

HISTORY

In the early 16th century the Clearwater area was known for its many fresh water springs that bubbled up along the shoreline. The Timucuan Indians called this area “Pocotopaug” meaning “Clear Water”. The area was first visited by the white men in 1528. This was 37 years before St. Augustine (1565), 79 years before Jamestown (1607), and 92 years before the Pilgrims landed at Plymouth Rock (1620).

On April 15, 1528, Panfilo de Narvaez, a Spanish explorer, landed with 600 soldiers and five ships, which was 15 years after Ponce de Leon had discovered Florida. De Narvaez found here a large tribe of Indians, which his army drove out. The Indians recaptured their territory, however, and held it until conquered in the Seminole Wars of 1835-42.

Fort Harrison was built in 1841 on the bluffs overlooking the harbor, and then called Clear Water Harbor, the present site of Clearwater. The fort was named for General William Henry Harrison, who became the President Harrison. It was used as an outpost encampment for soldiers stationed at Fort Brook (now Tampa), which was abandoned when the wars ended a few months later, and the territory was then opened by the Federal Government for homesteading under the Armed Occupation Act. This meant the homesteads would be granted to settlers willing to bear arms for protection against the still-hostile Indians hiding in the area.

James Stevens was the first of the homesteaders, staking out the fort and its surrounding areas as his claim. He was granted the first land title in 1842. This was the real beginning of the Clearwater of today. For years, a plaque at the entrance of the famed “Brown Estate”, on the waterfront bluff in Harbor Oaks, marked the site of Fort Harrison.

The early settlement, which adopted the name of Clear Water Harbor, grew slowly for several years as an agricultural and fishing community. The only outside contacts were made either by horse-and-buggy, wagon, by foot to Tampa, or by sailboat 100 miles up the Gulf to Cedar Key.

In the early 1850’s, the first area school, the Taylor School, was built in the vicinity of the present Druid Road and Hercules Avenue. The first school house within the community of Clear Water Harbor was built in 1883. The first post office was established on August 20, 1859. According to the U.S. Post Office Department, Clearwater became one word on January 19, 1895, and Harbor was dropped from the name on February 28, 1906. A Baptist minister established the first newspaper, named the Clear Water Times, in July 1873.

The first hotel, the Orange Bluff, was built in 1880. A second hotel, the Sea View, followed a short time later in the early 1880’s. It stood near the site now occupied by the City’s main library. The railroad was built through Clear Water Harbor in 1888, which became known as the Atlantic Coast Line.

Clear Water Harbor was incorporated in 1891. Clearwater Harbor received a special charter in 1897. Clearwater was chartered as a municipality on May 27, 1915. The act creating Pinellas County was passed by the State Legislature in May 1911. Clearwater became the county seat.

The first ice factory was built here in 1900. It was purchased by the City in 1910. The first public dock and pavilion were built at the foot of Cleveland Street in 1902. The telephone exchange was established in 1903. The library was built on the bluff in 1916 where the new library sits today. In 1911, the first city hall with fire station was built at 29 North Fort Harrison Avenue.

A wooden bridge from Seminole Street to Clearwater Beach was built in 1916 with a hand-cranked rotating boat passage. On November 11, 1927, Memorial Causeway was dedicated, extending from Cleveland Street to the beach with a double lift bridge to accommodate the Intercoastal waterway. The major East/West connector, Gulf-to-Bay Boulevard also was opened in 1927. In 2005, the new high level Clearwater Memorial Bridge opened replacing the former draw bridge.

The City of Clearwater turned 100 on May 27, 2015. To celebrate the occasion, at least one Centennial event was planned for each month of the year in 2015. These events included concerts, a parade, and art displays which drew record crowds. A centennial logo was created to promote this year to remember, and a pictorial history book was made which is available for order at www.clearwatercentennial.com. A 48-foot-tall monument was constructed at the western end of the Courtney Campbell Causeway to celebrate the city’s incorporation 100 years ago. With a design that has depicts historical elements from downtown Clearwater, this monument is a beacon for the city.

Source: Clearwater Historical Society.

