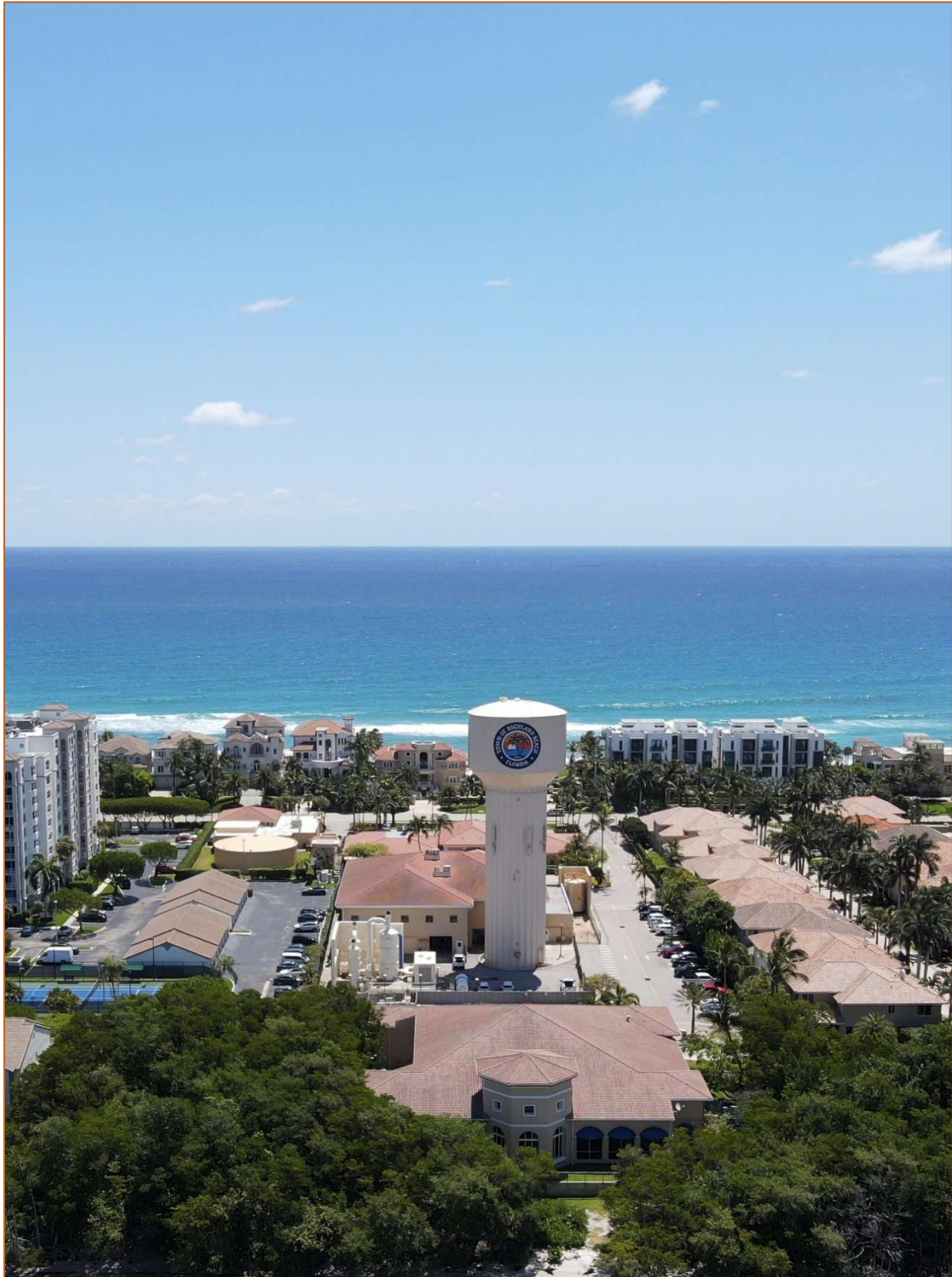


# MANAGER'S MONTHLY



JUNE 2023

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# MESSAGE FROM YOUR MANAGER

It was a Spring of progress in Highland Beach! We are in the midst of several key initiatives, including the FDOT SR-A1A RRR Project, Fire Station Construction, entering a new agreement for Solid Waste and Recycling Collection Services, and the FY23-24 Budget. As we wind the season down and move into Summer, let me take this opportunity to provide an update on each of these main strategic priorities and take a look ahead at what is yet to come:

