

HISTORY

In the early 16th century the Clearwater area was known for its many fresh water springs that bubbled up along the shoreline. The Timucuan Indians called this area "Pocotopaug" meaning "Clear Water". The area was first visited by the white men in 1528. This was 37 years before St. Augustine (1565), 79 years before Jamestown (1607), and 92 years before the Pilgrims landed at Plymouth Rock (1620).

On April 15, 1528, Panfilo de Narvaez, a Spanish explorer, landed with 600 soldiers and five ships, which was 15 years after Ponce de Leon had discovered Florida. De Narvaez found here a large tribe of Indians, which his army drove out. The Indians recaptured their territory, however, and held it until conquered in the Seminole Wars of 1835-42.

Fort Harrison was built in 1841 on the bluffs overlooking the harbor, and then called Clear Water Harbor, the present site of Clearwater. The fort was named for General William Henry Harrison, who became the President Harrison. It was used as an outpost encampment for soldiers stationed at Fort Brook (now Tampa), was abandoned when the wars ended a few months later, and the territory was then opened by the Federal Government for homesteading under the Armed Occupation Act. This meant the homesteads would be granted to settlers willing to bear arms for protection against the still-hostile Indians hiding in the area.

James Stevens was the first of the homesteaders, staking out the fort and its surrounding areas as his claim. He was granted the first land title in 1842. This was the real beginning of the Clearwater of today. For years, a plaque at the entrance of the famed "Brown Estate", on the waterfront bluff in Harbor Oaks, marked the site of Fort Harrison.

The early settlement, which adopted the name of Clear Water Harbor, grew slowly for several years as an agricultural and fishing community. The only outside contacts were made either by horse-and-buggy, wagon, by foot to Tampa, or by sailboat 100 miles up the Gulf to Cedar Key.

In the early 1850's, the first area school, the Taylor School, was built in the vicinity of the present Druid Road and Hercules Avenue. The first school house within the community of Clear Water Harbor was built in 1883. The first post office was established on August 20, 1859. According to the U.S. Post Office Department, Clearwater became one word on January 19, 1895, and Harbor was dropped from the name on February 28, 1906. A Baptist minister established the first newspaper, named the Clear Water Times, in July 1873.

The first hotel, the Orange Bluff, was built in 1880. A second hotel, the Sea View, followed a short time later in the early 1880's. It stood near the site now occupied by the City's main library. The railroad was built through Clear Water Harbor in 1888, which became known as the Atlantic Coast Line.

Clear Water Harbor was incorporated in 1891. Clearwater Harbor received a special charter in 1897. Clearwater was chartered as a municipality on May 27, 1915.

The act creating Pinellas County was passed by the State Legislature in May 1911. Clearwater became the county seat.

The first ice factory was built here in 1900. It was purchased by the City in 1910. The first public dock and pavilion were built at the foot of Cleveland Street in 1902. The telephone exchange was established in 1903. The library was built on the bluff in 1916 where the new library sits today. In 1911, the first city hall with fire station was built at 29 North Fort Harrison Avenue.

A wooden bridge from Seminole Street to Clearwater Beach was built in 1916 with a hand-cranked rotating boat passage. On November 11, 1927, Memorial Causeway was dedicated, extending from Cleveland Street to the beach with a double lift bridge to accommodate the Intercoastal waterway. The major East/West connector, Gulf-to-Bay Boulevard also was opened in 1927. In 2005, the new high level Clearwater Memorial Bridge opened replacing the former draw bridge.

Source: Clearwater Historical Society.

CITY OVERVIEW

Clearwater is situated on the Pinellas Peninsula midway on Florida's west coast. It is directly located on the Gulf of Mexico, 20 miles west of Tampa and 20 miles north of St. Petersburg. Clearwater is the county seat of Pinellas County and one of the largest cities in the Tampa Bay Area. The City is known for its high coastal bluffs, commanding a magnificent double waterfront view of the Intercoastal Waterway and the Gulf of Mexico.

