

# 2024 STATE LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM

**FLAGLER COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**





# Putting Flagler F.I.R.S.T...Making a Difference

This document represents Flagler County's legislative program for the 2024 Session. While these priorities are intended to guide the County's advocacy efforts in Tallahassee, the list is not exhaustive, and issues may arise or evolve that will require Board attention.

Flagler County is truly appreciative of the great working relationship we enjoy with our state legislative delegation and are thankful for their continued attention to the needs and interests of our residents and businesses. This year, Flagler County will continue intentionally improving our public health and safety, behavioral health, infrastructure, and community resiliency. We have collaborated with our municipal partners to provide a unified agenda to represent the needs of all Flagler County citizens and we welcome your partnership in our vision for 2024.

As such, we offer this legislative agenda for your consideration, with the full knowledge that the 2024 session will have many fiscal challenges in setting priorities while fulfilling State obligations.

*Flagler County Board of County Commissioners*



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# Flagler County Board of County Commissioners



Left to right: Commissioner **Andy Dance**, District 1; Commissioner **Gregory Hansen**, District 2; Commissioner **David Sullivan**, District 3; Commissioner **Leann Pennington**, District 4; and Commissioner **Donald O'Brien Jr.**, District 5

## VISION

To make Flagler County a vibrant and prosperous community with a focus on exceptional quality of life.

## MISSION

The mission of Flagler County is to provide high-quality services through a responsive workforce committed to excellence, integrity, in collaboration with the cities and to act as a fiscally responsible steward.

## County Administration

Heidi Petito, County Administrator  
Jorge Salinas, Deputy County Administrator  
Holly Albanese, Chief of Special Projects/ Library Director

## Memberships in Legislative Alliances





# Flagler County's Guiding Principles

## PRIORITIES

**SUPPORT** funding requests for critical recovery actions as a result of Hurricane Ian and Hurricane Nicole impacts.

**SUPPORT** funding in areas of high priority to include Effective Government, Economic Vitality, Growth and Infrastructure and Public Health & Safety.

**FOSTER AND SUPPORT** those elements of the community that contribute to an enhanced "Way of Life" that is unique to Flagler County. This includes outdoor recreation and other leisure activities, educational attainment, land, water and wildlife conservation, beach renourishment, and protection of the coastal wetlands and our farming industry.

**SUPPORT** economic vitality including the use of creative policies and marketing efforts to ensure Flagler County remains a world-class community for residents, visitors and businesses. These approaches will maintain the viability of employment corridors, encourage smart growth and diversify the tax base.

**OPPOSE** unexpected financial directives issued by legislators that can have a negative impact on local governments. Unfunded mandates often take money away from programs intended to support or improve the quality of life of our citizens.

**SUPPORT** effective government through transparency and collaboration. Good governance requires that decisions are made and implemented using legitimate (legal), transparent, participatory, responsive and equitable processes to achieve effective policies that will protect Flagler County.

## OBJECTIVES

Focus on issues that will have the highest impact and foster collaborative relationships with local municipalities and private partners in promoting legislative support.

Work in collaboration with Florida Association of Counties (FAC), Florida City and County Management Association (FCMMA), Northeast Florida Regional Council (NEFRC), Small County Coalition (SCC) and the Florida Shore and Beach Preservation Association (FSBPA).

## Flagler County's State Delegation

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Senator  
Travis Hutson  
*District 7*



Speaker  
Paul Renner  
*District 19*

# Flagler County's Guiding Principles

The ability to maintain home rule and to avoid unfunded mandates are central to Flagler County's federal and state legislative priorities and advocacy needs, as outlined below. These ideals are championed by Flagler County, its municipalities, the Florida Association of Counties (FAC) and the Florida City and County Management Association (FCCMA). Each year Flagler County works alongside FAC and the FCCMA during the State Legislative Session to help support all legislative policy statements.

## HOME RULE

Home rule power is conferred to Florida counties and cities by Article VIII, Section 1(f) and 1(g) of the Florida Constitution (1968), and by section 125.01, Florida Statutes. The Flagler County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) and its municipalities are dedicated to the preservation of this Florida constitutional principle whereby a local government can exercise powers to protect the health, safety and welfare of its citizens. Flagler County and our municipalities **SUPPORT** maintaining the integrity of home rule power, both administrative and fiscal, which allows counties/cities to develop and implement community-based solutions to local problems and **OPPOSE** any effort to preempt locally elected officials from making fiscal and public policy decisions on behalf of the citizens they represent. Basically, home rule means let the people closest to the issues decide the best solutions.



## UNFUNDED MANDATES

While some mandates are justified because they achieve agreed upon policy goals, many are imposed without the consensus of local governments or without providing the resources needed for implementation. Mandates drain the financial lifeblood from local governments and impede their ability to adequately deliver fundamental services required by law.

The County and our municipalities **SUPPORT** the establishment of a deliberative process whereby elected officials evaluate the appropriate funding and the best options for the delivery of services by local, state or the federal government.



# Flagler County Municipal Partners



## **CITY OF PALM COAST**

Mayor David Alfin  
Denise Bevan, City Manager



## **CITY OF FLAGLER BEACH**

Mayor Suzie Johnston  
Dale Martin, City Manager



## **CITY OF BUNNELL**

Mayor Catherine Robinson  
Dr. Alvin B. Jackson, Jr., City Manager



## **TOWN OF BEVERLY BEACH**

Mayor Stephen Emmett  
Jim Ardell, Town Clerk



## **TOWN OF MARINELAND**

Mayor Angela TenBroeck  
Suzanne Dixon, Town Manager



# Report and Discussion

## LEGISLATIVE AGENDA DEVELOPMENT

Each year, the BOCC and staff evaluate the trends and issues affecting all County programs and services to identify potential policy or substantive legislative issues. This year we have collaborated with our local municipalities to ensure we provide a unified agenda that will support all residents and transcend all boundaries. Included herein are the substantive priorities and general issues to be pursued and supported during the 2024 State Legislative session.

## LOBBYING CONTRACTS

All local governments utilize contract lobbying services at the State level to further our unified legislative goals and to secure vital appropriations. Flagler County currently contracts with *The Fiorentino Group*. The City of Palm Coast has a contract with *The Southern Group* and the City of Flagler Beach has a contract with *Anfield Consulting Group*. These firms provide a daily presence in Tallahassee and advocate for county and city legislative priorities. County and City staff coordinates regularly with the State lobbying team by phone and e-mail to strategize on key State policy, regulatory, and budget issues. In addition to calls during session, and issue tracking, lobbyists also submit monthly reports.

### THE SOUTHERN GROUP

123 S Adams St.  
Tallahassee, FL 32301  
(850) 671-4401

### THE FIORENTINO GROUP

1301 Riverplace Blvd.  
Suite 1300  
Jacksonville, FL 32207  
(904) 358-2757

### ANFIELD CONSULTING GROUP

201 W Park Ave.  
Suite 100  
Tallahassee, FL 32301  
(866) 960-5939

## KEY SESSION DATES

<b>AUGUST 4, 2023:</b>	Deadline for filing claim bills
<b>JANUARY 9, 2024:</b>	Regular Session convenes
<b>FEBRUARY 24, 2024:</b>	Motion to reconsider made and considered the same day. All bills are immediately certified.
<b>FEBRUARY 27, 2024:</b>	50th day – last day for regularly scheduled committee meetings
<b>MARCH 8, 2024:</b>	60th day – last day of Regular Session



# Appropriations and Funding Requests





# Appropriations and Funding Requests



## PUBLIC HEALTH & SAFETY



### Public Health and Social Service Project

**Background:** The Department of Health-Flagler has outgrown its space. This has become evident over the last 10 years as new services have been initiated and existing services have expanded. New programs include comprehensive services for HIV patients, a Diabetes education and prevention program and expansion of Sexually Transmitted Disease services, WIC (Woman's, Infant and Children) program, School Health and Pediatric Dental services, including a dental sealant program within the school district. As a result, we now have become space constrained with some programs and Health Department functions to relocate down the street to offices owned by the County and other space was leased at the County Airport to accommodate School Health, Disease Investigation and the Diabetes program. At our primary location, no spaces exist for a conference room, or storage of supplies. Office space and parking is lacking. Flagler is operating with the lowest square feet of space per employee at 244 as compared to an average of 469 square feet per Full Time Equivalent (FTE) over the past few years we have had to install several storage units along the exterior perimeter of the facility to accommodate needed additional storage needs. Additionally, we purchased three condo units to house Environmental Health and Vital Statistics.

