

## Myrtle Beach has Council-Manager form of government

Myrtle Beach city voters adopted the Council-Manager form of government in 1973 by a four-to-one margin. Under this system, City Council is the legislative body, setting policy and direction for municipal government.

A professional manager is appointed by Council and serves as the chief executive and administrative officer for the city. The city manager handles the daily operations through the executive staff and city department heads.



City Council is composed of a mayor who serves as the presiding officer and six members. The mayor and Council are elected at-large to four-year terms in staggered, biennial elections. All seven are non-partisan, meaning they do not seek office or serve under any party affiliation.

The City of Myrtle Beach is both a public agency and a multi-million dollar corporation. The budget for fiscal year 2021-22 totals \$292 million, with no property tax increase. Owner-occupied homes continue to receive a 76 percent property tax credit thanks to the Tourism Development Fee.

South Carolina requires that local governments adopt balanced budgets, providing sufficient revenues and other financing sources to offset expenditures authorized for the fiscal period. Myrtle Beach has such a balanced budget.

## Renovated, expanded Police Annex named for Chief Gall

The Warren S. Gall Police Annex at The Market Common is named for retired Myrtle Beach Police Chief Warren Gall. The renovated and expanded building officially opened in May 2021. It includes a new second floor, more classrooms and offices and an indoor firing range.

The long-time chief joined the Police Department in March 1980 after serving the US Air Force. In fact, Gall's first assignment at the Myrtle Beach Air Force Base was in one of the buildings on Mustang Street which now bears his name.

Gall rose through the ranks at the department, becoming police chief on April 2, 1997. In all, he served the City of Myrtle Beach for 37 years, including 20 years as police chief.



*City Council wants to hear from you! We created an email address specifically to encourage public input to the Myrtle Beach City Council. Send your email message directly to Council at [dearcitycouncil@cityofmyrtlebeach.com](mailto:dearcitycouncil@cityofmyrtlebeach.com).*

### 2021 Solid Waste Holiday Schedule

#### Veterans Day Week (November 8-12)

Regular Monday-through-Thursday collection schedule.

#### Thanksgiving Week (November 22-26)

Service on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday. No service on Thursday.

#### Christmas Week (December 20-24)

Regular Monday-through-Thursday collection schedule.

Sign up for Myrtle Beach's weekly news and events email. The **Friday Fax** provides upcoming meetings and agendas. Send your address to [info@cityofmyrtlebeach.com](mailto:info@cityofmyrtlebeach.com).

### PROGRESS REPORT

Autumn 2021

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# PROGRESS

## REPORT

### Annual Report: Fiscal Year 2020-21

## Myrtle Beach again adds 10 police officers; keeps tax rate stable

Public safety remains the top priority for the City of Myrtle Beach. For a fourth consecutive year, the city is adding 10 police officers in the budget. Property taxes also remain stable for Fiscal Year 2021-22.

Last year, thanks to COVID-19 and a slowing of the economy, the budget for 2020-21 shrank to \$193.7 million dollars. The city implemented a number of cost-cutting measures and managed to avoid significant service cuts or staff reductions while responding to COVID.



Fortunately, the City of Myrtle Beach is returning to normal economic conditions in FY 2021-22, with a \$292 million budget that restores most COVID-related cuts. The current budget also continues the city's practice of adding new police positions as part of the retention and recruitment program. Along with more police officers, the new spending plan includes salary increases for paramedics and other high-demand Fire Department personnel, to keep those positions competitive in the marketplace.

...see [Myrtle Beach recovers](#), page 2

## Winter Wonderland brings new holiday activity to Ocean Blvd.



A new holiday festival with a skating rink is coming to Myrtle Beach on Ocean Boulevard.

Winter Wonderland is set for November 26 through January 2 at the Burroughs & Chapin Pavilion Place. The event will feature a covered, outdoor ice-skating rink and a holiday lights experience, along with other activities.

The Myrtle Beach Area Chamber of Commerce and the City of Myrtle Beach created the festival to provide family-friendly holiday fun. Local sponsors include Gay Dolphin Gift Cove, HTC, Ripley's Aquarium, Ripley's Believe It Or Not and Magnolia Row.



