



City of Gulf Breeze

September 2007

WWW.CITYOFGULFBREEZE.COM

850 - 934-5100

MAYOR

Lane Gilchrist

COUNCIL MEMBERS

Richard Fulford
Carl Hoffman II
J B Schluter
Beverly Zimmern

CITY MANAGER

Edwin Eddy 934-5115

DEPARTMENT DIRECTORS

PARKS & RECREATION

Ron Pulley 934-5140

COMMUNITY SERVICES

Craig Carmichael 934-5109

FIRE CHIEF

Craig Carmichael 934-5133

POLICE CHIEF

Peter Paulding 934-5121

PUBLIC SERVICES, WATER & GAS SERVICE

Vernon Prather 934-5108

FINANCE & BILLING

Nancy Millay 934-5100

PHONES FOR TROOPS

City Hall is a collection point for this program that converts old cell phones and donations to calling cards for our troops.

Cell phone (any condition)
= 250 minute calling card
\$30 donation
= 800 minute calling card

THE CITY OF GULF BREEZE

- 4.5 SQUARE MILES
- 44.7 MILES OF ROADS
- 5,765 RESIDENTS
- 3,101 HOUSEHOLDS
- 23 PARKS
- 23 VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS
- 18 FULLTIME POLICE OFFICERS
- 5 PART-TIME POLICE OFFICERS
- 82 FULL TIME CITY EMPLOYEES
- 30 PART TIME CITY EMPLOYEES
- 45 MILES OF WATER LINES
- 21 MILES OF SEWER LINES



Property Tax Changes and Impacts

There has been an enormous amount of publicity on the current and proposed changes in the State laws on property tax rates and property valuations. On the surface, these announcements appear very appealing: the State will force counties and cities to decrease tax rates. It is a great way for State level officials to campaign for re-election. After all who doesn't want lower taxes?

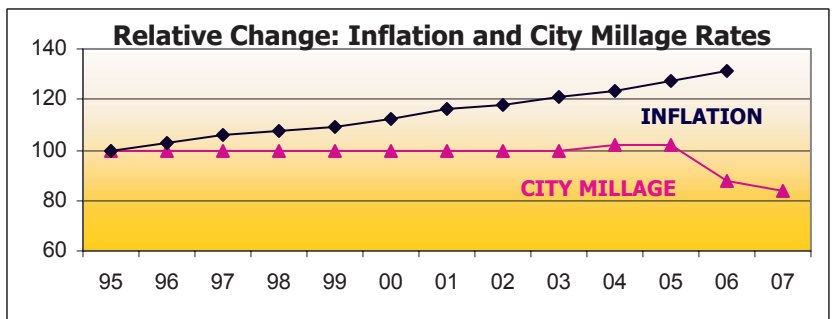
But with maturity comes the realization, though it may be disappointing, that services and infrastructure maintenance costs need to be paid by someone.

At the local level of the City, we are subject to the property tax rate cuts that have been legislated. Yet the number of requests for added services and programs to be provided by local government are increasing. So it is important to raise the question about what services and infrastructure will be impacted by these cuts, both this year and in future years.

Many municipal organizations including school boards and even State governments are facing significant problems in balancing current budgets this year. Recent news articles have highlighted the Governor considering selling State assets and reinstating chain gangs to make ends meet. This suggests these organizations will face even more enormous dilemmas with the future proposed legislation for additional cuts and some will need to face massive operational shutdown of staff, facilities and services. Or, they will need to find other means of funding the shortfall.

The current legislation and pending constitu-

tional amendments are creating enormous pressure on all organizations regardless of past efficiency, regardless of importance of service and regardless of ability to survive as a separable operation. We'd all like to have our costs roll back to the 1960's levels, but to simply force budget cuts without a realistic plan of how things will be reorganized, reengineered and re-tasked is likely to result in unintended consequences such as



new fees, abandonment of services and loss of quality personnel.

A balanced and mature evaluation of the plan to reduce taxes is important if we are to avoid further unintended and unexpected changes in fees, services and resources. As a result it is vitally important that informed judgment be used in evaluating the potential long and short term benefits of legislated budget cuts.

