



2022

# PLANNING AND PRIORITIES DOCUMENT

*Our community. Our future.*



# SWOT ANALYSIS



## STRENGTHS

- Regional Water Utility
- Cocoa Village
- Employee Knowledge
- Location
- Financial Status
- Culturally Diverse
- Abundance of Churches/Non-profits
- Educational Hub
- Tree City USA
- Centers for Distribution
- Dr. Joe Lee Smith Community Center
- Diamond Square Community



## WEAKNESSES

- Cocoa's Image/Reputation
- Irregular City Boundaries
- Crime and the perception of crime
- Limited funding for improvements
- Limited control over our parks
- Affordable business space for entrepreneurs
- Incentives for city employees living in the City
- Representative of the population
- Sustainability



## OPPORTUNITIES

- Cocoa Village
- Use of City Facilities and Amenities
- Annexations
- Expansion of Water/Wastewater utilities
- Industrial areas
- Brightline Station
- Cocoa's Image/Reputation
- Tradeschools and partnership with STEM and CTE programs
- Diamond Square Community
- Eco tourism
- Grant Eligibility
- More connected pathways
- Low-impact development
- Have a culturally and ethnically diverse workforce
- Building/residential development
- Vacant commercial property
- Citizen participation/engagement



## THREATS

- Competition for municipal employees
- Cocoa's Image/Reputation
- Unmanaged growth
- Homelessness
- Lack of Attainable workforce housing
- Lack of civic engagement
- Lack of service and healthcare businesses
- Health of the lagoon
- Climate change (storm surge, heat events, sea level rise)

# OUR MISSION

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To enrich the quality of life for our unique and diverse community by delivering **P**rofessional, **R**esponsive, **I**nnovative, **D**edicated and **E**xceptional public services!  
**Serving our community with P.R.I.D.E.**

# OUR VISION

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We envision Cocoa as a safe, vibrant, and diverse city that values its rich history and environmental resources, while promoting an engaged and inclusive community with ample employment, housing, recreational, and social opportunities for all.

# OUR VALUES

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## **INTEGRITY**

Conducting ourselves in a moral, ethical, and honest manner.

## **ACCOUNTABILITY**

Citizens, Staff and City Council taking ownership and responsibility to promote public trust.

## **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

Encouraging community participation, inclusivity and awareness so that all residents feel they have an opportunity to participate in their local government.

## **PROFESSIONALISM**

Serving the community competently and efficiently with character and a positive attitude.

## **EXCELLENCE**

Providing responsive and exceptional customer service.

## **RESPECT**

Treating the public and one another with dignity, consideration and compassion.

# PUBLIC SAFETY/COMMUNITY STANDARDS

*Provide effective and efficient public safety services that remains proactive and allows for enhanced community relations and preparedness.*



The City of Cocoa's commitment to be a safe and inclusive community can be seen in its efforts to implement proactive, community-based solutions to build strong partnerships, engage its residents and focus on our youth. This past year the City of Cocoa welcomed a new Police Chief, Evander Collier IV. His focus was on getting out in the community and forming partnerships between our police officers and our residents. Chief Collier held several community walks where he and the team were seen walking the streets of Cocoa to meet residents and learn first hand their concerns. This past year, we saw a reduction in overall crime from the previous year and through these community based, data driven efforts, the Cocoa Police Department is better prepared to respond to crime trends and emerging social problems.

Through this unimaginable few years of a global pandemic, the public safety team has become better prepared to respond in times of disaster with training and enhancements to disaster preparedness initiatives. The Fire Department has been enhancing training and response efforts as well.