We now have an opportunity to co-locate and create a public-private partnership with Flagler Cares and the Flagler County Village to promote the 'No-Wrong Door' approach to care. We embrace the advantage of being in the same building as Flagler Cares and several health and social service agencies and non-profits. Currently, organizations that comprise the Flagler County Village include Easter seals of Northeast Central Florida, Early Learning Coalition, Healthy Start, The House Next Door, Epic Behavioral Health Care, Outreach Community Care Network, Flagler Open Arms Recovery Services and more. The Health Department is closely aligned with Flagler Cares and each of the entities identified above. We refer patients to each other on a continual basis. The reality of a Flagler County Social Services building, centrally located in Palm Coast would serve as a hub for organizations with a shared commitment to creating access for vulnerable residents can co-exist for ease of referrals and accessing health, social care, behavioral health, financial and housing supports. In essence, a one stop shop solution to available care.

**Requested Action:** Provide funding assistance to construct a true "one-stop shop" solution for health and social service care in Flagler County.

**Effect:** The ability to provide wrap around and expanded services for the residents of Flagler County with a public private partnership approach.



# Appropriations and Funding Requests

## PUBLIC HEALTH & SAFETY

### Multipurpose Emergency Preparedness Project

**Background:** Currently Flagler County has a deficit of special needs shelter spaces, as determined by the most recent Florida Statewide Emergency Shelter Plan. This deficit is determined by the number of approved and usable special needs shelter spaces compared to the expected demand for space.



Flagler County continues to grow, with a significant portion of that growth coming from senior citizens, as it has been for decades. Flagler County's senior citizen centric growth creates a unique hurricane evacuation issue for us, as senior citizen households are more likely to need special medical needs sheltering than other segments of the population.

Coupled with our Special Medical Needs Shelter deficit, Flagler County also has a significant lack of non-school facilities that can serve as shelters for any type of emergency or disaster. Currently the only non-school shelter facilities are community centers, which are generally very small. They have limited capabilities and due to age are not built to today's building codes.

The Flagler County Fairgrounds Property, which is State owned, is a prime location with the potential to serve as a countywide disaster resources site. This location would not only benefit our entire county, but it could also support of our neighboring counties. However, for this potential to materialize, ground and facility improvements will be necessary. The site offers the perfect opportunity to:

- 1) Construct a multi-purpose facility that can serve as our primary special medical needs shelter for hurricanes, and a consolidated shelter for both post-hurricane and non-hurricane evacuations.
- 2) Improve onsite drainage and provide a hardened/elevated (flood resistant) parking surface and ingress/ egress route to/from the entrance roadway.
- 3) The roadway and parking lot should also be designed in a manner that would allow the site to appropriately handle traffic flow as a disaster point of distribution (vaccines, food, water, tarps, etc.)

When not in use as a shelter this facility would be a great replacement for Cattleman's Hall, which is a rustic metal building that lacks insulation, drywall, drop ceilings and restrooms, and its adjacent structures, would allow for year-round events that would be both culturally and economically beneficial to our community.

**Requested Action:** Provide funding to improve the fields and create a special needs shelter for future emergency preparedness needs.



**Effect:** This project will create a dedicated special needs shelter and allow us to reduce that deficit as defined by the State. This site will also act as a disaster resources site for the county and can be used to support our neighboring counties as well.

# Appropriations and Funding Requests

## HISTORIC PRESERVATION, CULTURE & RECREATION



### Preserve Historic Fire Station 22



**Background:** Preserving Historic Fire Station 22 in Palm Coast is essential to maintaining the city's unique identity and honoring its rich history. This historic landmark serves as a tangible link to the past, offering residents and visitors a glimpse into the early days of the community's development. By preserving this iconic structure, Palm Coast can ensure that future generations continue to appreciate the historical context and evolution of firefighting services, fostering a sense of pride and connection to the local heritage. Moreover, repurposing the building for community use, such as a museum or cultural center, would provide a valuable space for educational programs and events, promoting a deeper understanding of the area's history. In embracing its past, Palm Coast can create a legacy that enhances both its sense of place and its sense of community. This request is for state funding to accomplish required building code updates to repurpose the building for an assembly use.

**Requested Action:** Support funding to preserve historic Station 22 for future generations to enjoy as a cultural center.

**Effect:** This funding will ensure future generations continue to appreciate the historical context and evolution of firefighting services.



# Appropriations and Funding Requests

## HISTORIC PRESERVATION, CULTURE & RECREATION



### Construction of a YMCA

**Background:** The establishment of a YMCA in Palm Coast would usher in a plethora of advantages for the community. Firstly, a YMCA serves as a central hub for health and wellness activities, offering a diverse array of fitness programs, sports facilities, and recreational opportunities catering to individuals of all age groups. This not only promotes mental and physical well-being but also nurtures a sense of community involvement and social interaction.

Furthermore, YMCA facilities often serve as venues for educational programs, workshops, and classes, contributing significantly to personal development and lifelong learning opportunities for residents. Additionally, a YMCA can effectively address the community's need for secure and supervised after-school programs, providing children with a productive and enriching environment while their parents are at work.

Moreover, the YMCA's strong emphasis on inclusivity ensures that individuals from all backgrounds and socioeconomic statuses can readily access its services, thus promoting social cohesion and fostering equality within the community. Ultimately, the presence of a YMCA in Palm Coast would serve as an asset, enhancing the overall quality of life and contributing to the city's vibrant and health-conscious cultural landscape.

In FY23, the Volusia Flagler YMCA secured \$1,000,000 for the design of a new facility in Palm Coast, with the city having identified available public lands for the project.

**Requested Action:** Support funding for construction of a YMCA providing health and wellness opportunities to seniors and families.

**Effect:** This funding will enhance the overall quality of life by contributing to the health and wellness of our residents.



# Appropriations and Funding Requests

## HISTORIC PRESERVATION, CULTURE & RECREATION



### Restoration of the Historic Bunnell City Hall also known as the Bunnell Coquina City Hall



**Background:** Bunnell City Hall is in the heart of the oldest city in Flagler County. The Bunnell City Hall is a unique one-story public building constructed of locally quarried coquina stone. The building was constructed during the Depression Era of the 1930's under the auspices of the Works Progress Administration (WPA), a New Deal agency organized to alleviate unemployment. The building was placed on the National Registry of Historic Places in 2019. Some of the uses of this site are elections, board and other organizational meetings, cultural events, community outreach, summer programs for children and a place for private family events. In 2021, the City had to close the building for use due to deteriorating conditions of the building and safety concerns for occupants as validated by a building inspector. In 2022, remediation of the building was completed at costs exceeding \$100,000.00.

The City has received two awards to assist with the restoration of the facility; however, current construction costs have limited the impact of the awards and the issues that could be addressed using the funding provided. The amount of structural needs in the building and other aspects of the building requiring work plus the requirements of historical preservation, require additional funding to restore the facility to a safe and full use.

**Requested Action:** Provide local levels of funding in the amount of \$1,000,000.00 to reconstruct the National Registered Historic Bunnell City Hall also known as the Bunnell Coquina City Hall.

**Effect:** This funding will assist the City offset a large capital outlay so that a facility vital to the community for its central location and ease of access for citizens can safely be reopened to allow for the cultural, educational and enrichment of the citizens of Flagler County and adjacent counties as well.