Situated in a semitropical zone, Clearwater enjoys nearly ideal weather the year round with an average yearly temperature of 73 degrees Fahrenheit. Mild winters and warm summers, tempered by the cooling afternoon rains and southerly prevailing winds off the Gulf attract millions of vacationers.

Tourism is the City's largest industry; however Clearwater is home to a wide range of businesses including computer components, aircraft technology, surgical instruments, and data communication.

Transportation available to Clearwater includes, the St. Petersburg-Clearwater International Airport which has direct flights to convenient destinations throughout the United States and Canada. Fifteen minutes to the east, Tampa International Airport serves destinations worldwide and is recognized as one of the most efficient in the world. The Clearwater Airpark, which is slightly over a mile from the downtown business section, provides service and maintenance for private plane owners. The airpark has one 3,500 foot hard-surface runway and hangar facilities for visiting and locally based aircraft. Ground transportation is provided through the Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority (PSTA) bus service which offers 37 local routes, two express routes which cross Tampa Bay for service to downtown Tampa and a beach trolley that runs north and south along Pinellas County's barrier islands. The Clearwater Jolley Trolley also provides transportation on Clearwater Beach with daily routes along North and South Clearwater Beach, Island Estates, and Sand Key.

The Tampa Bay area has a great variety of resources for quality health care including over eight hospitals, as well as various nursing home and nursing care communities, health clinics, and doctors in various specialties. Located in Clearwater, Morton Plant Hospital has earned a reputation for being one of the most effective, well-managed hospitals in America. Pinellas County is also home to one of the country's largest blood transfusion service organizations – Florida Blood Services.

Clearwater Beach

Clearwater's beach is on an island connected to downtown by palm tree-lined Memorial Causeway—a beautiful drive stretching across scenic Clearwater Harbor. The beach island is also connected to Sand Key and other Gulf beaches by the Clearwater Pass Bridge. Clearwater Beach, with three miles of glistening powdery white sand and gentle waves, lies directly on the Gulf of Mexico. This beach is one of several in the area that has been included on the Clean Beaches Council Blue Wave list. Clean Beaches is a national nonprofit organization funded by federal, corporate and foundation grants. It sets criteria for cleanliness, safety and environmental health that beaches must meet to make the list.

Beach Walk is revitalizing the community that surrounds Clearwater's popular south beach destination. Beach Walk is a winding beachside promenade with lush landscaping, artistic touches and clear views to Clearwater's award-winning beach and the water beyond, a place where bicyclists, rollerbladers and pedestrians all have safe and convenient access and where visitors and locals can socialize, dine, play games, or simply enjoy the spectacular sun and surf.

The Clearwater Municipal Marina is a 207-slip facility on the intercoastal waterway of Clearwater Harbor. The Marina serves nearly 600 transient boaters each year, provides fuel for thousands more and is home to about 50 commercial tenants on a long-term basis. Centrally located at the entrance to Clearwater Beach, the Marina is a hub for water sports activities, entertainment, and attractions that serve over 1.2 million visitors to Clearwater annually. Also available at the Marina are a bait house, seafood restaurant and oyster bar, nautical shop, gift shop and post office, and a free fishing pier. The Marina houses the largest fishing fleet on the west coast of Florida.

Fishing is a big business and a popular past time in Florida. Visitors may be interested in chartering one of many boats from the marina for deep-sea fishing. Clearwater also offers an abundance of prime fishing off its piers, bridges, and beaches. Although Florida is not limited to a fishing season, fish such as snook, snapper, and others have a designated time of year in which they may be kept. Florida requires licenses for both fresh and saltwater fishing.

Just across the street on the Gulf of Mexico, the Marina manages Pier 60, a 1,080-foot observation and fishing facility with a bait house, snack bar and restrooms. Pier 60 is also the site of "Sunsets at Pier 60" every night from two hours before until two hours after sunset. Between February 1st and Labor Day, artisans and performers are featured. The three acre Pier 60 Park features a concession stand, covered play area and a pavilion for special events, concerts and continuous visitor entertainment.