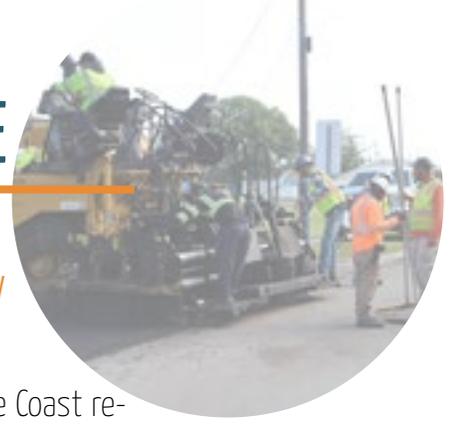
These proactive, community-based solutions are helping enhance public safety and improve the overall quality of life for the Cocoa community.

## **Broad-based initiatives to achieve the priority area of public safety and community standards include:**

- **Implement proactive, community-based solutions to build strong community relations.**
- **Proactively and consistently respond to shifting crime trends and emerging social problems.**
- **Attract and retain a skilled community-oriented and diverse sworn and civilian workforce.**
- **Ensure training and readiness of Public Safety employees.**
- **Enhance community disaster preparedness initiatives.**
- **Enhance community standard efforts while continuing to strive for voluntary compliance.**

# INVESTMENT IN PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE

*Ensure safe and efficient public infrastructure that drives growth and development in an environmentally responsible manner.*



Cocoa is a unique and diverse community centrally located in the heart of the Space Coast region, along the Indian River in Brevard County. With one of the largest regional water utility systems in the state, Cocoa Water Utility provides customers with safe, clean drinking water. Enhancements were made to the Dyal Water Treatment facility to allow the system to continue to expand and remain resilient for years to come.

Brightline continues to construct its high speed rail from Miami to Orlando through the Cocoa community. The City of Cocoa is working to bring a multi-modal station to the Cocoa community to allow our residents and the entire Space Coast region to take advantage of this enhanced public transportation service in our region. The City continually strives to enhance other transportation networks as well including annual upgrades to streets and sidewalks to ensure safe modes of transportation for our community.

A focus for the City Council this past year was to enhance and support a safe, accessible and well-maintained network of community parks. A number of improvements are planned to enhance playing fields, facilities, and safety to allow for increased use of our parks.

The City also invested in parking for the downtown business district. Property was purchased to allow for additional parking while additional on-street parking was also configured. This is an on-going commitment as the downtown continues to grow.

Investing in our infrastructure continues to drive growth and development and make Cocoa a leader in the Space Coast region.

## **Broad-based initiatives to achieve the priority area of investment in public infrastructure include:**

- **Ensure the delivery of safe, clean drinking water to all utility customers.**
- **Enhance the City's transportation networks. (Train, bicycle, walk, drive, public transit, Brightline Multi-modal station)**
  - **Invest in environmental stewardship.**
  - **Support a safe, accessible, well-maintained network of parks, facilities and greenspace.**
    - **Continue to expand parking options in Cocoa Village.**

# ECONOMIC/COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



*Enhance efforts to make the City of Cocoa a thriving and competitive economic driver along the Space Coast.*

Cocoa is a unique and diverse community situated in the heart of the Space Coast. Serving as a gateway to Brevard's beautiful beaches, Cocoa is minutes to Central Florida's many amenities and attractions such as Port Canaveral's cruise port, Kennedy Space Center, the Brevard Zoo, historical downtown districts, and Orlando area attractions. The City of Cocoa is emerging as a competitive and innovative regional hub with an array of available land, a central location close to major highways, and commitment to invest in development.

This past year, the City paved a pathway for faster permitting with development of online permitting. This new program makes it easier for residents and businesses to obtain permits.

This past year major investments in the City of Cocoa came from large organization such as Amazon and the expansion of the WalMart Distribution Center to include Sam's Club. The City's new Upstart program helped two new business owners get started with and expand their business in the Cocoa community.

The City is seeing economic growth through the investment in public infrastructure, incentives to foster continued development, and investment in targeted marketing and data collection efforts. The City also supports local job readiness training and continuing education programs to foster a prepared market of employees for the growing business community.

A surge in residential developments and investment in local residential programs help to ensure a diverse variety of housing options for our growing community. With all of this investment and growth, Cocoa is building a stronger, more competitive community poised for economic success.

