



*Celebrating 100 Years  
of the City on the Gulf*

# **Venice Strategic Plan for Oct. 1, 2026 through Sept. 30, 2027**

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Adopted: APRIL 28, 2026

**STRATEGIC PLAN**

# “Maintain Venice as a vibrant, charming, historic, coastal community in which to live, learn, work, and play”

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## Charming

- Promote the architectural theme of Northern Italian Renaissance for gateways, commercial corridors, downtown, and areas that are key to maintaining the City’s character
- Walkable, with bicycle and pedestrian-friendly areas and multimodal transportation options
- Well-maintained buildings, streetscapes, landscaping, streets, and parks
- Historic community with preserved historic and architectural character
- Protect the natural character of the City, including landscaping, beaches, and waterways
- Preserve downtown area with parks, small shops, and restaurants
- Ensure that people feel safe and secure
- Small shops and restaurants

## Vibrant - High Quality of Life

- Successful community events, festivals, parades, music, arts, and theater to bring people of all ages together
- Strong community organizations and volunteerism
- Diverse parks, amenities, recreation and leisure programs with safe walking, biking, boating, flying activities for all generations and active lifestyles
- Quick access to top-quality medical and health care services
- Energy-efficient and environmentally friendly programs city-wide
- Access to adequate free parking
- Variety of quality restaurants, retail, and commercial businesses
- Access to local and regional culture and arts



Photo by Suncoast Reef Rovers



***“To provide exceptional municipal services through a financially and environmentally sustainable City with engaged citizens”***

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**Exceptional Municipal Services**

- Employees are ambassadors of the City to citizens, the business community, and visitors
- Engage in the community, understand customers, their needs, and expectations
- Provide services compatible with the City’s financial capabilities

**Financially Sustainable City**

- Maintain a balanced budget
- Construct the annual City budget focused on community needs
- Continually evaluate ways to reduce costs and enhance service delivery
- Closely monitor the cost of delivering services
- Maintain or improve the City's credit rating

**Engaged Citizens**

- Always listen to citizens
- Engage in strategic policy development to define future issues and challenges
- Contribute expertise and partner in service to the community through participation on advisory boards, task forces, and stakeholder committees
- Help maintain open and transparent City government



Roberts Bay

# PILLARS & GOALS OVERVIEW



## Pillar 1: Sense of Place

- G1. Maintain pristine beaches and Gulf waters
- G2. Enhance, protect, and improve entrance gateways to Venice through design, architectural, and landscape features to achieve a sense of place upon arrival
- G3. Proactively plan for and maintain parks, green spaces, and public property
- G4. Pursue strategies to reduce the City's energy consumption and to protect the City's natural resources
- G5. Pursue the implementation of a comprehensive Traffic Management Plan and enhance multimodal transportation within the City to reduce congestion.

## Pillar 2: Good Governance & Exceptional Services

- G1: Continuously evaluate opportunities to improve operational efficiencies and cost savings
- G2: Continue to promote positive relationships with governmental agencies and community organizations
- G3: Maintain necessary personnel levels and compensation schedules to provide for high-quality service delivery
- G4: Support and engage area youth and their interests through City resources and community events
- G5: Use Venice's historic Centennial Celebration to develop a new unified logo to enhance community branding

## Pillar 3: Fiscal Sustainability

- G1: Maintain a balanced budget without the use of reserve funds to support ongoing operations
- G2: Continue to adhere to governmental accounting and financial reporting principles in accordance with the Governmental Accounting Standards Board
- G3: Protect the City from fiscal crisis by maintaining a strong credit rating through sound, conservative financial decision-making

## Pillar 4: Facilities & Infrastructure

- G1: Pursue available funding opportunities for City capital projects and programs with county, state, federal, and private sources
- G2: Establish, update, and maintain a contemporary asset management plan for City facilities, infrastructure, and property utilization
- G3: Actively engage interlocal relationships with county, state, and federal partners to advocate for and expedite priority projects that are located within the City limits