## Ninth Avenue North welcomes history and new beginnings

Myrtle Beach's new Arts & Innovation District is rapidly taking shape, now that historic store fronts have been restored on Ninth Avenue North. One of those store fronts will house the HTC Aspire Hub, a cowork space for entrepreneurs, artists and other emerging companies.

Interest is high among businesses that want to be a part of the newly renovated office space, just down from Nance Plaza, which received a makeover late last year.

Still to come are underground utilities and other infrastructure work, now that the facade renovations are nearly complete. Look for Ninth Avenue North to be a downtown leader in attracting new business and commercial possibilities.

HTC is providing \$250,000 toward the upfit and technology needs in the cowork space. Aspiring businesses can rent small portions of the space at affordable rates and share ideas and synergy.



<https://www.facebook.com/myrtlebeachcitygovernment>



City	Water	Sewer	Total
North Charleston	44.78	48.10	92.88
Charleston	29.11	98.08	127.19
Spartanburg	36.30	56.33	92.63
Anderson	36.19	57.54	93.73
Rock Hill	28.57	52.03	80.60
Greenville	17.81	56.70	74.51
Columbia	29.95	52.83	82.78
North Augusta	18.01	35.47	53.48
<b>Myrtle Beach</b>	<b>20.38</b>	<b>34.24</b>	<b>54.62</b>
Orangeburg	18.17	29.69	47.86

The City of Myrtle Beach has lower water-and-sewer service charges than many other South Carolina cities.

## Myrtle Beach recovers from COVID in 2021-22

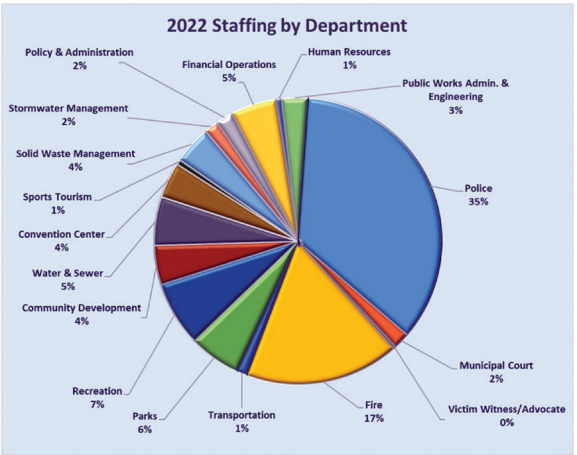
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The city's property tax rate remains unchanged at 78.9 mills in FY 2021-22, and owner-occupied homes still receive the 76 percent tax credit, thanks to the Tourism Development Fee.

Fees for residential solid waste service and recreation programs remain unchanged for FY 2021-22. Water and sewer rates did increase slightly, due to higher wholesale costs and needed system improvements. The average family using 6,000 gallons of water per month will pay an extra \$1.96 monthly for water and sewer service.

Stormwater utility fees also increased by \$1.38 a month, per ERU, to pay for additional projects and system maintenance. The new monthly stormwater fee for a single-family home will be \$7.63.

The chart above compares Myrtle Beach's water and sewer utility rates with other providers. The chart below shows departmental staffing. The current budget authorizes 990 fulltime staff members.



During FY 2020-21, the City of Myrtle Beach sought millions of dollars in grant funding to improve services and offset costs. More than \$4 million in grants have been awarded already, with another \$15.5 million in requests still pending.

Grants were received for library services, HazMat equipment, parks and recreation, street paving and other needs.

## 2020-21 awards and recognitions

◆ Myrtle Beach Fire Chief Tom Gwyer was named the International Association of Fire Chiefs' "Southeastern Fire Chief of the Year" in June 2021.



◆ The Myrtle Beach Police Department won South Carolina's Gold Standard Award for traffic enforcement efforts.

◆ The City of Myrtle Beach received its 24th annual Tree City USA Award last year. Sponsored by the National Arbor Day Foundation, the US Forest Service and the National Association of State Foresters, the award recognizes efforts to protect and preserve our urban forest.