CITY OVERVIEW

Clearwater is situated on the Pinellas Peninsula midway on Florida's west coast. It is directly located on the Gulf of Mexico, 20 miles west of Tampa and 20 miles north of St. Petersburg. Clearwater is the county seat of Pinellas County and one of the largest cities in the Tampa Bay Area. The City is known for its high coastal bluffs, commanding a magnificent double waterfront view of the Intercoastal Waterway and the Gulf of Mexico.

Situated in a semitropical zone, Clearwater enjoys nearly ideal weather the year round with an average yearly temperature of 74 degrees Fahrenheit. Mild winters and warm summers, tempered by the cooling afternoon rains and southerly prevailing winds off the Gulf attract millions of vacationers.

Tourism is the City's largest industry; however Clearwater is home to a wide range of businesses including computer components, aircraft technology, surgical instruments, and data communication.

Transportation available to Clearwater includes, the St. Petersburg-Clearwater International Airport which has direct flights to convenient destinations throughout the United States and Canada. Fifteen minutes to the east, Tampa International Airport serves destinations worldwide and is recognized as one of the most efficient in the world. The Clearwater Airpark, which is slightly over a mile from the downtown business section, provides service and maintenance for private plane owners. The Airpark has one 4,100 foot hard-surface runway and hangar facilities for visiting and locally based aircraft. An improvement that will help the Airpark remain competitive in the market place is the installation of an automated weather observation system. This improvement will make it safer for planes that already are allowed to use the Airpark. The Clearwater Airpark received the 2014 Florida General Aviation Airport of the Year award from the Florida Department of Transportation, topping 111 general aviation airports in the state. Ground transportation is provided through the Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority (PSTA) bus service which offers 32 local routes, two express routes which cross Tampa Bay for service to downtown Tampa and a Trolley that runs north and south along Pinellas County's barrier islands. The Clearwater Jolley Trolley also provides transportation on Clearwater Beach with daily routes along North and South Clearwater Beach, Island Estates, and Sand Key. In 2010, the Jolley Trolley began the Coastal Route that starts at Island Estates and progresses through Downtown Clearwater, into Dunedin, Palm Harbor and ends in Tarpon Springs. This route operates only on Friday thru Sunday. Effective February 2014, Jolley Trolley has added an additional route connecting the city of Safety Harbor and Westfield Mall (Countryside Mall) to their coastal route on weekends. This new route will connect through the city of Dunedin.

The Tampa Bay area has a great variety of resources for quality health care including over fifteen hospitals, as well as various nursing home and nursing care communities, health clinics, and doctors in various specialties. Located in Clearwater, Morton Plant Hospital has earned a reputation for being one of the most effective, well-managed hospitals in America. Pinellas County is also home to one of the country's largest blood transfusion service organizations – OneBlood.

In January 2012, the City of Clearwater became one of fourteen cities in the United States to officially be designated a "Coast Guard City" and the only city in Florida to hold the title. The designation, endorsed by Congress and the Coast Guard, is made to recognize the outstanding support the community provides to Coast Guard personnel and their families.

In July 2013, the Clearwater Police Department was awarded the prestigious Excelsior status by the Commission for Florida Law Enforcement Accreditation, Inc. The Clearwater Police Department is one of fewer than two dozen law enforcement agencies in Florida to have been awarded. The Excelsior status means that the department has been reaccredited five times in a row at three-year interims.

To commemorate its' hundred year birthday of its' charter as a municipality, the City constructed a 48 foot tall entryway Centennial Monument on the east end of Gulf to Bay, at the Courtney Campbell Causeway. It's inscribed with "Welcome to Clearwater" and features an illuminated centennial logo near the base and a four foot sun globe at the top with up-lighting.

Clearwater Beach

Clearwater's beach is on an island connected to downtown by palm tree-lined Memorial Causeway—a beautiful drive stretching across scenic Clearwater Harbor. The beach island is also connected to Sand Key and other Gulf beaches by the Clearwater Pass (Sand Key) Bridge. Clearwater Beach, with three miles of glistening powdery white sand and gentle waves, lies directly on the Gulf of Mexico. This beach is one of several in the area that has been included on the Clean Beaches Council Blue Wave list. Clean Beaches is a national nonprofit organization funded by federal, corporate and foundation grants. It sets criteria for cleanliness, safety and environmental health that beaches must meet to make the list. Beach Walk is revitalizing the community that surrounds Clearwater's popular south beach destination. Beach Walk is a winding beachside promenade with lush landscaping, artistic touches and clear views to Clearwater's award-winning beach and the water beyond;

