



**DOLLARS**

**TO**

**DONUTS**

**POST-EVENT  
REPORT**



# SUMMARY

On Saturday, Aug. 1, 2026, the city of Clearwater hosted Dollars to Donuts, an interactive community budget workshop designed to educate residents about city services, explain how municipal budgets are developed and gather resident feedback on budget priorities.

Unlike a traditional budget meeting, the event combined educational displays, department booths, interactive activities and resident engagement opportunities to create a welcoming environment where participants could learn about city services while providing meaningful feedback.



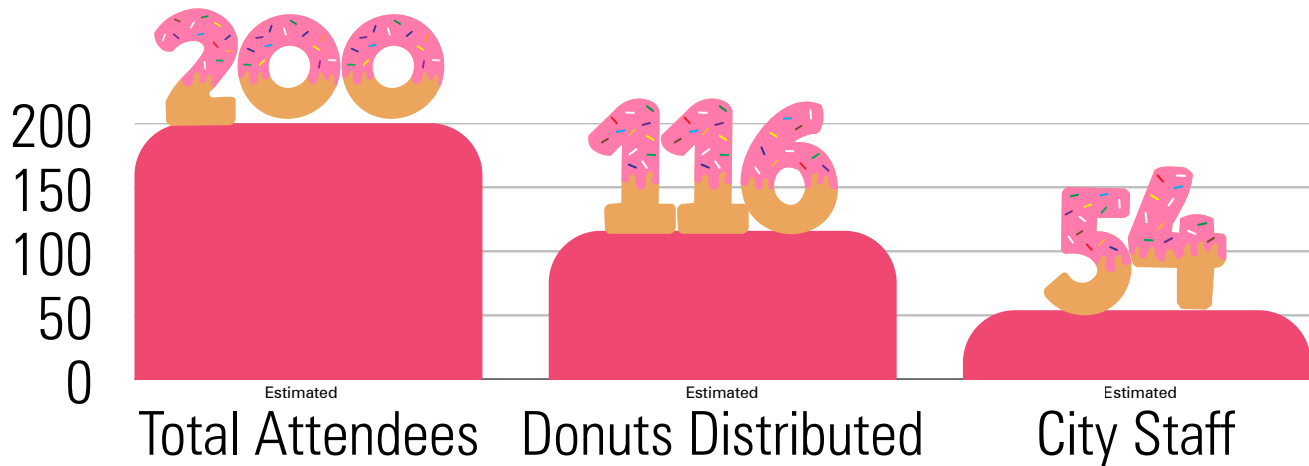
**“We’ve never done anything quite like this with the budget before.”**

**-Clearwater Staff Member**



# ATTENDANCE

Approximately 200 people attended Dollars to Donuts, including residents, community members and city staff.



**THANK YOU TO ROCKSTAR DONUTS  
AND GLAZ'D DONUTS FOR GENEROUSLY  
DONATING DONUTS AND COFFEE.**

## DEPARTMENT BOOTHS

Every city department hosted an informational booth featuring department statistics and budget information. Department directors and other city staff were available to answer questions from residents.



# FEEDBACK BOARDS

When residents visited each department booth, they were presented a question and were asked to place a donut sticker on the answer they liked best from the list of options. The feedback from the questions asked is listed below:

## Which option would make it easiest for you to provide feedback on City Council agenda items?

- Submit Comments Online – 22
- Send an Email – 27
- Speak In-Person – 25
- Register to Speak In Person – 10

