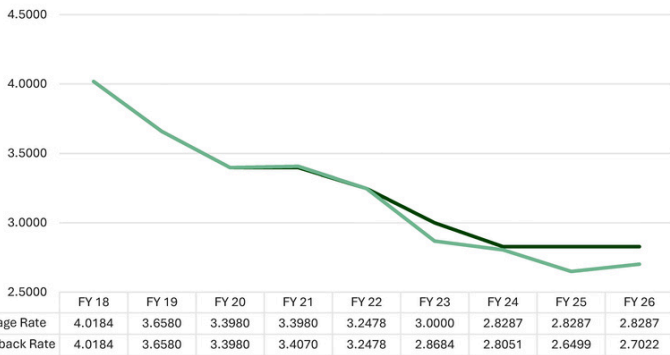




# WILDWOOD CONNECTION

**Millage Rate Trend**



*Wildwood's current millage rate of 2.8287 is the lowest in the city's history.*

**Expenditures by Function - City Wide**



- Utilities (**Budgeted**) \$116,816,230.00
- Fund Balance (**Budgeted**) \$95,693,919.00
- Transportation (**Budgeted**) \$15,692,855.00
- Other Financing Sources (**Budgeted**) \$15,336,004.00
- Public Safety (**Budgeted**) \$13,843,900.00
- Culture & Recreation (**Budgeted**) \$12,840,720.00
- General Government Services (**Budgeted**) \$7,743,380.00
- Economic Environment (**Budgeted**) \$1,280,100.00
- Debt Service (**Budgeted**) \$1,016,160.00
- Physical Environment (**Budgeted**) \$800.00

*The proposed budget prioritizes infrastructure for a rapidly growing population. A major upgrade and expansion of the city's utility systems will provide additional capacity while enhancing environmental quality.*

## TWO BUDGET HEARINGS IN SEPTEMBER: RESIDENTS INVITED TO PARTICIPATE

For the upcoming fiscal year, which begins Oct. 1, 2025, Wildwood officials have developed and proposed a \$280 million city budget balancing the delivery of municipal services with anticipated revenues in a rapidly growing and diversifying city.

Six primary objectives have been included in the formulation of operating and capital budgets:

- Maintaining the ad valorem tax rate at its historically low rate of 2.8287
- Investing in critical infrastructure needed to support continued economic growth; most importantly, the water reclamation facility/wastewater treatment plant expansion
- Decreasing financial strain on the Utility Revenue Fund
- Improving public facilities and services
- Efficiently and effectively managing city assets
- Implementing strategic planning initiatives

"Expanding and improving our infrastructure is front and center," explained City Manager Jason McHugh. "These critical services require significant investment. We can't kick the can down the road if we want to continue to deliver the level of quality our residents have come to expect."

The proposed budget also provides financial resources toward the six goals contained within the city's five-year strategic plan:

- Community Engagement
- Transportation
- Affordable Housing
- Downtown Redevelopment
- Infrastructure
- Employee Recruitment/Retainment

In accordance with state law, Wildwood's city commission will conduct two budget hearings this month, each providing an opportunity for public input. Those hearings are scheduled for Sept. 8 and Sept. 22, both beginning at 7 p.m.

"We want to hear what citizens think about this budget," said Assistant City Manager/CFO Cassandra Smith. "City leadership values public engagement so much, it is the first priority of Wildwood's strategic plan. I strongly encourage people to come out, ask questions, and provide feedback."

The proposed budget can be found on the city's website at [wildwood-fl.gov/finance](http://wildwood-fl.gov/finance).

## WILDWOOD WATER SYSTEM MAINTENANCE SCHEDULED FOR SEPTEMBER

Wildwood officials are advising utility customers that maintenance of the potable water system will begin the first week of September and is expected to continue through the end of the month.

"We will be flushing the main line and maintaining our isolation valves," said Deputy Director of Utilities Jason Martin. "This work is essential to upholding the system's integrity and avoiding potential infrastructure issues in the future."

Martin explained that lower-than-normal pressure and/or discolored water may occur while the work is being done, but these issues should clear up within a few hours. Anyone experiencing prolonged effects is urged to contact the city.

"Ideally, customers will not even notice we are doing the work," said Martin. "But it is possible to have pressure fluctuations during flushing. Those fluctuations can dislodge accumulated sediment inside older pipes, leading to short-term water discoloration. We want any customer who notices persistent changes to their water to call us so we can dispatch a technician to troubleshoot."

Over the past few years, the city has been systematically replacing older galvanized steel water lines with new materials that do not oxidize and are less vulnerable to damage. Galvanized piping was popular in the middle of the last century, when the city's original utility infrastructure was constructed. The city also continues to refine scheduling and calibration of water applications to enhance consistency and help prevent chemistry fluctuations that can accelerate oxidation.

