



January 2008

# City gets \$3.6 million for stormwater upgrade project



Pictured from left are: Assistant City Manager John Jones, Commissioner Teri Johnston, General Services Director David Fernandez, City Manager Jim Scholl, Congresswoman Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, Mayor Morgan McPherson, Environmental Programs Manager Annalise Mannix, Commissioner Clayton Lopez and City Attorney Shawn Smith.

Congresswoman Ileana Ros-Lehtinen was in town this month to celebrate a significant achievement for Key West and the Florida Keys: the awarding of \$5 million in federal funds for the Florida Keys Wastewater Project.

The City of Key West and other Keys localities have been working to secure federal funding for this project for more than seven years. Congress has authorized up to \$100 million in funding for the Florida Keys Wastewater and Stormwater Project.

“This is a two-part process,” explained General Services Director David Fernandez, who has been instrumental in securing these funds for Key West. “First, we get the authorization from Congress, then we

have to get the appropriations.

“It’s a very long, drawn out process,” Fernandez continued. “We have to go through a lengthy environmental study conducted by the Army Corps of Engineers and then once you had that completed, we had to have the Corps draft, approve and sign the contract so that we can finally start incurring costs and moving forward with our project.”

That’s what Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works John Paul Woodley, Jr., did in Key West this month. He and Mayor Morgan McPherson inked the Project Cooperation Agreement that will allow the

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## VIEW FROM THE TOP

It’s been another busy month for the City of Key West. I would like to start with a special recognition for Maria Ratcliff. Maria was honored this month for her support of the Angel Tree project.



**City Manager  
Jim Scholl**

The Angel Tree project was conceived by Mr. Mike Donovan to provide a way for the Key West community to combine the recognition of those who have made the ultimate sacrifice in service to our country while providing bicycles as Christmas presents to local children who otherwise do not have the opportunity for such a gift. Mike’s efforts will be officially recognized in a ceremony at the Pentagon in Washington D.C. on February 14, 2008.

Maria coordinated all the official city permissions for the Angel Tree event and was recognized by Mike at an awards ceremony on January 20th at Cowboy Bills. Congratulations and thank you Maria!

Our fiscal year first quarter is complete. The controllable expenditures are tracking well. I appreciate the efforts of the directors and staff at working to stay on track and within budget constraints. We still need to keep a tight watch on all spending in order to make it to the end of the year and not be overcommitted. That will remain a constant challenge. I need everyone to help by controlling spending and limiting all expenses to essential needs. We must all be good stewards of the taxpayers’ dollars.

Thanks to all for the great support for New Years events! Enjoy the rest of the winter.

# CITY OF KEY WEST

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## Questions? Comments?

If you have information for the next City Newsletter or would like to see something added to the publication, please contact Communications Manager Christie Phillips at [cphillip@keywestcity.com](mailto:cphillip@keywestcity.com). This newsletter is a publication of the City of Key West.



Mayor Morgan McPherson, left, and Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works John Paul Woodley, Jr., right, sign the project cooperation agreements while Congresswoman Ros-Lehtinen looks on.

city to start incurring costs on its stormwater project and be eligible for reimbursement for those costs.

The City of Key West was originally allocated a total of \$10.3 million for its longterm plan to revamp and improve stormwater collection on the island. At this month's signing ceremony, the city received approval to spend up to \$3.6 million of that allocated money.

"Basically, our aim is to improve the city's stormwater infrastructure," Fernandez explained. "In a nutshell, that will both clean stormwater runoff and improve drainage throughout the city."

Fernandez said the city has over 300 intersections that have been approved for upgrades in their stormwater basin systems, including the addition of pump-assisted outfalls in areas where gravity does not help stormwater drainage, and gravity wells and gravity collection systems in areas above sea level.

"We were very pleased with this final approval to start work on our stormwater project," Fernandez said. "This has been a very lengthy process and we are ready to move forward on construction."

Key Colony Beach and Key Largo also received approval to start spending grant money at this month's ceremony. Key Colony Beach was allocated \$200,000, while Key Largo is to receive reimbursement for nearly \$1.2 million.

The City of Key West has a stormwater capital plan, developed to help prevent flooding, divert stormwater flow from outfalls and reduce or eliminate discharge of pollutants and contamination of near shore waters.

As intersections throughout the city are improved, the General Services Department will be able to greatly reduce the amount of pollutants that flow into sewer outfalls by installing pollution control devices into localized wells.

After the stormwater runoff is filtered and descends into the well, the water will slowly filter through the bedrock to the ocean. This process will also help improve stormwater drainage, thereby lessening the effects of area flooding due to heavy rains.

The city contracts out its stormwater management functions to Operations Management International, Inc., at 305-292-5100. □

## City Hall closed for Presidents Day

The City of Key West will be closed for Presidents Day on Monday, Feb. 18, 2008.

Regular business hours will resume Tuesday, February 19. The City of Key West wishes everyone a happy holiday.