Since services that are demanded by residents must be paid for somehow, residents should expect that alternative funding mechanisms (pay per use, other taxes, service based taxing au-

thorities such as fire districts, etc) or abandonment of services by local municipalities will result. Also it is likely to become more difficult to document and establish federal tax deductibility of such alternative revenue sources as service fees compared to current property taxes.

Citizens concerns, desires and opinions and willingness to accept tradeoffs must be voiced at State, County and City levels so that officials know what services to cut and abandon and what aspects of public service to strive to preserve.

GULF BREEZE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

SANTA PARADE

SATURDAY DECEMBER 8th, 2007

10 am Shoreline Drive to McLane



Are You O.K.?

The City of Gulf Breeze would like to remind it's citizens about the **Are You O.K.?** Program.



The **Are You O.K.?** Program is designed for Seniors, disabled persons, shut-ins who live alone, or anyone in our community who needs to be checked upon daily.

Are You O.K.? Is a computerized telephone calling system which is operated free of charge by the City of Gulf Breeze Police Department. The system calls each enrolled subscriber every day of the year at the same time of day. This service is in addition to other services like Lifeline or Lifephone.

The **Are You O.K.?** Phone calls will be made in the morning between 7:30 and 10:30 A.M. Each subscriber will be asked to choose an hour during which he or she prefers to be called. Everyone who signs up for the service will be asked to fill out a short form with medical and other information which the police may need in an emergency. All information is confidential.

If for any reason the subscriber fails to answer the phone after several tries, or if there is a busy signal several times in a row, the computer immediately notifies the police dispatcher, who will then send a patrol car out to check on the person. During the holidays, vacations, or any other time the subscriber plans to be out of away, a simple call to the Police Department will stop the calls for as long as needed.

The system is now use in over 500 cities and towns throughout the United States. If you wish to sign up, or if you think you might be interested and would like to talk about it with someone, please call Lois Hudson at the Gulf Breeze Police Department at 934-5121. Office hours are Monday through Friday between 8:00 A.M. and 4:00 P.M.

Holiday Safety Tips FROM THE GULF BREEZE FIRE DEPARTMENT

When decorating with electric lights, check all the wiring to make sure that all insulation and sockets are in good condition. Look for a tag or label that indicates the device or light string is U.L. approved.

When using lights outdoors, make sure that they are approved for outdoor use. Do not use candles near flammable materials such as cut greenery, paper, fabrics and wood. When displaying a cut tree, mount the tree in a base that has a water reservoir so the tree will not dry out.

When you leave the house, turn off the lights.

COOKING

During the holiday season it is not unusual for kitchen appliances to be used to their full capacity and sometimes beyond safety limits. Cooking is one of the leading causes of fires, so please do not leave your stove unattended.

IN CASE OF FIRE

When a fire is discovered, **ALWAYS dial 911** before attempting to put out the fire with an extinguisher. 84 percent of all **FATAL** fires burn ten minutes or longer before the fire department is notified. If there are other occupants in the house, make certain they are all aware of the fire and are safely out of the house before any attempt is made to put out the fire.

Smoke detectors have the potential to significantly reduce fire notification time. In order for this to happen, smoke detectors must be purchased, installed as directed and periodically tested. Change the batteries at least twice a year. Use alkaline batteries for longer life span.

If possible, use two different types of detectors in your home - one battery operated and the other wired to the electrical system in your house.

Have a **HAPPY** and **SAFE** Holiday Season

CLICK IT OR TICKET PROGRAM

Each year in Florida, more than half a million people are involved in traffic crashes, and many are killed or injured because they are not buckled up. During this holiday time, local police will make a special effort to see that all motorists in Florida are wearing safety belts. For more information on Florida's safety belt laws, visit www.buckleupflorida.com.



Those who are not buckled up will be ticketed. Buckle Up Florida; it's the law.

HOT RUMOR!
Santa Claus to "Test Run" Route
 We hear from reliable sources that Santa has asked the Gulf Breeze Fire Volunteers to help him check his route through the City. He always has treats for kids that come out to wave to him.
Evening Dec 18th, rainedate: Dec 20th.