Events at the beach – including Spring Break, The 5150 Clearwater Triathlon Series, Bright House Superboat National championship, Outback Bowl festivities and the Sunsets at Pier 60 Festival – draw thousands of visitors each year. These events, along with the nearby Clearwater Marine Aquarium and Clearwater Beach Marina, are what led the Travel Channel to name Clearwater one of the "Top 10 Activity Beaches" in the world.

Clearwater is the home of The Clearwater Marine Aquarium. The Aquarium is a non-profit Aquarium dedicated to public education, animal assisted therapy, marine research and the rescue, rehabilitation and release of sick or injured whales, dolphins, otters and sea turtles. The aquarium is the official home of Winter the Dolphin, the star of the movie, "Dolphin Tale". Winter was rescued from the Florida east coast, after her tail was destroyed by a crab trap line. She was transported to the Clearwater Marine Aquarium where the expertise of a dedicated marine biologist, the ingenuity of a brilliant prosthetics doctor and staff performed a groundbreaking miracle. They developed a prosthetic tail which allowed Winter to swim and survive for years to come.

The Clearwater and Pinellas County area offer visitors 28 miles of beautiful beaches, some of which have received prestigious awards. Geologist Dr. Stephen Leatherman, known as Dr. Beach, has designated local beaches as "America's best beach" including, Caladesi Island in 2008, and Fort DeSoto Park's north beach area in 2005. Sand Key County Park beach has also been named among the "Top 20" best beaches.

Downtown

Clearwater is seeing its own downtown resurgence, with new residences available within the downtown core, along with new retail/office space. A new streetscape project is redefining the city's downtown destination, Cleveland Street, which is envisioned as the central café and retail district for the area. The Downtown Clearwater's website, www.ClevelandStreetDistrict.com, has received the Outstanding Achievement Award in the Government category from New York's Interactive Media Awards (IMA). The Outstanding Achievement award is the second highest honor bestowed by the IMA and an extremely challenging award to win.

Clearwater's waterfront downtown is one of its most attractive and unique assets. Sitting atop a 30-foot bluff overlooking Clearwater Harbor, the downtown combines the best of waterfront living with a walkable urban setting. At the foot of the bluff lies Coachman Park, home to various events that draw tens of thousands to the downtown each year including, Clearwater Jazz Holiday which has been lauded as one of the top 20 events in the Southeast.

Clearwater Harbor Marina, a new 126-slip public marina opened September 2010 on the downtown waterfront. With this new facility, downtown Clearwater has achieved an active, dynamic waterfront offering a destination for visitors cruising the Florida coastline and for locals out for a day of fun. The Clearwater Harbor Marina provides over 1,700 feet of overnight "side-tie" mooring for visitors and over 700 feet of free "side-tie" mooring for daytime visitors and special events.

The new Clearwater Harbor Marina allowed the City of Clearwater to be honored with the receipt of the 2010 BoatUS Recreational Boating Access Award. The award is made in recognition of the city's ability to bring much needed boating access to Clearwater. BoatUS (Boat Owners Association of the United States) created the award program in 2007 to highlight successes in protecting water access as boaters and communities were losing marina slips, service yards and launching areas.

In January 2009 the City and Ruth Eckerd Hall joined forces to renovate and revitalize the historic Capitol Theatre located on downtown Clearwater's beautiful Cleveland Street. The old Capitol Theatre, built in 1921 will be transformed into a mid-size performing arts venue. A few events are scheduled before the theatre is closed for major renovations. When completed, the 655-seat theatre will become a venue at which Ruth Eckerd Hall will present all genres of live entertainment, including jazz, classical artists, pop music acts, dance and other diverse national, regional and local acts. A film series is also anticipated.

Sports & Culture

Clearwater's commitment to high-quality recreation, parks and cultural programs earned national acclaim in 2005, when Sports Illustrated Magazine named the city as Florida's "Sports Town USA," as well as one of the top ten finalist in the United States Tennis Association's "2010 Best Tennis Town" nationwide Competition. These awards confirm what many who live here have known for years: Clearwater maintains some of the best facilities in the nation, and provides programs for nearly every sporting interest, skill level and age. This includes facilities and programs for everything from soccer and lacrosse to lawn bowling and horseshoes. Because of Clearwater's year-round temperate climate, many visitors take advantage of golfing on the nearly 30 public and semi-private courses in the area. Also visitors can enjoy playing tennis, jogging, cycling and walking through numerous beautiful parks.

