

## **State of the City of Key West**

**Delivered By: Mayor Craig Cates, 2017**

2016 was an extraordinary year for the City of Key West! When looking back at the list of projects that were on the horizon for last year, the vast majority were completed. This is a tremendous accomplishment not only for the staff, but the people of our great community who support our city with their thoughts, ideas and tax dollars. I am proud to say that we are moving forward, and making progress for our people in leaps and bounds.

Over the next few minutes I will highlight the accomplishments of our city's departments in 2016, and take a look at what is on the horizon for the year 2017.

This is an exciting time for the residents of our special island. We get to witness and take part in major projects and milestones that will bless our city for many years into the future. We are improving quality of life for our residents and enhancing the experience for the visitor. We are honoring our history and making sound decisions for our future. It's a great time to be a part of the City of Key West.

### **2016 Accomplishments:**

#### **Finance:**

Managed a General Fund Budget of over \$63 million dollars with funding sources which include taxes, License & Permit fees, Intergovernmental Revenue, Charges for Services and Fines & Forfeitures

Managed an overall budget of over \$170 million dollars.

Only \$15 million was collected from property tax (supporting low property taxes for our residents)

Received the Government Finance Officers Association Award for Excellence in Financial Reporting for the 31<sup>st</sup> consecutive year.

Assisted in achieving "rollback" tax rate in 2016 for the 2017 budget cycle.

Managed a general ledger which includes 17 funds:

1. General Fund – 63,134,340
2. Infrastructure Surtax Fund – 12,282,367
3. Internal Improvement Fund -5,278,127
4. Fort Taylor Surcharge Fund – 1,780,300
5. Affordable Housing Fund – 84,500
6. Community Fund – 347,260
7. Law Enforcement Trust Fund – 93,752
8. Capital Projects Fund – 1,533,535
9. Bahama Village TIF Fund – 1,672,856
10. Caroline TIF Fund – 1,407,411
11. Sewer Fund – 22,385,841
12. Stormwater Utility Fund – 6,650,217
13. Solid Waste Fund – 18,124,622

14. Key West Bight Fund – 14,625, 960
15. Transit System Fund – 4,468,364
16. Garrison Bight Fund – 3,225,394
17. Insurance Program Fund – 14,102,503

**Building:**

After more than five years of interaction and reviews with FEMA the Building Department succeeded in obtaining a “letter of good standing” regarding our Flood Plain Enforcement within the City.

Improved Community Rating System Class 10 to a Class 7 which resulted in a 15% Flood Insurance discount for the City of Key West property owners

**Engineering:**

Completion of the New City Hall at 1300 White Street.

Completion of the New Transit Facility on College Road (\$8.9M)

Completion of the Caroline Street Corridor

Committed expenditures of \$500,000 worth of new sidewalks and repairs to existing sidewalks, with more to come in 2017.

Completion of White Street sewer lateral trench repair, mill and pave

Mallory Square Bathroom Restoration Completed

Completion of Douglass Gym Band Room white box stabilization

Ribbon Cutting of the new Sexton’s House

Currently active engineering projects:

The \$1.7M Frederick Douglass Gym renovation project is under construction with completion scheduled for July 2017.

Repairs to the Mallory Square T-Pier and the Zero Duval Seawall are ongoing, with completion of this \$1.8M project in February 2017

Building 103 Stabilization Design and reconstruction ongoing

Smathers Beach bathroom facility construction to begin in 2017

Amphitheatre at Truman Waterfront construction has commenced

### **Fire Department and EMS:**

Received an ISO rating of 1, a superior rating that puts us in the top 1% of all fire departments in the nation. This also results in the lowest possible fire insurance rates to taxpayers.

A new Pierce Velocity pumper has been placed into service at station #3

13 Students completed the Key West High School Fire Academy sponsored by the Monroe County School Board and the Key West Fire Department.

In 2016, the new EMS service required the hiring of 13 new Firefighter/EMT positions and a new administrative assistant. The new service acquired three new Horton Type III ambulances as front line units and another used unit as reserve. The new EMS service acquired state of the art EMS equipment to treat the patients we serve. We acquired a new John Deere Gator unit for special events deployment.

The Key West Fire Department responded to 6000 EMS calls and 4200 transports with a total of over 7000 calls for service (an increase of 1300 from last year).

An Advanced Life Support Ambulance is now stationed at each of our three Fire Stations enabling our Rescue crews to arrive on emergency scenes in less than 4 minutes on average.

### **Community Services:**

The City of Key West hosts over 80 Festivals and Events each year.

Big events include:

- Fantasy Fest
- New Years
- Poker Run
- Marathons & ½ Marathons
- 4<sup>th</sup> of July
- Conch Republic Independence Day
- Hemingway Days

There are also approximately “smaller” events not counting tag days, 5K’s, small one block closures.