## How should the city notify you about events?

- Email newsletters – 29
- Text messages – 34
- Social Media – 10

## What do you see as the most important service offered by Clearwater Fire & Rescue?

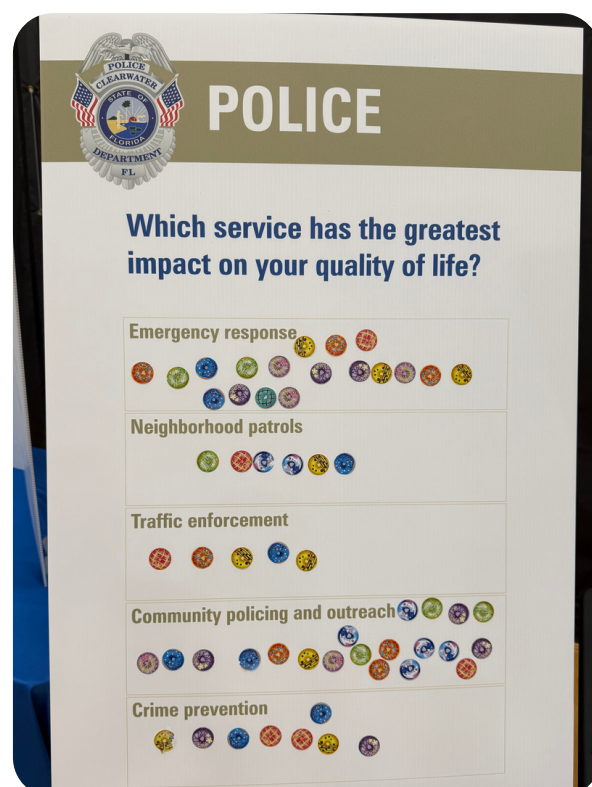
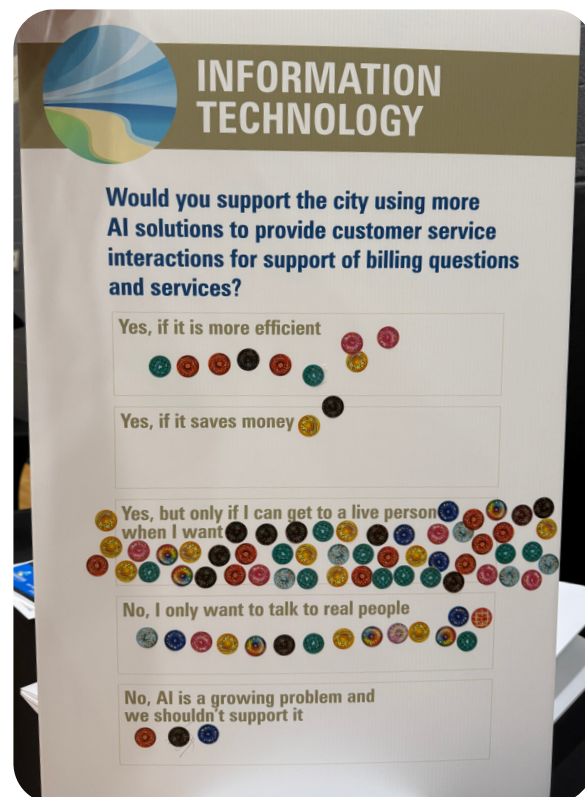
- Emergency medical and fire response – 39
- Fire prevention and safety education – 8
- Disaster preparedness – 12

## If the city could prioritize one transportation investment, which would you choose?

- Reduce traffic congestion – 5
- Improve road conditions – 14
- Repair sidewalks – 2
- Enhance pedestrian crossings and safety – 9

## Which Clearwater Police Department service has the greatest impact on your quality of life?

- Emergency response – 18
- Neighborhood patrols – 6
- Traffic enforcement – 5
- Community policing and outreach – 20
- Crime prevention – 8



# FEEDBACK BOARDS

## What should be Economic Development and Housing's top priority?

- Attracting high-quality employers and jobs – 23
- Helping local small businesses grow – 11
- Expanding affordable and workforce housing – 27
- Redeveloping vacant and underused properties – 16

## Which Library service is most important to you?

- Children's and adult programs – 24
- Borrowing books, movies and other materials – 29
- Technology and digital resources – 19
- Meeting and study spaces – 7



## Which Code Compliance service is most important to your neighborhood?

- Addressing unsafe or deteriorating properties – 14
- Taking action to resolve overgrowth, debris and other property maintenance concerns – 12
- Working with the community and property owners to understand and correct code issues – 23
- Proactively checking neighborhoods for code concerns – 9

## Would you support the city using more AI solutions for customer service interactions?

- Yes, if it is more efficient - 9
- Yes, if it saves money – 2
- Yes, but only if I can get to a live person when I want – 52
- No, I only want to talk to real people – 15
- No, AI is a growing problem and we shouldn't support it – 3

## How do you prefer to pay your utility bill?

- In person at the cashier's office via cash, check or the 24/7 kiosk – 1
- Using our after-hours drop box – 0
- By phone – 0
- Online – 2
- Mailing a check – 5
- Autopay via direct debit (bank draft) – 11
- Other (Amscot, Walmart) – 4

**UTILITY CUSTOMER SERVICE**

**How do you prefer to pay your utility bill?**

In person at the cashier's office via cash, check or the 24/7 kiosk

Using our after-hours drop box

By phone

Online

Mailing a check

Autopay via direct debit (bank draft)

Other (Amscot, Walmart)