Every year, hundreds of youth, collegiate and adult sports teams convene in Clearwater for national tournament play and training activities at City facilities. Most notable of these are the city's five decades of partnership with major league baseball's 2008 World Series Champion Philadelphia Phillies, who host spring training at Bright House Networks Field. The City of Clearwater is the home of the Threshers, a minor league team of the Philadelphia Phillies. The Threshers play at Bright House Networks Field is a fan-friendly ballpark with a capacity of 8,500. The ballpark distinguishes itself with a 360-degree main concourse, grass berm seating, and a tiki-hut pavilion in left field. Other characteristics include group picnic areas, a children's play area, and a state-of-the-art video scoreboard.

With five regional recreation centers, a nature center, and five libraries, residents have a multitude of options for keeping their hearts, minds and bodies healthy and happy. To connect all of these options, Clearwater has been steadily building a regional trail system that not only links points within the City, but also ties in to a larger system that spans all of Pinellas County.

In June 2010, the City's Aging Well Center Opened at the Long Center. The new Aging Well Center promotes health and wellness, education, recreation, socialization, creative expression and access to resources for residents age 55 and older. With a mission to serve as a resource that facilitates services and activities promoting a high quality of life for our community's older adults; the City has a multi-year comprehensive plan to provide Clearwater with a roadmap to further enhance the quality of life for current and future older adults.

Visitors can take a break from the sunshine and shop in Clearwater's diverse stores which, when combined, provide over two million square feet of shopping delights. From unique boutiques, antique stores and malls to flea markets, a visitor will find that perfect shopping opportunity.

Clearwater has a rich history of both professional and community-based arts programs, led by the award-winning Ruth Eckerd Hall. Ruth Eckerd, known for its 2,180-seat acoustically perfect auditorium, hosts artists from America and around the world ranging from classical, rock, opera, Broadway, jazz, pop, and more are included in the stellar lineup of more than 200 performances a year. Ruth Eckerd also plays an integral role in community-based performance education through the Marcia P. Hoffman Center for the Performing Arts.

COMMUNITY PROFILE

Clearwater and the surrounding Tampa Bay area have a variety of sporting competitions for spectators. This area is home for many nationally known teams including the National Football League Tampa Bay Buccaneers (2003 Super Bowl Champions), the National Hockey League Tampa Bay Lightning (2004 Stanley Cup Champions), the Major League Baseball Tampa Bay Rays (2008 American League Champions).

Less than a two hour drive away are numerous attractions such as Busch Gardens, Adventure Island, Walt Disney World Resort, EPCOT Center, Hollywood Studios, Universal Studios, Sea World, and Lowry Park Zoo, which was named "No. 1 Zoo in the United States for Kids" by Parents magazine in 2009. Numerous museums can also be found in the area including the Salvador Dali Museum, which contains the largest private collection of this artist's work outside of Spain.

Sources include: City of Clearwater Comprehensive Annual Report, Clearwater Regional Chamber of Commerce, various City Departments, PSTA and Ruth Eckerd Hall, The St. Petersburg Times, 9/25/11.

CLEARWATER AT A GLANCE

- ❖ Incorporated: May 27, 1915
- ❖ Form of Government: Council-Manager
- ❖ Elected Officials: Mayor and four at-large Councilmembers

Demographics:

Population Estimates:	
2006	110,602
2007	110,469
2008	110,251
2009	109,907
2010	107,685
Pinellas County (2010):	916,542
Median Age (2010):	45.3
Percentage of Households:	
Single Family/Duplex	56%
Multi-Family	44%
Per Capita Personal Income:	
2010	\$43,064
Personal Income (thousands):	
2010	\$4,637,347
Racial Composition:	
White	71%
Hispanic or Latino	14%
Black or African American	11%
Other Race	4%

Climate:

Average Annual Rain Fall: (inches):	52.4
Average high/low temperatures:	
January	76.5/55.6
July	88.5/69.7
Days of sunshine	361 days