## FDOT SR-A1A RRR Project

FDOT (Florida Department of Transportation) representatives attended the May 2<sup>nd</sup> Town Commission meeting to provide updates and answer questions regarding the SR-A1A RRR (Resurfacing, Restoration, and Rehabilitation) project. If you were not able to attend the meeting or would like a refresher on FDOT's presentation, you can find a comprehensive list of major takeaways in the "What's Happening in Highland Beach?" section of this newsletter or watch a recording of the meeting on the Town's [YouTube channel](#). Thank you to all the residents who attended this meeting; FDOT has taken all your comments and concerns into consideration and will continue to evaluate the project impact during the remainder of the planning phase. As a reminder, there will be one more pre-construction public meeting next Spring once the 100% Plans are submitted and the project is awarded.

## Fire Station Construction

As you have probably noticed, construction has officially commenced on Fire Station #116. I assure you that while we may look closed behind that big green fence, all Town operations are still active and performed at the level of service that our residents have come to enjoy. I would like to thank all our residents for their flexibility and adjusting to the changes we have had to make around the Town Hall complex in order to accommodate the construction. We knew that the construction period would cause some level of inconvenience for all of us, but we also know that the end result of an independent Fire Rescue operation will be worth that cost. If you have not done so already, I encourage you to visit our website to view an updated layout of available parking, and as always, to register with the Town's general information list to receive news updates.



## New Solid Waste and Recycling Collection Rates

The Town's contract with Waste Management for Solid Waste and Recycling Collection Services, which had been active for nearly a decade, had exhausted all renewal options and was set to expire on May 31<sup>st</sup>. To secure a new contract and ensure that services were not disrupted, Town staff underwent a competitive RFP (Request for Proposals) process and received proposals from two firms. The RFP Selection Committee determined that Waste Management could provide a higher level of service and their costs were substantially lower than their competitor. Town leadership attempted to negotiate a reduced rate, but Waste Management affirmed that their submitted price model was as low

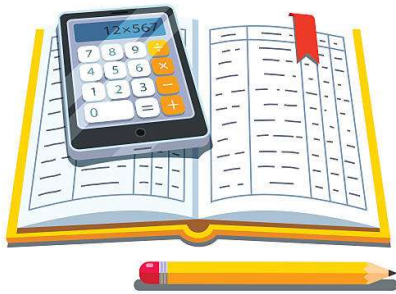
as they could afford and once again pointed to their rates being the lower of the two by a wide margin. At the May 16<sup>th</sup> Town Commission Meeting, a new five-year agreement was executed. Although their costs were the lower of the two, residents will still see a noticeable increase in billed fees. As we all know, price increases have felt seemingly universal over the past several years and this unfortunately falls into that category. The price increases will be as follows:

Single-Family and Multi-Family Units of Four or Less – From \$15.97 to \$29.15 per month

Multi-Family Units of Greater Than Four – From \$10.30 to \$17.46 per month

In an effort to reduce the impact on the residents, the Town has made a sizeable decrease in administrative fees included in the bills. While the new contract does not culminate in the rates we desired, it is important to keep in mind that the Town has been receiving services at rates significantly below market value for the past several years. It is our hope that inflation subsides and market conditions stabilize in the coming years, leading to a more agreeable rate in the future.

### FY23-24 Budget



While the previous three priorities are unique and present many challenges that the Town has not faced before, we are all very familiar with the budget cycle. I am working with the Town's department heads to take a zero-based budget approach to maximize the value of your tax dollars. While Town staff are working on preparing revenue and expenditure projections for the upcoming year, the Property Appraiser is compiling the 2023 estimated taxable property values, which will be released near the end of this month. It has been and will remain my mission to keep the millage rate and taxes level as we move forward in

becoming an independent, full-service Town. If you would like to view the Town's Five-Year Financial Forecast, please visit the Finance Department's [webpage](#) for a detailed presentation.

