positive trends with employee vacancy rate (at 7.7%) and projected turnover rate (at 9.6%) which are the lowest metrics since 2020.
- Implemented a new learning management system, MyClearwater Learn, which includes deep integration with LinkedIn Learning offering thousands of online training courses.
- Researched and developed a customized curriculum, and launched the inaugural cohort of the Clearwater Executive Leadership Academy to develop future Clearwater leaders. (5.1, 5.2 and 5.3)

### Police Training & Recruitment

- Instituted a pre-academy program for agency-sponsored police cadets scheduled to attend the police academy. That boost in training will help better ensure cadets' success at the academy and longevity in the department. Clearwater Police Department also initiated a teen academy program for youth interested in learning more about a potential law enforcement career. In addition, the department began using the police aide program as a recruiting tool for police officer positions, and we began offering more academy sponsorships to qualified officer candidates. (5.2 and 1.4)
- The police department enhanced its recruiting efforts to continue to attract a quality workforce. They produced a new recruitment video, updated their website, and used social media to help recruit potential candidates. (1.4 and 5.1)
- Clearwater Police Department made several advances in its training program. For example, they participated in multi-agency, countywide training on active assailants, and they transitioned from an online legal training system to one produced in-house that better targets their needs and issues. The department also created a more robust field training program for new supervisors to ensure their success.

### Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Efforts

The city increased its Diversity, Equity and Inclusion activities and events, such as Unclassified SAMP Leadership Training, LGBTQIA Youth Pride and Family Day, Pride Breakfast, Juneteenth Community Events, Juneteenth Luncheon, Pride Parade, Diversity Poster Contest, Latin Dance Class, Diversity Week, National Hispanic Heritage Contest. (5.3)

### Wellness Program Successes

Clearwater achieved four awards for the city's wellness program: 2023 Gold Cigna Healthy Workforce Designation, 2024 Healthiest Employers, 2024 Gold Bell Seal Mental Health Award, and 2024 American Heart Association Gold Level Well-being Works Better. (5.4)







THERE ARE SO MANY WAYS TO

# STAY IN TOUCH WITH WHAT'S HAPPENING IN CLEARWATER.



### Follow Us on Social Media

- [Facebook.com/CityOfClearwater](https://www.facebook.com/CityOfClearwater)
- [Facebook.com/ClearwaterPolice](https://www.facebook.com/ClearwaterPolice)
- [X.com/MyClearwater](https://www.x.com/MyClearwater)
- [X.com/MyClearwaterPD](https://www.x.com/MyClearwaterPD)
- [Instagram.com/MyClearwater](https://www.instagram.com/MyClearwater)
- [Nextdoor.com](https://www.nextdoor.com)



### Stream City Meetings

- [YouTube.com/MyClearwater](https://www.youtube.com/MyClearwater)
- [MyClearwater.com/CouncilMeetings](https://www.myclearwater.com/CouncilMeetings)
- Facebook Live @CityOfClearwater



### Subscribe to 'MyClearwater News' and Other Newsletters

- [MyClearwater.com/Alerts](https://www.myclearwater.com/Alerts)



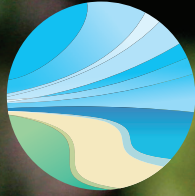
### Join an Advisory Board

- [MyClearwater.com/AdvisoryBoard](https://www.myclearwater.com/AdvisoryBoard)



The Clearwater community went through a lot this past year after hurricanes Helene and Milton ravaged parts of our bright and beautiful city. The city's leaders and staff are committed to our residents and businesses. As recovery efforts continue, staff will continue working hard to restore our city to what it was prior to the storms. Our city will remain strong and resilient, bright and beautiful, from bay to beach.





# CLEARWATER

BRIGHT AND BEAUTIFUL · BAY TO BEACH