# Appropriations and Funding Requests

## INFRASTRUCTURE



### CR 304 Resurfacing and Multiple Bridge Replacement Project

**Background:** County Road (CR) 304 is an asphalt-paved roadway, located in Flagler County, Florida, and is owned and maintained by Flagler County. Resurfacing of CR 304 from US-1 to SR 11 is an approximately 7.75-mile-long project consisting of paving, signing & pavement markings, stabilized shoulders, and minor stormwater management system improvements. CR 304 connects US-1 to SR 11 and then connects US-1 to SR 100 and US-17 through CR 305. As such CR 304 is a major connector to many evacuation routes and will see increased traffic with projected population growth in the future. CR 304 includes four bridge crossings spanning active waterways, each of which lies within regulated flood plains. The four bridges serving the roadway are situated at various locations along CR 304:

- **Bridge 734010** - three-barrel 12-foot by 8-foot (span by rise) bridge culvert located 8 miles south of Bunnell, FL. The crossing is 0.5 miles west of the intersection of CR 304 and SR 11.
- **Bridge 734011** - 270-foot-long bridge consisting of nine 30-foot spans located 8 miles south of Bunnell, FL. The crossing is 0.8 miles northeast of the intersection of CR 304 and SR 11.
- **Bridge 734012** - 160-ft long bridge consisting of four 40-ft spans located 8 miles south of Bunnell, FL. The crossing is 1.0 miles west of the intersection of CR 304 and SR 11.
- **Bridge 734013** - 120-ft long bridge consisting of three 40-ft spans located 8 miles south of Bunnell, FL. The crossing is 1.5 miles west of the intersection of CR 304 and SR 11.

Over time, each of these bridges has become inadequate to pass flood volumes generated by severe storm events without overtopping. When this occurs, the associated roadway becomes impassable, severely hampering regular traffic and critical evacuation and emergency service operations. In addition, continued deck exposure to the forces of storm surge reduces their useful life expectancies and drives up annual bridge and road maintenance costs. Replacing these obsolete bridges and resurfacing CR 304 remedies these circumstances and will result in a reliable roadway system for this area of the county.

**Request Action:** Provide funding to resurface CR 304 and replace the four bridges located on this public right-of-way.

**Effect:** Replacing the outdated bridges and resurfacing CR 304 promotes and facilitates a structured approach to resilience planning by strengthening existing arterial roadway networks for residents and allows businesses to operate with fewer interruptions and increased reliability. The new bridges will augment network redundancy and further enhance emergency response and recovery efforts. In addition to resiliency and emergency response this project will increase safety, mobility, economic competitiveness and improve quality of life.



# Appropriations and Funding Requests



## INFRASTRUCTURE



### General Aviation Terminal Project

**Background:** The Flagler Executive Airport (FIN) is one of the busiest General Aviation (GA) airports in the State of Florida and continues to experience a significant increase in the number, size, and type of aircraft operations. Daily activity on the airport's two paved runways range from the smaller single-engine training aircraft utilized by area flight schools to the largest business jet aircraft flying today. This growth has led to the need for a new General Aviation (GA) Terminal to replace the existing 3,240 sq. ft. 30-year-old structure built as a lean-to, to an existing hangar building. The new 15,529 SF GA Terminal Building will accommodate airport administrative offices, an airport operated FBO, its appurtenant facilities, public space, meeting space, and room for additional small tenants.

As a result, the project will allow the Flagler Executive Airport (FIN) to improve customer service, provide better public access and an overall safer operating environment for the public, and support local businesses. This project will provide access to improved terminal facilities for a disadvantaged population area in this economically distressed rural part of Florida. As a REDI County (Rural Economic Development Initiative, the new terminal building will increase development at the airport, which will lead to business opportunities and job creation.

Overall, expansion to the terminal is expected to improve efficiency, meet ADA requirements and provide users with more amenities and options. It will provide new offices, administration space, pilot lounge and flight planning. The building will serve the Airport Administration and the airport operated (Fixed-Based Operator) FBO. This project will enhance safety with more centralized control between the landside and airside areas and increase capacity to support aeronautical demands now and into the future.

**Requested Action:** Provide funding assistance to help construct a new general aviation terminal.

**Effect:** The funding will increase capacity, replace the aging infrastructure, achieve compliance with ADA, improve access for the historically disadvantaged populations, improve airport safety and energy efficiency and create high-value, high wage jobs.



# Appropriations and Funding Requests

## INFRASTRUCTURE

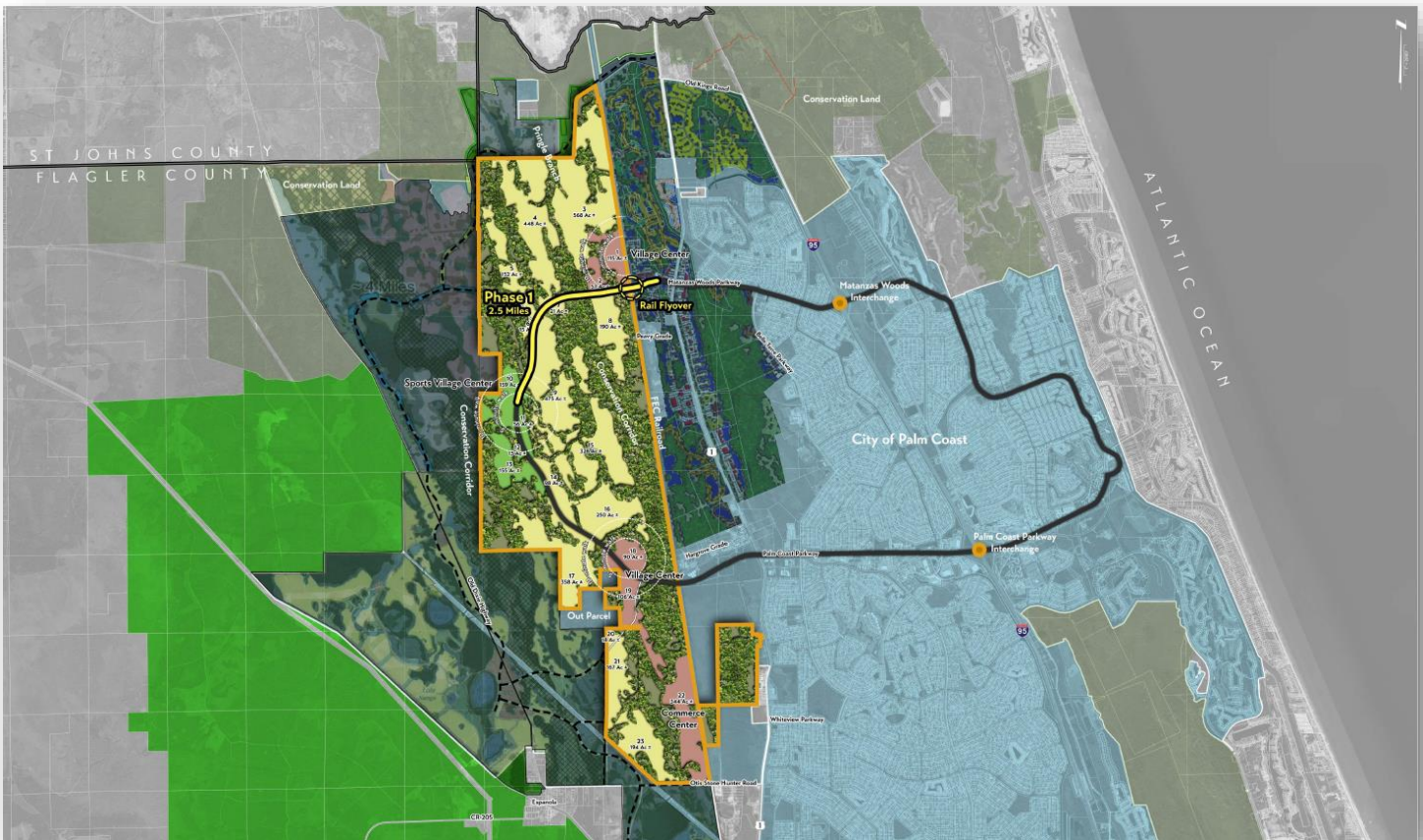


### Continue to Support Transportation Access to the West

**Background:** The FEC Railroad divides Palm Coast into two sections, running in a north-south direction just to the west of US1. To the west of these railroad tracks lies approximately 40,000 acres of land within in the Palm Coast utility service area, which currently have limited access. Construction on the initial access point is scheduled to begin this year, and plans are in progress for the development of a loop road that will connect Matanzas Woods Parkway to Palm Coast Parkway.

**Request Action:** Provide funding or legislative support for transportation projects that will improve access to large tracts of land on the western boundary of Palm Coast.

**Effect:** Improved access to the west will provide opportunities for regional economic advancement.



# Appropriations and Funding Requests

## INFRASTRUCTURE



### Request FDOT Fund Old Kings Road Construction Phase 3



**Background:** The top-priority transportation project for the city within the River to Sea Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) is the widening of Old Kings Road, which commenced under the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) in 2009. Phase I, funded by FDOT in 2019, reached completion in 2022, and Phase II construction is scheduled for 2024. The River to Sea TPO ranks this project as the third highest among Regionally Significant Non-Statewide Infrastructure System (SIS) Projects.