### Upcoming Agenda Items (Subject to Change and Additional Items may be Added)

#### June 6<sup>th</sup>, 2023 (Regular Meeting)

- State Legislative Update – Representative Peggy Gossett-Seidman, Senator Lori Berman, and Jared Rosenstein (Capital City Consulting)
- Fire Rescue Implementation Update – Town Manager
- FDOT RRR Project Update – Town Manager
- Continued discussion of proposed changes (“amendment concepts”) to the Accessory Marine Facility (AMF) and Seawall Regulations of the Town Code
- Budget Amendment re: Fire Station Construction
- Resolution Amending the Fund Balance Policy to increase funding for Fire Rescue Department (\$4 million to \$5 million)



- Approval of Meeting Minutes
- Canvassing Board Activities Update

#### June 20<sup>th</sup>, 2023 (Regular Meeting)

- FY 2024 Budget Presentation – “Protecting our 3 Miles of Paradise”
- Update of the International Property Maintenance Code from FY 2012 version to FY 2021 version
- Fire Rescue Implementation Update – Town Manager
- FDOT RRR Project Update – Town Manager

#### July 18<sup>th</sup>, 2023 (Regular Meeting)

- Continued discussion of legal opinion on Milani Settlement Agreement Extension (Non-Park Property)
- Discussion Zoning Ordinance revision options for lot split
- Updated FY 2024 Budget Presentation
- First Reading of Levy & Setting of the Tentative Maximum Millage Rate
- Fire Rescue Implementation Update – Town Manager
- FDOT RRR Project Update – Town Manager

## WHAT'S HAPPENING IN HIGHLAND BEACH?

### FDOT SR-A1A RRR Project Presentation Takeaways

- FDOT is considering extensive traffic control methods, such as placing message boards notifying drivers of construction and recommending that they seek an alternate route at the following intersections: Linton Blvd./Federal Hwy., Linton Blvd./SR-A1A, Spanish River Blvd./Federal Hwy., Spanish River Blvd./SR-A1A
- FDOT will re-evaluate the potential addition of intermittent bike lane separation devices.
- The current project plans have been uploaded to the Town's website and are available for viewing in Town Hall. The most up to date plans will continue to be provided as they become available.
- There will be an extension to the Linton Blvd./SR-A1A intersection westbound turn lane.
- East side flooding will be mitigated by regrading the road more effectively towards the swales and adding infiltration rock and French drains in targeted areas.
- Five-foot bike lanes will be consistent through northern and southern borders into Town.
- A safety evaluation was performed at the beginning of the project design, and it was determined that bike lanes should be enhanced.
- There will be minimal lane closures when work is only being performed on swales.
- Temporary pedestrian walkways will be installed where sidewalks are being raised.



- No existing turn lanes are being removed.
- Out of the 678 trees that were evaluated, only seven will be removed and 23 relocated.
- The 15-month timeline is based on a 40-hour work week and may be accelerated by the Town and contractor allowing night and weekend work.
- The construction equipment staging area will be determined by the awarded contractor at a later stage of the project.

### Board Vacancies

Board of Adjustment & Appeals – Two (2) vacancies for three-year terms and one (1) vacancy for an unexpired term ending September 21<sup>st</sup>, 2024.

Natural Resources Preservation Advisory Board – Three (3) vacancies for unexpired terms ending April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2024.

For additional information, please contact the Town Clerk's Office at (561) 278-4548 or email [lgaskins@highlandbeach.us](mailto:lgaskins@highlandbeach.us) (Lanelda Gaskins) or [jdehart@highlandbeach.us](mailto:jdehart@highlandbeach.us) (Jaclyn DeHart), Monday through Friday from 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM.

## COMMUNITY

The Town would like to give special recognition to Ludovic Joseph, Director of Plant Maintenance at St. Lucy Catholic Church, who will be retiring after an astounding 33 years of service! In the words of Father Horgan, Ludovic "Brought to these shores determination, commitment, and loyalty...He is a true gentleman and has without doubt embraced what makes this country so great: hard work, perseverance, and a willingness to serve his maker through his service of so many other people." Congratulations Ludovic, we wish you all the best and hope you enjoy your well-earned retirement!

## POLICE DEPARTMENT

### Home Safety

Nothing is more important than keeping loved ones safe in your home. Home security systems are a proven theft deterrence that protects your home and family from burglaries, fire, carbon monoxide, and even water damage.

