

CITY OF AVENTURA ANNUAL REPORT

2009



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR



DEAR CITY OF AVENTURA RESIDENT

It is my pleasure as your Mayor to present the City's Annual Report for 2009. It has been five years since you elected me to the Office of Mayor. Much has been addressed during that period of time in response to your concerns and continues on an ongoing basis.

Cities throughout the nation have struggled to survive one of the worst recessions in history. We do know that the recovery from this downturn will be slower and longer than previous recoveries, and that spending on City services will have to be tightly controlled. In today's economic times, our fiduciary stewardship keeps us focused on leveraging every dollar. While we have tightened our belts like many to stretch your dollar, we have avoided financial peril through conservative revenue forecasting and budgeting. Aventura's greatest asset continues to be our community's commitment to meeting challenges with innovation and creativity. In light of these economic times your City Commission is committed to continue our efforts to provide a sustainable community for our residents to enjoy.

This past year the City Commission adopted landmark legislation to promote a Green Building Program for developments within the City. Green buildings use environmentally superior building materials, reduce waste generated by construction, employ mechanical systems and technologies that are energy efficient, conserve water and are designed to minimize impacts on local natural habitat. The legislation also provides incentives based on the LEED rating level that a building achieves. In addition, the City held a Go Green Symposium for residents and condominium managers to learn how the City of Aventura is going green in its operations while discovering ways to establish or enhance their own Go Green initiatives. The City recognizes those businesses and condominiums that developed and implemented programs to reduce energy consumption and encouraged more recycling at our Annual Arbor Day Celebration in April.

The City has also filed a grant application with the Department of Energy and the State for funding for the solar energy retrofit for the Community Recreation Center and Charter School and retrofitting street lights with LED or induction lighting. These initiatives over time will reduce our annual operating costs and impacts on the environment.

This past year much has been accomplished to make the City's new Arts & Cultural Center a reality. The 325 seat facility will provide a variety of

performing arts and cultural programming for all age groups. Construction is underway and is scheduled to be complete by June 2010. The City entered into an agreement with the Broward Performing Arts Center Authority to provide startup services and manage the facility. The Arts and Cultural Center Advisory Board has been meeting monthly with staff and providing valuable input. The Center will have a "soft" opening this summer with a summer theatre camp. The grand opening celebration is scheduled for October 2010. The Center will provide opportunities for our residents to enjoy a variety of events within our community and expand drama and arts programming provided for at our Charter School. The majority of funding for the proposed 15,000 sf. facility is provided from the Miami-Dade County's GOB Program. Two fundraising projects were introduced: "Walk of the Arts" and "Honor Roll" giving residents and businesses a chance to support local cultural programs while becoming part of Aventura history.

The Aventura City of Excellence School obtained an "A" rating again from the State of Florida and has been recognized nationally for its character education programs. We are proud of its accomplishments.

As we begin 2010, I want to take this opportunity to thank the community for its valuable support during the past year as we addressed many difficult and important issues on behalf of the future of Aventura.

Sincerely,

Susan Gottlieb, Mayor

CITY OF AVENTURA GOVERNMENT CENTER 19200 West Country Club Drive Aventura, Florida 33180

Main Number	305-466-8900
Main Fax Number.....	305-466-8939
Mayor and Commission	305-466-8901
City Manager.....	305-466-8910
City Clerk.....	305-466-8901
Finance.....	305-466-8920
Community Services	305-466-8930
Community Development	305-466-8940
Police Department	305-466-8989
Charter School	305-466-1499
Job Hotline	305-466-8955
Customer Service (Office of the City Manager)	305-466-8911
Aventura Arts & Cultural Center	305-466-8002



Zev Auerbach



Bob Diamond



Teri Holzberg



Billy Joel



Michael Stern



Luz Urbáez-Weinberg

CITY COMMISSION

OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER



TO THE RESIDENTS OF AVENTURA

Each year as we prepare this annual report to the citizens of Aventura, we reflect on and seek to communicate with you the achievements of the past and our plans for 2010. The document also provides an overview of the City's accomplishments and information on municipal service delivery.

Over the past two years the City has experienced huge losses in property tax revenue. Between the economic recession that resulted in lower home values and voter-approved constitutional amendments, the City's taxable value has decreased from \$9.609 Billion to \$8.063 Billion. This represents a loss of 16.1% or \$2.5 million in tax revenue compared to the 2007 tax roll year. The economic recession has negatively affected many of the City's other revenue sources as well.