"The technology in this field has advanced leaps and bounds during the past couple of decades," Martin commented. "We have tools that didn't exist when I began my career. It is exciting to be able to solve problems that were unsolvable back then and to continue to improve the delivery of quality water to our customers."

Anyone receiving City of Wildwood water service who experiences quality issues that do not resolve quickly should call 352-330-1336.

## WILDWOOD LEADERS JUMP IN TO ASSIST FLOODED PARK AND RESIDENTS

The City of Wildwood stepped in to assist residents of Villager RV Park last month, pumping down stormwater that had accumulated due to impeded drainage within the FDOT right of way along U.S. 301.

Crews pumped throughout the night to restore access to the RV park by the next morning.

In addition, Wildwood personnel coordinated a meeting with the city's consulting engineer and a private development team working on a commercial project adjacent to the park.

During the meeting, the developer's contractors took responsibility for the impeded drainage and were directed to remove the stabilized access (berm) and reconnect the drainage ponds to restore stormwater flow. By the following afternoon, the flow had resumed.

Villager RV Park management expressed their appreciation to the city for jumping in to help.

"I am happy we were able to identify the problem quickly and facilitate the correction while also providing immediate assistance to the park," said Development Services Director Melanie Strickland. "Our public works team deserves extra appreciation for their teamwork, rapid response, and work throughout the night to ensure residents regained access to and from their homes."

*Photos at right show park entrance before and after city crews pumped through the night.*



# LABOR DAY

## HOLIDAY OFFICE CLOSURES AND SCHEDULE CHANGES

Wildwood City Hall and city offices will be closed on Labor Day, September 1, 2025.

Residential curbside trash and yard waste services provided through the city's contractor, WM, will be delayed one day the week of Labor Day for customers who normally receive collection on Tuesdays or Fridays.

Commercial customers who normally receive container service on Mondays will receive service on an alternate day the week of Labor Day.

Residents of The Villages® section of Wildwood should contact District Customer Service Center at 352-753-4508 with any questions about holiday collection schedules.

## WILDWOOD OFFICIALS ADVISE PUBLIC OF CONTINUED LOCAL LANE CLOSURES

Wildwood officials continue to advise the public of local lane closures associated with construction of a new floodplain remediation pond area, stormwater inlets, and pipes near the intersection of Missouri Ave. and Lee St.

Work began Aug. 18, 2025, and is expected to take three to four weeks to complete. The project is intended to remediate flooding concerns on Powell Street.

"We thank residents for their patience," said Public Works Director Jeremy Hockenbury. "Our goal is to minimize a temporary inconvenience during construction while alleviating the greater inconvenience experienced by residents over several years during heavy rainstorms."

Motorists are encouraged to navigate around the construction site by using nearby roads in the neighborhood's street grid.

## APWA TO PRESENT WILDWOOD WITH PUBLIC WORKS ACCREDITATION PLAQUE THIS MONTH

American Public Works Association Director Larry Ingram is scheduled to attend Wildwood's Sept. 22, 2025, commission meeting to present city officials with a plaque officially recognizing the national accreditation recently achieved by the city's public works team.

## WILDWOOD OFFICIALS RESPOND TO OVERNIGHT LOCALIZED FLOODING

City of Wildwood officials responded to localized flooding that began the evening of Aug. 18, 2025, in the midst of an intense, sustained downpour produced by a severe thunderstorm.

City Manager Jason McHugh said the city's stormwater systems are designed to Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD) standards and the precipitation surpassed system capacity for a short period, resulting in flooded streets in the downtown area.

Affected areas included Main Street/U.S. 301, Gamble Street, and Rutland Street, as well as public and private roads in several mobile home parks.



"I began assessing the situation about 7:00 p.m. when the downpour did not let up," McHugh said. "I was on the scene near City Hall by 7:40 p.m., where vehicles were stuck in water on Gamble Street. Wildwood police and Sumter County's public safety teams were already there assisting. Thankfully, we have received no reports of injuries."

A Wildwood Middle High School weather station recorded 5.52 inches of rain between 6:00 and 8:00 p.m. the day of the event.

According to the city's consulting engineer, this intensity exceeded National Weather Service Rainfall Frequency Atlas data for the 100-year storm event, the standard used by the city's Land Development Regulations, SWFWMD Regulations, and State of Florida Administrative Code for designing stormwater management systems.

The city's wastewater treatment facility on Industrial Drive experienced a sudden spike in infiltration and infill, resulting in an overflow of approximately 5,000 gallons, despite the efforts of round-the-clock personnel. The spill was contained to the facility site and addressed in strict accordance with all Florida Department of Environmental Protection regulations and protocols.