# Key West named Tree City USA for 8th year

This month, the Arbor Day Foundation named Key West a Tree City USA community for its commitment to community forestry.

This is officially the second year Key West has received this national recognition, the first time being back in the 1980s.

But Key West's Urban Forestry Program Manager Cynthia Domenech-Coogle said that the Arbor Day Foundation is going to grant the title to the city dating back to 2001, because though the city hasn't applied for the designation each year, it has met the requirements every year.

Key West had to meet four standards to earn the title of Tree City USA, including having a tree board, a tree care ordinance, a comprehensive community forestry program and observing Arbor Day.

Domenech-Coogle said the city has been celebrating Arbor Day for the past 17 years. This year, Mayor Morgan McPherson declared January 18, 2008, as Florida Arbor Day in Key West. The city's Tree Commission, Key West Woman's Club and Sunset Rotary Club were on-hand to thank the Mayor and Commissioners for their dedi-

cation to the planting and maintenance of trees in the City of Key West (see below).

"Basically, the Tree City USA designation means that we protect our trees," Domenech-Coogle explained. "We have had a Tree Commission since 1971, which ensures that if someone removes a tree, they will plant another. We've become more savvy over the years. Now we judge tree replacement on the diameter, location, condition and species of the tree requested for removal, so that if you take down a large tree the applicant may be required to replant several new trees."

Tree conservation efforts have also helped the city rebound after hurricanes.

"Every time we have a hurricane and trees are knocked down, we're out there replanting them," Domenech-Coogle said.

For Arbor Day this month, Domenech-Coogle and a league of volunteers planted trees in the pocket parks at Flagler & 6th Street, Patterson & 8th Street, the Fran Ford White Crowned Pigeon Park and at McCoy Indigenous Park. To volunteer with tree planting efforts, contact Domenech-Coogle at 305-809-3768. □



Members of the city's Tree Commission and other volunteers accept a plaque from Mayor Morgan McPherson. From left: Neils Weise, Mimi Grantham McCoy, Danilo Crespo, Sunset Rotary President Manny Madruga, Cynthia Domenech-Coogle, Gregory Curry, Mayor McPherson, Julio J. Barroso and Rudy Molinet.

## FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

Daniel Blanco - Fire Department - Feb. 2  
Gerzale Curry-Hill - Building - Feb. 2  
Dave Hall - Police Department - Feb. 2  
Rodolfo Bravo - Parks & Rec - Feb. 3  
Megan Wilcox - Police Department - Feb. 3  
Heriberto Dominguez - Transportation - Feb. 4  
Albertha Miller - Transportation - Feb. 5  
Jorge Galvan - Fire Department - Feb. 6  
Renel Nelson - Transportation - Feb. 6  
Mark Bacon - Mallory Square - Feb. 7  
Charles Major - Parks & Rec - Feb. 7  
Steven Wells - Fire Department - Feb. 7  
Jeffery Berman - Code Compliance - Feb. 11  
Leandre Washington - Parks & Rec - Feb. 12  
Terry Blanco - Fire Department - Feb. 13  
Frank Sauer - Police Department - Feb. 13  
Adriana Gomez - Transportation - Feb. 15  
Karl Wagner - Fire Department - Feb. 15  
Doug Bradshaw - Port Operations - Feb. 17  
Alberto Vazquez - Parks & Rec - Feb. 17  
Rich Thomas - Police Department - Feb. 19  
Manny Menendez - Police Department - Feb. 20  
Francisca Banos - Public Works - Feb. 21  
Kent Fisher - Public Works - Feb. 21  
Lisa Grizzle - Building - Feb. 21  
Antonea McDowell - Parks & Rec - Feb. 21  
Joal Rivero - Parks & Rec - Feb. 21  
Andy Harris - Fire Department - Feb. 23  
Lars Pedersen - Project Construction - Feb. 23  
Barbara Regensburger - City Attn.'s Office - Feb. 26  
Nicholas Richardson - General Services - Feb. 26  
Ralph Major - Parks & Rec - Feb. 28

# 10th Ambassadors class launched this month

## JANUARY SERVICE AWARDS

Kevin Cates - Fire Department  
25 years of service

Mike Karash - Fire Department  
25 years of service

Ray Alvarez - Fire Department  
20 years of service

Roger Wittenberg - Finance  
20 years of service

Diane Lipinski - Police Department  
5 years of service

Portia Navarro - City Mgr.'s Office  
5 years of service



City Manager Jim Scholl welcomes the 10th Ambassador class during their first session.

The 10th Ambassador class convened for the first time this month for the start of a 14-week program filled with presentations and demonstrations introducing them to the various departments and functions of the City of Key West.

There are 16 members registered for the 10th Ambassadors class, including new Commissioner Teri Johnston. The group will meet every Thursday for 14 weeks to hear

about each city department, one by one, from its director.

City Manager Jim Scholl welcomed the class in its first session earlier this month, presenting an overview of Key West history, as well as the history of our local government.