As far as expenditures are concerned, due to privatizing and outsourcing many City services over the years, completing \$110 million in capital projects since 1996 and maintaining prudent reserve funds, the City has stabilized costs and is in a better position than most to weather the current economic slowdown. Prior years' comprehensive reevaluation of service levels and budget line items which resulted in operating cost reductions also played a key role in creating the foundation and financial stability for the City to respond to lower revenues as we prepared last year's budget. The City continues to enjoy the lowest tax rate at 1.7261 in the County.

As we enter 2010 and we continue to experience the aftershocks of the economic recession that has in one way or another touched every household, it is important to note that the taxable values are expected to decrease again due to the continuing decline in the housing market. This will result in a challenging budget preparation cycle.

Even in the light of the economic recession, your City government continues to maintain municipal services and programs and preserve the community's quality of life.

During this past year, the City focused on maintaining and protecting its infrastructure by completing several capital projects. A new turning lane was

installed at the intersection of Country Club Drive and Aventura Boulevard to improve traffic flow. This past year, the City was approved for over \$1,000,000 in Federal Economic stimulus dollars to fund transportation and transit improvements. These projects are underway and will be completed this year. Over 19,000 riders a month utilize the City's free shuttle bus service to travel to their destinations throughout the City.

The City's charter school completed a successful sixth year and scored an "A" on the School Performance Grade issued by the State of Florida. The school administration, staff, teachers, parents and students should be commended for a job well done. This past year, ten additional classrooms were constructed and opened to address the State class size requirements. The total number of students attending the K-8th grades school increased to 932.

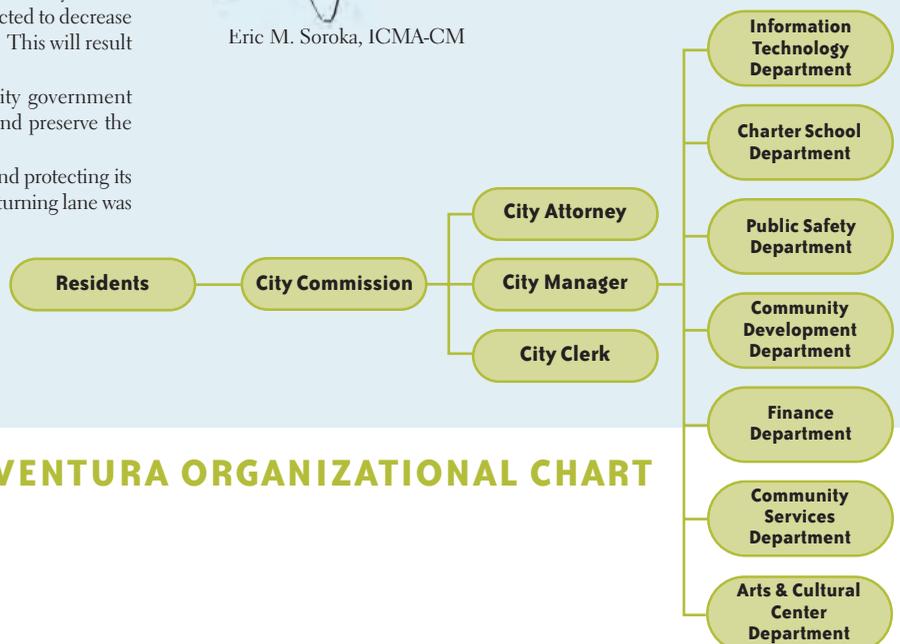
This past year, the City's Police Department was awarded re-accreditation by the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA) and the City was awarded the Distinguished Budget Presentation award from the Government Finance Officers Association.

I am proud to work with informed elected officials, a dedicated group of City employees and involved citizens as we continually strive to improve our community.

These are challenging times for local governments to maintain quality services in light of revenue reductions caused by the downturn in the economy. However, we are committed to continue to provide the type of community residents take pride in and others seek to emulate. I hope you enjoy reading about the progress of your community, the City of Excellence.

Sincerely,

Eric M. Soroka, ICMA-CM



CITY OF AVENTURA ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

FINANCE DEPARTMENT



The Finance Department provides overall financial and administrative support to the City's other operating departments. The primary functions of Finance include accounting, budgetary control, purchasing, risk management, payroll, cash management and debt administration.

