



# Accomplishments Report

2024

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# Who we are

City of Isle of Palms, South Carolina



The Isle of Palms is a seven-mile-long barrier island located eight miles east of Charleston on the South Carolina coast. The island is bounded on the north by Hamlin Creek and the Intracoastal Waterway, on the east by Dewees Inlet and Dewees Island, on the south by the Atlantic Ocean, and on the west by Breach Inlet and Sullivan's Island.

Isle of Palms is primarily a residential community with resort amenities and a relatively large commercial base when compared to other barrier island communities in the area.

According to the US Census, the City has a population of 4,370 with a median age of 52. The City has a highly skilled and educated citizenry, with 72% of the City's population having a bachelor's degree or higher.

The median property value in Isle of Palms is \$1,065,500 which is double than the national average. The median household income is \$160,417, more than double the median household income in South Carolina.

Isle of Palms has a total of 4,627 housing units, 36% of which are occupied by year-round residents (Charleston County 2024 Property Tax Records).



Mayor Phillip Pounds



Councilmember Jan Anderson



Councilmember John Bogosian

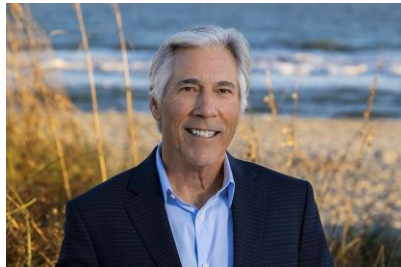


Councilmember Blair Hahn

# Isle of Palms City Council



Councilmember Katie Miars



Councilmember Scott Pierce



Councilmember Ashley Carroll



Councilmember Rusty Streetman



Councilmember Jimmy Ward

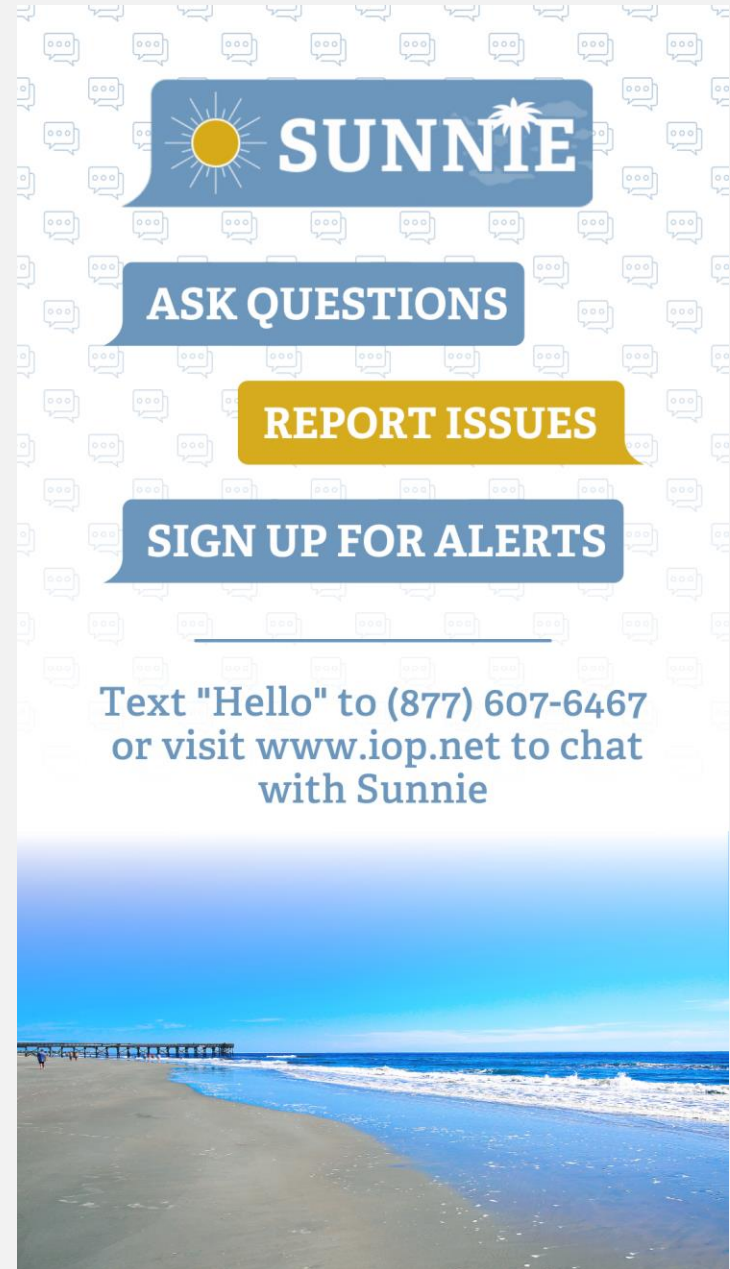
# Managing pressure from areas population growth

