



2023 State of the City

PRESENTATION | JANUARY 2024



MAYOR CHERRY FITCH



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Introduction

The City of Gulf Breeze
has never been...

STRONGER

In 2023, the City completed three
major milestones with lasting impact
for generations:

- Police Station and City Services Annex
- Fire Rescue Upgrades
- Shoreline Park Master Plan Update



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Year 3 of the 5-Year Strategic Plan

2023
Highlights
and
What's Ahead



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Milestones

City of Gulf Breeze



Police Station

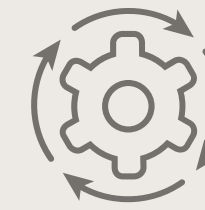


- No local tax dollars spent
- 90% federal Rescue Plan dollars
- Infill redevelopment project
- Total \$4.7M
- On time and on budget

- State-of-the-art Emergency Operations and Dispatch Center
- Prior building was built in 1985 when the city had 12 full-time officers
- New police station is 7,787 sq. feet
- Project included the demo of the Old 1950s firehouse, a goal in city plans since 2007

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Third Consecutive Excelsior Accreditation rating



Operational Audit

Bi-annually, the City's Police Department voluntarily participates in an operational audit by law enforcement officers representing agencies statewide with the Commission for Florida Law Enforcement Accreditation.



Accreditation

Accreditation is the certification by an independent reviewing authority that an entity has met specific requirements and prescribed standards. The city's law enforcement has consistently attained the highest rating.



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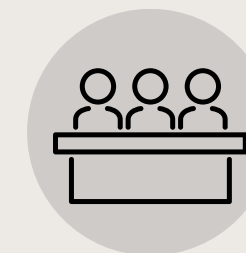
City Services Annex

- Zero cost to ratepayers for the new utility offices in a city services annex.
- Older plans called for a new, larger City Hall to make space. 2012 Most Livable City Master Plan proposed developing conservation land in Shoreline Park South or commercial property on Highway 98.
- City Hall consists of 2 to 4 employees per office.
- No meeting space for developer plan reviews, conferences, or Human Resources privacy.
- Relocating Utility Customer Service to a City Annex allows for space re-use with no bigger footprint.
- More secure with added amenities including a walk-up outside window.



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Fire Rescue



- Re-constituted a Fire Board with new appointees after a decade of nonactivity.
- Transitioned from 100% Volunteer Fire Rescue Department to a Combination Dept.
- Fire Station upgrades thanks to community sponsors.



- Appointed the city's first salaried Fire Chief and Fire Marshal.
- Most Fire Departments in this country are volunteer or mostly volunteer.
- 45% of Fire Departments in the state of Florida are volunteer.



Fire Rescue

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- (20) Active volunteer firefighters
- (5) EMTS and paramedics
- (5) Paid city employees in other city departments that volunteer.

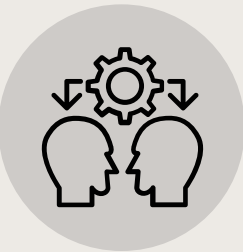


Volunteer certified firefighters earn a stipend limited to 20% of what area full-time firefighters receive.

Junior Firefighter Program with 10 active members.



Shoreline Park Masterplan Upgrades



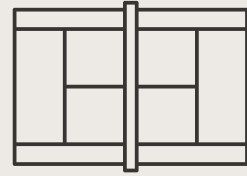
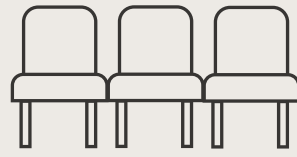
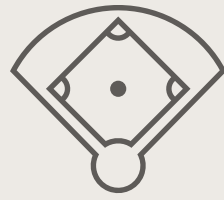
Resolution 07-2023; First Comprehensive Review and Updates since 2008.



Approved by City Council after Public Input and Recommendations of the Advisory Park Board



No physical structures or substantive changes can be made to Shoreline Park North or South without a recommendation of the Advisory Park Board and public hearing by the City Council to amend the Master Plan.



6 New Outdoor Pickleball Courts

– Construction Feb '24

Resurfacing 10 Tennis & 2
Basketball Courts

– Construction Jan '24

Shoreline Field Visitor Seating &
Overflow Parking

– Construction complete

Rebound wall 12' x 16'

– Construction complete

Ballfield resurfacing and laser
grading

– Construction Jan '24



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Updates to Shoreline Park North



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Updates to Shoreline Park South



Wetlands Trail Visitor Welcome Area— construction Jan ‘24



Paddler & Fishing Improvements— under design



Decorative lighting



Parking restriping plan for larger boats



Full-time Park Ranger, signage and visitor parking.