Our mission is to establish and maintain effective internal controls that safeguard the City's assets and maintain the City's strong financial condition by conducting the City's business operations in a fiscally responsible manner.

In March 2009, Finance issued the City's Comprehensive Annual Financial Report ("CAFR") for the fiscal year ended September 30, 2008. The Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada ("GFOA") awarded a Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting to the City of Aventura for its CAFR for the fiscal year ended September 30, 2008. This was the thirteenth consecutive year that the City has achieved this prestigious award. In order to be awarded a Certificate of Achievement, a government must publish an easily readable and efficiently organized CAFR. This report must satisfy both generally accepted accounting principles and applicable legal requirements.

ADDITIONALLY, FINANCE'S RESPONSIBILITIES INCLUDE:

- Providing administrative, operational and financial assistance to the City Manager and staff
- Providing Accounting, Accounts Payable, Payroll, Budget, Grant Monitoring and Revenue Collection functions
- Monitoring/projecting the City's fund balances
- Preparing/assisting with all financial reports - including the CAFR, the Aventura City of Excellence School Special Purpose Financial Report and the Annual Budget
- Providing cash/investment and debt management
- Monitoring/developing financial strategies that ensure fiscal solvency and financial statement integrity through the maintenance of proper internal controls
- Monitoring and implementing reporting requirements recommended by the State Auditor General, GFOA and GASB

OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK

The City Clerk serves as the City's corporate secretary, and is the official records keeper of the City and custodian of the City seal. The City Clerk is a constitutional officer by Charter and is appointed by and reports to the City Commission. Responsibilities of the City Clerk include:

- Recording the minutes and all official actions of the City Commission and its Advisory Boards.
- Attesting to and maintaining custody of all records of the City including ordinances, resolutions, contracts, deeds, etc.
- Publishing and distributing public notices as required by law.
- Administering the publication and supplementation of the City Code Book.
- Serving as the municipal Supervisor of Elections, conducting all City elections in accordance with city, county and state laws.
- Establishing and coordinating the City's records management program in compliance with state law.
- Responding to public records requests and lien searches.
- Scheduling code enforcement hearings and providing clerical support to Special Master.
- Providing clerical support to Commissioners and assisting the City Manager with special projects.
- Administering oaths and providing full notary public services.

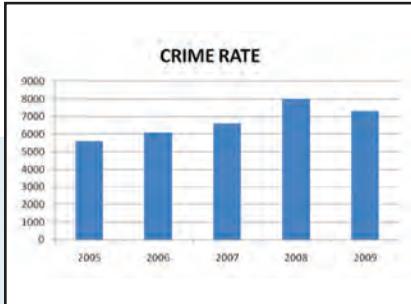
The City Clerk's Office prepared 38 sets of minutes and 36 public notices, published 22 legal advertisements, drafted six ordinances and 28 resolutions, responded to 982 lien requests, and prepared 441 welcome letters during Fiscal Year 2008-2009.

Residents are encouraged to attend City Commission meetings, which are held in the Government Center Commission Chamber on the Plaza Level at 19200 West Country Club Drive. To confirm all meeting dates, times and locations, please contact the City Clerk's Office at (305) 466-8901 or visit the City's website at www.cityofaventura.com.



OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK

PUBLIC SAFETY



The Aventura Police Department's commitment to its Mission Statement has allowed it to be recognized as an outstanding police department within the law enforcement community in Miami-Dade County. The men and women, both sworn and civilian, have done an outstanding job in the performance of their duties.

In March 2009, members of the department appeared before the CALEA Board of Directors, at the annual CALEA Conference in Raleigh, NC, and the Aventura Police Department was officially reaccredited for an additional three years.

The Department supports children and community programs such as the DARE Program, Red Ribbon Week, National Night Out, Annual Food Drive, Bicycle Safety Rodeos, security surveys for businesses and residences through the Crime Prevention Unit under the Special Services Division. The Department also conducted a holiday toy drive, in conjunction with the Salvation Army, in which the Aventura Police supplied over 200 toys for needy children.

At the beginning of 2009 the department implemented a new proactive Crime Suppression Unit (CSU) which is made up of one Sergeant and five officers. These officers work in plain clothes and unmarked vehicles working varying days and hours. Using our crime reports and statistical research, this unit targets specific crimes or sections of the city where crime is occurring. The CSU also participates in a task force which fights organized shoplifters and jewelry thieves. The unit works closely with several Federal agencies for assistance such as making arrests for crimes that have occurred in Aventura.