**Request Action:** Provide funding or legislative support for District 5 FDOT to include Old Kings Road Phase 3 in the 5year work plan.

**Effect:** Build traffic capacity and directly aid alternate traffic patterns and evacuations.



# Appropriations and Funding Requests

## INFRASTRUCTURE



### Request FDOT Fund I-95 Parallel Facility Widening of Old Kings Road

**Background:** In just the past three years, there have been a staggering 63 instances where I-95 in Flagler County had to be completely shut down for severe accidents. What's even more concerning is that this number has consistently increased each year, with 23 closures already recorded by September 2023. These frequent closures of I-95 place an immense burden on our city's road infrastructure and have a detrimental impact on our ability to provide essential emergency services.

During these closures, Old Kings Road, owing to its proximity and parallel alignment with I-95 throughout the entire county, bears the brunt of diverted traffic nearly twice a month. Given these circumstances, we urgently request state funding for three vital initiatives:

- The widening of Old Kings Road to accommodate the increased traffic load effectively, ensuring it can serve as a suitable parallel route during I-95 closures.
- Enhancements to evacuation routes to bolster our community's preparedness in times of crisis, as the current reliance on I-95 is unsustainable.
- Improvements to public safety measures, acknowledging that a well-maintained Old Kings Road not only facilitates traffic flow but also ensures the safety and well-being of our residents during emergencies.

**Requested Action:** Provide funding to add capacity to Old Kings Road south of SR 100 an I-95 parallel facility and vital evacuation route.

**Effect:** This funding will allow improvements to public safety measures and facilitate traffic flow for the safety and well-being of our residents during emergencies.



# Appropriations and Funding Requests

## INFRASTRUCTURE



### Palm Coast Maintenance Operations Center Construction



**Background:** The existing Public Works Facility was transferred to the City by Flagler County in 1999. Since then, Palm Coast has operated within this facility, making incremental improvements to address immediate needs and deficiencies. However, the current facility is insufficient in terms of storage and maintenance capabilities to meet the growing demands of the City of Palm Coast safely and efficiently.

Presently, the facility faces several shortcomings, including inadequate parking and material storage areas, aging buildings with structural issues, and an inadequate number of fleet mechanics' bays, which don't provide sufficient space for servicing many of the City's larger work trucks, heavy equipment, and fire apparatus.

The existing Public Works facility cannot adequately meet the current operational requirements and must be upgraded in terms of safety, technology, capacity, traffic flow, and workflow. Establishing this new Public Works facility is crucial to maintaining a high level of service to our residents and addressing the present and future needs of the community. The work carried out by our Public Works teams has a significant impact on every resident, visitor, and City employee, and an appropriate facility is essential for staff to work with maximum efficiency.

Being proactive in anticipating and addressing both current and future community demands is a key part of our strategy to ensure that we can maintain the expected service levels needed to properly manage City facilities and public assets such as parks, community centers, rights-of-way, City fleet and equipment, and effectively respond to emergency and disaster situations without exposing our employees to additional risk.

The new facility, situated on a 128-acre parcel along US Highway 1, is strategically located in anticipation of the City's westward expansion. This complex will cater to all City departments and will include a Fleet Maintenance Building, Fuel Depot, Fleet Wash Building, and an Administrative Building housing warehouse and shop spaces. To enhance sustainability, the complex will feature rooftop photovoltaic systems, partially powering it and aiming for LEED Silver Certification.

Furthermore, the Maintenance Operations Center will be constructed as a critical, fortified facility, doubling as the City's Emergency Operations Center. The site will include designated areas for debris storage, storm event material staging and storage, and the distribution of public sandbags. It will be the primary facility for coordinating staff and equipment during storm events and during the recovery process.

**Requested Action:** Support funding to construct Phase 1 of the Maintenance Operations Complex to provide a safe workspace for city staff directly related to citizen service delivery.

**Effect:** This funding will ensure we can maintain the expected service levels and provide a safe workspace for staff.



# Appropriations and Funding Requests



## INFRASTRUCTURE

### Parking Within the Town

**Background:** The town has been overwhelmed by the growth that has come to Flagler County in the past few years. With that growth has come heavy traffic – especially at public attractions like the beach. The town has never developed the infrastructure to deal with this overflow, mostly because: 1) It has not needed to; 2) Much of the traffic is from adjoining towns and not from Beverly Beach.

**Requested Action:** With limited land to create parking lots, the town must inventory its facilities and develop solutions within its capacity. Land that is close to the beach is invariably expensive, the purchase of which would seem extravagant to its citizens. One of the options is to create reserved parking for the town's citizens. However, much of the town's available land is on a state-owned easement that cannot be reserved. Enforcing a "reserved parking" facility might also require increased code enforcement.

**Effect:** Creating an innovative solution at this level is not only a logistics problem, but a financial one. The town has limited resources and reserving unused space for citizens is a difficult task. Better service for tax-paying citizens is the immediate outcome.



# Appropriations and Funding Requests

## INFRASTRUCTURE



### Study the Feasibility of Acquiring Private Land Within the Town Boundaries

**Background:** This feasibility study is the first step in the Town's project that seeks to plan and design the development of essential facilities that improve access to natural assets, enrich recreational and educational opportunities, foster cultural and community vitality, and ensure ecological sustainability through preservation, adaptation and education.

The Florida Department of Community Affairs designated the Town of Marineland as 'Florida's First Remarkable Coastal Place' in July 2000 under a planning initiative for coastal communities. The specific purpose of this designation was to aid Marineland in preserving and enhancing its ecological, educational, and historical resources. The Town is accomplishing this objective through an ongoing strategic planning and implementation process involving all the stakeholder organizations within and collaborating with the Town. Resilience, education, and preservation have been at the forefront of the Town's efforts.

Previous and ongoing climate resilience efforts include shoreline stabilization projects on the Atlantic and Intracoastal Waterway sides of the island. The proposed effort will enable regional implementation of resilience and adaptation by ensuring that the Town is designed in a way that incorporates natural solutions to include restoration and runoff drainage systems for flood management, as well as architecturally designing buildings that minimize weather impacts and impacts on wildlife movement.

Requested Action: Provide funding assistance for a feasibility study on the acquisition of private land to preserve this unique location and provide resilience, housing opportunities, educational opportunities, and infrastructure for the surrounding communities and tourists.

**Effect:** This effort will foster local communities through collaboration between government agencies, and organizations within the Town through a central location that would be used to host educational opportunities and promote sustainability and preservation within the community and surrounding areas. This would be a unique effort, with nothing quite like it yet in existence - furthering sustainable ecotourism and habitat opportunities in the area.



# Appropriations and Funding Requests

## COMMUNITY RESILIENCY



### Septic to Sewer Conversion and Water Treatment Expansion for Commercial Opportunities

**Background:** Currently, municipal utility service is lacking along a portion of US 1 heading into Ormond Beach. This area is part of the underserved area of Flagler County and will provide service to current and future businesses and residential homes and communities and will help the environment by moving them from septic to sewer working in partnership between the Florida Governmental Utility Authority (FGUA), a special purpose government and Flagler County.

FGUA operates the water and wastewater plant in this area of the county and has indicated there would be needed improvements to the plant and further connections installed along US 1 to bring service to the area. With the chronic shortage of workforce housing, our teachers, nurses, and first responders often are unable to break the barriers to homeownership because of high home values in the County. There are preliminary plans to build an affordable housing community which will offer homes at price points for first-time or entry level buyers. A location has been identified but water and sewer capacity need to be available before plans to develop this site will move forward. Previously, we have reached out to the neighboring jurisdiction to the south, but they are not interested in expanding north, outside of their boundaries. With a lack of fire protection (hydrants) and availability of municipal water, this area will continue to lag the necessary infrastructure needed to support development.

Flagler County will work with FGUA to see that the plant is upgraded to handle the extra capacity and utility connections are made so that the current and future businesses and home communities may connect and get rid of the septic systems in this area and along US 1.

**Requested Action:** Provide funding to upgrade the FGUA Water and Wastewater Treatment Plant and provide connections along US 1 for the underserved area of the county.

