



TOP REASONS TO BE A PROUD CLEARWATER RESIDENT



State of the City, 2012

When city leaders developed their vision of our city 12 years ago, no one guessed that the robust economy we had come to expect would alter so radically within the decade. But in those prosperous times, the priorities of a vision that included Public Safety, Economic Development, Infrastructure, Quality of Life and Human Resources, provided a strong forum to help the city weather leaner times.

Now, several years into the recession, the vision's core still serves as a guide, though diminished revenues and subsequent deep cuts to staff, services and programs have altered many of its goals and necessitated jettisoning some.

Clearwater's economic future is still uncertain, although some indicators, such as an increase in Pinellas County tourism, home values that have once again begun to rise and job numbers that are more positive than those of recent years, point to recovery, however slow.

In 2012, we had reason to be cautiously optimistic, as projected revenue shortfalls to the General Fund came in smaller than anticipated, and we were able to keep the city's millage rate unchanged for a third year. With help from reserves set aside for such circumstances, no additional cuts to city services or staff were made, and all employees received a small cost of living allowance.

We have worked to contain steep rises in employee costs. Increases in the city's contributions to its pension fund were becoming unsustainable, so changes to the fund were proposed and were subsequently passed by the voters. In addition, we partnered with the City of Dunedin to provide a larger patient pool for the city's Employee Health Clinic, making improvements to the clinic to accommodate the increased traffic and reducing health insurance costs for both jurisdictions.

We also capitalized on opportunities and developed partnerships to consolidate resources and streamline work. While these are altering the outcome of the city's vision, the changes are largely for the better. One outstanding example was the celebration of our Coast Guard City designation as we continue working with that most visible and vital organization to our waterfront community.

We formed other partnerships to solve pressing social issues. We are working with many agencies to reduce Clearwater's incidence of homelessness: our own Police, the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office, the Public Defender's Office, Directions for Living, the Homeless Emergency Project, Religious Community Services, and the Salvation Army. The Jack Russell Stadium site is now an athletic field for North Greenwood children thanks to a partnership with the Tampa Bay Buccaneers and Clearwater for Youth.

Still other partnerships provided huge potential for tourist dollars and increased commerce downtown including the city's purchase and renovation of the Capitol Theatre with entertainment management of Ruth Eckerd Hall and Clearwater Marine Aquarium's Dolphin Tale Experience.

The city's climate and beautiful beaches continue to provide a backdrop for top flight events such as Jazz Holiday, the Sea Blues Festival, the Superboat Championship and the Hispanic Heritage Concert.

In addition, we played a key role in the Republican National Convention, providing hotel accommodations for delegates and receiving national media attention prior to the general election with the Dolphin Pod at Pier 60 Exhibition.

Clearly, none of this would have been possible without wise leadership from our Mayor and City Council and a team of loyal and highly-skilled employees, all of whom go the extra mile to be sure Clearwater citizens' needs are met in a timely and efficient manner.

We are still facing many challenges, but working to implement sensible solutions aimed at enhancing the city's economic prospects. Examples include upcoming projects funded with federal, state, county, Penny for Pinellas and city dollars such as improvements to Pier 60, one of our most outstanding attractions. Several key recreational parks and trail amenities will also be expanded, outdoor assets that keep our quality of life high and serve as attractors for those who would settle and start businesses here.

The pages which follow, detail how each department has responded in creative and innovative ways to the challenges of these difficult times. We invite you to see how your tax investment ensures that Clearwater remains a sparkling city in which to live, learn, work and play.

Office of Management and Budget

City Council adopted 2012/13 Annual Operating and Capital Improvement Budget and maintained the same millage rate of 5.1550 mills for the 2012/13 fiscal year, the same millage rate as the last three fiscal years. • Received the Government Finance Officers Association's Distinguished Budget Presentation Award for the 26th consecutive year. • Met compliance with the State of Florida "Truth-in-Millage" process and all City and State compliance budget processes for fiscal year 2011/12. • Completed the biennial update of the Revenue Manual, a reference tool for revenues received by the city for departments, the City Council and administration.