Most residences in town have some type of home security system and the Highland Beach Police Department responds to all alarm calls. Regardless of the exact cause, there is no charge for response to a false alarm. It is important to know that your home alarm does not need to be registered with the Town. Home security systems monitored by an alarm company will notify the police department if an alarm is activated and the company cannot contact the homeowner or a valid passcode cannot be obtained. Your alarm company will notify the



Highland Beach Police Department's dispatch center at 561 243-7800 and an Officer will be dispatched to your residence. Here are some home alarm system tips:

- Make sure everyone in your home knows how to manually operate the alarm system and what to do if the alarm is accidentally set off.
- Before you turn on your alarm, make sure all doors and windows are closed and locked.
- Test your alarm system at least once a month to make sure it is working properly. Call your alarm company for immediate service if you think your system is not working properly.
- When testing your alarm, don't forget to notify the alarm monitoring company.
- Keep pets out of rooms with motion sensors. Also make sure these rooms are free of anything else that could activate the system.

Though we live in a safe community where home burglaries are rare, they can and do occur. A home security system is a good option that is a proven theft deterrent that will also provide peace of mind for the safety and security of your home and your family.

If you need any further information or we can be of any assistance with your home security system, please feel free to contact the Highland Beach Police Department.



#### Driver Safety

For several years, Highland Beach has had License Plate Reader Cameras (LPR Cameras) for the town. Recently, the cameras have been upgraded with new technology and we have expanded coverage to include the side streets in the town. The improved technology and the added coverage will provide law enforcement with another tool to keep one of the safest towns in Florida even safer.

While the Police Department uses LPR Cameras to help keep the roads safe, drivers can keep themselves safe by choosing to wear their seatbelt. A National Highway Traffic Safety Administration study found that an estimated 14,955 lives were saved by seatbelts in 2017 alone. Through June 4<sup>th</sup>, the Police Department will be featuring the Click It or Ticket campaign, which focuses on seatbelt safety and enforcement. Be a safe driver, wear a seatbelt!



# FIRE RESCUE DEPARTMENT

On March 30th, the District of Columbia Fire and Emergency Medical Services Department (DCFD) and UL's Fire Safety Research Institute (FSRI) co-hosted a symposium to discuss their findings and recommendations on lithium-ion battery fire safety. The symposium covered various topics, including the causes of lithium-ion battery fires, prevention measures, and extinguishing methods. Here are some key takeaways from the event that could help improve lithium-ion battery safety:



1. Proper use of lithium-ion batteries is generally safe, but they can fail energetically due to a range of factors, including mechanical abuse, temperature abuse, charge/discharge cycles in older chemistries, electrical abuse, manufacturing defects, or external damage. It's crucial to handle devices using lithium-ion batteries with care and follow the manufacturer's instructions.
2. Lithium-ion batteries that are fully charged between 75% and 100% are more likely to fail energetically than partially charged batteries. Avoid overcharging your devices and consider using chargers that have safety features to prevent overcharging.
3. UL's FSRI conducted an experiment in which an e-scooter was intentionally overcharged in a closed bedroom. The results were alarming, with the smoke detector activating in 13 seconds, low-speed explosions blowing out windows in 18 seconds, and flashover occurring in 25 seconds. To avoid similar incidents, it's best to charge your e-mobility devices or other lithium-ion-powered devices in well-ventilated areas away from combustible materials.
4. A failure of an e-mobility device containing a lithium-ion battery pack in a garage can lead to deflagration, a low-speed explosion that produces about three psi of pressure inside the garage. It's important to store lithium-ion batteries properly and dispose of them safely when they reach the end of their life cycle.
5. To prevent or extinguish lithium-ion fires, it's essential to follow the manufacturer's storage, charging, and discharging procedures. Water can be used to cool down the battery and dilute the electrolyte, while ABC extinguishers can be used to smother the flames. It's crucial to avoid using water on a battery that's still hot or on a battery that's been damaged.
6. The National Fire Sprinkler Association (NFSA) plays a significant role in controlling lithium-ion battery fires by providing education, advocacy, and research on fire sprinkler systems and their effectiveness in suppressing lithium-ion fires. Proper installation and maintenance of fire sprinkler systems can help minimize the damage caused by lithium-ion battery fires.

By following these safety measures and guidelines, we can minimize the risks associated with lithium-ion battery fires and ensure that these devices are used safely and responsibly.



## CODE TIP OF THE MONTH: WORK REQUIRING PERMITS

It is important to be aware of who you hire to perform this work as, unfortunately, South Florida is notorious for unlicensed “contractors” who take advantage of unwitting customers who are not familiar with the process required for permitting such work.