## Pillar 5: Economic Development

- G1: Engage in regular collaboration with the local business community to gather feedback, foster business growth, and provide easy-to-navigate processes and procedures
- G2: Support the revitalization and enhancement of the Seaboard District and gateway areas
- G3: Utilize the Venice Municipal Airport as an economic driver for the community

## Pillar 6: Quality of Life Through Planning

- G1: Ensure adherence to the comprehensive plan when reviewing land development applications
- G2: Develop opportunities to promote and incentivize mixed-use development, including affordable, workforce, and market-rate housing
- G3: Preserve Venice's historical resources and significant structures
- G4: Analyze anticipated growth and associated personnel and capital infrastructure demands to sustain a high level of service across the City
- G5: Increase resiliency and sustainability through proper planning, strengthening infrastructure, and enhancing emergency preparedness
- G6: Pursue the renegotiation of the 2007 Joint Planning Agreement/Interlocal Service Boundary Agreement with Sarasota County prior to its 2032 expiration for the planned orderly growth of the City and its related infrastructure



Snake Island



## 1. *Sense of Place*

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“Keep Venice beautiful and environmentally sustainable”



# Sense of Place



## GOAL 1: Maintain pristine beaches and Gulf waters

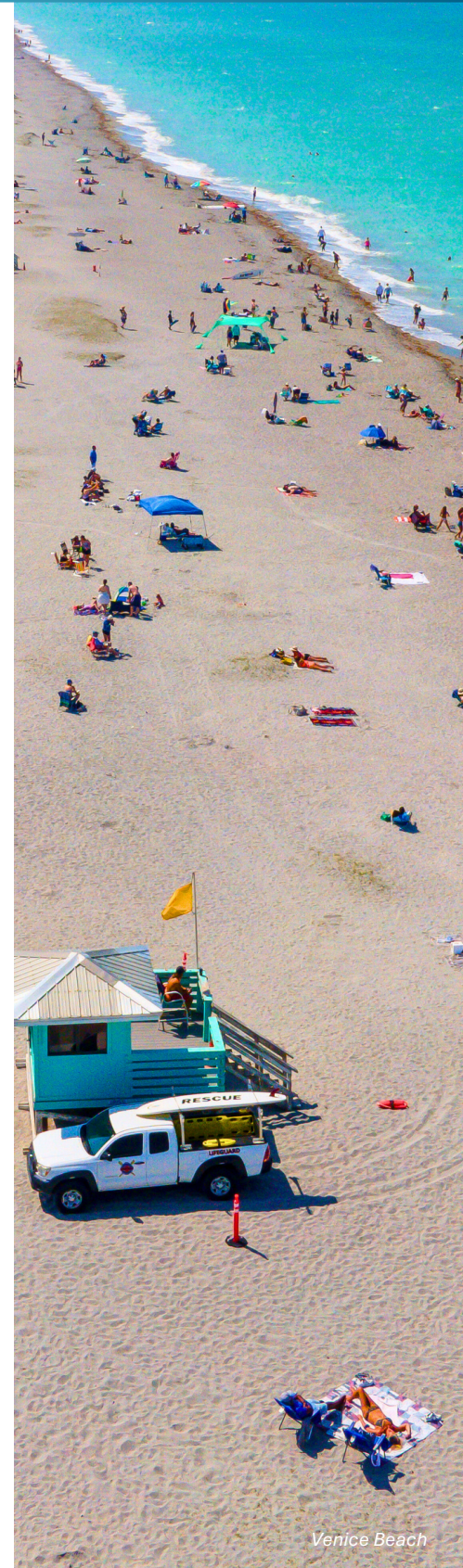
- **Pursue** actions to protect public beaches and shorelines and restore/preserve access to Venice Beach, Caspersen Beach, and South Jetty through partnerships and alternative solutions.
- **Pursue** innovative strategies to mitigate pollution and improve water quality through maintenance and enhancement of stormwater outfalls, and eliminate known means of pollution for optimal beach and water quality.