*Community Services* assists with barricades, set-up, during and clean up for many of these events.

The larger parks include but are not limited to:

- Clayton Sterling Complex, which consists of four baseball fields and batting cages, are located at the corner of Kennedy Drive and North Roosevelt Boulevard. This complex is home to Little Conch baseball.
- Rosa Hernandez Softball Field, located at the corner of Kennedy Drive and Northside Dr. and is home of the Key West Girls Softball League.

- Wickers Sports Complex is comprised of the Dewitt Roberts softball field, George Mira football field and Blake Fernandez Skate Park. The complex is home of the Key West Junior Football League, the Key West men's softball league and the Jewfish Over 40 Softball League. The complex is six acres in total and located at Kennedy Drive.
- Sonny McCoy Indigenous Park located at the corner of Atlantic Blvd and White Street totals 10 acres; houses the bocce courts and the Wildlife Rescue.
- Bayview Park on the corner of Truman Avenue and Jose Marti Drive is comprised of 4 acres is home to the Vietnam Living Memorial within the Veterans Memorial Garden. The Park also offers basketball goals, tennis courts, softball field, a playground and facilities for the Boys and Girls Club.
- In-line hockey rink is located at the corner of Bertha and Atlantic Blvd and is home to the Southernmost Hockey League.
- Pocket parks such as the Bill Butler Park, Cozumel Park, 18<sup>th</sup> Street Park and Spottswood Park provide other recreational venues.

Some of the smaller pocket parks include: Bill Butler Park, Cozumel Park, 18<sup>th</sup> Street Park and Spottswood Park

The Truman Waterfront is currently under construction to create a world class park. This area is home to the Matthew L. Gilleran Recreational Field.

The *Parks and Recreation* division maintains all of the City's parks and fields.

The recreation division also provides maintenance and upkeep for beaches and other green space areas within the City of Key West limits.

*Community Services* cleans and maintain our city which is home to approximately 25,000 residents and over 3 million visitors per year.

The *Fleet Services* division maintain over 400 City vehicles and equipment. The staff can respond 24/7 to any vehicle or equipment emergencies and is an essential element in our emergency response situations.

*City Cemetery* –

Over 100 interments annually

Over 80,000 people are interred at the City cemetery

Burial Records for all 19 acres of the historic cemetery have been digitized

*Facilities Maintenance Team* -

This department was established to meet the repairs, maintenance and construction needs of the City of Key West facilities and infrastructure. The staff skill set consists of electrical, welding, plumbing, environmental control, carpentry, masonry, roofing and general construction. The team maintains and repairs over all city-owned buildings and facilities.

Collectively, the Community Services Department touts the following highlights from its list of accomplishments for the year 2016:

- Replace playground equipment at Bayview Park
- Renovated Police Athletic League gym with new electrical, air conditioning, lighting, and windows.
- Ribbon cutting at Sexton Office at Historic Cemetery
- Installed benches on South Roosevelt Boulevard
- Bayview Park Pavilion painting
- Resurfaced Bayview tennis and Cozumel basketball courts
- Refurbished the Staples Avenue Bridge
- 9.8 million linear feet of Right of Way maintenance

**City Clerk:**

Prepared City Commission meeting packets for distribution for 31 commission meetings and workshops

Administered and attested to 376 resolutions and 27 ordinances

Administered 250 hours preparing agendas, minutes and attending meetings for Bahama Village Redevelopment Advisory Committee, Key West Bight Management District Board and Sustainability Board

Administered and implemented public records software on the City's website

Clerk more than 12 boards on an ongoing basis:

- Key West Bight Board
- Pension Board
- Tree Commission
- HARC
- AIPP
- BVRAC
- TWAB
- Sustainability Advisory Board
- BOA/LRA/CRA
- Contractor's Examining Board
- Key West City Commission

**IT:**

Moved all IT equipment for the entire city staff from Habana Plaza to the New City Hall

- Designed, configured and setup network for New City Hall
- Set up IT services for the entire building
- Outfitted new commission chambers

**CODE:**

During the past fiscal year, the Code Compliance Department received and investigated approximately 1,766 complaints with the following being the top five:

1. 244 for obstruction of streets.
2. 228 for building without permits or building beyond the scope of a permit
3. 218 for unlicensed/delinquent business tax receipts.
4. 217 general/miscellaneous complaints.
5. 125 transient rental complaints.