a place where bicyclists, inline skaters and pedestrians all have safe and convenient access and where visitors and locals can socialize, dine, play games, or simply enjoy the spectacular sun and surf. Clearwater has received two awards from the Florida Chapter of the American Planning Association. The first award in 2001 was for Clearwater's Beach by Design which was a redevelopment initiative addressing existing issues of parking and streetscape improvements while developing wholesale reconfiguration and incentives to attract resort development. The City received its second award in 2012 which was for its Clearwater Beach Walk being recognized in the "Great Places in Florida Public Spaces" category. This project was a redevelopment initiative that has transformed the look and feel of south Clearwater Beach.

The Clearwater Beach Marina is a 203-slip facility on the intercoastal waterway of Clearwater Harbor. The Marina serves nearly 600 transient boaters each year, provides fuel for thousands more and is home to about 50 commercial tenants on a long-term basis. Centrally located at the entrance to Clearwater Beach, the Marina is a hub for water sports activities, entertainment, and attractions that serve over 1.2 million visitors to Clearwater annually. Also available at the Marina are a bait house, seafood restaurant and oyster bar, and a free fishing pier. The Marina houses the largest fishing fleet on the west coast of Florida.

Fishing is a big business and a popular past time in Florida. Visitors may be interested in chartering one of many boats from the marina for deep-sea fishing. Clearwater also offers an abundance of prime fishing off its piers, bridges, and beaches. Although Florida is not limited to a fishing season, fish such as snook, snapper, and others have a designated time of year in which they may be kept. Florida requires licenses for both fresh and saltwater fishing.

Just across the street on the Gulf of Mexico, the Marina manages Pier 60, a 1,080-foot observation and fishing facility with a bait house, snack bar and restrooms. Pier 60 is also the site of "Sunsets at Pier 60" every night from two hours before until two hours after sunset. Between February 1st and Labor Day, artisans and performers are featured. The three acre Pier 60 Park features a concession stand, covered play area, restrooms and a pavilion for special events, concerts and continuous visitor entertainment. The Clearwater Regional Chamber in partnership with the City of Clearwater and the Clearwater Marine Aquarium created a project to artistically showcase the bottlenose dolphin and draw attention to our area during the 2012 Republican National Convention. The title of the exhibit, "Clearwater's Dolphins, The Pod at Pier 60" showcased seventy individually designed and uniquely decorated, six foot tall dolphin sculptures. The dolphins are now displayed with their sponsors or donated within the community. The locations of all seventy dolphins are outlined on a Dolphin Pod Trail map that is available on the City of Clearwater's website and the Chamber of Commerce.

Events at the beach, including Spring Break, Bright House Superboat National championship, Outback Bowl festivities and the Sunsets at Pier 60 Festival, draw thousands of visitors each year. These events, along with the nearby Clearwater Marine Aquarium and Clearwater Beach Marina, are what led the Travel Channel to name Clearwater one of the "Top 10 Activity Beaches" in the world. New lifeguard towers each with a creative and distinct Florida design are now in use and have become a popular photo opportunity for visitors to Clearwater Beach.

Clearwater is the home of The Clearwater Marine Aquarium. The Aquarium is a non-profit Aquarium dedicated to public education, animal assisted therapy, marine research and the rescue, rehabilitation and release of sick or injured whales, dolphins, otters and sea turtles. The aquarium is the official home of Winter the Dolphin, the star of the movie, "Dolphin Tale" and its sequel, "Dolphin Tale 2". Winter was rescued from the Florida east coast, after her tail was destroyed by a crab trap line. She was transported to the Clearwater Marine Aquarium where the expertise of a dedicated marine biologist, the ingenuity of a brilliant prosthetics doctor and staff performed a groundbreaking miracle. They developed a prosthetic tail which allowed Winter to swim and survive for years to come.