## GOAL 2: Enhance, protect, and improve entrance gateways to Venice through design, architectural, and landscape features to achieve a sense of place upon arrival

- **Promote** Public-Private-Philanthropic (P3) partnerships (e.g., VABI, KVB, Urban Forest, etc.) to support the visual beauty of the City and pursue similar partnerships when available.
- **Review** and enhance the commercial building maintenance standards in the Land Development Regulations to provide a higher level of standard for the commercial entrance corridors and downtown.
- **Prioritize** landscaping enhancements along the primary gateways into the City, including E. Venice Avenue, Business 41, the Circus Bridge, and Venice Municipal Airport.

## GOAL 3: Proactively plan for and maintain parks, green spaces, and public property

- **Work** with Sarasota County to implement the new interlocal parks agreement, including transition planning for the management of an improved regional athletic complex at Wellfield Park and transition of seven neighborhood parks, including the Venice Community Center, to the City.
- **Implement** strategies to meet expanded park and facility maintenance needs with current staffing, leveraging contracted services as needed, and support a successful transition to City operation through the new Venice Community Center management plan.
- **Finalize** and adopt a Parks Master Plan and associated Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) consistent with updated Interlocal Parks Agreement.
- **Encourage** developers, business partners, and homeowner associations to help maintain adjacent public lands.





## GOAL 4: Pursue strategies to reduce the City's energy consumption and to protect the City's natural resources

- **Use** energy-conserving tools and tactics for public assets and incorporate innovative means to reduce energy by performing assessments of existing facilities and incorporating cost-effective, sustainable design into all new City projects and renovations.
- **Implement** and update the Land Development Regulations (LDRs) to allow for conservation and preservation of land and natural resources.
- **Pursue** opportunities to employ environmentally sustainable options, including incentives for residential properties in the LDR's.

## GOAL 5: Pursue the implementation of a comprehensive Traffic Management Plan and enhance multimodal transportation within the City to reduce congestion

- **Effectively** utilize income from mobility and impact fees for infrastructure upgrades.
- **Focus** on opportunities to enhance safety measures along public roadways.
- **Promote** continued design and implementation of alternative transportation routes, including: Multi-Use Recreational Trails (MURTS), sharrows, biking and pedestrian pathways, and other multimodal options.



Lord-Higel's Coffee House



## ***2. Good Governance and Exceptional Services***

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“Provide efficient, responsive government with exceptional municipal service”



*Venice Municipal Airport, Venice Fishing Pier*



## GOAL 1: Continuously evaluate opportunities to improve operational efficiencies and cost savings

- **Optimize** operations, staffing levels, processes, and procedures to maximize efficiency.
- **Complete** the relocation of Fire Station 52, including EOC support functions, to improve future service delivery.
- **Utilize** public outreach surveys, input from Advisory Boards and Commissions, and other tools to enhance opportunities to get citizen input on City issues.
- **Research** and implement modern technologies, contract services, Public-Private Partnerships (P3s), and software to enhance workforce efficiency and improve service delivery.
- **Enhance** relationship with Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) and the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) regarding funding opportunities and oversight of projects.
- **Implement** conversion to internal fleet maintenance operations for the light-duty vehicle fleet in FY 2027. Continue contractual services for the heavy-duty fleet vehicles and consider conversion to in-house as a future priority.
- **Pursue** Information Technology enhancements as needed, including the City's website, Timekeeping & Payroll, Land Use & GIS, Cybersecurity, Data Governance, improved island-mainland connectivity, transition to cloud-based servers, Help Desk responsiveness, and other core business systems.

## GOAL 2: Continue to promote positive relationships with governmental agencies and community organizations

- **Establish** a process to collaborate and communicate with community and neighborhood groups, nonprofits, and business partners.
- **Collaborate** with other governmental agencies to share public assets and develop partnership opportunities.
- **Support** policies that promote economic growth and development consistent with the adopted comprehensive plan.