- Collaborated with the Berkeley-Charleston-Dorchester Council of Governments and the Town of Mount Pleasant to continue the seasonal operation of the CARTA beach shuttle, a free service to alleviate parking and traffic congestion on the island. In 2024, 703 riders used the service, a slight decrease from 2023.
- In 2023, the City, in collaboration with Explore Charleston, the College of Charleston, and The McNair Group, began the development of a community enrichment plan using residents' voices as the main driver of the process. A total of 735 stakeholders responded to the survey asking residents, visitors, business owners how the City can improve its balance of resident's quality of life and tourism. This year, thirteen volunteers have been meeting throughout the year to review public feedback, study the issues and develop recommendations for City Council. The final report is expected to be completed early 2025.



## Effective, consistent and timely communications

- Implemented Sunnie, an AI powered citizen engagement tool that allows residents and visitors get immediate answers to questions, make service requests, send personalized messages, and get real-time alerts anytime via text and website
  - 1,070 people have signed up to receive text alerts
  - 5,823 total users engaged with Sunnie, via text and IOP website and 11,806 total communications
- Launched a monthly e-newsletter
  - 1,576 people subscribed
  - 4,187 subscribed for weather email notices



# Financial sustainability



Ended Fiscal Year 2024 with \$44.6M in cash reserves, of which approximately \$20.7M are restricted funds



Maintained the highest credit rating possible and have a manageable debt load with rates ranging from 1.6% to 4.14% with a significant portion maturing in the next five (5) years