Economics:

Job Base by Industry Sector:
(as of March 2010) thousand

Healthcare	15.0
Retail Trade	12.8
Admin Support Services	9.6
Manufacturing	8.8
Hotels, Restaurant, Bars	8.6

Principal Employers:
(2010 Pinellas County Data)

- Pinellas County School District
- Bay Pines VA Medical Center
- City of St. Petersburg
- Raymond James Financial
- Pinellas County Government
- Pinellas County Sheriff

Principal Taxpayers: (2010 Tax Data)	<u>% of Total Assessed Value</u>
Bellweather Prop. LP Ltd.	1.47%
Waters Edge One LLC	0.65%
Taylor, John S. III	0.53%
Sandpearl Resort LLC	0.44%
Grand Reserve Property Owner 628 East Cleveland St.-Clw.	0.41%
	0.35%

2011 Taxable Value: \$7,614,685,194

FY11/12 Property Tax Millage Rate: 5.1550

Assessed Property Value Distribution:	
Residential	67%
Commercial	16%
Govt & Institutional	11%
Other	6%

FY2011/12 Adopted Budget:

Operating (expenditure)	\$312,327,840
Capital Improvement	\$44,309,870

CLEARWATER AT A GLANCE (continued)

Land Use:

Incorporated Land Mass: 26
(square miles)

Land Use:

Residential	57%
Commercial	18%
Recreation/Open Space	10%
Industrial	2%
Other	13%

Education:

Number of Public Schools:
(For School Year 2010-2011)

Elementary	11
Middle	3
High School	3
Other	8
2010/2011 Enrollment	20,588
Public/Private Colleges	3

SERVICE STATISTICS

Public Safety

Police

Sworn Officers	231
Police Stations	5
Average Response Time (in minutes, 10/10 – 07/11)	9:50

Fire

Certified Firefighters	192
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Fire Stations	8
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Number of Service Calls (FY10)	25,258
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Average Response Time (FY10)	4:36
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General Government (FY11 Data)

Planning

Building Permits Issued:	
Commercial	1,339
Residential	4,224

Code Enforcement

Cases brought to compliance	4,346
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Roadway

Miles of paved streets	314
Miles resurfaced	8.69

Sidewalks

Sq. feet repaired/constructed	147,705
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SERVICE STATISTICS (continued)

Culture & Recreation (FY11 Data)

Number of Parks/Facilities	121
Parks Acreage	1,450
Recreational Paths (miles)	16
Playgrounds	27
Swimming Pools	5
Baseball/Softball Fields	32
Soccer/Football Fields	20
Tennis/Handball Courts	66
Basketball Courts	20
Recreation Centers	5
Nature Center	1
Total Recreation Visitors	1,432,825
Libraries	5
Volumes in collection (thousands)	616
Library Visits	860,044
Circulation	1,147,428
Marine - Boat Slips	333
Aviation - Airpark Spaces	153
Parking Spaces:	
Downtown	2,697
Clearwater Beach	2,286

Utilities (FY11 Data)

<u>Water and Sewer Utility</u>	
Water Mains (miles)	592
Water Customers	42,103
Water Pumped (million gallons/day)	11.5
Sanitary Sewer Mains (miles)	363
Sewer Customers	33,041
Daily Treatment Capacity (million gallons/day)	29
<u>Stormwater Utility</u>	
Stormwater Mains (miles)	148
Equivalent Residential Units	99,536
<u>Gas Utility</u>	
Gas Mains (miles)	826
Gas Customers	19,581
<u>Solid Waste Utility</u>	
Solid Waste Customers	28,262
Collected and disposed (tons)	112,100
<u>Recycling Utility</u>	
Recycling Customers	27,227
Marketable Recycled (tons)	9,130

Sources: University of Florida, Bureau of Economic and Business Research: April 1, 2009 estimate for current year and Florida Statistical Abstract for prior years; US Census Bureau: 2008 American Community Survey; Pinellas County School District; Pinellas County Finance Department; Pinellas County Property Appraiser; various City departments ; Florida Agency for Workforce Innovation.