Solid Waste staff



### GOAL 3: Maintain necessary personnel levels and compensation schedules to provide for high-quality service delivery

- **Evaluate** personnel levels annually and make recommendations to provide adequate staffing to meet the level of service demands of a growing community.
- **Identify** additional ways to recognize and reward exemplary service, succession planning, and longevity.
- **Leverage** technologies to enhance efficiency, effectiveness, and transparency in municipal service delivery across all departments.
- **Provide** adequate staff support for public outreach and responsiveness to citizen concerns, including topics of public safety, municipal airport, transportation, and planning.
- **Pursue** Best Management Practices, Departmental accreditations, and satisfaction surveys in support of the delivery of exceptional municipal services.

### GOAL 4: Support and engage area youth and their interests through City resources and community events

- **Consider** the appointment of youth members on Advisory Boards & Committees, joint meetings, public forums, and through presentations in area schools regarding City programs and services.
- **Evaluate** the feasibility and practicality of possible City internship programs and employment opportunities for high school and college students.

### GOAL 5: Utilize Venice’s historic Centennial Celebration to develop a new unified logo to enhance community branding

- **Engage** the community in defining and shaping the City’s brand through outreach, public input, and Centennial-related initiatives.
- **Develop** and establish a unified brand identity, standards, and guidelines to ensure consistency, clarity, and authority across all City communications and materials.
- **Adopt** updated City logo and guidelines through City Council action.



Centennial Park



## 3. *Fiscal Sustainability*

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“Ensure a financially sound City”



Fountain Park



**GOAL 1: Maintain a balanced budget without the use of reserve funds to support ongoing operations**

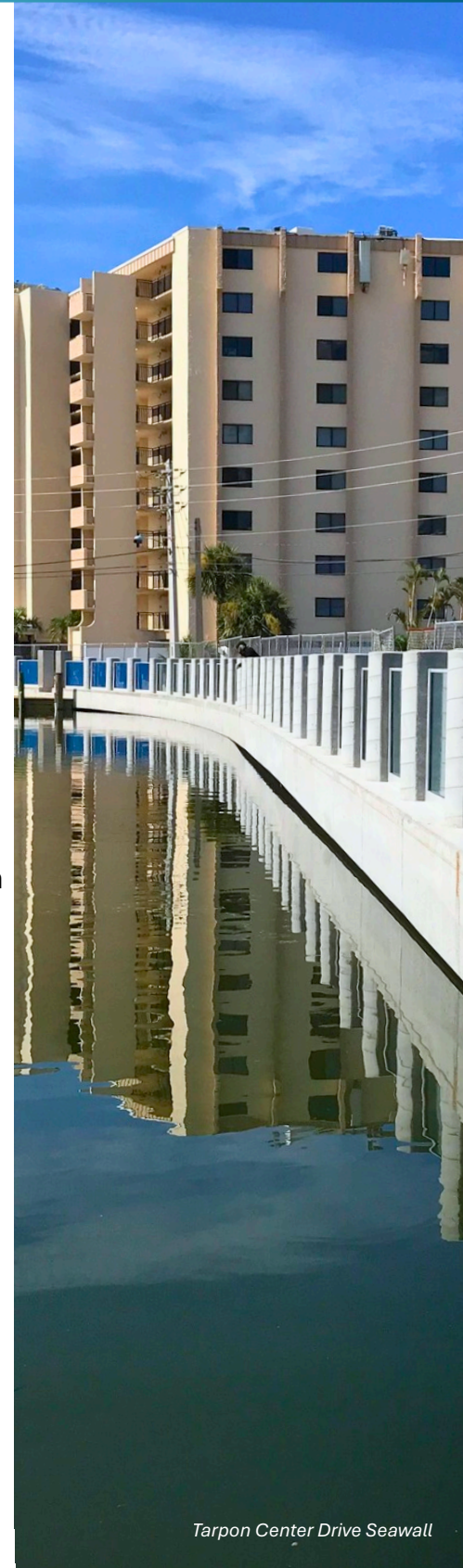
- **Maintain** General Fund Reserves of, at a minimum, 25% of fund expenditures.
- **Pursue** strategies to reduce the City’s reliance on residential ad valorem taxes.