**Effect:** Allow for extra capacity and new connections to move businesses and home communities from septic to sewer and provide the ability for new workforce housing.



# Appropriations and Funding Requests

## COMMUNITY RESILIENCY



### **Beach Restoration/Coastal Stabilization Project**

**Background:** Flagler County, has 18 miles of Atlantic Ocean shore front. The County beaches and dunes were severely impacted by storm surge and waves from Hurricanes Matthew, Ian and Dorian. The impacts created critical beach and dune erosion and localized Flooding of the adjacent uplands. Also, some of our dunes were lost completely. A plan for ongoing maintenance is being established, along with a funding plan. At this time, the costs for the initial construction of dune nourishment have been met, however there is still a portion requiring attention. As a result of past hurricanes and damage to A1A, beaches and property along the coast, Flagler County has recognized the need to develop and implement a comprehensive Beach Management Plan for Flagler County's Atlantic Ocean coastline. In 2021, a Beach management Study was sponsored by Flagler County to identify needs, goals and implementation requirements. The results of the study were recently provided to the Board of County Commissioners to discuss and adopt a Beach Management Plan for the future resiliency of the coastline. This study includes an 11.6-mile stretch along the coastline that must be considered for preservation. This will be in addition to the US Army Corps project and additional assistance from FDOT. As part of the study, current sand loss, location of sand sources, loss of sand from future storms and sea level rise and required sand volume needed to construct and maintain the Flagler County Atlantic Coastline have all been considered.

In the future, Flagler County will be responsible for the 50-years of management and maintenance of the 18 miles of shoreline from the St. Johns County line to the northern limit of the FDOT Secant wall in the Town of Beverly Beach. However, there is still a portion of sand loss that must be replaced to get us to the needed volume to move to management and maintenance. Since Flagler County does not have the resources to provide the funding that is needed to restore and stabilize the coastline, we are requesting a legislative priority to fill the gap.

**Requested Action:** Provide the portion of funding needed to replace the current sand loss and restore the 18 miles of coastline.

**Effect:** This project will provide a resilient coastline, protect life and property including A1A from future impacts and give Flagler County the time needed to implement a six-year interval management and maintenance plan.



# Appropriations and Funding Requests

## COMMUNITY RESILIENCY

### Stormwater Infrastructure Improvements and Resiliency Project



**Background:** Many county-maintained roadways and canals regularly experience flooding during seasonal and extreme precipitation events causing erosion of roadways and the banks of various canals. To resolve these problems a Stormwater Master Plan is being developed and projects are being identified. Currently, there are several roadway projects and canals in need of stormwater related improvements for drainage efficiency and to reduce flood frequency of the area's developed.

The proposed improvements include re-grading of roadside swales and ditches, upsizing of cross drain culverts, pond siting and property acquisition, and acquiring easements to access drainage facilities for maintenance. The canals identified need to be widened and have a standard revetment installed to protect against erosion and increase flood storage capacity.

Potential communities impacted/benefited by project implementation.

- Rima Ridge
- Ormond Beach
- Sea Colony
- Armand Beach
- Hammock Beach Estates
- Johnson Beach
- Hammock Dunes
- Old Haw Creek Road Communities

Potential communities indirectly benefitted by restoration of the canals.

- West Side communities (i.e., Daytona North area and surrounding) downstream of the facility via water quality treatment and flood control measures.

Critical assets or pertinent facilities benefited by restoration of the canals.

- Hammock Community Center
- Hammock Community Volunteer Fire Department
- Sheriff's Office Substation
- Old Hammock Plantation Wastewater Treatment Plant
- County owned parcels adjoining the canal side.
- Amvets Post 59
- Flagler County Jail

**Requested Action:** Provide funding to include planning/design, permitting, easements and property acquisition.

**Effect:** This stormwater improvement project is required to restore consistent conveyance in the existing drainage systems, improve infrastructure, improve water quality and increase flood storage capacity in the canals to reduce flooding frequency.



# Appropriations and Funding Requests

## COMMUNITY RESILIENCY



### **Reduce the Risk of Flooding - Support Funding Blare Drive and Colbert Lane Flood Mitigation and Flood Map Study and Revision**



**Background:** This project centers on enhancing the stormwater conveyance capacity of three culvert crossings: (1) at Blare Drive and (2) at Colbert Lane. The goal of this undertaking is to enhance the efficiency of the drainage system, ensuring swifter recovery during and after storm events. Simultaneously, it bolsters the flood protection and resilience of the adjacent residential neighborhoods. As part of the project, advanced stormwater modeling software and data is being employed, surpassing the capabilities of the previous model. This presents an opportunity to recalibrate the existing flood maps, offering a more precise delineation of the floodplain boundaries once the project is completed. The potential revision of these flood maps holds the promise of reducing flood insurance premiums for homeowners whose properties fall outside the updated floodplain boundaries.

**Requested Action:** Provide funding to construct three culvert pipes to eliminate home flooding in the low-lying Woodlands neighborhood.

**Effect:** This funding will enhance stormwater conveyance ensuring swifter recovery and providing the potential reduction of flood insurance premiums for the effected homeowners.



# Appropriations and Funding Requests

## COMMUNITY RESILIENCY



### **Protection of Water Supply – Indian Trails Reclaimed Watermain Extension and Sports Complex Irrigation Conversion**

**Background:** The Indian Trails Sports Complex in the City features numerous ball fields for public recreation and sports clubs. Until now, the irrigation system has relied on four shallow irrigation wells as its water source. However, these wells have been steadily declining in their raw water production and have faced issues related to fouling. Maintaining a dependable irrigation system for the ball fields is crucial for preserving the quality of the playing surfaces and attracting sports clubs and tournaments.

To address this issue, a project is planned to extend a reclaimed water main, spanning approximately 1 mile, to connect with a stormwater irrigation pond. Reclaimed water will be utilized to maintain the water level in the pond, thereby offsetting the depletion caused by irrigation usage. Additionally, the pond will be equipped with an irrigation pump system to replace the four shallow irrigation wells, ensuring a more reliable and sustainable water supply for the sports complex.

**Requested Action:** Provide funding to extend a reclaimed water line to Indian Trails Sports Complex.

**Effect:** Maintaining a dependable irrigation system and an irrigation pump system will preserve the quality of the playing surfaces and ensure a more sustainable water supply.

# Appropriations and Funding Requests

## COMMUNITY RESILIENCY



### Protection of Water Supply – Citation Boulevard Reclaimed Watermain Extension

**Background:** The developer of Seminole Palms is constructing the Citation Boulevard extension and associated utilities including a reclaimed wastewater main. This request is to connect to the new reclaimed main and continue it west to Belle Terre Boulevard. This will provide reclaimed service to both Seminole Palms to the east and Flagler Village and Citation Estates to the west. This project includes sidewalks and street lighting to match the new portion of Citation.

**Requested Action:** Support funding to extend the soon to be developer constructed reclaimed water line to Belle Terre Boulevard.

**Effect:** This funding will allow us to continue the reclaimed main west to Belle Terre Boulevard and provide service to both Seminole Palms, Flagler Village and Citation Estates.





# Appropriations and Funding Requests

## COMMUNITY RESILIENCY



### Protection of Water Supply – Land Acquisition for Rapid Infiltration Basins.

**Background:** Acquire land in the western part of the city to provide additional inland disposal and storage of treated wastewater effluent to accommodate growth, protect natural waterways by avoiding surface water discharge, and provide storage and recovery for irrigation needs when irrigation demands are at peak levels which may exceed daily production of effluent during weather or seasonal conditions. RIBs are an essential component of water conservation and protection of surface waters. Utilizing treated effluent/reclaimed water for irrigation reduces aquifer and potable water consumption. When demand for irrigation water reduces with increased rainfall, it becomes necessary to dispose of excess treated effluent/reclaimed water. Disposing of excess reclaimed water in RIBs helps to replenish the surficial aquifer.

**Requested Action:** Provide funding for land acquisition for a regional RIB site providing advanced aquifer recharge.

**Effect:** Acquisition of land in the western part of the city will allow for necessary disposal of excess treated effluent/reclaimed water. This will help to replenish the surficial aquifer.





