



2021 Year in Review





Message From the City Manager

Though this past year in many ways has been as challenging as 2020, the City of Melbourne was able to achieve great things. With careful planning and deliberative management of resources, we continued to be able respond to the pandemic while ensuring the provision of essential City services. Our business-friendly approach kept us responsive to the needs of our local businesses and the development community as they recovered and expanded.

As you will read in the pages that follow, major infrastructure projects were completed, including improvements to roadways, sidewalks, and parks and recreation facilities. We continued to invest in new training, technology and equipment for our first responders, and we found ways to safely bring back community outreach events, celebrations, and activities that had to be put on hold in 2020 due to the pandemic. To better serve the most vulnerable of our residents, we held a City Council workshop to examine the problems of homelessness and panhandling in our community and determine what we could do as a city government to help. We also continued to revise and implement additional policies

to strengthen our internal controls and procedures, and ensured employees had access to training in these areas in addition to ongoing professional development.

We laid the groundwork this year to advance significant new projects in 2022, including construction of the new police station, creation of new affordable housing programs, improvements to water treatment and production facilities, installation of new stormwater and pollution prevention features, and improvements to roadways and sidewalks.

Thanks to the creativity, dedication and hard work of our employees and City Council members, along with the support and input of the community we serve, the City of Melbourne is well-positioned to remain a reliable provider of services to our residents and businesses, as well as a place families and visitors can enjoy. We look forward to continuing this important work in the year ahead.

Shannon Lewis, City Manager

Financial Stability

Despite many challenges faced by local governments, businesses and other organizations throughout the country, the City of Melbourne's current fiscal condition remained stable in 2021. We continued to be proactive in managing expenditures to stay within available resources in order to maintain the necessary infrastructure and staffing to support the level of service our residents and customers expect and deserve. We avoided the use of cash reserves to fund daily ongoing operational needs and continued to evaluate and implement cost control measures to achieve expenditures savings in future years. In addition, the City actively pursued grant funding to fund special projects and equipment. In 2021, we received a total of \$2,476,793.60 for ongoing grant-funded projects, and were awarded \$2,653,522 in new grant funding.

The City of Melbourne received national recognition for these efforts. After reviewing the City's financial information and its five-year capital plan, Fitch Ratings

gave the City of Melbourne a rating of "AA" with a stable financial outlook. The City was also awarded a Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting by the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada for the 33rd year in a row.

During 2021, Congress included a provision in the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) that provided for direct funding to municipalities to help address the pandemic's economic fallout and revenue replacement for losses incurred from FY2020-FY2024. The City of Melbourne will receive a total of \$14,263,027 in ARPA funds to be used for eligible expenses and programs. City Council set aside a portion of the ARPA funds to be used for a new public safety computer aided dispatch system and the relocation and expansion of a homeless assistance center focused on case management and permanent housing solutions.



Fitch Ratings

Economic Development

The City of Melbourne saw great growth with businesses locating or expanding in our city. We worked hard to maintain a business-friendly environment issuing 8,935 permits valued at \$323 million during the 2020-2021 fiscal year.

In 2021, Melbourne's economy was in a constant state of improvement as substantial projects were completed and others were well underway. Hotel Melby – a 156-room full service hotel with a rooftop lounge, event space and 170-space structured parking – opened in the summer of 2021. Also in 2021, one tower of the two-tower Paramount Condominium development on U.S. 1 opened. The Highline Apartments project, which was completed in 2020, brought in more than \$21 million in tax revenue during the 2020-2021 fiscal year, which exceeded the debt obligation on the

\$2.4 million grant to the developer by over \$61,000 in year one alone.

The Melbourne Orlando International Airport welcomed new service from Allegiant Air and broke ground on a new 143-room Hyatt Place hotel, scheduled to open in 2022. In addition, a project to expand, renovate and modernize the terminal made great progress in 2021 in anticipation of the arrival of TUI Airways.

The Olde Eau Gallie Community Redevelopment Area sunset date was extended to facilitate the development of a public parking garage in the Eau Gallie Arts District. City Council held a special workshop on the U.S. Treasury Department's Opportunity Zone program in March for developers, business owners, property owners, realtors, and economic development professionals. A brochure



Hotel Melby.

offering details about locations and zoning information on potential infill development sites within the City was also developed.

Our community has earned national recognition for ongoing economic development progress. Melbourne was ranked in the top 25 places to live by U.S. News and World Report due to strong population growth and a job market that performed better than other areas during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Palm Bay-Melbourne-Titusville Metropolitan Statistical Area was ranked second in the nation in the Milken Institute's Best-Performing Cities index, which tracks where America's jobs are created and sustained. The area was recognized for strong wage and job growth, which are third and eighth in the nation, respectively.



Highline Apartments.



Pineapples in the Eau Gallie Arts District.