This past year Code Compliance became proactive investigating short term, (transient) rental complaints. The City Commission authorized two full time code officers dedicated to investigating transient complaints which has resulted in a dramatic increase in transient rental investigations. In fiscal year 2015 the total number of transient cases investigated was 60 compared to fiscal year 2016 where the total cases investigated was 125. The Code Compliance Department works closely with the Monroe County Tax Collector's Office in this effort to reduce the number of illegal transient rentals, which has resulted in the Tax Collector collecting more in bed taxes.

**HR:**

Wellness:

- Sponsored our 5<sup>th</sup> annual employee health fair.
- Continued with an employee wide "Wellness" program stressing annual checkups and screenings; these are provided by our current carrier Cigna Insurance.

They presented the following service awards:

- 27 Five year anniversary awards
- 31 Ten year anniversary awards
- 8 Fifteen year anniversary awards
- 5 Twenty year anniversary awards
- 5 Twenty-five year anniversary awards
- 5 Thirty year anniversary awards

**Summary of 2016 accomplishments...These were On the Horizon for 2016 and completed:**

Ribbon Cutting ceremony & Opening of the New Sexton's House

Completion of the \$8.9 Million Key West Transit Facility

Peary Court Referendum to bring the decision to the voters of Key West

Explore options such as Sigsbee, Poinciana, Peary Court, Truman Waterfront, Mosquito Control and SPCA property on college road for affordable housing. Peary Court was deed restricted as affordable housing, the construction of 39 affordable housing units at Sunset Marina was approved.

Move in to the New City Hall – in December 2016

Construction bid for the Truman Waterfront Amphitheatre was awarded in December 2016

Repaving of White Street

Begin renovation of Douglass Gym and break ground on New Community Center adjacent to the gym.

Repair the roof at the Martin Luther King Jr. Community Center, Solar Panel Installation is in progress.

Designing and permitting new restroom facility at Smathers Beach

Resurfacing playing courts at Bayview

Replacing fencing at the Clayton Sterling Baseball Complex

General Upgrade Plan for Bayview Park

- Replacing Bayview Park playground equipment
- Painting the Bayview Park Pavilion

New urban beautification projects including the Southern end of Duval Street and the implementation of a comprehensive bicycle path plan have been budgeted and will go for Commission approval mid-spring 2017

Re-writing of HARC Guidelines, including new construction, new additions, and signage were approved.

Develop and present conceptual design for three individual sites for Affordable Housing, rezoning of College Road will be presented to the Planning Board by mid-spring 2017.

Approval of a design of the Dock Master's Office at Garrison Bight, going out for construction bids in mid-February 2017.

### **Projects on the horizon for 2017:**

Douglass Gym Completion

Community Center at Douglass Gym

Route 1 Bus Apron Improvements

NOAA Seawall Construction

Rest Beach Armoring

Outer Mole Pier Entry Control Point

Smathers Beach Restroom Construction and Completion

MLK Solar Panels

Continued Right of Way improvements

Building 103 Stabilization

Glynn Archer Gym Roof

10<sup>th</sup> Street Walkway and Boat Ramp (Permitting)

Graduate 17 KWFd firefighters from the paramedic class, June or July

Building Department Transition to a new online software system and more online processing to reduce hard-copies and improve on permitting process ease and accessibility.

HR will sit with PBA and the Local Teamster Union 769 to renegotiate collective bargaining units as their current contracts expire September 30<sup>th</sup> of 2017.

Ribbon cutting and opening of New Amphitheatre at the Truman Waterfront.

Execution and implementation of comprehensive bike plan for the City of Key West

*Our top three priorities for the year 2016 were:*

**1. Affordable Housing & Affordable Living**

While many things were done in 2016 to help overcome the challenges of affordable housing and affordable living, we still have quite a bit of work to do to make a dent in this issue for our residents. This will remain at number one on our list of priorities for 2017.

**2. The Truman Waterfront Park**

The park's Master Plan was completed in 2016. Phase 1 is well underway. As a separate project outside of Phase 1, a World Class Amphitheatre has been approved and the construction bid has been awarded with completion expected in August of 2016. These two phases of the Truman Waterfront are expected to yield the greatest fruit for our residents and visitors as the heart of the Truman Waterfront are included in these two sections.

**3. Ferry Service to Cuba**

While our vision for the future of this possibility was not quite focused at the beginning of 2016, we have now narrowed in on the most viable and cost effective options for where ferry service would best serve the citizens and visitors of both Key West and our neighbors in Cuba.

With all that the City of Key West, and its partners accomplished in 2015, it seemed almost unreasonable to ask for more in 2016. But once again, goals were met and surpassed. This group went above and beyond and accomplished an overwhelming list of projects and turned ideas into realities. They made great things happen.