## COMMUNITY RESILIENCY



### Protection of Water Quality – Wastewater Treatment Facility No. 1 Capacity Expansion

**Background:** Expand Wastewater Treatment Facility No.1 from 6.83 million gallons per day treatment capacity to 9.1 million gallons per day treatment capacity, improve electrical and control systems, and upgrade process equipment needing replacement. WWTF-1 is the City's primary wastewater treatment facility and currently serves most of the City's residences and businesses. The City has undergone significant growth in recent years, and WWTF-1 is nearing its current capacity and needs expansion to accommodate additional growth. WWTF-1 also produces a considerable amount of reclaimed water for irrigation use which is beneficial in offsetting the consumption of aquifer water.

**Requested Action:** Support funding to expand Wastewater Treatment Plant 1 to keep pace with economic growth.

**Effect:** This funding will allow for expansion of the Water Treatment Plan to keep pace with growth.



## COMMUNITY RESILIENCY



### Protection of Water Quality- Construct Regional Rapid Infiltration Basin (RIB) Site

**Background:** A study for a Resiliency Plan for the Rapid Infiltration Basin (RIB) site is complete. The study revealed that converting the spray irrigation to rapid infiltration basins is feasible and will increase the much-needed effluent capacity and storage. The RIB treats the effluent as it infiltrates through the soil and, at the same time, replenishes the aquifer. The process can treat a much larger volume of wastewater than aboveground high-volume irrigation on a small land area. This request is to convert approximately 43 acres used for treated wastewater effluent wet weather disposal from spray fields to rapid infiltration basins to increase disposal volume to accommodate growth and reduce discharge frequency to the Matanzas River.

**Requested Action:** Support funding to convert existing spray fields to rapid infiltration for increased aquifer recharge volume.

**Effect:** Construction of this Rapid Infiltration Basin (RIB) will improve water quality and produce a higher rate of aquifer recharge than achieved through above-ground high-volume irrigation.



# Appropriations and Funding Requests

## COMMUNITY RESILIENCY



### Lambert Avenue Water Main Extension



**Background:** The City of Flagler Beach maintains and operates a municipal water system. This system, which includes extraction, treatment, and distribution, supports the City’s residents and businesses. A critical shortcoming of the system, though, is the lack of redundancy: only one sixteen-inch transmission main crosses (below) the Atlantic Ocean Intracoastal Waterway (AICW). Due to that sole crossing, the transmission network is not effectively “looped,” especially at the north end of the City’s service area east of the AICW. This systemic shortcoming puts water system users at increased risk if the sole crossing were damaged or severed or if water at the north end of the system is not adequately circulated. The estimated cost to design an extended water main north on Lambert Avenue and then cross the AICW as a redundant service and additionally “loop” the system is approximately \$300,000. The estimated cost of construction for the extended water main is approximately \$3,000,000. The City of Flagler Beach requests an appropriation of \$1,650,000, which the City would similarly match, to design and construct the Lambert Avenue Water Main Extension.

**Requested Action:** Provide funding to extend the water main north on Lambert Avenue across the AICW and loop the system.

**Effect:** This funding will allow resolution of a critical shortcoming of the current system with a lack of redundancy and not effectively looped.



# Appropriations and Funding Requests

## COMMUNITY RESILIENCY



### Flood Mitigation Measures for City Facilities

**Background:** Several City facilities are vulnerable to storm surge and flooding, especially those located in the vicinity of the AICW. These facilities include the Police and Fire stations; a 1,000,000-gallon water storage tank; two City Maintenance facilities, and the Library. Although a berm is currently being designed to protect this general area, additional equipment can be utilized to enhance protection in specific areas. The estimated cost for sufficient protective measures (HydroDefense Flood Planks) is approximately \$150,000. The City requests an appropriation of \$150,000 for the purchase of an estimated twenty flood planks.

**Requested Action:** Provide funding to support flood mitigation measures.

**Effect:** This funding will support the purchase of flood planks that will protect vulnerable city facilities from storm surge and flooding.



# Appropriations and Funding Requests

## COMMUNITY RESILIENCY



### Wastewater Treatment Plant and Collection System Projects

**Background:** The City of Bunnell's Master Utility Plan outlines a range of initiatives aimed at tackling the needs and deficiencies within the city's Wastewater Treatment Plant and Collection System. Among the upcoming projects, in line with the Master Utility Plan, are those targeted at enhancing gravity collection systems and creating an underground sewer line map. These endeavors encompass slip lining, the rehabilitation of manholes, as well as the application of Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR) and Geographic Information Systems (GIS) mapping techniques.

**Requested Action:** Provide local levels of funding in the amount of \$4,500,000.00 to complete wastewater treatment and collection upgrades as identified in adopted Master Utility Plans.

**Effect:** This funding and the completing of these projects would improve wastewater infrastructure performance. Rehabilitated manholes can improve the overall performance of the sewer and utility systems. By ensuring proper flow capacity and reducing blockages, the rehabilitated manholes contribute to more efficient wastewater management. Slip lining offers several benefits, including reduced disruption to the surrounding area, cost savings compared to full pipe replacement, and reduction and/or elimination of ground and stormwater inflow and infiltration. By combining the capabilities of GPR and GIS mapping, we can gain a comprehensive understanding of their underground sewer infrastructure, leading to improved efficiency, reduced costs, enhanced safety, and better decision-making.



# Appropriations and Funding Requests

## COMMUNITY RESILIENCY



### Water Treatment Plant and Distribution System Projects

**Background:** The City of Bunnell's Master Utility Plan identifies several projects to address the needs and deficiencies in the City's water treatment plant and distributions system. Among the next projects to be completed as established in the Master Utility Plan are projects that address the following: new well installation, pipe upsizing, material upgrading and watermain looping for fire protection.

**Requested Action:** Provide local levels of funding in the amount of \$4,600,000.00 to complete water treatment and distribution upgrades as identified in adopted Master Utility Plans.

**Effect:** This funding and the completing of these projects would provide for improvement of water quality, pressure levels, fire flow protection capabilities and increased capacity for the City Water Distribution system.



# Appropriations and Funding Requests

## COMMUNITY RESILIENCY



### Resiliency and Vulnerability Study

**Background:** The Town of Beverly Beach has partnered with the City of Flagler Beach to commission a Coastal Resiliency and Vulnerability study through a grant from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection. The engineering firm, Mead and Hunt, is managing the data. The town has had several sites that have been vulnerable to storms in the past seven (7) years, including town infrastructure. Massive erosion from wave action has also occurred.

**Requested Action:** The town needs to listen to the interpretation of the study data and add its own processes to implement the findings. Any recommendations that need financial backing can be budgeted by the town.

**Effect:** If the study can identify even one element that the town is not aware of, the study will be well-worth the time and effort. The town has advocated lifting the moratorium on seawalls on residential properties on the oceanfront – as a matter of desperation. A second action, taken by the State, is to buttress the shoreline with dredged sand. The dredging will occur in 2025.



# Appropriations and Funding Requests



## COMMUNITY RESILIENCY

### Fragmented Stormwater System

**Background:** In one of the town's major subdivisions, the Osprey Point District, the developer left the town and the State of Florida, holding the proverbial "bag." No homeowner's association had been formed, and the state has the Environmental Resources permit, while the town controls the three roads in the district. However, the stormwater infrastructure is in the hands of the private property owners, including the two large retention ponds. With sea-level rise has come more flooding and ponds that are filled to capacity. While the town receives Local Gas Option Tax Funds to care for the roads, the amount is not large enough to take corrective action on the infrastructure, nor can the town do so on its own volition – given the political fallout of spending tax-payer funds for the benefit of a few private landowners. The town attempted to apply for a REDI grant from St Johns River Water Management District and was told that the grant cannot be used for private property.

**Requested Action:** The town has taken a variety of approaches to this issue. Even a public/private partnership to treat the ponds for algae has been retracted. There is no incentive for private owners to provide a public benefit. Consequently, actions that need to be done, such as the dredging of the ponds, do not get done. While a court order can encourage corrective action, it is a last resort for homeowners, and the town does not want to be forced into eminent domain-type seizures. As of this date, there have been no proposed alternatives. The subdivision cannot be forced to form an HOA and a Special Taxing District is administratively burdensome.

**Effect:** St. Johns River Water Management District has declared that the stormwater system is functional. The town wants it to remain functional, despite the proclivity of 100-year storms, and wants to alleviate flooding concerns in the future.