Clearwater Customer Service

More than 591,000 utility bills were issued. More than 98 percent of them were billed within three days of scheduled date. More than \$138 million in revenues were billed, and more than 539,000 customer payments were processed. • Performed more than 777,000 water and gas meter readings, with an accuracy rate of 99.92 percent. A meter reading error rate of less than one error per 1,000 meters read was achieved. • Received more than 119,000 customer telephone calls, answered more than 83 percent in 30 seconds or less, with less than 2 percent abandoned call rate (customer hang-ups before calls are answered). • Continued to provide responsible collection of past due and final billed receivables. Despite the down economy, CCS achieved a bad debt rate of 0.12 percent (uncollectible write-off as a percentage of total billed revenues). • Continued to partner with AARP Foundation to have seniors staff customer information/reception area in the Municipal Services Building atrium. • Worked with the Salvation Army and utility customers who contribute to the We Care Fund, to provide 226 customers temporary assistance in paying their City of Clearwater utility bills.

Economic Development & Housing

Tourism public relations yielded 196 media placements with a \$3 million advertising value. Tourism had a total impact to our economy of \$1.3 billion with an 8 percent increase in number of visitors and 13 percent increase in direct expenditures. • Began implementation of the city's Economic Development Strategic Plan. \$200,000 in CRA funds was identified for use as incentives to encourage growth of IT/software firms as part of a Technology District in downtown. As part of the business Retention & Expansion Program, new protocols were established and 30 site-visits were conducted. Clearwater was marketed nationally as part of Front Row Tampa Bay, a promotion during the Republican National Convention. • Developed the East Gateway Vision Plan and Fiscal Year 2012-17 Five-Year Action Program. • Began implementation of the Homeless Initiative. • Processed 14 rehabilitation loans and 13 downpayment assistance loans totaling \$506,162 which leveraged \$3,800,410 in private funds. • Restructured Palmetto Park apartments \$1 million loan (192 multi-family units); provided an \$800,000 rehabilitation loan to Prospect Towers (208 senior housing units); and provided a \$725,000 loan to HEP West Veterans Apartments (32 units) for construction.

Engineering

Installed two electric car charging stations in the downtown Garden Avenue Garage. • Completed conversion of all metered beach parking lots to paystations with multiple payment options. • Completed the Gulf to Bay/Highland intersection improvement project, providing a gateway entrance to downtown. • Completed the design of the Hillcrest/Brookhill and Wood Valley traffic calming projects. • Completed construction of Cleveland Streetscape Phase 2. • Constructed 72,810 square feet of sidewalks. • Lined 8,510 feet of deteriorating storm sewers. • Improved water quality in Prospect Lake by removing all accumulated alum sludge. • Completed a city-wide sidewalk inventory.

Finance

Completed a refinancing of Stormwater System Revenue bonds for an aggregate debt service reduction of \$4.2 million and a net present value savings of \$2.9 million. • Received an annual rebate from BOA on City P-card and E-Pay purchases of \$122,000. • Realized cash pool investment earnings that were 112 basis points

in excess of the cash pool's customized benchmark, representing approximately \$3.7 million in additional City earnings due to out-performing the benchmark. • Received the Government Finance Officers Association's Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting for the 33rd consecutive year.

Clearwater Fire & Rescue

Command staff completed extensive Blue Card Incident Commander Certification program. • Acquired arson dog and trained inspector for Inspections and Investigations Bureau. • Modernized vehicle fleet with replacements for Engine 48 and Rescue 46. • Acquired two new loaner jet skis from the Kawasaki dealer for the Marine Rescue Team. • Acquired four rescue boards for the Marine Rescue Team. • Trained staff and deployed upgraded advanced life support monitors and defibrillators. • Approved construction design and contract for replacement of Main Fire station with groundbreaking in February 2013.

Clearwater Gas System

Connected the 20,000th active gas customer in April 2012, and ended the fiscal year at 20,029, the highest level ever achieved. This doubles the number of gas customers served since 1990. • Opened the new Natural Gas Fueling Station to the public in January 2012. When opened, this was the largest public NGV fueling station in the Southeast U.S. Currently have about 35 vehicles fueling at this station on a regular basis. • Achieved a Clearwater Gas System Total Operating Income of \$9.5 million for fiscal year 2011/12, which is the highest level ever achieved. • Total Gas Sales (Natural and Propane Gas) reached 22.3 million equivalent therms for fiscal year 2011/12, which is also the highest level ever achieved.

Human Resources

Entered into an agreement with the City of Dunedin to share the Employee Health Center, resulting in cost savings. • Increased efficiency and accountability with implementation of the Kronos time management system. • Pension Referendum passed by voters which should result in substantial savings to the City.