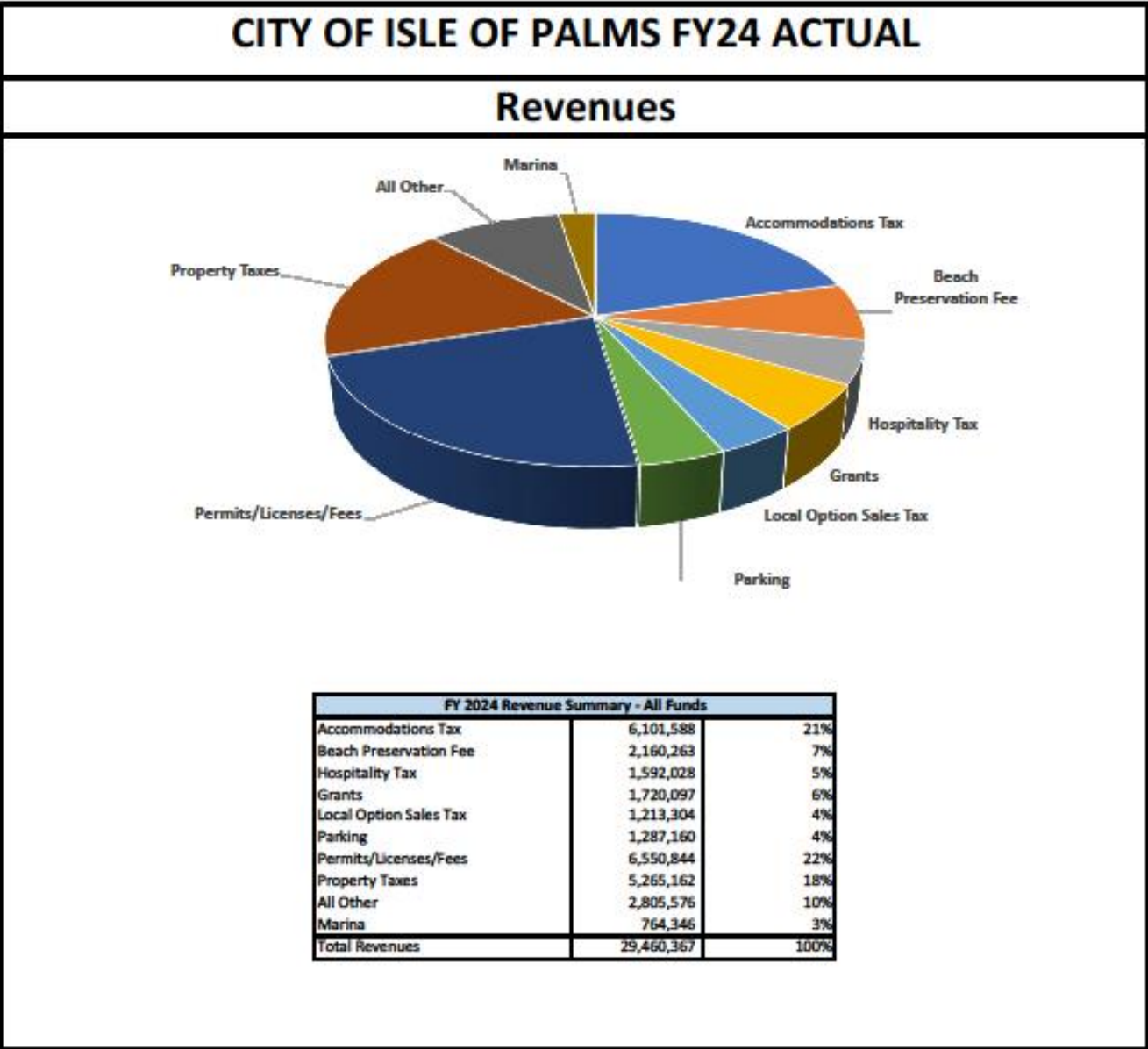


The City's assets surpassed its liabilities by \$60.6 million in net position, with \$52.9 million attributed to governmental activities and \$7.6 million to business-type activities (Marina)