City Attorney Shawn Smith followed with a detailed presentation about the City of Key West's City Manager-style government, the Sunshine Law and other legal issues the city faces on a day-to-day basis.

The open forum encourages questions from participants and aims to open the lines of communication between citizens and their governmental counterparts.

The City of Key West will be holding two Ambassador classes this year. If you are interested in participating in the 11th class, starting in June 2008, please contact City Manager's Assistant Melissa Larmel at 305-809-3882 or visit [www.keywestcity.com](http://www.keywestcity.com) and click on the City Manager's page, then on Ambassador Program in the right hand column under In This Department for an application.

The Ambassador program was launched in 2003 by then-City Manager Julio Avel. To date, there are over 230 graduates of the program. □



Commissioner Johnston diligently takes notes.



Mayor Morgan McPherson, City Manager Jim Scholl and affordable housing consultant Paul Clayton on the set of City Beat!

# Mayor creates new community TV show

City of Key West Mayor Morgan McPherson wanted a forum that would reach many constituents at one time, a forum in which he could explain actions the City Commission has taken, a forum more informal than his seat on the dais.

He found that in the creation of the city's new community news program City Beat!

"City Beat! is a great opportunity for me and the City Manager to explain what's going on in the city, and to highlight policy decisions or ongoing programs," Mayor McPherson said.

"It's just another way we are reaching out to the community to keep the lines of communication open."

Mayor McPherson alternates hosting of the weekly show with City Manager Jim Scholl. It airs on local Comcast Channel 5 on Tuesday and Wednesday nights, at 7 p.m. and 8 p.m. respectively.

"I will be more focused on the actions of the City Commission, and talking

about why I voted one way or the other on some of the issues, while Jim will be more focused on city initiatives and accomplishments," Mayor McPherson explained. "I think showing the two sides of city government – the political and the administrative – will help viewers understand more about how the City of Key West operates."

Mayor McPherson and City Manager Scholl kicked off the first show on Jan. 3, 2008. The show is taped in the Comcast studio on Kennedy Drive.

"Any time we can take an opportunity to reach out to the citizens, we need to do it," City Manager Scholl said. "Our job is to earn and keep the public trust, and governmental transparency helps tremendously in that process. This show is just one more public outreach outlet for us to accomplish that goal."

If you have a question or issue you'd like the Mayor to address on his show, email Paul Clayton at paulclayton@earthlink.net. □

## PUBLIC MEETINGS FEBRUARY 2008

Feb. 4: Community Housing Committee  
City Hall, 5:30 p.m.

Feb. 5: City Commission  
Old City Hall, 6 p.m.

Feb. 9: Citywide Cleanup  
Bayview Park, 8 a.m.

Feb. 11: Clean Key West Task Force  
City Hall, 12 p.m.

Feb. 20: City Commission  
Old City Hall, 6 p.m.

Feb. 25: Community Housing Committee  
City Hall, 5:30 p.m.

# City honors Martin Luther King Day

The City of Key West celebrated Martin Luther King Jr. Day this year with a parade march that ended in a picnic festival at Nelson English Park.

“We had an amazing turnout at all the Martin Luther King Day events this year,” said Commissioner Clayton Lopez. “There were definitely more people marching with us this year in the parade, and everyone was enjoying themselves afterwards at the picnic.”

Commissioner Lopez led the parade march for a while before moving back into the crowd to lead songs over a megaphone. His uplifting comments about equality and love for One Human Family earned several ‘Amen’s from his fellow marchers.

“It was a wonderful day



Commissioner Clayton Lopez leads the Martin Luther King, Jr., Day parade march up Whitehead Street.

for the City of Key West and for our community,” Commissioner Lopez said. “Any time we can come together like that and embrace our differences recognizing that we are all part of the same family is an important day for this city.”

The Police Athletic League contributed materials this year for children to make and display posters, which they proudly did during the march.

The parade march was followed by the ever-popular community picnic at Nelson English Park.

The city’s Community Services department hosted the picnic, which gave all community-based organizations in the city the chance to come out and educate citizens as to the services they provide.

It was also a chance for neighbors to get together and remember the contributions Martin Luther King Jr. made to history.

Many in attendance finished the day by listening to

Roosevelt Sands deliver Martin Luther King Jr.’s famous ‘I have a dream’ speech at the Cornish Memorial AME Zion Church.

“It was a moving day for many of us,” Commissioner Lopez said. □



Mayor Morgan McPherson and his daughter Shiloh.



## Sue Snider wins HR Health Quiz

Human Resource’s Alice Parker, right, awards the Finance Department’s Sue Snider with a fruit basket acknowledging that Sue won December’s HR Health Quiz. The quiz, put out each December as an insert in employee’s paychecks, tests common health knowledge. This year, HR had 16 people submit answers in the quiz, more than double the usual amount of participants. Thanks to everyone who participated, and congratulations Sue!