With the start of the 2009-2010 FY year the Department was budgeted for 81 sworn employees and 39 civilians. The crime rate for January – December 2009 showed an overall decrease of 8.9%.



YEAR	TOTAL CRIMES	VIOLENT CRIMES	POPULATION	CRIME RATE	% CHANGE
2005	1646	35	29451	5589.0	-14.8%
2006	1797	60	29451	6101.0	+9.2%
2007	1965	77	29451	6600.0	+8.1%
2008	2363	68	29475	8020.0	+25%
2009	2195	68	30027	7310.0	-8.9%

AVENTURA CITY OF EXCELLENCE SCHOOL



Aventura City of Excellence School, (ACES) the first municipally-run charter school in Miami-Dade County serves over 900 students in Kindergarten through Eighth grades.

ACES parents often state that their children are “getting the best education possible” with 99% reporting that the school is safe, secure and that they would recommend it to a friend. ACES leads the way in educational excellence by consistently outperforming other schools. For the past six years, ACES has earned an “A” rating. Students are challenged academically and engaged with a curriculum that supports their interests and individual development.

ACES’ well-rounded formula for success has led it to become one of the top schools in the country by providing a safe learning environment, a rigorous academic curriculum infused with character education, a talented teaching staff dedicated to best practices and a responsive leadership team that fosters a school culture of excellence.

The challenging core curriculum provides students with an opportunity to enroll in gifted classes at the elementary level and high school courses at the middle school level. In addition to academic offerings, students explore their interests and talents through a variety of unique programs. Middle school students select from an array of elective courses such as art, drama, dance, journalism, TV production, guitar and physical education/health. Elementary students attend an assortment of special classes daily such as art, music, physical education, dance, media, technology, and Spanish. Plentiful school-sponsored extracurricular activities include volleyball, tennis, basketball, Student Government Association, chorus and a leadership speaker series.

Aventura City of Excellence School has won 11 State and National Awards for its Character Education Initiatives. ACES “Whole Child” approach to education promotes a child-centered learning environment, which encompasses the social, emotional, and academic growth of its students.

ACES “Community Care Outreach Program” ties the Character Education Program into the curriculum by providing ACES students with a framework to “Live their Values.” ACES joins together with the City of Aventura to participate in the Founder’s Day, Veterans Day, and Arbor Day events. Guests from the community are invited to speak at ACES for special occasion assemblies; such as the Middle School Leadership Speakers Series,

and the International Peace Day Celebration. Area businesses are invited to participate in the Annual Career Day and Club Sponsorship Programs. ACES students discover at a very young age the importance of being socially responsible, caring and contributing citizens by giving back to their community and to the world. Students often raise much needed funds for a variety of local, national and international charities.

Aventura City of Excellence School excels in student achievement, community involvement and innovative practices, while caring for families and each student’s individual needs. This award-winning formula has created a foundation of success and an unparalleled experience for ACES students. ACES operates as a City Department with the principal reporting to the City Manager.

HIGHLIGHTS OF ACES OFFERINGS:

- Enthusiastic and nurturing teachers and staff
- Collegiate size gym
- Intramural sports programs include volleyball, basketball, tennis and golf
- Competitive boys and girls basketball
- Middle School Student Government Association
- Extended learning experiences through trips to historic places
- Internationally recognized Character Education Program
- Middle school electives include TV Production, Art, Guitar, Journalism, Drama, Dance, Physical Education/Health
- Opportunities to earn high school credit for Spanish, Science and Math courses
- Gifted program
- After school programs offering art, dance, sports, thinking games and academics
- Cross-curricular and cross grade studies and student mentoring
- 6th grade hands-on Eco-Literacy curriculum for science
- 23 unique special interest clubs offered Friday at school
- Parenting Workshops
- Parental involvement encouraged
- Community Care Outreach Program
- Guidance program teaches students communication and conflict resolution skills
- A Middle School Leadership Speaker Series
- Author Series
- Theater Series: Ballet, Black History Theater, Women’s History, Ecology, Middle School Drama Performance and Talent Show
- Aventura Arts and Cultural Center opening in 2010 will offer even more cultural activities and opportunities for ACES students and families



COMMUNITY SERVICES



The mission of the Community Services Department is to provide the residents of Aventura with the highest quality parks, facilities, events, programs, and activities that reflect the City of Aventura standards of excellence. The Department provides numerous recreational, cultural and leisure activities, as well as managing the city's parks, facilities, right-of-ways, streets, landscaping and beautification efforts. The Community Services Department continues to use modern practices to respond to the needs of the residents. The Department has two operating divisions that deliver these services: Public Works Division and Parks and Recreation Division.