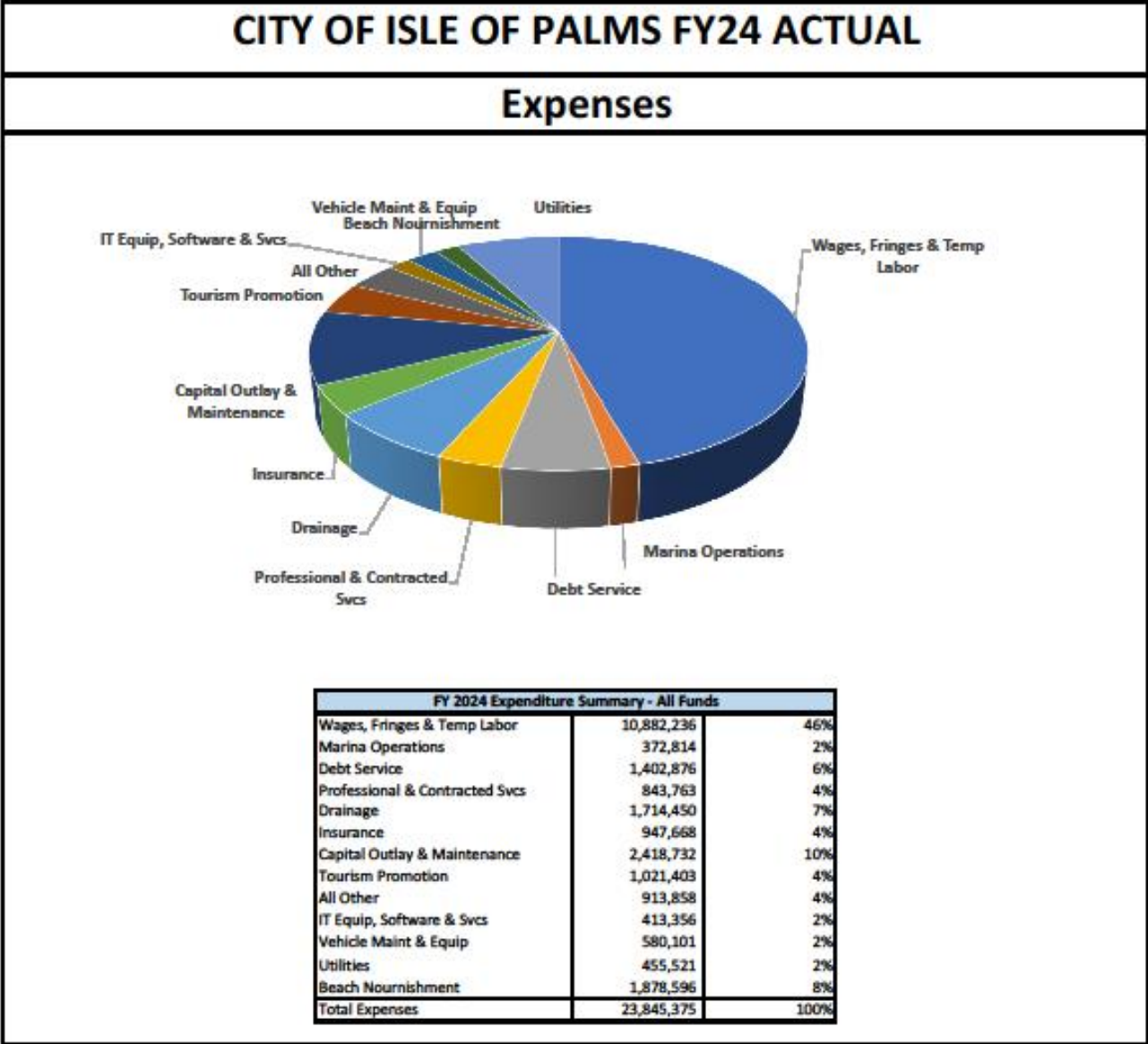


Received a clean opinion from the auditors for FY24

# Financial Sustainability



# Financial Sustainability





# Environmental protection efforts

- Continued a glass recycling and composting program in partnership with Harris Teeter and IOP Marina tenants - the IOP community diverted approximately 52 tons of glass and 9 tons of food waste from the landfill in 2024.
- Hosted a series of free lectures by Sharleen Johnson on gardening with native plants at the IOP Recreation Center during the winter.
- Prepared the plot for the Isle of Palms Native Plant demonstration garden located on the Water Commission's property at Palm and 7th Ave and planted 100 plants of 28 species in March.
- Obtained approval and implemented a water quality testing initiative through GEL and Trident to sample and analyze chemicals in runoff at 9 drainage outfalls following a rain event.
- Awarded grant to install solar panels on the Public Works building; installation scheduled for 2025.



# Employee retention and succession planning

- Held the annual Employee Appreciation Event where employees were recognized for their longevity and service to the island.
- The City awarded the Employee of the Year award to Nate Ellis from the Public Works Department.
- Held a Holiday party for all city employees, Councilmembers and volunteers who serve on Boards and Commissions.
- Police Department held an Annual Awards ceremony where several awards were presented to members of the police department in recognition of their service.
- Continued the Incentifit program to improve employee engagement and encourage healthy lifestyles – 35 employees actively participated in several programs throughout the year.



# Community Enhancements- Drainage

- Completed the Phase 3 Drainage Project at the 30<sup>th</sup>, 36<sup>th</sup> and 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue outfalls. This project was partially funded by a \$2.7M grant from the SC Office of Resilience.
- Continued enhancing the city's in-house capabilities to improve proactive maintenance of city's drainage systems. In 2024, approximately 32,000 linear feet of drainage systems were cleaned and restructured by the Public Works stormwater management team.



# Beach Preservation Efforts

- Coordinated and implemented emergency protective measures to areas of the beach in emergency conditions due to erosion, including the area along Breach Inlet and the north end of the island, along Beachwood East.
- Submitted permit applications for the next shoal management project on the north end of the island and a supplemental project at Breach Inlet in coordination with the USACE beneficial use project to address chronic erosion hotspots along both areas of the beach. Both projects are expected to start construction prior in the first quarter of 2025.
- Accelerated permitting process for the next large scale dredging nourishment projects with the goal of having permits on hand by the end of 2025
- Created the Beach Preservation Ad Hoc Committee, composed of 4 residents and 3 council members, with the goal of reviewing the city's beach restoration policies and develop recommendations for a more proactive response to beach erosion and for the development of new funding mechanisms for future needs and projects. The group met approximately 25 times engaging with multiple stakeholders and developed a report of 21 recommendations aimed at meeting their goals. The ad hoc committee will present their findings and recommendations to Council in January 2025.
- Increased the frequency of the monitoring and surveying of the beach and inshore zone from annual to semiannual. By increasing the monitoring and surveying frequency to twice per year, the city hopes to identify potential issues quicker and be more proactive in addressing them.