Neighbor to Neighbor: Caring and Sharing

Caring & Sharing of South Santa Rosa County is midway in its annual Thanksgiving and Christmas campaign to provide assistance for the Holiday seasons for the needy in our community. This program is specifically dedicated to providing assistance to our neighbors in need in the south Santa Rosa county area.

At our Thanksgiving distribution on November 18th, over 260 cartons of food were distributed in the south county area to families who have requested assistance. As a result, many tables were better able to share in a Thanksgiving meal.

At the Christmas distribution there will be even more seeking our help. Thanks to the generosity of this community, we have always been able to provide this help in the past.

There are **collection boxes in the lobbies of City Hall and the Chamber of Commerce**, as well as Bruno's. Anyone wishing

to make a donation of non-perishable food or a new toy for a child may drop them off during regular business hours. Please do not gift wrap any contributions.

Also, this is the season to consider repaying the kindnesses shown by our neighbors throughout the country by showing your generosity toward the Red Cross and Salvation Army and other aid organizations who came to help us in 2004.



Safety Reminder

If you smell gas and the odor is faint, follow your nose to the source. It may be an appliance where the pilot light is out or a burner valve that is not fully closed, as in a stove-top. Shut off the burner; re-light the pilot light. If you can't find the source, or if the odor persists, call **934-5100** for assistance. It's free.

If the odor is intense and seems to be everywhere, it is important that you follow these steps:

- If the odor is in your house or building:
- (1) Get out immediately.
- (2) Do NOT light a match; do NOT switch anything on or off; do NOT use the phone inside your house.
- (3) When you are safely away (at your neighbor's house, for example), call **934-5100**.

If the odor is outside, call **934-5100** immediately.

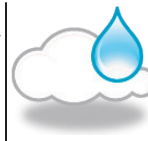
FLOOD MAPS AND INFORMATION

The City of Gulf Breeze, Department of Community Services can help you determine if your property is in a Special Flood Hazard Area and also provide you with more flood hazard information.

Copies of Elevation Certificates can be obtained at the Santa Rosa County Building Inspections Department, 6051 Old Bagdad Hwy, Room 202, Milton, FL 32583. These certificates are required when construction is done in a flood hazard area. Flood Insurance Rate Maps are available for view at Gulf Breeze City Hall, 1070 Shoreline Drive, Gulf Breeze, FL 32561.

The FEMA website is another good source of information on the National Flood Insurance Program. Visit: <http://www.fema.gov>

Flash Floods from the Sky



On October 19th of this year Gulf Breeze was deluged with more than 20 inches of rainfall within 24 hours. This total exceeded the single day accumulation of the April 2005 rains when we received almost 22 inches over a week and over 30 inches over 30 days.

We enjoy the weather in this area most of the time, but it also has less desirable attributes. Certainly hurricanes are one threat we must be vigilant about, but torrential rains and resulting flash floods are also very real, recurring prospects (as are the rare occurrences of hail and tornadoes).

Most area soils can absorb six inches or more of rainfall per hour when perfectly dry. This "permeability rate" is also the maximum speed at which groundwater migrates sideways. Runoff from roofs, decks, sidewalks, driveways and roads divert more than double the rainfall amounts to the remaining surrounding permeable land. With a large portion of the City's residents living on areas where groundwater levels are within a foot or two of grade, it is easy to see why deluge rainfalls can result in standing water.

Each property owner has a responsibility to protect themselves from losses due to weather events through a combination of insurance, construction materials and design, and willingness to accept economic loss. The City's personnel regularly go above and beyond to provide assistance when such occurrences take place, but the City cannot provide, nor should residents expect, foolproof protection from these weather events.

All residents should seriously consider flood insurance (contact your homeowner's insurance agent for details). Be aware that most flood insurance claims come from outside the flood zones. The City complies with federal programs for flood plain mitigation practices that enable residents to receive lower rates on flood insurance.



Transfer Station Rates Change

Rates at the City's transfer station were adjusted recently. The transfer station will now charge for loads to be chipped as well as loads disposed into the roll off containers. While most City residents should not experience much of a change, County residents and commercial users (i.e. landscapers and tradesmen) are likely to see a jump in fees charged.