THE PUBLIC WORKS DIVISION IS RESPONSIBLE FOR:

- Maintaining all landscaping, streets, right-of-ways, storm water drainage, decorative streetlighting, signage, public buildings and schools
- Issuing Public Works permits to utilities performing improvements in the public right-of-ways and reviews engineering plans
- Acts as a liaison to public utility service providers and responds to citizen concerns
- Mapping resources with the automated GIS computer system to provide accurate information regarding zoning, land parcels, and infrastructure

THE PARKS AND RECREATION DIVISION IS RESPONSIBLE FOR:

- Community Recreation Center programming
- Founders Park, Waterways Park, Waterways Dog Park and Veterans Park
- Athletic leagues for both children and adults
- Special events that foster community pride and spirit
- Cultural Arts, Theater and Leisure senior programming which offers trips and tours to the theater, museums, historical places, art festivals, and area restaurants
- Managing the "Aventura Express" city shuttle service

In April 2009 the City of Aventura was again named a "Tree City USA" by the National Arbor Day Foundation for the twelfth consecutive year. This year the City of Aventura was proud to announce the 2nd Annual Go Green Initiative Program, which raises environmental awareness and recognizes those residents and businesses that are acting now to preserve our environment, save energy and prepare the City of Aventura to be a sustainable community.

The annual Founders Day Celebration held every November at Founders Park was enjoyed by over 3,700 residents. This family festival featured continuous entertainment from School of Rock, Hot Brass Evolution and the 7th annual "Aventura Star" resident talent show. Interactive games, puppet shows, face painting, food and arts and crafts rounded out a fun filled day of activities for all.

Parks are a special amenity for Aventura residents providing outdoor recreation for all ages. Resident ID cards are required for entry to all Aventura parks. Cards are available at the Community Recreation Center, Founders Park, and Waterways Park during operating hours at no cost.

Waterways Park is located at 3301 NE 213th Street. This seven acre park has lighted multi-purpose athletic fields, parking, restrooms, a large covered shelter, covered playground, full court basketball, exercise path, and a staffed welcome center.

Waterways Dog Park is located at 3401 NE 213th Street. The 1.5 acre park features open space for your dog to exercise and socialize. Amenities include two comfort stations with doggie water fountains and showers. A large covered patio provides shade and rest for dog owners and dogs alike.

Veterans Park is located at 18375 NE 31st Avenue. Veteran's Park is a two acre neighborhood park with a covered playground, restrooms, and an open grass playfield.

Founders Park is located at 3105 NE 190th Street. The 11 acre park features parking, public restrooms, covered playground, open green space, a multi-purpose athletic field, two clay tennis courts, quarter mile exercise trail and the 5,000 square foot SplashPad water feature sprayground.

The SplashPad operates seasonally and opens for weekends March through October. Beginning on Memorial Day through Labor Day the SplashPad will operate Tuesdays through Sundays.

The city-wide youth athletics program consist of tennis, and leagues for soccer, softball, t-ball, basketball and flag football. Over 700 children participated in the City of Aventura Youth Athletics in 2009. In addition the City also offers adult softball leagues and tennis programs.

The "Aventura Express" Shuttle Bus Service serves your busy lifestyle with a convenient schedule to better serve the community. "Express Yourself" and see why over 1.3 million passengers have ridden the Aventura Express since 1999. The Aventura Express features:

- Five ADA compliant and air conditioned buses and bus routes
- Routes that connect you to great shopping and all the places you need to go. The Blue route serves the north end of the City, the Green and Red routes serve the central area and the Purple and Yellow routes serve the south



COMMUNITY SERVICES, cont.

- Easy transfers to any Miami-Dade or Broward County Transit route at the Aventura Mall
- Hourly schedules
- Bicycle racks on all buses

The Community Recreation Center is a 25,000 square foot multi-use facility located in a park like setting at 3375 NE 188 Street. The Center features a collegiate size wood floor gymnasium, fitness center, aerobics room, locker and shower facilities, multi-use classrooms and activity centers, and a high-tech computer center with internet access.