Information Technology

Expanded public WiFi access and field mobility solutions. • Upgraded various servers and storage. • Installed enterprise video monitoring system. • Implemented mobile permit inspection system. • Implemented data security and "bring your own device" policies. • Implemented major upgrades to the city's asset management system and utility billing system. • Upgraded city phone switching infrastructure. • Upgraded enterprise email system.

Internal Audit

City Audit performed 20 revenue audits that reviewed more than \$12 million to ensure receipt of all revenue lawfully entitled. • Revenue audits resulted in \$23,500 recovered that will produce an additional \$55,000 in annual recurring revenue. • Thirty internal department and program audits (reviewed approximately \$20 million in expenditures) produced more than 80 recommendations with the potential to increase annual revenues more than \$250,000.

Clearwater Public Library System

Completed a new strategic plan. • Began working with the St. Petersburg College Clearwater Campus on a joint use library incorporating the East Branch into a new college library. • Expanded the e-book collection to better meet the public's needs. • Formed a partnership with the North Greenwood Recreation Center, Neighborhood Services, and the Boys and Girls Club to provide better community service at the North Greenwood Branch. • Began a "roving reference" project that provided librarians with tablet computers so they could circulate in the shelves, assisting patrons more effectively. • Digitized the *Clearwater Sun* morgue and microfilm collection so that it can be made available online next year. • During the Summer Reading program, more than 27,000 days were spent reading by more than 1,600 kids this summer, a 42 percent increase over last year. • Checked out 1,150,168 items, including 50,595 downloadable books or music files, to 80,360 registered borrowers. • Saw 836,919 visitors to all library locations. • 150 public access computers were used 180,410 times last year.

Marine & Aviation

The Beach Marina improvements are underway with the addition of a full service restaurant and relocation of the Harbor Master's Office to the first floor. • The Clearwater Harbor Marina doubled last year's profits, bringing in more than \$200,000. Occupancy rate rose to 79 percent with 90 slips rented out of the 114 slips available. • The Airpark completed and rented the second 9,000-square-foot corporate hangar. Hours of operation were extended. • Remodeling began at the Seminole Launch Ramp with resurfacing of all ramps and cement catwalks; repairs to the seawall; and replacing the seawall cap. Boat launching and retrieval will be expedited and safety will be improved. • City was recognized by Congress as a Coast Guard City; worked with the local USCG Auxiliary flotilla on a new office, watch center and classroom at Sand Key Park.

Official Records & Legislative Services

Added more than 16,000 documents to Laserfiche. • Domestic Partnership Registration was initiated with 32 registrations.

Parks & Recreation

Partnered with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Community Development Block Grant program to construct a multiple use field in the North Greenwood Community. • Began partnership with Morton Plant Mease to implement a Youth Sports Initiative addressing the education and needs of participants in youth sports. • Established a partnership with the MLK Neighborhood Family Center, Boys and Girls Clubs of the Suncoast, to provide programming at the North Greenwood Recreation and Aquatic Complex. • Partnered with the Clearwater Regional Chamber of Commerce to coordinate the Dolphin Pod exhibit at Pier 60 Park. • Coordinated 37,401 volunteer hours in fiscal year 2011/12. • Enrolled 1,200 SilverSneakers members. • Constructed new Beach Lifeguard Towers. • Remodeled the Pier 60 restroom/concession. • More than 473,000 visits to recreation centers were counted last year. • 450 children attended summer camp programs each week and 1,600 participated in life safety swim classes. • The Philadelphia Phillies broke their all-time attendance record with 157,892 attendees for the 2012 spring season.

Planning and Development

Implemented major changes due to the recommendations of the Business Task Force. • Implemented major changes to the sign code pursuant to joint staff/Clearwater Regional Chamber of Commerce coordination. • Received an award for Beach Walk as a Great Florida Place. • Staff completed customer service training. • Reorganized to a Customer Service Center structure. • Initiated a major study analyzing U.S. 19 Redevelopment and an Economic Development Strategy. • The City of Clearwater was awarded the Charles A. McIntosh, Jr. Award of Distinction for the Clearwater Greenprint: A Framework for a Competitive, Vibrant, Green. This award recognizes outstanding achievement in the community and is the highest honor given by the Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council. The award highlights projects that provide excellence in the region and exhibit distinction in regional visioning.