The Clearwater and Pinellas County area offer visitors 35 miles of beautiful beaches, some of which have received prestigious awards. Clearwater Beach was selected as USA Today's "Best Beach Town" in Florida for 2013. An online vote was held to select the winner, and Clearwater Beach received an overwhelming amount of votes – more than twenty five percent of the total votes casted for the ten nominees. In addition, Geologist Dr. Stephen Leatherman, known as Dr. Beach, has designated other local beaches as "America's best beach" including, Caladesi Island in 2008, and Fort DeSoto Park's north beach area in 2005. Sand Key County Park beach has also been named among the "Top 20" best beaches. Clearwater Beach has won the 2014 USA TODAY/10Best Readers' Choice Awards for the title of "Best Place to Watch a Sunset". Clearwater Beach's luxuriously wide sandy beaches draw the locals and visitors for each evening's sunset.

Downtown

Clearwater is seeing its own downtown resurgence, with new residences available within the downtown core, along with new retail/office space. A streetscape project is redefining the city's downtown destination, Cleveland Street, which is envisioned as the central café and retail district for the area. The Downtown Clearwater's website, www.ClevelandStreetDistrict.com, has received the Outstanding Achievement Award in the Government category from New York's Interactive Media Awards (IMA). The Outstanding Achievement award is the second highest honor bestowed by the IMA and an extremely challenging award to win.

Clearwater's waterfront downtown is one of its most attractive and unique assets. Sitting atop a 30-foot bluff overlooking Clearwater Harbor, the downtown combines the best of waterfront living with a walkable urban setting. At the foot of the bluff lies Coachman Park, home to various events that draw tens of thousands to the downtown each year including, Clearwater Jazz Holiday which has been lauded as one of the top 20 events in the Southeast. At the top of the bluff sits the Main Library, a signature building providing spectacular views from four levels as well as an outstanding collection of materials. Public computers and Wi-Fi access help keep the community connected.

Clearwater Harbor Marina, a 126-slip public marina opened September 2010 on the downtown waterfront. With this new facility, downtown Clearwater has achieved an active, dynamic waterfront offering a destination for visitors cruising the Florida coastline and for locals out for a day of fun. The Clearwater Harbor Marina provides over 1,000 feet of overnight "side-tie" mooring for visitors and over 600 feet of free "side-tie" mooring for daytime visitors and special events.

The new Clearwater Harbor Marina allowed the City of Clearwater to be honored with the receipt of the 2010 BoatUS Recreational Boating Access Award. The award is made in recognition of the city's ability to bring much needed boating access to Clearwater. BoatUS (Boat Owners Association of the United States) created the award program in 2007 to highlight successes in protecting water access as boaters and communities were losing marina slips, service yards and launching areas.

In January 2009, the City and Ruth Eckerd Hall joined forces to renovate and revitalize the historic Capitol Theatre located on downtown Clearwater's beautiful Cleveland Street. The old Capitol Theatre, built in 1921, was transformed into a mid-size performing arts venue with its re-opening on December 18, 2013. This 747 seat theatre will become a venue at which Ruth Eckerd Hall will present all genres of live entertainment, including jazz, classical artists, pop music acts, dance and other diverse national, regional and local acts. A film series is also anticipated.

In November 2013, the Clearwater voters approved a ballot referendum to allow the City to negotiate a sixty year lease with the Clearwater Marine Aquarium for a \$160 million, 200,000 square foot aquarium complex on the city hall waterfront property in downtown Clearwater.

Sports & Culture

Clearwater's commitment to high-quality recreation, parks and cultural programs earned national acclaim in 2005, when Sports Illustrated Magazine named the city as Florida's "Sports Town USA," as well as one of the top ten finalist in the United States Tennis Association's "2010 Best Tennis Town" nationwide Competition. These awards confirm what many who live here have known for years: Clearwater maintains some of the best facilities in the nation, and provides programs for nearly every sporting interest, skill level and age. This includes facilities and programs for everything from soccer and lacrosse to lawn bowling and horseshoes. Because of Clearwater's year-round temperate climate, many visitors take advantage of golfing on the nearly 30 public and semi-private courses in the area. Also visitors can enjoy playing tennis, jogging, cycling and walking through numerous beautiful parks.