**GOAL 2: Continue to adhere to governmental accounting and financial reporting principles in accordance with the Governmental Accounting Standards Board**

- **Articulate** specific funding sources that support government operations and continue to research funding opportunities to enhance service delivery for transparency.
- **Develop** a long-term plan to maintain or exceed 80% funding for the City’s Fire Pension plan.
- **Continue** to maintain or exceed 90% funding for the City’s Police Pension plan.

**GOAL 3: Protect the City from fiscal crisis by maintaining a strong credit rating through sound, conservative financial decision-making**

- **Maintain** AA+ bond ratings to reflect investment-quality bonds.
- **Maintain** the Triple Crown award from Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) by receiving all three GFOA awards; Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting, Distinguished Budget Presentation, and Popular Annual Financial Report.



Tarpon Center Drive Seawall

## 4. *Facilities and Infrastructure*

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“Upgrade and maintain City infrastructure and facilities”





**GOAL 1: Pursue available funding opportunities for City capital projects and programs with county, state, federal, and private sources**

- **Articulate** the City’s priorities to funding agencies on a timely basis.
- **Establish**, adopt, and share annual City priorities with county, state, and federal legislative bodies.
- **Regularly** review and actively pursue grant and funding opportunities that are relevant, cost-effective, and appropriate for the City’s project priorities.

**GOAL 2: Establish, update, and maintain a contemporary asset management plan for City facilities, infrastructure, and property utilization**

- **Complete** construction of Fire Station 52 adjacent to the existing Police Station, including all Emergency Operations Center support functions to create a Public Safety Campus.
- **Complete** the feasibility planning process for the Water Treatment Plant to provide a resilient, long-term strategy for potable water production.
- **Review** opportunities for increased beach parking and safe access to the public beaches.
- **Continue** comprehensive asset management policies and practices, including the annual Capital Improvement Project process and regular assessments of all City assets.

**GOAL 3: Actively engage interlocal relationships with county, state, and federal partners to advocate for and expedite priority projects that are located within the City limits**

- **Work** directly with the Army Corps of Engineers and West Coast Inland Navigation District to expedite the federal funding, planning, design, and construction of the South Jetty storm restoration project.
- **Collaborate** with Sarasota County on priority transportation projects through annual updates to the Capital Improvement Schedule and annual staff project priority meetings.
- **Collaborate** with Sarasota County on the future planning for Caspersen Beach, including potential access alternatives, increased beach parking, and future park usage.



Fire Station 52



## 5. Economic Development

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“Encourage and support a robust and diverse economy”



Venice FL Farmers Market

# Economic Development



**GOAL 1: Engage in regular collaboration with the local business community to gather feedback, foster business growth, and provide easy-to-navigate processes and procedures**

- **Provide** direct support and guidance for local businesses when navigating the City permit processes and to reduce obstructions to economic development.
- **Support** the local business community by partnering with local organizations, including the Venice Area Chamber of Commerce, Venice Main Street, Visit Sarasota County, and the Economic Development Corporation of Sarasota County, on local economic development initiatives and events.

**GOAL 2: Support the revitalization and enhancement of the Seaboard District and gateway areas.**

- **Pursue** and commence a meaningful component of the Seaboard District to demonstrate visible progress.
- **Identify** funding sources, collaborate with stakeholders, consider Public–Private partnerships (P3), and execute master plan phases to advance Seaboard District redevelopment opportunities.
- **Acquire** additional public property as necessary in support of the Seaboard District Master Plan.