# FEEDBACK BOARDS

**If you haven't used the Resident Parking Discount Program, what's the biggest reason?**

- I wasn't aware of it – 32
- I don't park in city lots or garages – 3
- I don't know how to sign up – 5
- I use another parking option – 4

**What should be Marine and Aviation's top priority?**

- Maintain existing marinas and infrastructure – 22
- Improve waterway safety – 9
- Expand public access – 15



**What natural gas improvements or services would make the biggest difference for your household?**

- Reliability – 2
- Outage communication – 1
- Expanding service availability – 11
- Safety upgrades – 7

**If the city had to prioritize one investment in its stormwater system, which would you choose?**

- Drainage improvement projects – 8
- Maintenance of existing storm drains – 8
- Neighborhood flood mitigation projects – 14
- Environmental restoration and water quality projects – 22

**What should Public Utilities prioritize most?**

- Reliable service – 7
- Affordability – 15
- Water quality – 23
- Infrastructure renewal -17
- Environmental protection - 10

**Which Solid Waste service provides the greatest value to your household?**

- Weekly garbage collection – 15
- Recycling – 17
- Yard waste collection – 4
- Bulk item collection – 5



# FEEDBACK BOARDS

## What is your favorite Parks & Recreation facility?

- Enterprise Dog Park - 1
- Allen's Creek Park - 1
- Clearwater Beach Recreation Center - 1
- Edgewater Park - 1
- Shuffleboard & Lawn Bowling Court - 1
- Sunset Sam Park- 1
- Station Square Park - 1
- Lake Chautauqua Park - 2
- State Street Park - 2
- Coachman Park - 2
- Kapok Park - 3
- Long Center - 3
- The Landings Golf Club of Clearwater - 4
- Crest Lake Park - 4
- Moccasin Lake Park - 7
- Morningside Recreation Center - 8
- McMullen Tennis Complex - 8