If you are having work performed on your property in the scope of anything more than painting, carpet, or other minor repairs, it is required that you and/or your contractor apply for and obtain the proper permits from the Town before the work begins. Permits protect you as a homeowner from illegal contractors and from sub-par workmanship. When permits are issued for electrical, plumbing, mechanical or structural projects, the homeowner can be assured that the work will be inspected and will not be approved until it meets all current quality standards.

Although it is typically the Contractor’s responsibility to file for the permit, the ultimate responsibility falls on the homeowner to verify that all permits are issued before work begins or fines can be levied against the property. Verify that the person you plan to hire is properly licensed and insured to perform work in the county and ask to see proof of permit before work begins.

If you have questions about the permitting process or would like to know what type of work requires or does not require a permit, please contact the Code Compliance Department at 561-278-4540.

# BUILDING DEPARTMENT

The Building Department would like to emphasize the importance of monthly testing of emergency lights in your condominium. Emergency lights are a critical safety feature crucial in guiding people to safety during power outages or emergencies.

Per building codes and regulations, emergency lights must be tested monthly to ensure they work correctly. During these tests, a designated person, such as a building maintenance staff, will check the emergency lights to ensure that they are fully charged, correctly installed and that the bulbs are functioning correctly.

Regular testing of emergency lights is not only a legal requirement but is also essential for the safety of all residents and visitors in the building. Without proper illumination, navigating stairwells and exit paths during an emergency can be challenging, potentially putting lives at risk.

The Building Department strongly urges all residents to cooperate in regularly testing emergency lights. It is also important to immediately report any issues or concerns to the building management or maintenance team.

In conclusion, monthly testing of emergency lights is a vital safety measure that should not be overlooked. We encourage all residents to cooperate and work with the building management and maintenance team to ensure the safety and well-being of all residents and visitors.



# LIBRARY

Parking may be a little tighter these days, but don't forget that the library is open until 8:00 PM Monday through Thursday and there is usually plenty of parking after 4:30 PM. If you can't find parking, we offer Curbside Concierge Service to deliver your reserved items right to your car!

## New at the Library:

Highland Beach resident Dr. Martin Shugar has graciously donated a collection of seashells that are on permanent display in the library. In just two years, he has collected approximately 200 different shell species, mostly along the beach from Toscana to Yamato Rock. Come see Dr. Shugar's shells, then check out one of our shelling books to get started finding your own treasures from the sea!

For our littlest residents and visitors, the Friends of the Library donated a new Early Literacy Station for our Children's Room. This computer provides fun, age-appropriate, and engaging content for children, ages 2-8, in reading, math, science, art & music, computer skills, and more. We also offer two weekly programs for kids:

- Small Fry Story Time plus Crafts on Wednesdays at 4:30 PM, ages 4 and up
- Toddler Time: Stories and Rhymes on Saturdays at 10:30 AM, ages 2 and 3

## Upcoming events:

- Now – July 14<sup>th</sup>: Adrienne Geffen Art Exhibit (glass, stone, shell, color pencil, metallic ink)
- June 1<sup>st</sup> at 5:30 PM: Neil Bacher Jazz Quartet
- Saturdays at 10:30 AM: Current Events Discussion Group

Get a full list of our activities on our website or call us at 561-278-5455.

## VACATION RENTAL CERTIFICATES

*In 2019, the Town adopted Ordinance No. 19-002, which established regulations for vacation rental units. The purpose of this ordinance is to protect the residential character and quality of life in the neighborhood where the vacation rental unit is located as well as to preserve and foster the public health, safety, aesthetics, general welfare, and quiet enjoyment of the residents of the town. Residential properties that meet the following parameters are required to complete and submit a vacation rental registration form to the Town's Building Department: Any unit, group of units, dwelling, building, or group of buildings within a single complex of buildings which is rented to guests more than three (3) times in a calendar year for periods of less than thirty (30) days or one calendar month, whichever is less, or which is advertised or held out to the public as a place regularly rented to guests.*