# Appropriations and Funding Requests

## COMMUNITY RESILIENCY

### Complete Design and Construction of Water and Sewer Connection from Flagler County



**Background:** The Town of Marineland encompasses some of the most pristine coastal habitats and public education opportunities in the region. As the collaboration site for scientists and visitors, the Town contains the River To Sea Preserve, University of Florida’s Whitney Laboratory for Marine Bioscience and Sea Turtle Hospital, the Marineland Dolphin Attraction, the Guana Tolomato Matanzas National Estuarine Research Reserve, the preserved Jordan and Mellon Islands, Ripple Effect Ecotours, and the Town of Marineland Marina. The Town also has local offices for the Marineland Right Whale Project, Flagler Audubon Society, Volusia/Flagler Sea Turtle Patrol, and Florida Wildlife Commission. With a current combined 500,000+ visitors per year between the Marineland Dolphin Attraction, University of Florida Whitney Laboratory, and visitors exploring the natural beaches, parks, and educational opportunities within the Town, the privately owned wastewater treatment plant is not sufficient to provide services to the growing Town. The University of Florida Whitney Laboratory is undergoing a 30-million-dollar expansion project that will require additional water and wastewater services.

**Requested Action:** Provide funding assistance to complete the design and construction of water and sewage connection from Flagler County to support the growing Town of Marineland community needs.

**Effect:** These services are foundational to ensuring public health, driving economic development, and preserving the unique environmental attributes of the region. A consistent and clean water supply has a direct bearing on the quality of life of Marineland residents and visitors, from everyday household activities to the recreational pursuits that the beautiful local water bodies offer. The Town’s unique location and proximity to the Atlantic Ocean and Intracoastal Waterway makes it particularly vulnerable. Untreated or inadequately treated wastewater could lead to the contamination of these waters, causing harm to marine life and posing health risks to residents and tourists alike. The Town’s distinctive position as a “Remarkable Coastal Place” amplifies the significance of robust and efficient water infrastructure.





# Appropriations and Funding Requests

## CONSERVATION AND OPEN SPACE



### Regional Conservation & Eco-Tourism Educational Center Project

**Background:** In 2019, the Flagler County Board of County Commissioners approved and adopted the county's tourism strategic plan. The strategic plan recognized that the key ingredients to be successful and ensure a return on investment was the eco-tourism related educational, marketing, and promotional components for on-going support. One of the main objectives to accomplish this is the creation and development of the Flagler County Eco-Discovery Center. The eco-discovery center will act as the main hub in Flagler County to protect, conserve and enhance recreational, natural, historical, and cultural resources.

The new 10,000 sq. ft. Eco-Discovery Center will be located on a 22-acre county owned parcel on SR100 which is on the Heritage Crossroads Byway and approximately 1 mile east of I-95 and 3 miles west of A1A Scenic & Historic Coastal Byway in Flagler Beach. This location is also approximately .25 miles from the newly constructed pedestrian bridge and adjacent to the future Bulow Creek Headwaters Regional Park. The pedestrian bridge project along with its additional miles of trails, will serve as a gateway for the already 135 miles of trails in Flagler County. The bridge connects to the Lehigh Greenway Trail and eventually to the Bulow Trail which will connect to the Bulow Creek Headwaters Regional Park currently in the design and planning phase. This 1,000-acre park is a critical part of the larger 'Palm Coast to Bulow Corridor' that includes Graham Swamp Preserve, Bulow Creek, and Tomoka marsh conservation areas. This regional greenway is of statewide significance as identified within the Florida Greenways and Trails System Opportunity map. This conservation area is large enough and well-connected enough to provide significant environmental benefits to the region.

**Requested Action:** Provide funding assistance to construct the Flagler County Regional Conservation & Eco-Tourism Educational Center to support the goals, objectives, and priorities of Flagler County, Northeast Florida Regional Council, and the Scenic A1A Byways.

**Effect:** This conservation and educational center will act as the main hub in Flagler County to protect, conserve and enhance recreational, natural, historical, and cultural resources.

# Appropriations and Funding Requests

## CONSERVATION AND OPEN SPACE



### Acquisition of Conservation Lands

**Background:** Flagler County recognizes the priority and vision of the Florida Wildlife Corridor, which gives priority to lands that preserve, protect or enhance wildlife habitats and corridors and linkages to agricultural and rural lands. Flagler County’s Environmentally Sensitive Lands Program in Summer 2023 began outreach to private property owners in the western portion of Flagler County for the purpose of purchasing land along some groundwater recharge areas and surface water discharge areas along some of the primary tributaries to Haw Creek and “feeder” water creeks which feed into Crescent Lake. Crescent Lake is fed primarily by Haw Creek which receives discharge from several smaller creeks including Little Haw Creek and Middle Haw creek. Crescent Lake feeds through Dunn’s Creek to the St. Johns River.

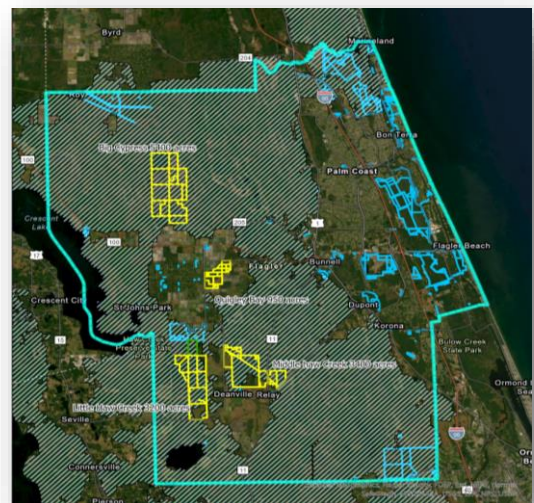
The Middle Haw Creek flows to the northwest from the southern reaches of the County into Haw Creek and west into Dead Lake and beyond. Little Haw Creek flows north from Lake Disston into Haw Creek and Dead Lake. Both systems function as discharge for surface water which ultimately flows into Crescent Lake and the St. Johns River and lie within the Florida Wildlife Corridor.

Locally referred to as “floodplain corridors” these connected properties shown in the attached map represent opportunities to conserve water quality and protect habitat for sensitive plants and for animals’ dependent on these habitats including the black bear. Although the County is prepared to consider either fee-simple acquisition or less-than-fee acquisition of conservation easements from “willing sellers”, our hope is that these program efforts will help our citizens to maintain their way of life, whether that way of life includes protecting local landowners’ ability to continue their farming operations or to provide recreation opportunities for citizens and visitors alike where possible. The majority focus of our program will go towards identifying willing sellers and negotiating for the acquisition of properties that will meet these goals throughout our County. Primary focus should go towards those properties within the Florida Wildlife Corridor.

**Requested Action:** Provide local levels of funding to acquire tracts of land to create a floodplain on the West Side of Flagler County.

**Effect:** Creating a natural floodplain will provide flood risk reduction benefits by slowing runoff and storing flood water. It will also provide other benefits of considerable economic, social, and environmental value to include:

- Fish and wildlife habitat protection
- Natural flood and erosion control
- Surface water quality maintenance
- Groundwater recharge
- Biological productivity
- Higher quality recreational opportunities





# Appropriations and Funding Requests

## CONSERVATION AND OPEN SPACE

### Protect Environmentally Sensitive Areas - Protect Palm Coast Parkway's Unique Hard Wood Tree Canopy



**Background:** The stretch referred to as the "Tree Tunnel" extends from the intersection of Palm Coast Parkway and Florida Park Drive to the Hammock Dunes Bridge. This area offers a captivating display of the splendid native trees that grace Palm Coast and offers a glimpse of the origins of Graham Swamp. Within the Palm Coast Parkway and Colbert Lane property, you'll find trees with diameters exceeding 70 inches, critical habitats for native wildlife, and vital floodwater storage components integrated into the swamp's ecosystem.

Preserving the northernmost section of Graham Swamp serves a dual purpose: it conserves the distinctive "Tree Tunnel" character while maintaining the swamp's integrity as an interconnected system, capable of storing water and facilitating water treatment for the city. This preservation effort ensures that the natural beauty and ecological functions of this unique area are safeguarded for current and future generations to enjoy.

**Requested Action:** Support inclusion in the Flagler County Environmentally Sensitive Lands Program and Florida Forever funding.