"I was able to watch water subside in minutes as the rainfall intensity diminished and our stormwater system started to catch up," McHugh said. "This was an extremely unusual storm, the likes of which I have never seen in my 16 years with the City of Wildwood."

## WHERE'S JASON THIS MONTH?

Wildwood City Manager Jason McHugh spent half a day in August with Wildwood's code compliance crew.

After learning about the two-person team's approach to identifying and responding to violations of Wildwood's Code of Ordinances, McHugh toured several areas of the city and viewed specific out-of-compliance properties.

He assisted in posting signs notifying owners, residents, and the community about upcoming hearings related to the cases in question, and learned more about how the special magistrate presides over those hearings, listening to testimony from the city, specific complainants, and property owners, before making a ruling.

"I'm proud of the way Wildwood works toward compliance," McHugh commented. "Many violations result from out-of-state owners inheriting property or from residents lacking resources to do the work needed. In those instances, our team works side by side with owners to help them bring properties back into compliance without unnecessary hardship. In other cases, violations are repeated and willful, and those cases are handled much less leniently."

Where will Jason be next? Check out the next issue of the Wildwood Connection to learn more about his quest to try every job within the city's jurisdiction.

## WILDWOOD TEAMS WITH YOU THRIVE TO OFFER SENIOR MEALS AND ACTIVITIES

The City of Wildwood is teaming up with You Thrive Senior Services to offer weekly meals and recreational activities to Sumter County residents ages 60 years and older at two city locations.

"You Thrive has a longstanding record of offering services in communities to the families and individuals who need them most," Wildwood Parks and Recreation Director Courtney Kellem said. "We are excited to build this relationship with them and look forward to expanding opportunities that best serve our diverse residents."

The program begins Sept. 5, 2025, at Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Community Center, 101 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Ave., and continues on Fridays through Thanksgiving. It starts Sept. 8 at Warfield Auditorium and continues through November every Monday except Oct. 20.

Both sites will provide free breakfast and lunch along with activities such as card games, bingo, and exercise. Guest speakers will discuss retirement, financial planning, health topics, and more. All sessions begin at 8:30 a.m. and end at 12:30 p.m.

You Thrive Florida, established in 1968, is a community action agency in Brooksville and is part of a national network created by the 1964 Economic Opportunity Act.

For more information or to enroll, contact the city at 352-461-0134 or You Thrive Senior Services at 352-326-3540.

## CODE COMPLIANCE CONSIDERATIONS

Wildwood's code compliance team is proactive. If we see a violation while driving around town, you may receive a notice of violation.

If you have a question about a notice received or require additional time or guidance to correct the deficiency, please call us. We always give reasonable—but not indefinite—time for residents to reach compliance. Communication is the key to resolution.

Any case deemed a threat to life or safety may require immediate remediation or resolution.

Failure to bring a deficient property into compliance within the timeframe provided could result in a notice to appear before the special magistrate.

Florida Statutes Chapter 162 prohibits predicating a case with an anonymous complaint. Complainants must provide their name and address at a minimum before any enforcement proceeding may occur.

The preferred way to make a complaint is to file it online at [wildwood-fl.gov/code-enforcement](http://wildwood-fl.gov/code-enforcement) or by calling 352-661-6067 or 352-446-3492.

Wildwood's code compliance team handles exterior violations but does not investigate complaints related to building interiors. Complaints involving issues such as unsafe structures, leaking roofs, plumbing, or mold need to be directed to Sumter County at 352-689-4400.

Landlord and tenant disputes should be directed to the Florida Department of Agriculture at 800-435-7352 (800 HELP FLA) or 800-352-9832 (800 FL AYUDA).

*Common City of Wildwood code violations include litter/refuse, overgrown lots, debris, and derelict vehicles, such as the ones shown in the photo below.*





# WILDWOOD COMEDY NIGHT!

CASH BAR      FOOD TRUCK

Cost: \$15.00      Ages: 21+

**SEPTEMBER 6, 2025**  
**6:30 P.M.**

Doors open at 5:30 P.M.

Warfield Auditorium  
98 S. Warfield Ave., Wildwood, FL 34785  
352-461-0134  
Register at [wildwood-fl.gov](http://wildwood-fl.gov)



Please join  
**WILDWOOD POLICE DEPARTMENT**  
for the  
3RD ANNUAL  
**9/11 STAIR CLIMB**

**SEPTEMBER 11, 2025**  
**BEGINS AT 8:30 A.M.**

AT  
**THE IRON VILLAGE GYM**  
4059 Thomas Street, Oxford, FL 34484

Public welcome to watch & support the climbers.