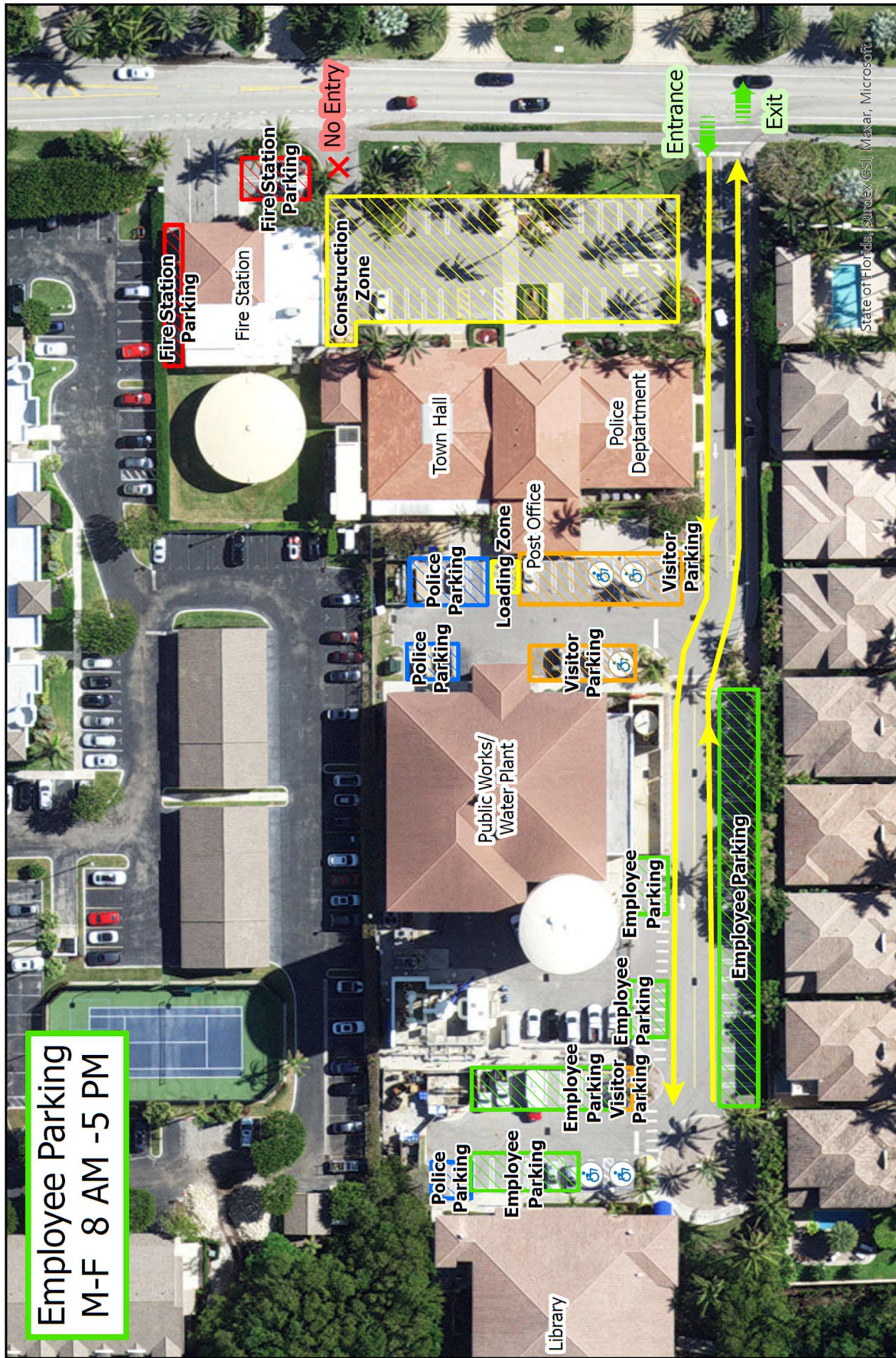
*For more information, contact Ingrid Allen, Town Planner, at 561-278-4540 (ext. 3).*

## *Library Hours:*

<i>Monday – Thursday</i>	<i>10:00 AM to 8:00 PM</i>
<i>Friday</i>	<i>10:00 AM - 4:30 PM</i>
<i>Saturday</i>	<i>9:00 AM - 1:00 PM</i>



Employee Parking  
M-F 8 AM -5 PM



# Highland Beach Parking Map

- Driving Direction
- Layer2
- Parking Designation
- Construction Zone
- Employee Parking
- Fire Station Parking

- Police Parking
- Visitor Parking
- Loading Zone
- Layer

- Handicap
- Entrance
- Exit



Print Date: 03/07/23



State of Florida, Surdex GSI, Maxar, Microsoft



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