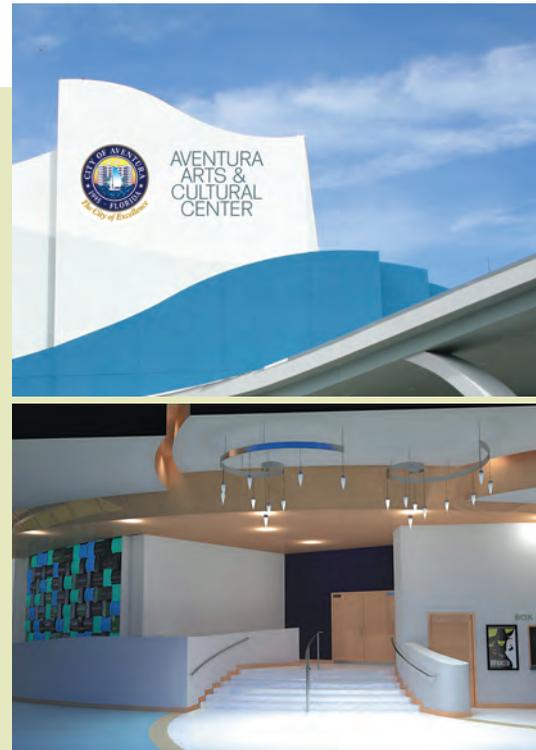
The Community Recreation Center overlooks the Intracoastal Waterway and is an exceptional destination for recreation and leisure activities. Adjacent to the Center is the Arthur I. Snyder Park featuring an open play area, shade trees and an outdoor plaza perfect to host special events.

The Community Recreation Center offers a complete and balanced program of recreation activities, fitness classes, youth programs and social activities available to members of all ages. 701 children were registered in the 2009 Summer Camp programs including Sports Camp and new Travel Camp.

The Aventura Activities brochure went green and is now available on the City's website. The eBrochure is part of the Aventura's Go Green Initiative. Digital publishing significantly reduces waste moving towards a more sustainable environment for future generations.

Over 3,000 seniors participated in activities ranging from Mahjong to Aerobics to health and wellness lectures. Diverse programs helps seniors stay active and vibrant in their daily lives and is a great setting to meet new people.

The Cultural Arts, Theater and Leisure program complements the department's offerings with trips to local events and excursions to various cultural destinations in South Florida. Over 400 seniors enjoyed trips and tours to fine art museums, historical destinations, and theater productions. This cultural program adds to the city's leisure programming creating a diverse package of recreational choices for Aventura residents of all ages.



AVENTURA ARTS & CULTURAL CENTER

In May 2009, the construction for the Aventura Arts & Cultural Center began and by December the AACC was celebrating its "Topping Off" when the highest point of the exterior was completed. This new 325 seat theatre will provide a wide range of performing arts and cultural programming options for patrons of all ages. Adjacent to the Aventura Community Recreation Center and Aventura City of Excellence School, the community will have a world of cultural opportunities right at home. The Center will feature high-tech light and sound systems and the building itself will incorporate recycled and green building materials. This new Aventura landmark is operated by the City of Aventura and managed by the Broward Center for Performing Arts (PACA). Two fundraising projects were introduced in 2009: "Walk of the Arts" and "Honor Roll" giving residents and businesses a chance to support local cultural programs while becoming part of Aventura history. The Center is due to open during the summer of 2010. The first program is the 2010 Summer Theatre Camp which starts in June for children ages 7-13.

**Visit the Aventura Arts & Cultural Center
online at www.aventuracenter.org**

2009 COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT ATTENDANCE SUMMARY

PARK AND COMMUNITY

RECREATION CENTER ATTENDANCE

Founders Park, including SplashPad	100,730
Waterways Park	99,736
Waterways Dog Park	21,006
Community Recreation Center	71,908
Total	293,380

ACTIVITY/PROGRAM ATTENDANCE

Special Events: Arbor Day, Senior Prom, July 4th Fireworks, Halloween, Founders Day, Veterans Day	22,302
Winter/Spring/Summer Camps	849
Teacher Planning Days (7)	204
Cultural Arts Theatre and Leisure Program	428
Youth Athletics: tennis, softball, t-ball, basketball, soccer, flag football	742
Adult Athletics: tennis, softball	288
Total	24,813

AVENTURA ARTS & CULTURAL CENTER

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



The Department of Community Development is responsible for the City's planning, development review, zoning, building plan review and inspections, code enforcement, economic development functions and the collection of local business tax. The department is organized to provide "one-stop" customer service at a centralized location.

