



This year, 2024, TEAM Punta Gorda turns 20! We look forward to exciting times ahead as we work together to make the greater Punta Gorda community an even better place to live, work and play. Anniversaries like this are a good time to examine our roots. Where did TEAM come from?

August 13, 2004. The most destructive hurricane in recent memory literally flattened Punta Gorda. The city's attention was focused on public safety, but in the wake of that storm, a determined group of citizens asked the question, what's next? As we rebuild, how do we make our community a better place?

This group, which became TEAM Punta Gorda, raised funds quickly to help the city develop the 2005 Citizens Master plan. Funded by TEAM Punta Gorda, the plan was accepted by the Punta Gorda City Council as a guiding document. Many of the features in this town that we know and love today, features like the Harborwalk, are directly derived from the 2005 Citizens Master plan.



Twenty years later, we are still here, celebrating the volunteers who continue to make this work possible. As we approach our 20th anniversary, I can't help but reflect on all that we've done in our community since its inception. What has been the Impact of 20 years of TEAM volunteering? What difference DO we make?

Since then, we have developed great partnerships with our local government, and with the other community organizations that make this town great. It's this spirit of collaboration that continues to sustain us these many years later. TEAM continues to provide a leadership platform for diverse community initiatives. We simply "get things done."

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION:

Participation is one of the foundational principles that has contributed to our success. We provide year-round opportunities for citizens to participate in improving our community. Some volunteer for one day or sign up for a longer project. Volunteers are the engines that make TEAM go. In 2023, 661 volunteers lent a hand on over 20 committees and special projects. Examples of a few: Community Garden, Paint your Heart Out, Free Bicycle Loaner Program.

COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT:

One area of effort for TEAM is community improvement. We like to make things better. Citizens often bring project ideas and resources to us, and we facilitate their implementation. Example: Downtown Landscaping

CONVENER

Another role we often play is that of convener. We help identify community problems and work with others to identify and mobilize solutions. We have become a force for growth and development, and a vehicle for community engagement. When the city wanted to develop a new Citywide Master plan, TEAM kicked off the process with "*Journey to the Future*", a conference designed to stimulate thinking and look at solutions tried in other communities.

PLANNING

Organizations and the government continue to bring new projects to TEAM because they know we are good partners and can move initiatives forward into the future. We call it facilitative leadership. We like to help others get things done. What has evolved from all of this is a true partnership, between a citizen-founded organization and local government. We've developed the most important element... trust. Example: Water Quality project.

PROJECT MANAGEMENT

We often provide support and project management for other organization's projects. When nonprofits and community groups come to TEAM for help, we extend a hand and figure out how to get it done. Example: Gilchrist Park Playground, Veterans Fountain.

COMMUNITY EVENTS

Special events like Pedal & Play in Paradise, the area's premier bicycling event, build community spirit and bring people together. This event is just plain fun. Not to be missed is our annual golf scramble. Paddle Punta Gorda provides both public education, and fun.

All of this is done without spending taxpayer dollars. TEAM operates with privately raised funds. There are three currencies that TEAM needs to sustain us: volunteers, community support and, of course, money. You can donate to TEAM at any time, but your dollars will be matched if you donate online during the biennial Sarasota Community Foundation Giving Challenge scheduled for April 9-10, 2024.

TEAM WELCOMES YOUR PARTICIPATION.

How can you participate? TEAM welcomes your participation in any capacity. Volunteer, become a sponsor, sponsor a yellow bike, and join the fun at any of our coming events. Reach out to our office by phone or email team@teampuntagorda.org to get involved.

How do you find out about our accomplishments and current plans? Read all about it...get on the TEAM Talk subscription list, our e-newsletter...or go to www.teampuntagorda.org to sign up. It's a great source of community news. TEAM

needs your involvement in whatever role you would like to play, for whatever time you can provide. Take a closer look at TEAM. Browse our website. I think you will agree that TEAM has made a huge difference in our quality of life.

We invite you to help us fulfill our mission of making the greater Punta Gorda area a great place to live, work and play. It has been a privilege to serve, and to be a part of the creative efforts that we nurture. We look forward to exciting times ahead as TEAM turns 20. We can do it together.

*Nancy Johnson, CEO
January 24, 2024*