Our city is comprised of a diverse group of citizens and visitors. It is because of these different views, this mix of traditional and progressive thinking, the multitude of points of view and the way our people share thoughts, ideas and experiences with our local government, our boards and committees and our city staff that we have the opportunity to pull from a vast pool of knowledge and experience.

And so this leads us to what is on the Horizon for the year 2017 for the people of the City of Key West...

Our top three priorities are:

1. Affordable Housing and Affordable Living
2. Substantial Completion of the Truman Waterfront Park in 2017-2018
3. Re-unifying our community

**Number 1:** Continues to be Affordable Housing... and Affordable Living. Affordable housing is a narrow focus. Affordable Living reflects a broad vision concept which encompasses housing, low taxes, transportation, daycare, and a comprehensive look at how to make living in Key West affordable for its residents.

In 2016, the City of Key West explored the option of Peary Court. The decision to do so was put to a referendum vote, and the citizens of Key West decided they did not want the City to make this purchase. In an effort to not lose these units as affordable housing for the working class and families of our community, a developer made a private purchase of the property and the city was able to preserve all 20 acres for affordable housing in perpetuity. That is a tremendous accomplishment for our community.

The Mosquito Control property on College Road, is being vacated and is currently at the planning board level for a request to increase density. This property, and the former Florida Keys SPCA property, will go out to RFP for the development of affordable housing, primarily low-income housing, before the summer of 2017. The Commission is asking that these properties be utilized for the construction of new affordable housing, through private developers or a public/private partnership.

Increasing housing capacity at Sigsbee Base was up for discussion last year. The discussion is in the hands of the Navy, which had to stall things in light of the then-upcoming Presidential Elections. This discussion is now back on track with progress expected to be made in the very near future.

The discussion of use of the Poinciana Housing development through partnership with the Key West Housing Authority was also in the mix of the affordable housing discussion. While one idea was not viable and not desired by the vast majority of our community, another project through a private/public partnership came to fruition when we broke ground on an Assisted Living Facility on this property. There is still space to expand on this property for some affordable housing components.

The City of Key West will continue to work tirelessly, think outside the box and come up with viable and innovative ways to lessen the Affordable Housing shortfall and

**Number 2:** We are working diligently toward Substantial Completion of the Truman Waterfront Park. This project has been in the works for 20 years! That's two decades of talking and ideas, planning and decisions a tremendous amount of staff hours and community input, and finally, in 2016 we were able to break ground on what this community has been waiting for so long.

In 2015 the city approved a Master Plan for the Truman Waterfront Park. It was vetted by the Truman Waterfront Advisory Board, the Bahama Village Redevelopment Committee and the City Commission. Everyone was on the same page and it was time to get these wheels into motion.

Today, we are looking at breaking ground on the Amphitheater in February 2017, with an expected completion date of September 2017. The community support has been tremendous for this project and it's going to be a wonderful venue for so many community events.

The entire park is being completed in phases with the current phase to be completed by the end of 2018.

The Truman Waterfront Park will be the epicenter of downtown Key West. It will serve athletes young and old with green spaces to accommodate local (and maybe visiting) sports teams. Over the years our youth sports have been challenged for space to work with our children. This park will provide several alternatives to our over-utilized new town spaces.

**Number 3:** We must make it a priority to re-unify our community in 2017. Our community is suffering a great divide. Whether it is due to this new political climate, a wave that has poured over our country since our presidential elections, or just a new era of how people are affected by and deal with things. Our One Human Family concept seems to be in question of its once solid and powerful existence.

A little island town with a laid back attitude, where anything goes and people would offer their neighbor a bag of mangoes from their tree, is experiencing a time of protest, intolerance and adversity. Where our community used to be champions of the idea that people were entitled to their own ideas and we were free to talk and think and share whether it was the mainstream consensus or not, has now become a place where people are feeling anger and hurt.

The epidemic that is affecting our entire country, has managed to make its way all the way down here, past the 7 Mile Bridge to little old Key West. The place at the end of the rainbow where life is great, the sun is shining and the fish are biting.

So let us not forget that we are all here because we have similar beliefs of respect and tolerance. We are here because we love the weather, the mentality and our neighbors. We do not need to protest every single opinion that differs from another. We need to come back together and be the One Human Family we were always meant to be, love thy neighbor, and be the charitable, loving and supportive community we have always been. So let's celebrate the positive things that happen every day here in Paradise.

Once again I would like to assure the residents of the City of Key West that the State of our City is truly at a remarkable point in its history. In the last 8 years, I have had the honor and privilege of seeing through a vast list of projects and accomplishments. We are accomplishing great things together for us all to enjoy, making our city great today, and for hundreds of years to come.

I thank you all for your contributions and your support in making these things possible. May God continue to bless this great island and the people on it.

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