New sidewalks were constructed.



Babcock Street improvements project.

Investing in Critical Infrastructure

In 2021, we continued our investments in maintaining and improving existing infrastructure and added new amenities citywide to improve service and public safety.

The City made great progress in its efforts to storm-harden all of the traffic signals at the 67 signalized intersections it maintains. Seven mast arm conversion projects were completed this year, and more are set to begin soon.

In 2021, the City worked with the Florida Department of Transportation to implement Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) projects along major corridors. The ITS system makes traffic move more efficiently by allowing staff to respond to changes in traffic flow due to accidents and construction. This work is also helping us prepare for future technologies.

To improve pedestrian safety along Country Club Road, the City of Melbourne constructed approximately 3,800 feet

of new sidewalks along the east side of the road from Edgewood Drive to Peekskill Place. Sidewalks were also added along the north side of Melbourne Avenue between Country Club Road and Babcock Street. This was a Local Agency Program project in partnership with the Florida Department of Transportation that included ADA compliant curb ramps, driveway reconstruction, crosswalk striping, guardrail relocation, signage, and other safety improvements.

New landscaped medians were installed on NASA Boulevard near the Melbourne Orlando International Airport to enhance this section of the NASA corridor, which is commonly travelled by visitors and those conducting business within the City. The final phase of Babcock Street's reconstruction was completed, which also included construction of new sidewalks and improvements to underground utilities. In addition, the Pineapple Avenue Complete Streets Project began in the Eau Gallie Arts District.



Thrush Drive Baffle Box under construction.

Protecting Our Environment

Supported by City Council, our staff worked hard on various projects and programs designed to keep our streets clean and protect the Indian River Lagoon.

In 2021, the City of Melbourne coordinated 29 active Adopt-a-Road teams comprising 466 volunteers who collected 5,250 pounds of litter. Street sweeping was another important way we kept our roadways clean and kept trash and debris out of the Indian River Lagoon. In 2021, our street sweeper removed 1.5 million pounds of trash and debris from 500 miles of roadways in the City of Melbourne. To help prevent dumping along roadways, temporary dumpsters

were made available for one month in the spring at the south end of the City and for one month in the fall at the north end. Residents used these free dumpsters to dispose of more than 1,650 cubic yards of bulk trash items, such as damaged fencing, pressure-treated wood, furniture, and old tires.

The City also kept up its efforts to construct stormwater treatment features that will help keep trash and harmful pollutants out of the Indian River Lagoon. In 2021, the Sherwood Park Water Quality Project was completed. The project included the installation of a baffle box, two wet detention ponds, and two rain

gardens that combined will remove an estimated 3,214 pounds of nitrogen and 879 pounds phosphorus a year. Another baffle box was constructed in the Thrush Drive neighborhood that is expected to reduce the amount of total nitrogen to the Indian River Lagoon by 3,661 pounds per year and total phosphorus by 773 pounds per year. Additional stormwater projects at Grant Place, Spring Creek, Melbourne High School, NASA Boulevard, and Espanola Way will be constructed in 2022.

Several septic to sewer conversion projects were initiated using more than \$2.5 million in grant funding from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection and the Save our Indian River Lagoon trust fund. Also with funding from FDEP, the City completed the Melbourne Coastal Resiliency Plan, which identified strategies to address coastal flooding and sea level rise in the City's Adaptation Action Areas.



Adopt-a-Road volunteers.



Sherwood Park Water Quality Project ribbon cutting ceremony.

Keeping Our Community Safe

Melbourne Fire Department

The Melbourne Fire Department staffed eight fire stations strategically located throughout the City to provide for the protection of life and property through innovative emergency medical care, fire suppression and hazard mitigation, technical rescue services and disaster assistance.

In 2021, the Fire Department focused on increasing capabilities in technical rescue, including trench rescue, rope rescue, vehicle machinery rescue, and confined space rescue. This enhanced training has helped ensure our first responders have the technical skills necessary to help our residents in their time of need. More high rises are being constructed in our community, and there will soon be high-speed trains going through the City's more than 20 intersections on a regular basis once Brightline's rail service begins.

This year work also began on a retrofit project to harden five of the City's fire stations with impact-resistant windows and doors with \$282,261 in funding from the Florida Division of Emergency Management Hazard Mitigation program.

Our code inspectors and fire prevention officers worked with residents and businesses to ensure the safety of homes and commercial buildings. In 2021, we conducted seasonal educational and outreach campaigns to share safety tips on a wide variety of topics including cooking, home heating, smoke alarms and escape planning for older or disabled adults, grilling and outdoor electrical safety, and swimming pools and drowning prevention.



Vehicle machinery rescue training.



Trench rescue training.

Melbourne Police Department

With the dedication of the Melbourne Police Department, crime has continued to trend downward for the fourth straight year.

