

**City of Belleair Beach**  
**Strategic Plan**  
**FY 2019-2024**



**Adopted by Resolution No. 2019-01**

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# CITY OF BELLEAIR BEACH STRATEGIC PLAN 2019-2024

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## **I. Definitions:**

- **Vision:** *what we aspire to be; why we exist*
- **Mission:** *the "big picture" explanation of how we plan to achieve our vision*
- **Core Values:** *our culture that guides, helps define, and shapes our future*
- **Goals:** *a broad statement of emphasis, focus or intent*
- **Objectives:** *a desirable, specific action, output or result that is measurable, has an owner (person accountable) and timeline for its accomplishment*

## **II. VISION Statement for the City of Belleair Beach**

*"To be a premier, gulf coast, residential community."*

*The Logic: If we create a high level of resident satisfaction ... then this will ultimately increase the demand for living in Belleair Beach ... and subsequently increase property values.*

## **III. MISSION Statement for the City of Belleair Beach**

*"We will create a high level of resident satisfaction by focusing on a beautiful, friendly, safe, well-managed waterfront community."*

## **IV. CORE VALUES for the City of Belleair Beach**

**As city officials and employees, we will:**

- 1) *Strive for excellence in all that we do – always with courtesy, enthusiasm, and respect.*
- 2) *Value safety, teamwork, and the worth of others in dealing with coworkers and residents.*
- 3) *Serve with the highest levels of integrity, ethics, and transparency.*
- 4) *Be good stewards – be proactive and innovative in preparing for the future and changing needs of Belleair Beach and our residents.*

## V. BACKGROUND

Belleair Beach is a small residential community of approximately 1600 residents. It is located on a barrier island of Florida's gulf coast and nestled between the cities of Clearwater Beach (pop. 115,000) to the north and Indian Rocks Beach (pop. 4500) to the south. With the Gulf of Mexico to the west and the Intracoastal waterway to the east, it is approximately 1.7 square miles, of which, approximately 73% is water. Belleair Beach was incorporated in 1950 and is unique because it does not have any commercial businesses located within the city limits (by City Charter), therefore it has NO commercial tax base. Resident demographics reflect a mature, established population with a median age significantly above the state average, median household incomes above state average, and a median house value significantly above the state average. (avg age 58; avg household size 2.1 people; avg household income \$95,700; avg house/condo value \$652K). Besides fees and "Pennies for Pinellas" grants, the primary revenues consist of various municipal and state taxes, rental charges for the use of the City Hall building (utilized for weddings and functions) and the Marina (consisting of 18 boat slips) rented on a monthly basis.

The city's annual OPERATING BUDGET is approximately \$2.7Million. The budget for CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS (CIP) is approximately \$1.24Million, and there is a (RESERVE) FUND BALANCE of approximately \$2.25Million (exclusive of a specific \$1.0Million Hurricane Disaster fund). The only debt load the city currently carries is \$1.16Million (remaining) to pay off the building costs for City Hall (built in 2009),

The city's leadership team is vested in a City Manager-City Council form of governing. The City Manager is responsible for the routine, daily operation of the city. The City Council is the legislative body empowered by the City Charter to make policy which is then communicated to the City Manager for implementation. The city staff consists of 8 full-time employees with an annual salary/benefits cost of \$658K.

With the hiring of a new City Manager and a major turn-over in the City Council in 2018, there has been an increased emphasis on the guidance and oversight provided by the City Council with respect to the budget and capital improvements processes. Other changes include the addition of regular and dedicated work sessions for time dedicated to BEST PRACTICES, BUDGET, COMMUNITY SAFETY, STRATEGIC PLANNING and general business. In the absence of an existing *Strategic Plan*, the Belleair Beach City Council collaborated to map out and document a definitive path for improvement and a continually rising standard of quality for the City of Belleair Beach.

This resulting Strategic Plan is designed to:

- *Create a shared vision and common baseline for the city leadership and management team.*
- *Focus on clear, collective goals and areas of strategic focus.*
- *Create a common framework for decision-making and prioritizing limited resources.*
- *Institutionalize a means to identify, measure, and communicate our progress.*
- *Provide continuity for changes in Council and city staff leadership.*

In order to achieve the desired *Vision* and *Mission* for Belleair Beach, the City Council had to decide on what describes a “premier, gulf coast, residential community”. “Resident satisfaction” was deemed to be ***THE*** key factor. Breaking this down further, the key elements constituting “resident satisfaction” were refined and prioritized. The result became our GOALS.