# Community Enhancements

- Completed improvements to the Dog Park at 29<sup>th</sup> Avenue, including new hardscape area, fencing, seating, dog toy accessories and automatic water fountain.
- Added the following new adult programs: Speaker Series, Ballet & Dance, Tech at the Rec, Watercolors, Drawing and Acrylic Art classes, and Pottery.
- Added the following new youth classes: Irish Dancing, Pottery, Sports Training, Lacrosse Clinic, Run Club, Toddler Music and a variety of Manners and Etiquette classes.
- Held an art competition to select new official design for the free T-Shirt program.
- Implemented the Holiday Door Decorating Contest.
- Partnered with Municipal PCI to manage the city's parking plan, allowing police officers to focus their attention on calls for service, and have higher visibility on the beach and reduce response time for calls.



# Community Enhancements:



- Began the construction of two new ADA compliant beach access paths and handicap parking spaces at 46<sup>th</sup> and 52<sup>nd</sup> Avenue beach access path. Project will be completed by the end of 2024.
- Began construction of two boardwalks at 26A and 36A to improve public beach access along paths that hold water after a rain event. Project anticipated to be completed prior to Spring 2025.
- In partnership with Dominion Energy, began construction of the overhead to underground power line conversion at 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

# Public Safety – IOP Police Department

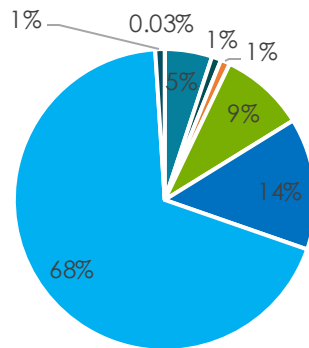
- The police department made it a goal to focus on traffic safety by focusing on objectives to reduce the number of vehicle collisions by 5% when compared to the previous year. The department was able to reduce the number of vehicle collisions this year by 27% when compared to 2023. This data was gathered from Jan. 1<sup>st</sup> to Nov. 30<sup>th</sup> each year.
- The police department conducted multiple traffic operations to address traffic violations on the Isle of Palms and has made almost 100 DUI charges during 2024.
- Sergeant King attended and graduated from the FBI Carolina Command College in March of 2024.
- Chief Cornett attended and graduated from the 2023-2024 Local Government Leadership Institute.
- The police department received a Law Enforcement Mental Health and Wellness Act grant in the amount of \$90,036 to implement a wellness app, certify the agency as the first trauma informed agency in SC through Columbia College and to host a law enforcement wellness seminar for law enforcement from around the state.
- The Isle of Palms Police Department held several community meetings to share police department statistics, hear from residents and to build partnerships with the residents of Isle of Palms.
- The Police Department was honored with a National Award for the 2024 National Night Out that was hosted in October at the Isle of Palms Recreation Center. This is the third year in a row that the department has received this recognition



# Protecting our City – IOPPD Stats

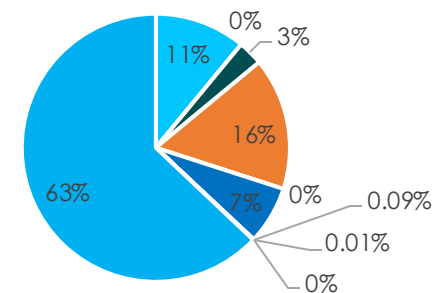
- The Police Department responded to 12,169 calls for service between January 1, 2023, and November 30, 2023, compared to 10,339 calls during the same period in 2022.
- Between January 1, 2023, and November 30, 2023, the Police Department conducted 4,796 traffic stops, issued 4,743 parking citations, served 97 warrants and made 591 arrests.

Select 2023 Charges Made Through 12/14



- Attempted Murder
- Disorderly Conduct
- Drug Violations
- Other Traffic
- DUI
- Weapon Law Violation
- Speeding
- Resisting/Hindering/Evading

2023 Offense Report Type through 12/14



- Alcohol Crimes
- Assaults
- Homicide Crimes
- Vandalism/Damage
- Other Money Crimes
- Arson/Suspicious Fire
- Drug Crimes
- Larceny Crimes
- Prostitution
- Other Crimes



# Public Safety – IOP Fire Department

- The fire department was awarded the Fire Safe South Carolina Community Designation for 2023.
- Implemented a Paramedic Program to improve medical response and provide advanced life support to the community.
- Created a SC State certified monthly Medical In-service Training program at the Advanced Life Support level.
- Re-structured the command staff with two Deputies and Fire Marshall promotions.
- Purchased new firefighter fitness and agility equipment.
- Implemented a comprehensive training schedule meeting National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), Insurance Services Office (ISO), Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), National Registry of Emergency Medical Technicians (NREMT) as well as various South Carolina State, and local standards.