Every year, hundreds of youth, collegiate and adult sports teams convene in Clearwater for national tournament play and training activities at City facilities. Most notable of these are the city's five decades of partnership with major league baseball's 2008 World Series Champion Philadelphia Phillies, who host spring training at Bright House Networks Field. The City of Clearwater is the home of the Threshers, a Class-A minor league team of the Philadelphia Phillies. The Threshers play at Bright House Networks Field, a fan-friendly ballpark with a capacity of 8,500. The ballpark distinguishes itself with a 360-degree main concourse, grass berm seating, and a tiki-hut pavilion in left field. Other characteristics include group picnic areas, a children's play area, and a state-of-the-art video scoreboard.

Also, with the generosity of the Tampa Bay Buccaneers and the Clearwater for Youth Association, the City constructed a full size multipurpose lighted football/soccer practice field. The field, named Tampa Bay Buccaneers Field serves as a catalyst to make a difference and provide positive change for our children and families in the North Greenwood community.

With five regional recreation centers, a nature center, and five libraries, residents have a multitude of options for keeping their hearts, minds and bodies healthy and happy. Each library branch focuses on the specific needs of the community it serves, providing a rich and varied experience. To connect all of these options, Clearwater has been steadily building a regional trail system that not only links points within the City, but also ties in to a larger system that spans all of Pinellas County, and now across Tampa Bay to Hillsborough County.

In June 2010, the City's Aging Well Center Opened at the Long Center. The new Aging Well Center promotes health and wellness, education, recreation, socialization, creative expression and access to resources for residents age 55 and older. With a mission to serve as a resource that facilitates services and activities promoting a high quality of life for our community's older adults; the City has a multi-year comprehensive plan to provide Clearwater with a roadmap to further enhance the quality of life for current and future older adults.

Visitors can take a break from the sunshine and shop in Clearwater's diverse stores which, when combined, provide over two million square feet of shopping delights. From unique boutiques, antique stores and malls to flea markets, a visitor will find that perfect shopping opportunity.

Clearwater has a rich history of both professional and community-based arts programs, led by the award-winning Ruth Eckerd Hall. Ruth Eckerd, known for its 2,180-seat acoustically perfect auditorium, hosts artists from America and around the world ranging from classical, rock, opera, Broadway, jazz, pop, and more are included in the stellar lineup of more than 200 performances a year. Ruth Eckerd also plays an integral role in community-based performance education through the Marcia P. Hoffman Center for the Performing Arts.

Clearwater and the surrounding Tampa Bay area have a variety of sporting competitions for spectators. This area is home for many nationally known teams including the National Football League Tampa Bay Buccaneers (2003 Super Bowl Champions), the National Hockey League Tampa Bay Lightning (2004 Stanley Cup Champions, 2014 Eastern Conference Champions), the Major League Baseball Tampa Bay Rays (2008 and 2010 American League Champions).

Less than a two hour drive away are numerous attractions such as Busch Gardens, Adventure Island, Walt Disney World Resort, EPCOT Center, Hollywood Studios, Universal Studios, Islands of Adventure, Legoland, Sea World, Dinosaur World and Lowry Park Zoo, which was named "No. 1 Zoo in the United States for Kids" by Parents magazine in 2009. In 2012, Lowry Park Zoo was awarded Significant Achievement in North American Conservation for the facility's Manatee Care and Conservation Program. The award recognizes exceptional efforts toward regional habitat preservation, species restoration, and support of biodiversity in the wild. Numerous museums can also be found in the area including the Salvador Dali Museum, which contains the largest private collection of this artist's work outside of Spain.

Sources include: City of Clearwater Comprehensive Annual Report, Clearwater Regional Chamber of Commerce, various City Departments, PSTA and Ruth Eckerd Hall, The St. Petersburg Times, 9/25/11.

CLEARWATER AT A GLANCE

- ❖ Incorporated: May 27, 1915
- ❖ Form of Government: Council-Manager
- ❖ Elected Officials: Mayor and four at-large Council members

Demographics:

Population Estimates:

2008	110,251
2009	109,907
2010	107,685
2011	107,805
2012	107,906
2013	109,065
2014	109,340
2015	110,679

Pinellas County (2014): 933,258

Median Age (2014): 47.0

Percentage of Households:

Single Family/Duplex	56%
Multi-Family	44%

Per Capita Personal Income:

2014 \$40,425

Personal Income (thousands):

2014 \$4,420,070

Racial Composition:

White	71%
Hispanic or Latino	14%
Black or African American	11%
Other Race	4%

Climate:

Average Annual Rain Fall: 54.7
(inches):

Six month avg. high/low temperatures:

January	79.7/62.0
July	84.2/68.8

Days of sunshine 361 days

Economics:

Job Base by Industry Sector: (2012)

	<u>thousand</u>
Admin Support Services	18.8
Healthcare/Education	10.1
Retail/Wholesale Trade	7.7
Hotels, Restaurant, Bars	5.2
Manufacturing	3.3
Construction	3.2

Principal Employers:

(2014 Pinellas County Data)

Pinellas County School District	15,928
Bay Pines VA Medical Center	4,406
City of St. Petersburg	3,112
All Children's Hospital	2,950
St. Petersburg College	2,744
Pinellas County Sheriff	2,693

Principal Taxpayers:

(2014 Tax Data)

	<u>% of Total Assessed Value</u>
Bellweather Prop. LP Ltd.	1.91%
301 South Gulfview LLC	0.77%
John Taylor Properties LLC	0.63%
Standard Grand Reserve	0.56%
Sand Key Assoc LTD	0.53%
Centro NP Clearwater Mall	0.52%

2015 Taxable Value: \$8,737,505,845

FY15/16 Property Tax Millage Rate: 5.1550

Assessed Property Value Distribution:

Residential	63%
Commercial	19%
Govt & Institutional	10%
Other	8%

FY2015/16 Adopted Budget:

Operating (expenditure)	\$370,901,350
Capital Improvement	\$69,963,350

CLEARWATER AT A GLANCE (continued)

Land Use:

Incorporated Land Mass: (square miles)	26.4
Land Use:	
Residential	55%
Commercial	17%
Recreation/Open Space	9%
Industrial	2%
Other	17%

Education:

Number of Public Schools: (For School Year 2014 - 2015)	
Elementary	13
Middle	2
High School	2
Other	9
2015/2016 Enrollment	16,231
Public/Private Colleges	3

SERVICE STATISTICS

Public Safety

<u>Police</u>	
Sworn Officers	234
Police Stations	6

<u>Fire</u>	
Certified Firefighters	193
Fire Stations	8

Culture & Recreation

Number of Parks/Facilities	110
Parks Acreage	1,708
Trees:	
Hardwoods	30,000
Palms	10,000

Recreational Paths (miles)	18
Tennis Courts	49
Baseball/Softball Fields	32
Playgrounds	27
Basketball Courts	22
Soccer/Football Fields	20
Recreation Centers	7
Swimming Pools	5
Dog Parks	3
Golf Courses	3
Performing Arts Venues	3
Nature Center	1

Libraries	5
Volumes in collection (thousands)	582

Marine - Boat Slips	315
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Aviation - Airpark Spaces	177
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Parking Spaces:	
Downtown	2,416
Clearwater Beach	1,406

Utilities

Water and Sewer Utility

Water Wells	41
Water Treatment Plants	3
Water Storage Tanks	6
Water Mains (miles)	616
Water Customers	39,077
Water Pumped	12.1
(million gallons/day)	

Sanitary Sewer Mains (miles)	402
Sewer Customers	33,585
Lift Stations	75
Wastewater Treatment Plants	3
Daily Treatment Capacity	29
(million gallons/day)	
Reclaimed Water Mains (miles)	137
Reclaimed Water Storage Tanks	3
Pump Stations	6
Reclaimed Customers	7,150
NELAP Certified Lab Tests	52,930

Stormwater Utility

Stormwater Mains (miles)	152
Stormwater Underdrains (miles)	113
Equivalent Residential Units	101,663

Gas Utility

Gas Mains (miles)	884
Gas Customers	21,049
Natural Gas Vehicle Fueling Station	1

Solid Waste Utility

Solid Waste Customers	29,105
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Recycling Utility

Recycling Customers	27,972
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Sources: University of Florida, Bureau of Economic and Business Research: April 1, 2009 estimate for current year and Florida Statistical Abstract for prior years; US Census Bureau: 2008 American Community Survey; Pinellas County School District; Pinellas County Finance Department; Pinellas County Property Appraiser; various City departments ; Florida Agency for Workforce Innovation.