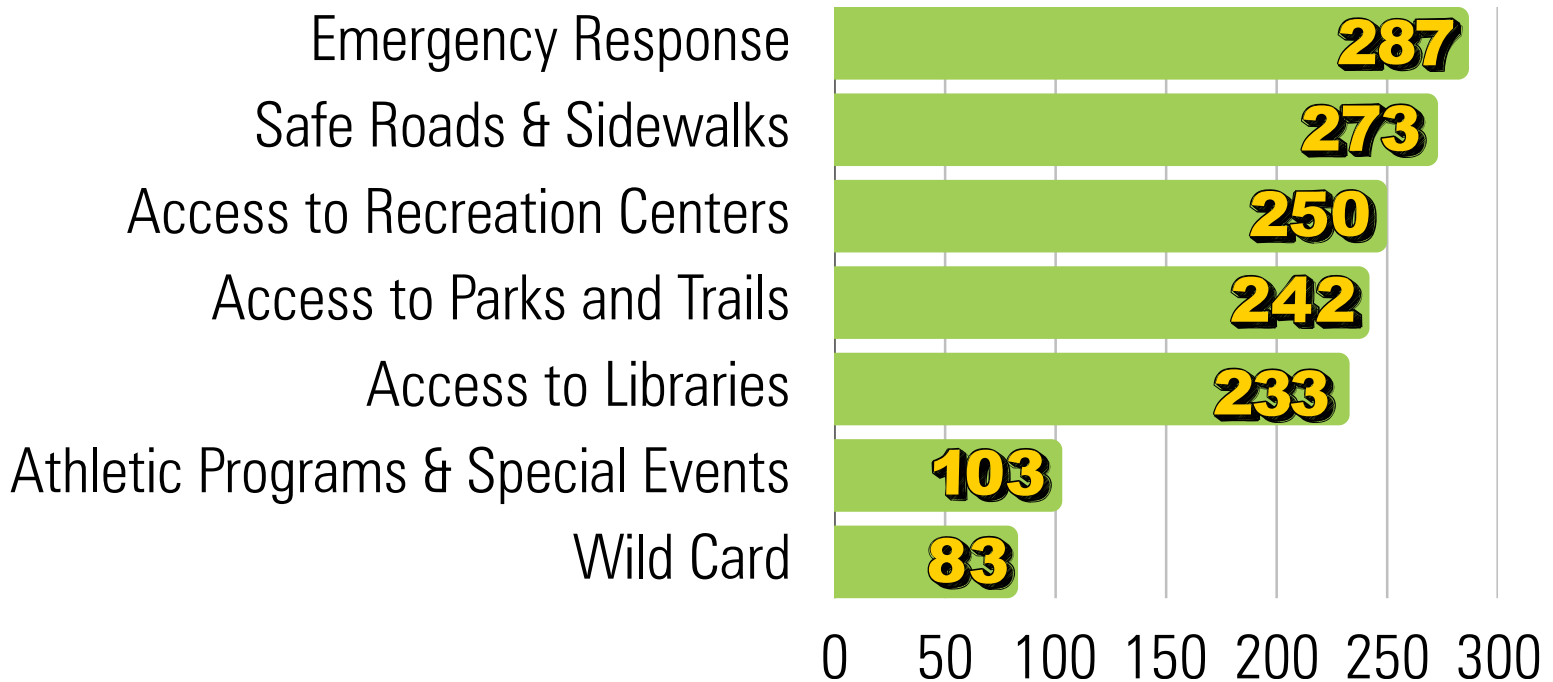


**Many residents asked  
whether this would  
become an annual event.**



# BUILD A CITY BUDGET

Residents were given \$13 each, which demonstrates a reduction of 10% in their budget, and were asked to divide the dollars among the city services that matter to them the most and to demonstrate how they would prioritize funding. The chart below shows the number of total dollars that were put in each box by those who participated.



**These are the full names of the categories that we asked residents to choose between when spending their dollars:**

- Emergency Police and Fire Response, Crime Prevention, and Emergency Preparedness
- Safe Roads, Sidewalks and Public Infrastructure
- Access to Recreation Centers, Fitness, Sports and Community Programs
- Access to Parks, Trails, Playgrounds and Natural Areas
- Access to Libraries, Learning, Technology, Information and Community Programs
- Athletics Programming, Special Events and Tourism
- Wild Card



This activity represented approximately 75% of property tax funding. The remaining 25% funds essential services that are required or support the city's overall operations, including planning and development, engineering services, economic development and housing, and administrative departments such as the city attorney's office, city manager's office, finance and budget, human resources and public communications.





# WILD CARD

If something was missing from the lists of items funded by property taxes, participants could suggest a service, program or initiative they'd like the city to consider and submit it in the Wild Card box. Four dollars were turned in blank.



| Category                                           | Dollars | Suggested Ideas                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|----------------------------------------------------|---------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Ad Valorem                                         | 1       | Return money back to taxpayers.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Arts & Culture                                     | 9       | Focus on art in public spaces and programming for cultural and art activities.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| Employee Benefits                                  | 10      | Funding for employee salaries and benefits, excluding the Council. Maintain strong pension reserves.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Technology / Dashboards                            | 4       | Use of AI/technology to ensure efficiency and high performance management throughout various departments.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Planning / Code Enforcement                        | 5       | Maintain appropriate department staffing levels to allow for high quality reviews of projects and keeping up with code updates and code enforcement.                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Public Works / Trees / Traffic Sidewalks / Parking | 13      | More inspections, repair and widening of sidewalks and drainage. Tree trimming on public land, undergrounding of electrical utilities, timely traffic flow studies, increased parking and charging ports for bikes/e bikes/scooters, more public transport trolleys. Also, reconstruction of speed tables at Countryside Recreation Center and Long Center. |
| Sustainability / Environmental Protection          | 14      | Protection of the environment and animals, water quality, renourishment and enhancement of beaches, planting of mangroves, and focus on stormwater mitigation, composting of waste and use of solar energy where possible.                                                                                                                                  |
| Economic Development / Housing                     | 4       | Allocate more funding toward affordable housing and associated infrastructure to help improve developing low income communities.                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Parks & Beautification / Recreation                | 14      | Keep Morningside pool open year-round, focus on general city beautification and aesthetics, construct new bathrooms at Edgewater and Kapok parks and reopen previously closed park bathrooms. Fund running tracks, enforce trail safety, and provide recreation options focused on mental health and happiness.                                             |
| Public Outreach / Community Groups                 | 5       | More opportunities for public outreach, cross-generational meetings or workshops on the future of the community. Host roundtables toward solutions for unhoused community members, renters/housing rights and health-focused community groups.                                                                                                              |

# KIDS ACTIVITY AREA

Clearwater Public Library staff provided children's activities throughout the event, creating a family-friendly space for younger attendees.