The Building Division continues to provide prompt and accessible service. Charged with enforcing the Florida Building Code, this division must review, permit and inspect all new construction and renovations in the City. Last year, the Building Division issued 3377 building permits and performed 6015 inspections. Building permits generated approximately \$997,200 in revenues. Inspection requests and results are now available online at www.cityofaventura.com, under 'ePermits'.

The Local Business Tax Receipt Division issued 2817 local business tax receipts generating approximately \$768,000 in revenues.

The Planning and Zoning Division processes all land development applications, including site plans, rezonings, variances and comprehensive plan amendments. In 2009, 19 land development applications were reviewed and processed.

The City's Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Regulations provide a cohesive blueprint for development and redevelopment of the City by addressing strategies to accommodate growth while maintaining neighborhood integrity, ensure appropriate height, transitions and linkages and limit the intensity of future development and redevelopment in a manner that is consistent with current development patterns and that minimizes further negative impacts to the City's infrastructure and quality of life.

An amendment to the Comprehensive Plan was adopted by the City Commission this year to incorporate potable water supply concurrency standards into the Plan. This amendment strengthens the link between land use planning and potable water supply and requires that developers fulfill level of service standards for new developments.

The Code Compliance Division continues to be seen around the community, ensuring businesses are legally operating with local business tax receipts, and assuring construction at homes and businesses have obtained the necessary building permits. Code Compliance Officers also enforce other City codes such as the property maintenance ordinance, noise and signage regulations. The Code Compliance Division issued 122 warnings and violations warnings last year and collected approximately \$16,300 in fines. This Division also works with the City's Special Master to conduct hearings related to the City's red light camera program. The City's red light camera program began in July of 2008. In 2009, 15,875 notices of violation were issued under the program.

The Code Compliance Division continues to work with the Aventura Police Department and property owners in the Hospital District to clean up overgrown properties and bring them into compliance with the City's property maintenance ordinance. Their successes have resulted in a cleaner and safer environment for our City.



The department is organized to provide "one-stop" customer service at a centralized location.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY



The Information Technology Department provides a secure, stable and high-tech computing environment for City staff to serve its customers. The computing environment includes general user applications, specialized business applications, email with spam control, phone systems and the infrastructure required to run the network. Information Technology works closely with other City departments to identify, select and implement applications and technology to help City staff perform their jobs efficiently in regards to cost and performance. The Information Technology Department supports 160 desktop computers, 90 laptops and 27 servers throughout the City. Help desk services are also provided to City employees with 24x7 support for the Police Department and in the event of emergencies.

The City continued to utilize technology to maximize the efficiency and effectiveness of operations across all departments. Upgrades and enhancements were made to existing systems and computer equipment embracing new technology wherever possible.

Information Technology has completed various projects in 2009 including: a new VoIP phone system for ACES, digital satellite for AVTV programming and a data sharing project between the Aventura Police Department and other law enforcement agencies. Several greening efforts were supported by Information Technology converting from carbon and preprinted forms to the use of plain paper and the transition from printed publications to online documents. Previously printed publications such as the Aventura Activities brochure and the weekly ACES packet for parents were transformed to online versions available on the City and school web sites.

Information Technology provides other technologies and programs to streamline business processes internally and for our citizens and customers. This support includes development and maintenance of the City's website, www.cityofaventura.com, the Aventura City of Excellence School's website, www.aventuracharter.org, the Aventura Arts and Cultural Center's website, www.aventuracenter.org and an internal web portal provide employees a central place to share forms, policy documents and internal web based applications. Information Technology offers internal training on all computer programs used by staff as well as education about technology issues such as email, viruses and security.

CITY COMMUNICATIONS

The City Commission supports a highly accessible government, and encourages community participation on many levels. In an effort to share the progress of the City effectively with the public, the City communicates with the community through a variety of mediums.

The City produces several publications throughout the year, online and in print, which include valuable information on government services and operations. In keeping with Aventura's Go Green initiative, many of the City's printed materials have been converted to electronic versions available on the City's web site.