Activity at the transfer station has tripled since the hurricanes, largely as a result of allowing residents from outside City limits to use the facility as well as allowing landscapers and tradesmen to avoid driving to the County landfill near Milton.

NEW TRANSFER STATION MINIMUM RATES			
Disposal To:	City Resident	County Resident	Commercial
Rolloff Dumpsters	\$8	\$16	\$36
Chipper	\$8	\$16	\$36
Recycle Bins	Free	Free	Free
Appliance Dropoff	\$15	\$20	Not Allowed

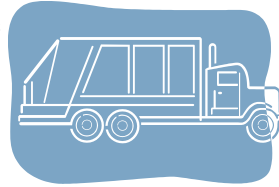
The above rates represent *minimum charges*; loads in excess of 2 cubic yards or which tie up the chipper for over 15 minutes will result in higher fees at the rate of \$4 per cubic yard or \$10 per 15 minutes of chipper time. See www.cityofgulfbreeze.com for details.

Tips for use of the Transfer Station

- The transfer station has limited capacity; once the bins are full it closes for that day. So get there early if you can.
- Safety requirements mandate an attendant at the shutoff switch of the chipper. You must expect to feed the chipper your load.
- Attendants are there to ensure safe operation and administration of the site; they are not required to assist you in unloading so please plan accordingly.
- The average pickup truck holds about 2 cubic yards level to its siderails. A load stacked to the height of the cab is about 4 yards so prepare for extra charges.
- Breakdown and flatten cabinets, crates and furniture to keep your charges low.
- Landfill disposal is by weight, so you should expect be charged extra if you are disposing of tile, glass, concrete and similar heavy materials.

HOURS: Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday from 7:30am to 4:00pm
LOCATION: South of intersection of Shoreline and South Sunset.

Waste Survey Results in Brief



During September and October of this year, the City distributed about 500 surveys asking resident's opinions on the City's waste services. The City will be rebidding waste and recycling collection services and the purpose of the survey was to help the City understand where residents might be willing to trade off costs and services. Here is a summary of the results from the 178 surveys returned:

- 70% claim to recycle most of the time;
- 73% like the current service level mix;
- 23% think twice a week garbage is too much;
- 75% say Allied Waste does an above average job;
- 65% want costs controlled;
- 70% want household recycling services;
- 68% want rates at \$25 per month or less;
- Only 35% would recycle without curbside pickup.

As we go to print the City is in the process of soliciting bids for the new collection contract which is due to start in February 2008.

KEEP AN EYE ON THE WEBSITES

WWW.CITYOFGULFBREEZE.COM

GULF BREEZE SCHOOL WEBSITES

- ELEMENTARY WWW.SANTAROSA.K12.FL.US/GBE/
PHONE: 850 934-5185
- MIDDLE SCHOOL WWW.SANTAROSA.K12.FL.US/GBM/
PHONE: 850 934-4030
- HIGH SCHOOL WWW.SANTAROSA.K12.FL.US/GBH/
PHONE: 850 916-4100
- COUNTY DISTRICT WWW.SANTAROSA.K12.FL.US/

EVACUATION ZONES BY ADDRESS

[HTTP://MAPS.ROKTECH.NET/SANTAROSA/EVACUATION/](http://MAPS.ROKTECH.NET/SANTAROSA/EVACUATION/)

COUNTY EMERGENCY WEBSITE

[HTTP://WWW.SANTAROSA.FL.GOV/EMERGENCY/](http://WWW.SANTAROSA.FL.GOV/EMERGENCY/)

STATE EMERGENCY WEBSITE

[HTTP://WWW.FLORIDADISASTER.ORG](http://WWW.FLORIDADISASTER.ORG)

COUNTY WEBSITE

WWW.SANTAROSA.FL.GOV

STATE WEBSITE

WWW.MYFLORIDA.COM

KNOW WHERE UNDERGROUND UTILITIES ARE BEFORE YOU DIG! FREE LOCATES : 800-432-4770