### ***GOALS for the City of Belleair Beach***

**GOAL 1: PUBLIC SAFETY AND HEALTH.** *Provide a safe and healthy environment for our residents.*

**GOAL 2: BEST VALUE FOR THE TAXPAYER DOLLAR.** *Prioritize and manage based on “targeted outcomes”. Be good stewards and fiscally responsible .... Be effective, efficient, sustainable, and resilient.*

**GOAL 3: AESTHETICS AND COMMUNITY.** *Create a vibrant, well-planned, well-maintained city and an atmosphere that enriches our sense of “community” and our quality of life.*

**GOAL 4: COMMUNICATIONS.** *Promote and foster the two-way information flow between the city and our residents.*

**GOAL 5: BEACH AND WATERFRONT.** *Preserve and protect our city’s natural beach and waterfront environments.*

***Utilizing the Strategic Plan as a foundation and standard, all aspects of Belleair Beach management, planning, budgeting, and business should be evaluated to assure alignment with the GOALS and OBJECTIVES set forth in the Strategic Plan.***

## **VI. SWOT ANALYSIS (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats)**

An examination of the city's Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats identified internal and external factors that are favorable and/or unfavorable to achieving the *Vision, Mission, and Goals*. It should be noted that in some cases there is a duality where some attributes of Belleair Beach are both a STRENGTH and a WEAKNESS or an OPPORTUNITY and a THREAT.

### **STRENGTHS**

- SMALL SIZE  
Engenders a "hometown" atmosphere
- SMALL CITY STAFF  
Flexible  
Responsive  
Streamlined internal communication  
Cross trained staff
- AFFLUENT DEMOGRAPHICS and PROPERTY VALUES  
High end due to extensive waterfront
- LOW MILLAGE RATE  
Combined with high property values generate adequate operating revenues for the city
- GOOD RELATIONS w/ NEIGHBORING CITIES
- TRANSPORTATION  
Gulf Blvd and Causeway Bridge provides access to local shopping and entertainment  
Beach location and lack of commercial businesses insulates the city from the adverse impacts of major commercial traffic

### **WEAKNESSES**

- SMALL SIZE  
No political or economic clout
- SMALL CITY STAFF  
Minimal depth of experience and no manpower reserve often necessitates outsourcing
- NO COMMERCIAL TAX BASE  
Creates extreme budgetary pressures on capital improvements and infrastructure maintenance/repair
- TRANSPORTATION ACCESS  
2 bridges & Gulf Blvd are major arteries for weekend visitors, vacationers and seasonal "snowbird" residents  
Major "choke points" during adverse weather, accidents or social events

## **OPPORTUNITIES**

- MARINA
  - Under-utilized or alternative development of parking lot
  - Inefficient use of available dockage/mooring
- CITY HALL BUILDING
  - Under-utilized or alternative development of excess space
- RESIDENT BUSINESS/POLITICAL NETWORK (how to capitalize on?)

## **THREATS**

- CYCLICAL ECONOMY AND PROPERTY VALUES
- ENVIRONMENTAL
  - hurricane
  - flooding
  - beach erosion
  - red tide
- STATE LEGISLATURE (e.g. Home Rule)
- AGING INFRASTRUCTURE & ESCALATING REPAIR/REPLACEMENT COSTS
- SEA LEVEL RISE LONG TERM IMPACT ON INFRASTRUCTURE AND PROPERTY VALUES
- IMPACTS OF NEIGHBORING CITY PLANNING, POLICY, AND ACTION  
e.g. expanding hotel business in Clearwater Beach without consideration of traffic and parking impacts
- INCREASING TRAFFIC CONGESTION

## VII. ASSUMPTIONS

Along with the SWOT Analysis, the City Council then made some assumptions to assist in determining specific OBJECTIVES for each of the GOALS.

- 1) *Belleair Beach demographics will remain relatively constant.*
- 2) *Costs associated with the repair, replacement, or improvement of aging infrastructure will continue to escalate over time. Therefore, preventative and scheduled maintenance is a cost-effective means of controlling future costs. This does not exclude the use of interim, mitigating action for scheduling, budgetary or technology purposes.*
- 3) *Residents want to be informed, but do not necessarily want to actively participate.*
- 4) *Traffic congestion will continue to increase.*
- 5) *A major storm will impact Belleair Beach.*
- 6) *Property values will continue to increase in the near term.*
- 7) *Stormwater flooding is a significant and expensive problem that will be a recurring long-term issue.*
- 8) *If sea level rise occurs, it will have adverse long-term impacts.*
- 9) *Beach erosion and Red tide will be a recurring issue.*
- 10) *The Belleair Beach Strategic Plan shall be reviewed and updated annually as a precursor to the budget process.*

A comprehensive list of OBJECTIVES was “brainstormed” for each GOAL. Due to staffing constraints, it was decided to prioritize and focus only an OBJECTIVE #1 and OBJECTIVE #2 (and in some cases, OBJECTIVE #3) at any one time. These OBJECTIVES will have a projected completion within the current fiscal year. Upon completion, a new OBJECTIVE can be selected. Although the #1 & #2 OBJECTIVES were selected for FY 2019, the follow-through remains to be completed - i.e. documenting a project owner, metrics to evaluate progress, and a project timeline.



## VIII. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

### ***GOAL 1: Provide a safe and healthy environment for our residents.***

- ***Objective 1 (2019).***

Update Stormwater Management Plan and seek a sustainable means of funding

- ***Objective 2 (2019).***

Review/update emergency management plans with a focus on “lessons learned” from recent storms and an emphasis towards “resiliency”.