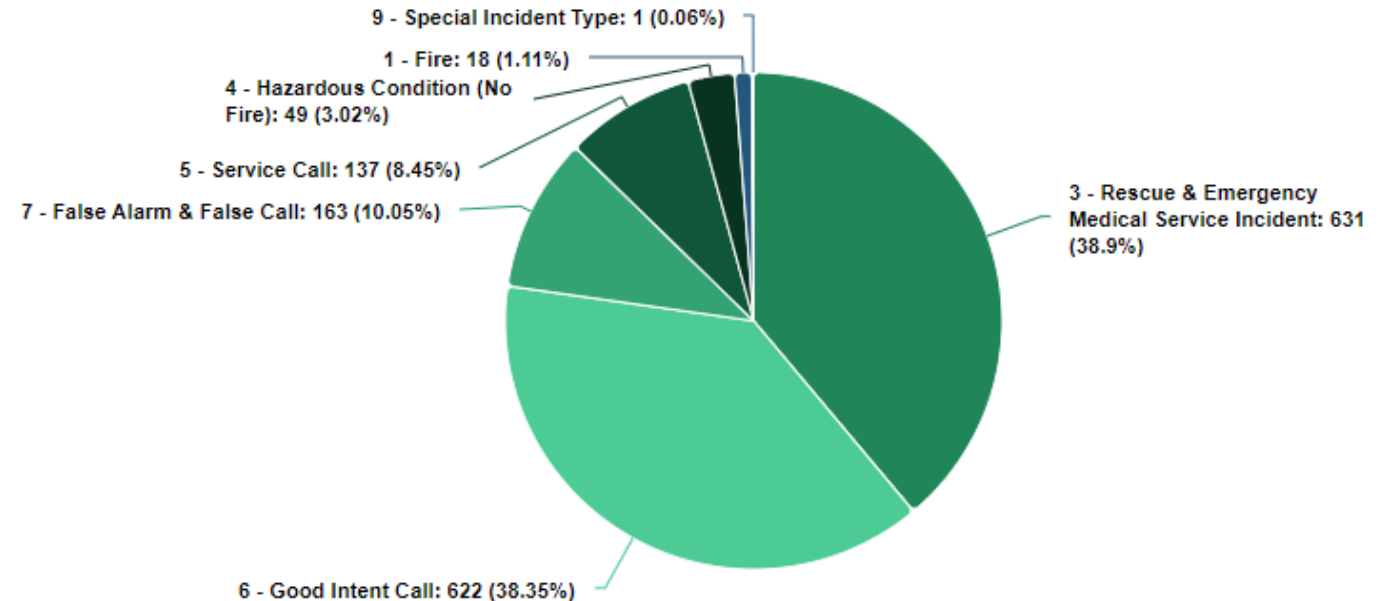


# Protecting our City – IOPFD Stats

- The fire department responded to 1,622 calls for service through December 2024.
- In 2024, the fire department responded to 631 rescue and emergency medical calls, 18 fires and 137 service calls.
- The fire department personnel completed more than 11,000 fire training hours and 1,600 medical training hours.

## Incident Type Categories

Jan 01, 2024 to Dec 31, 2024



# Special Community Events

The Recreation Department successfully planned and executed the following programs, events and activities:

- Camp Summershine & Wee Camp
- Youth Basketball, Soccer, Volleyball and tennis summer camps
- Youth Gymnastics and Cheer summer camps
- Youth Spring Break Soccer Camp
- Youth Basketball, Baseball and Soccer leagues
- Adult 3 on 3 Basketball, Table Tennis and 6 vs 6 soccer Leagues
- Fitness Classes: variety of classes offered to the community.
- Free Beach Yoga: May – October
- Free Beach Stroll & Learn: May – November
- Isle of Paws Music Festival
- Easter Egg Hunt & Festival
- Annual Yard Sale
- Front Beach Fest
- Sand Sculpting Competition
- IOP Beach Run
- IOP Farmer’s Market: June – October with more vendors and family activities.
- Food Truck Jam: June – October added more food vendors to the market
- Art at the Rec – Local Art show
- Outdoor Movie
- Annual Half Rubber Tournament
- IOP Connector Run & Walk
- Ghostly Tide Tales
- Halloween Golf Cart Parade & Drive through Haunted House & Carnival
- Holiday Cookie Workshop – Free Cookie Decorating
- Holiday Street Festival