Police

Operation Graduation program won the 2012 IACP/Cisco Systems Community Policing and the Florida Police Chiefs Association's "Rocky Pomerance Law Enforcement Excellence Award." • Created an online crime reporting system allowing the public to file certain types of reports at a time that is best for them without having to wait for an officer. • The Police and Solid Waste Departments started Operation Safe Disposal during the holidays to create safe places to drop off boxes from big ticket items reducing the chances of criminals targeting locations where those containers were left out. • Launched Operation Identification to increase awareness of the importance of marking your valuables and increasing the chances of recovering stolen property. • Created a Cold Case Unit to have an additional resource to focus on open homicide cases including a thorough review and resubmission of evidence testing.

• Communication Center employees and Police Training Program attained state certification.

Public Communications

Actively engaged with Internet users through social media accounts ([facebook.com/cityofclearwater](https://www.facebook.com/cityofclearwater), [facebook.com/clearwaterpolice](https://www.facebook.com/clearwaterpolice), Public Safety Twitter account, Flickr photo sharing, Pinterest and FourSquare). • Coordinated the 11th annual Citizens Academy, one of many programs designed to encourage residents' involvement with city government. • Produced and directed a "Candidate's Forum" to help the public make an informed decision when voting for a new Mayor. • Coordinated the first "Coast Guard City" celebration with partner agencies including the Clearwater Regional Chamber of Commerce and the U.S. Coast Guard. • Arranged the city's sponsorship of a Southeastern Guide Dog called Coastie, named in recognition of the city's designation as a Coast Guard City. • Strengthened and empowered the community through active dialogue and communication with Clearwater residents, businesses and visitors using print publications, the city's website, and C-VIEW TV. Publications include *Sunshine Lines* and *MyClearwater* magazine. Provided live cablecasts and streaming video of City Council meetings, work sessions and some board meetings.

Public Utilities

Supplied 4.2 billion gallons of clean, safe drinking (potable) water; treated more than 5.3 billion gallons of wastewater; and delivered nearly 2.3 billion gallons of reclaimed water for irrigation and other non-potable uses. • Expanded number of wellfields to produce more water locally and reduce reliance on water from Pinellas County. • Saved an estimated \$688,000 on construction projects by using in-house construction inspection rather than subcontracting the work. • Water reclamation facilities have saved nearly \$330,000. • Swept more than 32,000 miles of streets to remove almost 4,000 tons of pollutants that would have been transported by runoff to bays and beaches. • Inspected more than nine miles and cleaned more than 23 miles of storm pipe. • Mowed nearly 39 miles by machine and cut by hand more than 11 miles of ditch vegetation to maintain the flow of stormwater from roadways and developed properties.

Solid Waste

All garbage and recycling routes were collected on schedule without delay. Solid Waste collected approximately 8,500 tons of recyclables. Of that recycling total, 5,960 tons of recyclables were collected in Clearwater, thus avoiding disposal costs of \$223,500 while generating approximately \$780,000 from the sale of recyclables. • Set up and implemented a Single Stream Recycling Pilot Program for 1,200 homes. • Converted 644 residences from manual to automated solid waste collection which improves productivity and eliminates injuries associated with manual collection. • Hosted 12 e-waste drop-off events that allowed the citizens of Clearwater the ability to recycle more than 42 tons of hazardous e-waste. Additionally, Solid Waste staff removed another 71 tons of e-waste from the waste stream with curbside collection. • Purchased seven compressed natural gas solid waste collection vehicles, decreasing dependence on foreign petroleum products and reducing the department's carbon footprint. • Through safety training and the accident review committee, reduced claims by 18 percent from the most recent five-year average.

General Services

Maintained all Public Safety vehicles during the Republican National Convention. • Reorganized and maintained productivity after eliminating three mechanics from Fleet and nine workers (plumbers, electricians, tradesworkers) from Building Maintenance. • Secured numerous free training courses to maintain the knowledge of equipment without spending money. • Completed retrofit of 20 facilities to reduce the use of electricity for lighting, air conditioning and pool pumps.



George N. Cretekos, Mayor
Paul F. Gibson, Councilmember
Doreen Hock-DiPolito, Councilmember
Bill Jonson, Councilmember
Jay Polglaze, Councilmember