The City invested in additional police vehicles in 2021 so that more officers could be out on patrol. This included the purchase of a specialized van to provide our Crisis Negotiation Unit with an independent workspace to communicate with residents in distress.

In the spring of 2021, the department implemented a new body-worn camera program to increase transparency and improve safety. Body-worn cameras provide a safety mechanism for police officers and can capture valuable evidence. In addition, we received over \$130,000 to fund other key safety equipment, such as bulletproof vests and personal protective equipment.

For the first time, the Melbourne Police Department received re-accreditation from the Florida Commission for Accreditation. This was a momentous achievement achieved through the hard work and dedication of many.

The Police Chief's Advisory Council and the Police Community Relations Council continued to meet regularly, and the Police Department continued other long-standing community outreach efforts. Several community events were held throughout the year, including new events like Slurpee with a Cop and Kids Fishing Camp.

Design and bidding for the new police headquarters facility, named the Joseph Pellicano Law Enforcement Center, was completed. Construction is expected to begin in the early spring 2022.



Kids Fishing Camp.



Body-worn camera demonstration.



"Drive Boo" Halloween event at the Melbourne Auditorium.



MelBoom 4th of July Fireworks Celebration.



Melbourne Salutes Hometown Heroes.

Improving Parks and Neighborhoods

In 2021, we were able to host and bring back many of the special events that our residents have come to love and enjoy – including the return of MelBoom, our annual Fourth of July fireworks celebration at Front Street Park; our second annual "Drive Boo" Halloween event; and other popular seasonal events.

The "Melbourne Salutes Hometown Heroes" banner program honored City of Melbourne residents or their immediate family members who were actively serving in the U.S. Armed Forces, were veterans, or were killed in the line of duty. From May 1 to July 4, the City displayed street pole banners along New Haven Avenue in Downtown Melbourne, each featuring a different veteran's name, photo, branch of service and years served.

Major improvements began at Mallards Landing Golf Course. In the fall, work to replace the irrigation system began, and work to replace the greens is expected to begin in the spring of 2022. While the course is closed, the carpeting inside the Mallards Landing clubhouse, lounge and pro shop will be replaced.

In addition to the golf course, improvements were made to other parks and recreation facilities, including installing a new playground at Fee Avenue Park, resurfacing tennis courts at both of our tennis complexes, replacing siding at one of our community centers, renovating ball fields, installing bleacher covers, planting trees, improving landscaping, and relining pools. We continued to offer a wide variety of athletic programs and safely held our annual summer camps.



Ball field maintenance.



Arbor Day crafts.



Halloween Monster Bash at Lipscomb Community Center.



Backpack Giveaway event at Joseph N. Davis Community Center.



Summer camp.



Planting trees.



Golf lessons.



Youth tennis.



Summer fun at the pool.

Helping Community Members in Need

On May 4, the City Council held a special workshop meeting to set goals and strategies for addressing panhandling and homelessness issues in the City of Melbourne. As a result of that meeting, a Community Affairs Liaison was hired to coordinate efforts among City departments, nonprofits, businesses and residents in an effort to reduce homelessness and to address other community issues. Council approved a conceptual plan to make changes to City Code that will help reduce costs and provide additional incentives to encourage more affordable housing development in the City of Melbourne. Council also approved a new ordinance to improve driver and pedestrian safety within traffic intersections by limiting physical contact and the exchange of items between pedestrians and vehicles.

The City helped facilitate the development of Heritage Park, a 108-unit affordable housing development with supportive services and amenities, including a health clinic and computer lab. It opened in the summer of 2021 with 80 units committed to the prevention of homelessness, including 16 units specifically for people with disabilities, and 28 market rate units.

The City of Melbourne's Emergency Rental, Mortgage, and Public Utilities Assistance Program provided temporary assistance for up to six months of rent, mortgage and/or public utilities payments to residents with a household income of 80% of the area median income, adjusted for family size, who lost income due to the impacts of COVID-19, such as a layoff, furlough, or reduction of hours. The Emergency Repair Program, which ended on December 30, 2020, helped residents make critical repairs that allowed them to remain in their homes.

Staff met with representatives from Steadytown, Daily Bread and the Brevard Homeless Coalition to work on the details of a funding agreement for the continuation of the Street to Home Project to address homelessness within the City through the use of the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) CV3 funding. The program will begin in 2022 and will provide a community response team to address the immediate need for shelter, connections to permanent housing resources, and transition support services to assist with reintegration into the community.

City employees also personally gave back to the community. During the 2020 United Way Campaign, they pledged \$36,000 to support local charities in 2021. Multiple departments participated in holiday giving programs, employees contributed 613 pounds of food during a winter food drive for the South Brevard Sharing Center, and monthly blood drives were held at City facilities.



City of Melbourne Employee Food Drive for South Brevard Sharing Center.