Residents, visitors and businesses can visit the City's web site at www.cityofaventura.com to access eGovernment services and useful information.

Access is available 24/7 for the following eGovernment services:

- Online Registration System – Register for recreational activities and classes
- ePermits – Check building permits & request inspection appointments
- MyAventura – Make service requests, check FAQs, Message Center subscriptions, ask questions, search knowledgebase for answers
- Public Records – Online document repository
- Download Forms – Library of electronic forms

In June, 2009 Aventura started using social media to help communicate information on Twitter. Since June, the City's online messages (known as 'tweets') have informed residents and businesses about upcoming events, meetings and important information about City services. The latest tweet is simultaneously posted on the City's home page. Messages can also be accessed directly available at: www.twitter.com/cityofaventura.

Tune in to 1650 AM on your radio dial for the latest information on local traffic alerts, reports, special events and news items. The City radio station (WPZQ420) broadcast area is approximately a three mile radius within City limits.

The City's cable channel is another avenue of communication for City residents. You can find AVTV on cable channel 77. Special events and city announcements are broadcast 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Along with programming from The Florida Channel and encore presentations of Commission meetings and special events such as Arbor Day and the Arts & Cultural Center Topping Off Ceremony.

The City Manager meets with new businesses on a regular basis through "Meet Your City Manager" meetings. The City Commission meets monthly and encourages community participation at these meetings. Regularly held on the first Tuesday of the month, City Commission Meetings begin at 6:00pm in the Commission Chambers of the Aventura Government Center, 19200 West Country Club Drive.

CITY COMMUNICATIONS

BUDGET PRIORITIES



BUDGET PRIORITIES/GOALS

The following represents the pre-established priorities and goals that provided a framework for the preparation of the 2009/10 Budget Plan:

- Only rely on anticipated current year revenues to fund budget requirements without utilizing fund balances.
- Avoid increasing the property tax rate in light of the economic times our residents and businesses are experiencing.
- In response to decreased property tax revenues, limit increases in operating costs to 5% while maintaining current service levels and programs.
- In response to workload requirements and community needs increase funding for additional officers and a detective in the Police Department
- Fund startup operating requirements of the new Arts & Cultural Center scheduled to be opened in 2010.
- Continue to adopt “Go Green” initiatives in order to save energy, conserve precious natural resources and reduce our impact on climate change. These initiatives over time will also reduce our annual operating cost and impacts on the environment.
- Utilize Federal Stimulus funds for transportation and transit infrastructure improvements.
- Provide funding to maintain landscaped areas and continue to provide a high quality maintenance program.
- Implement and fund the “pay as you go” Capital Improvement Program to address the City’s infrastructure needs.

BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

Some of the major points emphasized, in the proposed budget, are as follows:

- For the fourteenth year, no property tax increase. By adopting last year’s millage rate, which is less than the roll back rate, most residents with lower property assessments will see a reduction in their City’s taxes.
- Total expenditures in all funds decreased by 11.5%.
- The operating cost increases were held to 4.3% without reducing current service levels.
- Reserve funds were not utilized to fund current budgetary operational requirements.
- Includes \$1,100,788 in anticipated Federal Economic stimulus dollars to fund transportation and transit improvements (Yacht Club Way Bridge Improvements, Exercise Trail Improvements and bus shelters) and one additional police officer position.
- Funds startup operations of the Aventura Arts & Cultural Center which will be utilized to host a variety of performing arts and cultural programming for all age groups.
- Includes funds to construct traffic flow intersection improvements and resurface Williams Island Road and the Hospital District at a cost of \$625,000.
- Addresses additional police manpower needs to respond to community requirements without impacting the budget.
- Continues to implement technology enhancements that develop our “Electronic Government” to allow the public to interact more easily and conveniently with the City and to automate City operations.
- Continues contracting most maintenance functions, engineering, plan review and inspection services to the private sector.
- Funds police equipment needs from laptop computers to new police vehicles in the amount of \$839,260.
- Includes \$200,000 to upgrade the City’s drainage system.
- Continue to adopt “Go Green” initiatives in order to save energy, conserve precious natural resources and reduce our impact on climate change.

Visit www.cityofaventura.com to access eGovernment services and useful information.





CITY OF AVENTURA GOVERNMENT CENTER
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