**GOAL 3: Utilize the Venice Municipal Airport as an economic driver for the community**

- **Complete** and adopt the Airport Master Plan in FY 2027, including robust community participation.
- **Begin** the planning process for various facility safety and security needs, including: in-house Aircraft Rescue & Firefighting service; enhanced perimeter fencing; Air Traffic Control Tower options; and Safety Management System Program.
- **Conduct** market rate analyses for both current and new leases and rentals to ensure responsible utilization of airport properties.
- **Work** with the FAA regarding the Venice Golf Association leasehold property ahead of the 2028 lease expiration. Evaluate future use options, balancing community interest, beach access, and FAA requirements.
- **Pursue** development/construction of additional mid-field T-hangars through City financing or P3 structures.
- **Support** existing and proposed aeronautical business partners while balancing the needs of the surrounding community.



*Downtown shops*



## 6. *Quality of Life Through Planning*

“Preserve the Venice quality of life through proper planning”



1,000 Miglia at Centennial Park



## GOAL 1: Ensure adherence to the comprehensive plan when reviewing land development applications

- **Continue** to monitor and update the Land Development Regulations (LDRs) to provide consistency with the Comprehensive Plan.
- **Communicate** proactively with residents, developers, Chamber of Commerce, and other stakeholders regarding the new LDRs.
- **Streamline** administrative processes to expedite issuance of land development permits for the benefit of redevelopment, preservation of historic properties and structures, and vacant infill development.
- **Develop** a public outreach campaign regarding the City's growth management strategies, including information on local government powers and authority over planning, land use, zoning, impact fees, roadway jurisdictions, etc.

## GOAL 2: Develop opportunities to promote and incentivize mixed-use development, including affordable, workforce, and market-rate housing.

- **Update** building codes to encourage and promote property upgrades, including renovation and/or preservation of historic sites.
- **Develop** and implement programs and affordable housing initiatives locally, including impact fee reductions, half dwelling units, accessory dwelling units, inclusionary zoning, surplus land, repurposing existing structures, and affordable housing trust fund.
- **Establish** and support partnerships with other agencies and expert providers to create affordable housing opportunities locally without the use of taxpayer funds.
- **Evaluate** the opportunity for reuse of the former Fire Station 52 property for expansion of the Venice Housing Authority. Explore options to provide support for the development of additional affordable housing units while maintaining perpetual access to the adjoining Union Missionary Baptist Church.

## GOAL 3: Preserve Venice's historical resources and significant structures

- **Implement** historic preservation controls and standards within the LDRs.
- **Encourage** the participation of significant structures in the Local Register of Historical Resources.
- **Maintain** compliance and active participation in the Certified Local Government (CLG) program.





# Quality of Life Through Planning

## GOAL 4: Analyze anticipated growth and associated personnel and capital infrastructure demands to sustain a high level of service across the City

- **Plan** for departmental staffing needs required to meet the level of service demands for current and future growth. Utilize outside professionals for staffing study support when appropriate.
- **Perform** capital planning to provide all necessary City services, including utilities, public safety, parks, solid waste, transportation, and multimodal improvements.
- **Evaluate** the development of increased stormwater runoff standards as a proactive strategy to minimize future flooding incidents.

## GOAL 5: Increase resiliency and sustainability through proper planning, strengthening infrastructure, and enhancing emergency preparedness.

- **Improve** emergency preparedness and response plans by implementing hurricane after-action report recommendations.
- **Continue** to harden critical infrastructure, including City buildings, roadways, beaches, utilities, technology, and stormwater management systems.
- **Review** existing stormwater and floodplain regulations for enhancement opportunities.
- **Integrate** resilience strategies into City master plans, zoning codes, and capital improvement projects.
- **Increase** community engagement and public awareness, including hurricane preparation, floodplain management, disaster recovery, and hazard mitigation.
- **Identify** and apply for state and federal grants focused on hazard mitigation and community adaptation strategies.

## GOAL 6: Pursue the renegotiation of the 2007 Joint Planning Agreement/Interlocal Service Boundary Agreement (JPA/ILSBA) with Sarasota County for the planned orderly growth of the City

- **Fully** investigate/evaluate the impact of lands within the targeted lands included in the JPA/ILSBA on the City's current and future infrastructure capabilities and needs.
- **Consider** adding areas, as strategically appropriate, to the JPA/ILSBA.



Venice Municipal Airport