◆ The city's Financial Management & Reporting Department received its 33rd annual "Certificate for Excellence in Financial Reporting" from the Government Finance Officers Association for the city's Comprehensive Annual Financial Report for 2019-20.

## What do you get for your money as a resident?

When all regular City of Myrtle Beach property taxes, fees and monthly service charges are considered, the typical residential household pays an estimated \$138 per month for all city services in 2021-22.

Included in that total cost are property taxes on a house valued at \$248,000 and two automobiles valued at \$34,700, along with monthly fees for 7,500 gallons of treated water, monthly curbside solid waste and recycling services and the monthly stormwater fee.

Note that the cost per month of all city services is about the same as a typical electric power bill or the cost of telephone, cable and internet service for most homes. And that's before calculating the TDF property tax credit for owner-occupied residential property.

Owner-occupied homes continue to receive a credit from the Tourism Development Fee for the operational portion of the city's budget. For 2021-22 fiscal year, the TDF provides a 76 percent credit toward city property taxes. On an owner-occupied home with an assessed value of \$250,000, that's a savings of \$600 per year.



## Historic markers replaced for Myrtle Beach Air Force Base

New sign faces have been installed in all 156 historic markers that remember the people, places and planes of the former Myrtle Beach Air Force Base. The markers are scattered throughout the Market Common area, which once was the Air Force Base.

By the way, now you can see all of the historic markers that tell the story of the Myrtle Beach Air Force Base in one place. Visit <https://www.cityofmyrtlebeach.com/MBAFBHistory.pdf>.

The Air Base Redevelopment Authority provided funding to replace all of the signage. The Authority was created when the base closed in the mid-1990s to help transform the land for civilian use.

## Jake Abraham Solid Waste Transfer Station almost ready

Work is nearly complete on Phase 1 of Myrtle Beach's new Jake Abraham Solid Waste Transfer Station, named for a former staff member with 33 years of service. The new facility replaces one that was built in the mid-1970s and no longer met capacity needs.

The new facility began service in early October. It will allow a larger quantity of materials to be transferred from the collection trucks to the tractor-trailers which take the waste, recycling and other items to the Horry County Landfill and Materials Recycling Facility on Highway 90.

Jake Abraham worked as a solid waste collection operator from January 1947 until his retirement in 1980, completing 33 years of dedicated service to the residents of Myrtle Beach. Known as "Mr. Jake," he was a great role model for the community. Mr. Abraham passed away June 12, 2011, at age 91.



## Comparing tax rates

As the chart below shows, Myrtle Beach's *ad valorem* property tax rate compares well with other cities' rates. And the comparison is even better when the Tourism Development Fee credit for owner-occupied homes is included.

The TDF tax credit offsets the majority of the city's millage rate for operations. Thanks to that 76 percent credit (60 mills), a resident homeowner pays a net rate of just 18.9 mills, of which 6.0 mills are for debt service.

### South Carolina Operating Millage Rates

City	Rate
Myrtle Beach	78.9
Charleston	76.3
North Augusta	73.5
Orangeburg	100.0
Greenville	85.3
North Charleston	97.0
Rock Hill	93.5
Spartanburg	104.4
Columbia	93.8
Anderson	116.0



## Use these handy phone numbers for Myrtle Beach facilities and services

<b>Main Number</b>	<b>843-918-1000</b>
Animal Control	843-918-1382
Business License	843-918-1200
Construction Services	843-918-1111
Chapin Memorial Library	843-918-1275
Clerk of Court	843-918-1356
Crabtree Memorial Gym	843-918-2355
Crime Prevention Officer	843-918-1806
Fire Administration	843-918-1192
General Robert H. Reed Rec. Center	843-918-2380
Mary C. Canty Recreation Center	843-918-1465
Myrtle Beach City Hall	843-918-1004
Tennis Center	843-918-2440
Neighborhood Services	843-918-1062
Parks and Recreation	843-918-1188
Pepper Geddings Recreation Center	843-918-2280
Police (Non-Emergency)	843-918-1382
Public Works	843-918-2000
Solid Waste	843-918-2160
Utility Billing	843-918-1212
Planning and Zoning	843-918-1073