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Employees are the Strength of our City

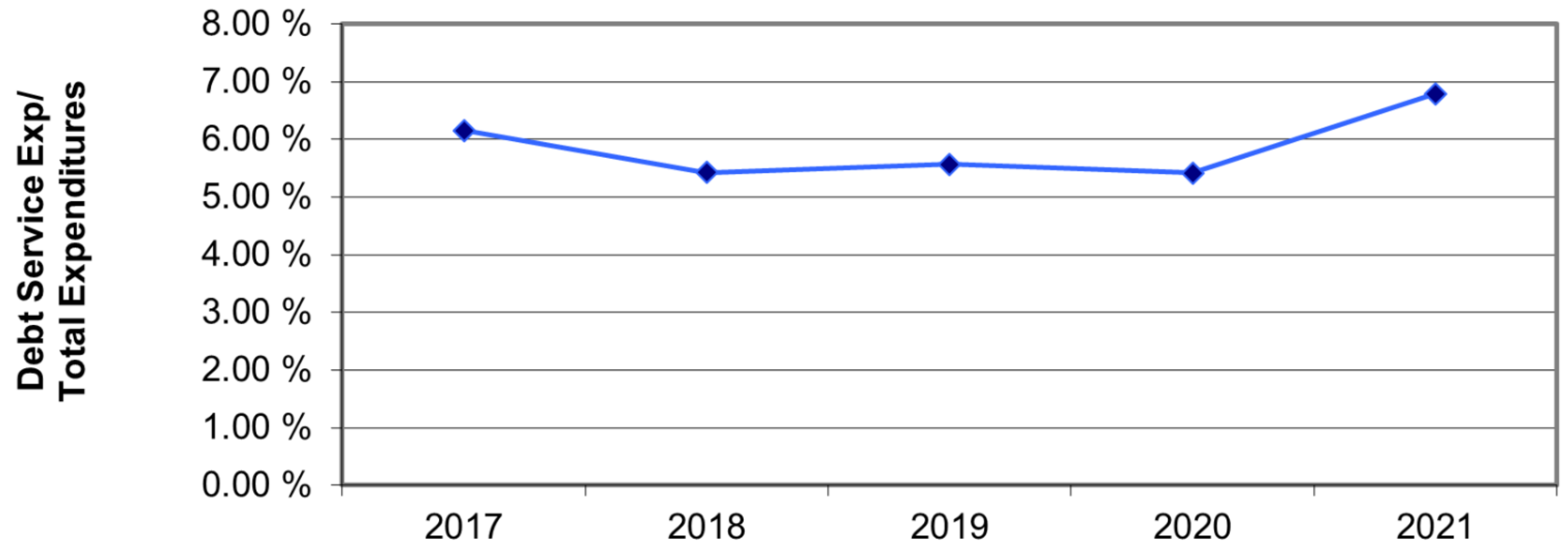
2023 marked the first full year of pay adjustments with added annual cost of living raises.



RESOLUTIONS 05-2023 AND 15-2023 STRENGTHENED THE CITY'S INVESTMENT POLICIES.

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The city has consistently upheld a minimum of 6 months' worth of operating reserves, serving as a contingency fund.



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Benchmark Comparison Information

Gulf Breeze	6.79%
FL Benchmark	6.24%
Difference	.55%



Exactly the Florida benchmark, 6.79% of the City's total expenses is allocated to debt.

NOTABLE HIGHLIGHTS

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PAVING

- Schedule is a minimum 2 miles per year for 15 yrs.
- Daniel Circle redesign as a boulevard for safety between GBHS softball field, hotel, and shopping outparcels.
- Sidewalk and bike lane repairs on Highway 98.