### **FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION**

- Ensure responsive, high quality emergency services
- Ensure safe conditions through proactive maintenance and new infrastructure.
- Facilitate healthy lifestyle
- Parks, trails, greenways
- Address future transportation impacts
- Ensure adequate citywide lighting
- Address increasing traffic congestion

### ***GOAL 2: Deliver the best value for the taxpayer dollar. Prioritize and manage based on “targeted outcomes”.***

- ***Objective 1 (2019).***

Develop an evaluation tool and process for prioritizing Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) - short term, long term, and for unforecast situations. Set a realistic budgetary reserve.

Factors to be considered include:

Alignment with strategic goals and priorities

Project cost

Project timeline (start/end date, duration)

Funding source

Develop a Grant Policy and designate an owner

Alignment and/or dependencies with other capital projects

Alternative strategies for mitigation

Risk Management

- **Objective 2 (2019).**

Update financial management software to provide improved staff utilization.

Factors to be considered include:

- Total asset/funds visibility
- Security
- Ease of use
- Analytical tools

- **Objective 3 (2019).**

Continue to invest in our Human Resources and the city staff. Review and update the city Personnel Manual.

Job descriptions and accountability

Qualifications, training and development

Evaluations

Compensation

**ADDITIONAL FACTORS FOR CONSIDERATION:**

- Focus on “Best Value” - Effective, Efficient, Sustainable, Resilient
- Refine the Budget process, Capital Planning, Contracts, City Investments
- Deliver the highest level of service
- Maximize Return-On-Investment (ROI) city hall, marina, marina parking lot
- Leverage grants, special assessments
- Integrate with all capital projects and the budget process
- Leverage technology
- Budget process based on strategic Goals and Objectives

***GOAL 3: Create a vibrant, well-maintained City and an atmosphere that enriches our sense of “community” and our quality of life.***

- **Objective 1 (2019).**

Develop a Walking Easement Project Plan

- **Objective 2 (2019).**

Develop a comprehensive City Maintenance Plan/Program

## **FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION**

- Review “unexpected consequences” of 2018 Code Review
- Implement a recurring Code review process/schedule
- Foster code compliance  
(education/communication/enforcement)
- Modernize lighting (streets, parks, beach access, public spaces)
- Develop Citywide plan/align with CIP – near & long term
- Marina parking lot revitalized
- Minimize “above ground” utilities
- Mature, manicured foliage and vegetation
- Signage
- Complete a city asset inventory (to include city staff)

## ***GOAL 4: Promote and foster two-way information flow between the city and residents***

- ***Objective 1 (2019).***

Develop a recurring, “town meeting” forum  
Provide education and updates for residents

- Budget
- Capital projects

Resident Q&A and feedback

- ***Objective 2 (2019).***

Increase the functionality of the city website.

Designate a Webmaster

Calendar of events

Improve the timeliness of agendas, background info, and minutes.

Improve user-friendliness and efficiency

- Develop a “feedback system” to acknowledge and provide closure for resident input
- Interactive forms, permits, applications, correspondence

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance

## **FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION**

- Create a “privacy protected” contact list/method for residents in order to disseminate important and timely information. Priority will be given to safeguarding privacy.
- Timely, accessible, user-friendly
- Review the public relations/media policy
- Handling of media and public records requests
- Explore development of a Resident Advisory group

- Engage community; build a resident skill-set database

***GOAL 5: Preserve and protect our city’s natural beach and waterfront environments***

- ***Objective 1 (2019).***

Beach nourishment and Red Tide.

- Support State, County, and local environmental programs.

- ***Objective 2 (2019).***

Develop a waterfront Code compliance program/capability

- Emphasis on the “backside” of properties

**IX. NEXT STEPS**

A. Add specificity to the enumerated OBJECTIVES – designate an owner; specify metrics and/or thoroughly describe the desired product or service (deliverable), estimate timelines. To be completed and presented to Council no later than May 1, 2019.

B. Adopt and institutionalize the Strategic Plan - short term via City Council Resolution. Long term integrate into the City Charter at the next Charter Review.

C. With a planning horizon of 3-5 years, the Leadership Team should articulate some “stretch” GOALS and OBJECTIVES. (e.g. Reduce city expenditures 5% by 2025; Eliminate the CIP backlog by 2025; Gulf Blvd utilities undergrounded by 2023; Citywide street lighting modernized by 2025; Develop and implement a Marina Improvement Plan by 2024).

D. Consider and integrate “Go Green” into future planning and project wherever feasible.

**X. CONCLUSIONS**

The benefits of a strategic plan are well established in government and business. However, ultimate success and benefits of the *Belleair Beach Strategic Plan* is dependent upon the commitment and self-discipline of the Belleair Beach Leadership Team. It must become the “sanity check” and litmus test for all planning and decision-making – i.e. does this task support and align with our GOALS and is it being given the proper priority?

The Belleair Beach Strategic Plan should serve as a guide and decision-making tool. It is a living document and shall be reviewed annually to

- validate ASSUMPTIONS, GOALS, OBJECTIVES, and priorities against ever changing economic, environmental, and political circumstances.