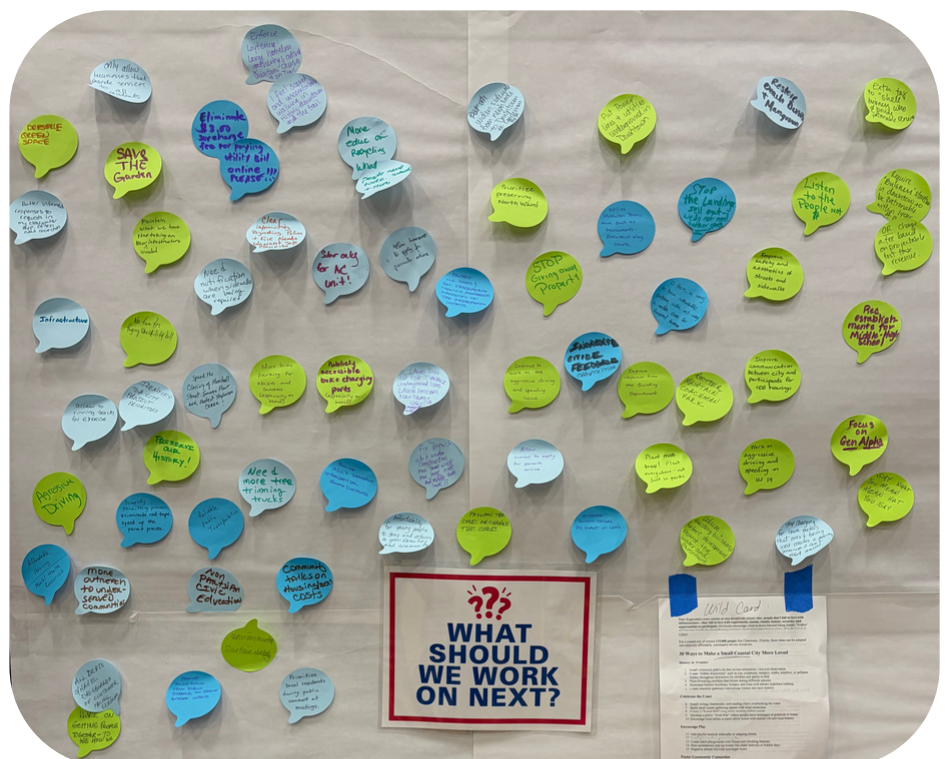


## COMMUNITY FEEDBACK WALL

The Community Feedback Wall highlighted examples of past city projects and initiatives that were influenced by resident feedback.

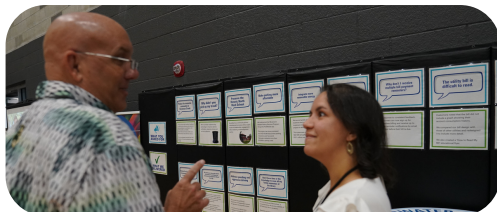
Attendees were then invited to share ideas, priorities and suggestions for future improvements, creating an opportunity for residents to contribute feedback that may help inform future planning and decision-making.

The table below summarizes key themes identified and is not intended to represent every comment received. A photo of all resident-submitted comments is included on this page to provide a complete visual record of the feedback collected.





# COMMUNITY FEEDBACK WALL



| Category                                  | Suggestions                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|-------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Parks & Recreation                        | Publicly accessible bike charging ports and more bike parking, especially at beaches; maintaining Coachman Park; using McMullen Tennis Complex for tournaments; access to running tracks for exercise                                                       |
| Arts & Culture                            | Preserve history and the North Ward School                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Public Safety                             | Continue prioritizing aggressive driving enforcement, especially on U.S.19; safety in downtown and trails                                                                                                                                                   |
| Utilities                                 | Eliminate the surcharge for paying utility bills online; more education on recycling; close the Marshall Street Plant sooner; stop charging for lawn meters that are unused                                                                                 |
| Community Development                     | Improve communication with residents regarding Community Development Board hearings; simplify the permitting process and offer online services for homeowners; promote ADU's                                                                                |
| Public Works / Transportation             | Give residents more notification when sidewalks are being repaired; infrastructure improvements on existing buildings; improve safety of streets and sidewalks; more tree trimming; Drew Street road configuration; put power lines underground in downtown |
| Sustainability / Environmental Protection | Invest in environmental sustainability; expand solar initiatives; plant more trees and protect the tree canopy.                                                                                                                                             |
| Housing                                   | Affordable housing; community halls/discussions on housing costs                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Operations & Communications               | Better informed responses to requests in Clearwater Connect; improve customer service; more outreach to underserved communities; additional citizen feedback opportunities                                                                                  |
| Miscellaneous                             | Mental Health resources; increase nuisance citations by flight/UAS; re-establish mentorship opportunities for middle and high school students; affordability for young people; focus on gen alpha; Peter Kageyama article, resources for young people       |