**RSVP by text:** Wildwood PD  
Community Outreach  
for your climb time.  
(352) 931-0357

We will never forget

### UPCOMING PROGRAMS AND EVENTS

Find more on the city's community calendar at [www.wildwood-fl.gov/calendar](http://www.wildwood-fl.gov/calendar).



## ONE-DAY FUN DAY

TEACHER WORKDAY  
STUDENT HOLIDAY

**FRIDAY**  
SEPT. 19, 2025  
7:30 A.M. - 5:30 P.M.

**98**  
S. WARFIELD AVE.  
WILDWOOD, FL  
34785

**COST**  
\$25/CHILD  
GRADES K-6

A DAY FULL OF GAMES, CRAFTS,  
LAUGHTER, AND MEMORIES!  
LUNCH AND SNACK PROVIDED

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE IS AVAILABLE TO RESIDENTS OF THE CITY OF WILDWOOD WHO QUALIFY

REGISTER:  
352-461-0134  
6500 POWELL RD.  
WILDWOOD, FL 34785

Wildwood Parks and Recreation  
**2025 Co-Ed Youth Flag Football League**  
Ages 5-14  
\$50 per child  
Coaches' kids play free (one child per coach)



**2025 Season: Oct. 13 - Dec. 13**

Parent Meeting: Sept. 30, 2025  
6:30 p.m.  
Wildwood Community Center  
6500 Powell Rd.  
Wildwood, FL 34785

Registration Deadline: Oct. 3, 2025

Register: [wildwood-fl.gov](http://wildwood-fl.gov)  
6500 Powell Rd., Wildwood, FL 34785  
Questions? 352-461-0134

### UPCOMING MEETINGS

**Code Compliance**  
September 2, 2025  
1:00 p.m.

**Local Planning Agency**  
September 2, 2025  
2:00 p.m.

**Planning and Zoning**  
September 2, 2025  
2:15 p.m.

**City Commission**  
September 8, 2025  
7:00 p.m.  
(first budget hearing)  
September 22, 2025  
7:00 p.m.  
(second budget hearing)

**Project Review Committee**  
September 9, 2025  
10:30 a.m.

#### General Information

Unless otherwise specified, all meetings are held at Wildwood City Hall, 100 N. Main St.

Agendas and minutes are posted on the city's website, [wildwood-fl.gov](http://wildwood-fl.gov). Click on the Agenda icon to view or download.

Meetings are open to the public. Attend in person or remotely by going to the city website and clicking on Government > Attend a Meeting Virtually.

Anyone wishing to speak during Public Forum should submit a comment card before the meeting begins.



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#### A LOOK AT WILDWOOD HISTORY

*This photo of Mrs. Mary Huey is from the 1962 Wildwood High School yearbook.*

### MONDAYS WITH THE MANAGER

**MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 2025**

**7:30 - 8:30 a.m.**

Wildwood Community Center (Jefferson Room)  
6500 Powell Rd., Wildwood, FL 34785



Questions? Have a suggestion? Need help with a local issue? Stop by and chat with Wildwood City Manager Jason McHugh.

No appointment needed.



### CITY INFORMATION

#### Commission

Ed Wolf  
Mayor  
[ewolf@wildwood-fl.gov](mailto:ewolf@wildwood-fl.gov)

Pamala Harrison-Bivins  
Mayor Pro Tem  
[pbivins@wildwood-fl.gov](mailto:pbivins@wildwood-fl.gov)

Joe Elliott  
Commissioner  
[jelliott@wildwood-fl.gov](mailto:jelliott@wildwood-fl.gov)

Marcos Flores  
Commissioner  
[mflores@wildwood-fl.gov](mailto:mflores@wildwood-fl.gov)

Julian Green  
Commissioner  
[jgreen@wildwood-fl.gov](mailto:jgreen@wildwood-fl.gov)

#### City Hall

100 N. Main St.  
Wildwood, FL 34785  
352-330-1330  
[www.wildwood-fl.gov](http://www.wildwood-fl.gov)  
[facebook.com/WildwoodFlorida](https://facebook.com/WildwoodFlorida)

#### Directory

City Manager  
Jason McHugh  
352-330-1332  
[jmchugh@wildwood-fl.gov](mailto:jmchugh@wildwood-fl.gov)  
Media Inquiries: 352-913-5538

Development Services  
352-330-1334

Human Resources  
352-330-1340

Parks and Recreation  
352-461-0134

Police (Non-Emergency)  
352-330-1355

Police (Emergency)  
911

Public Works  
352-330-1343

Utilities  
352-330-1336