## **Broad-based initiatives to achieve the priority area of economic and community development include:**

- Enable growth through enhanced and modernized infrastructure.
- Maintain and attract new industry, jobs and investment through targeted marketing efforts, data collection and maintenance.
- Support education, training and job readiness programs.
- Improve residential development and rehabilitation programs to ensure a diversity of housing options.

**147 New Businesses Started in Cocoa in 2021**  
106 Brick and Mortar businesses and  
41 Home-based businesses

**325 New Employees**  
from the 147 new businesses

**Cocoa saw a 31% increase in New Businesses in 2021**  
over fiscal year 2020

# COMMUNITY OUTREACH & ENGAGEMENT

*Engage residents, business owners and visitors to participate in and be informed about their community.*

Community input and involvement is paramount to good governance. The City of Cocoa has increased efforts over the last year to reach residents, business owners and visitors with community information. An enhanced website that is more user friendly and drives valuable community content was launched at the beginning of the fiscal year. The site contains easily accessible information that is important to our community including a calendar of events, emergency alerts, videos, the latest news, and more.

To make community information even more accessible, the City launched a new and improved mobile app. This app features easy access to City information at anytime. Features include a calendar of events that can be synced to your mobile device calendar, push notifications, alerts, report a concern and more.

The City's Leisure Services division was host to hundreds of special events at City facilities throughout the year and put on a number of free community events including celebrations for July 4th, Juneteenth, Memorial Day, movies in the park and more. These events attract hundreds of thousands of attendees, increasing the economic vitality of the Cocoa community.

The Cocoa Citizens Academy continues to build a strong and diverse base of community volunteers. Citizens and business owners apply to participate in this fantastic opportunity to learn more about the City of Cocoa, how their local government operates, and how they can become more involved. Participants visit with each City department, meet employees, and learn about how that department provides services to the community. This program has developed a number of dedicated community volunteers that are better equipped to assist in making their community better.

Reaching our residents, business owners and visitors is vital to cultivating a vibrant and dynamic community and there are many opportunities for engagement and participation in the Cocoa community.



## Broad-based initiatives to achieve the priority area of community outreach and engagement include:



- Continue to find new ways to communicate and reach the entire community with the latest news and information.
- Engage residents in volunteer boards and committees through community outreach programs.
- Ensure branding standards are maintained.
- Encourage a diverse array of special events at city facilities attracting a diverse audience.

# ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS



*Drive efficiency with impact focused workflow and attraction and development of a qualified workforce.*

The past year, the City of Cocoa focused on recovery efforts after a pandemic affected not only our community but the entire world. The City was able to deliver an excellent level of effective and efficient public services to the community. Efforts were focused this past year on maintaining a qualified and driven workforce by ensuring competitive wages.

Efforts will now focus on attracting and supporting a qualified and capable workforce that is reflective of the Cocoa community and leveraging the latest in technology to continue to deliver the best public services. This will include enhancing and analyzing workflow processes to ensure a high standard of service.

This past year the City also received awards for its budget and financial documents and received a glowing annual financial report with no audit comments. This solidifies the work of Council and staff to ensure the City is financially stable and ready for continued growth opportunities and to maintain long-term fiscal sustainability.

A dedicated and capable workforce that is impact focused and efficient is the base for delivering professional, responsive, innovative, dedicated and exceptional public services to the Cocoa community.

## **Broad-based initiatives to achieve the priority area of organizational effectiveness include:**

- Enhance efforts to attract, develop and support a qualified and capable workforce reflective of the community.
- Leverage the latest technology to deliver efficient and effective public services to the community.
- Improve organization efficiency and effectiveness by analyzing workflow processes.
- Maintain the City's long-term fiscal sustainability.



*Stay Connected* with the online dashboard



Stay connected and see all of the initiatives and projects of the City of Cocoa's priority planning at our online dashboard, [www.CocoaFL.gov/priorities](http://www.CocoaFL.gov/priorities).