MULTI-MOBILITY

- \$3.25M allocated by legislature for the multimodal overpass on Highway 98.
- Additional \$2.35M appropriation request for 2024 with construction scheduled Dec '24.
- Corridor safety improvements: TPO ranked project to widen sidewalk to a new 12' wide shared use path from new overpass to Pensacola Beach Road



WATER & RECLAIM

- Resolution No. 17-2023; A 20-year renewal for the supply of water among Gulf Breeze, Holley-Navarre Water System, Inc., and Midway Water System, as owners of the Fairpoint Regional Utility System, Inc.
- South Santa Rosa Reuse Initiative Phase III; \$2.5M in grant funds to construct 4.3 miles of pipe to join the Holley-Navarre Water System (HNWS) wastewater treatment plant (WWTP) with the City of Gulf Breeze reuse system. The transmission line will include connections every 1,500 feet for future customers.

NOTABLE HIGHLIGHTS



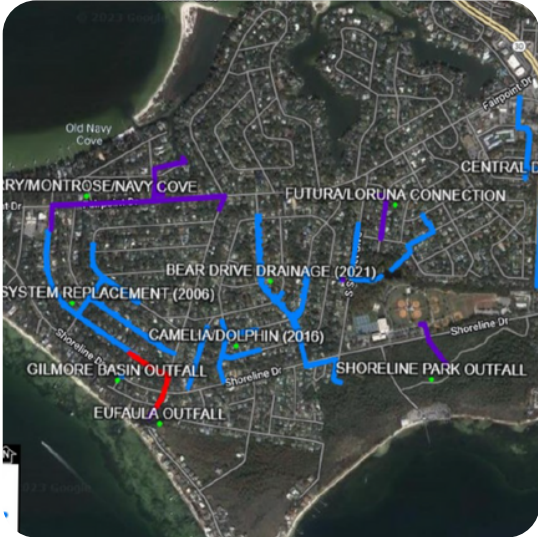
City Wide Septic to Sewer 8-year \$15 million plan



- 43% of city households are on septic. Initiative made possible by 2023 consolidation of the two water & sewer enterprises into the new Gulf Breeze Regional Water System. This allows for regional cost-sharing. Funding is from utility revenues and grants.
- 2023, design completed for 3 of 7 major areas. Bids are ready for the areas of Highpoint, Florida, Montrose and Navy Cove. Bay Cliffs at 60% design.
- The city has unofficially received notice of additional grant awards in '24.



Stormwater Master Plan Completion Shoreline Park and West Basin Stormwater Projects complete the 2014 Stormwater Master Plan.



- Shoreline Park Drainage Project. Cost: \$1.1 Million; 100% grant funded. Design complete 2023—construction '25.
- West Basin (Comprised of 3 separate projects) Eufaula Outfall Project. Cost: \$800,000 with \$375,000 grant-funded.
- Gilmore to Shoreline Project. Cost: \$4 million with zero grant funds. The project installs a secondary pipe across Shoreline for GRAVITY outfall.
- Navy Cove/Montrose Project. Cost: \$1.2 million. 50% RESTORE grant. Provides stormwater collection around Fairpoint, Montrose, and Berry Drive and provides stormwater treatment. Design expected in 2024. Final approval awaiting the Treasury Dept.



NOTABLE HIGHLIGHTS



WAYSIDE PARK

\$2.2M Hurricane Recovery Plan



- We completed the design for Wayside Park improvements and repairs for the Jan 2024 bid.
- 5-year repayment plan from bed tax dollars with no interest.
- Accepted a new public art piece, The Mariner.
- Design for waterfront Promenade underway.
- Promenade construction 2024.



VISTA PARK AND PIER

\$600,000 Hurricane Recovery Plan Phase II



- Replacements of the seawall cap, sidewalk, and guardrail.
- 2023 Cost-share agreement between the City's Community Redevelopment Agency and Escambia County for the project.
- December 5th broke ground. Project underway.
- Phase III beautification plans for landscaping and parking improvements to bid for construction in 2024. Design complete.
- Prior to Phase I was FEMA rebuilding of the fishing pier.





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Mayor's upcoming local legislative priorities

- Short-term rentals ordinance
- E-mobility ordinance
- Fire Board recommendations for new incentives for volunteers
- GBSA and City Agreement Update
- Community Center Tenant and Program Updates
- Review of the Septic Tank Program



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On the Horizon

- 2025 Strategic Plan 5-Year Updates
- SR 399 Replacement and new Highway 98 Flyover
- Bob Sikes Bridge Replacement with enhanced shared-use paths
- Land Development Code review for residential rebuilds/infill redevelopment
- Expanding the stormwater utility to include a funding plan for routine dredging waterways
- Breakwater for the Eastern Bay at Wayside Park for enhanced paddling and rowing



Thank You

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