# Appropriations and Funding Requests

## CONSERVATION AND OPEN SPACE



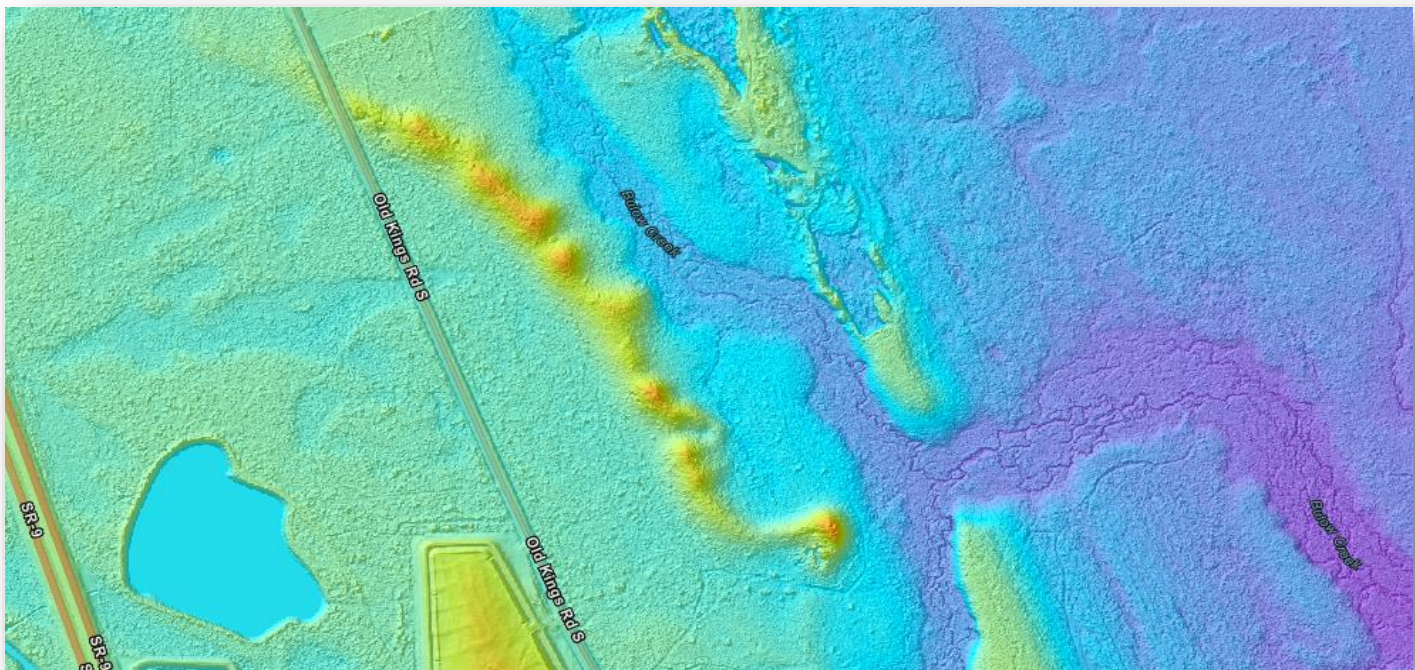
### Protect Environmentally Sensitive Areas - Acquire Bulow Creek Relic Dune and Burial Mound

**Background:** Designated as the relic dune or Sandridge by city staff, this topographical feature holds a distinct and significant position within Palm Coast. Soaring to an elevation of 42 feet above sea level at its highest point, this ridge stands out as a rarity in this region. The ridge serves as a protective barrier for Bulow Creek, recognized as an Outstanding Florida Waterway, extending from Old Kings Road S and offering the creek additional safeguards against pollution.

Bulow Creek plays a pivotal role in floodplain management, serving as a regulatory floodway where high-velocity floodwaters travel southward until reaching the Intracoastal Waterway. At the terminus of the ridge lies a Native American burial mound, which, although devoid of remains or artifacts, remains a significant cultural site. The combined presence of the Sandridge, adjacent wetlands, and Bulow Creek creates a diverse range of habitats for numerous species and plants, further underscoring the importance of preserving this area.

In line with Comprehensive Plan Policy 1.1.9.18, the City is committed to collaborating with land acquisition entities and public agencies to secure environmentally and culturally significant lands situated in the Planning Area to the east of Old Kings Road.

**Requested Action:** Support inclusion in the Flagler County Environmentally Sensitive Lands Program and Florida Forever funding.







# Policy Priorities & Support Issues





# 2023 POLICY PRIORITIES



**Amend** Florida Statute 288.0656 (2) (e) to Increase the Population Levels of a Defined Rural Community.

Urge the Legislature to Amend this Statute to Increase the Population Levels that Define a Rural Community. The population levels for a county has not been modified since 2001 and the levels for a contiguous county has not been modified since 2009.

**PROTECT AND INCREASE** Funding for the State of Florida Transportation Disadvantaged Program.

Urge the Legislature to protect the Transportation Disadvantaged program and increase funding to support the unmet trip requests.



**SUPPORT AND PROTECT** Florida's Housing Trust Funds

Urge the Florida Legislature to use ALL of Florida's housing trust fund monies for Florida's housing programs.



# 2023 POLICY PRIORITIES

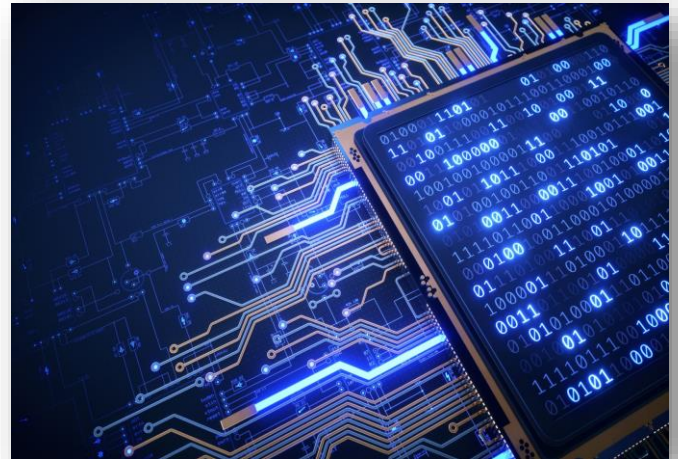


**SUPPORT** Affordable and Reliable High-Speed Internet throughout Florida.

Continue to support a coordinated and collaborative effort to advance and expand internet access in all areas of Florida through creation of a comprehensive plan and a grant program for service providers to increase and improve access in rural Florida.

**Continue Financial Support** for the Enhancement of Local Government Cybersecurity.

Support legislation dedicating state resources for the development and enhancement of municipal cybersecurity by providing funding for technical assistance, threat assessments, employee training, infrastructure improvements and data protection.



**CONTINUE FINANCIAL SUPPORT** of the SCRAP and SCOP Grant Programs to Assist Small Counties in Paving Farm to Market Roads.

Continue the current level of financial support to FDOT for the Small County Road Assistance (SCRAP) and Outreach Programs (SCOP).

## 2023 POLICY PRIORITIES

**SUPPORT** Community Resiliency Grant Programs for Wastewater, Water Quality, Beach Restoration, Flood and Sea Level Rise Mitigation and Septic to Sewer Conversion Projects.

Urge the Legislature to increase available grant programs through the State of Florida Department of Environmental Protection.



**SUPPORT** Funding Intended for any Legislative Appropriation Projects for Land Acquisition within Flagler County.

Urge the Legislature to approve funding for conservation and to protect water resources, drinking water sources, land and water quality through Article X, Section 28 of the Florida Statutes for the Land Acquisition Trust Fund.



**PROVIDE** timely reimbursements and upon approval of grants over \$1 million assist with cash flow by fronting at least 25% of the project

Urge the Legislature to provide timely reimbursements and assist with cash flow of grants over \$1 million by fronting a minimum of 25% of the project to provide real relief.





# 2023 POLICY PRIORITIES



## **MAINTAIN** Short Term Vacation Rental Legislation Status Quo.

Maintain the status quo regarding local government regulations for Short Term Vacation Rental legislation

## **SUPPORT AND CONTINUE TO ADVOCATE** for Home Rule Authority.

Continue to advocate for home rule authority by actively opposing further preemption legislation or other legislation that restricts local government in acting in the best interest of their citizens.



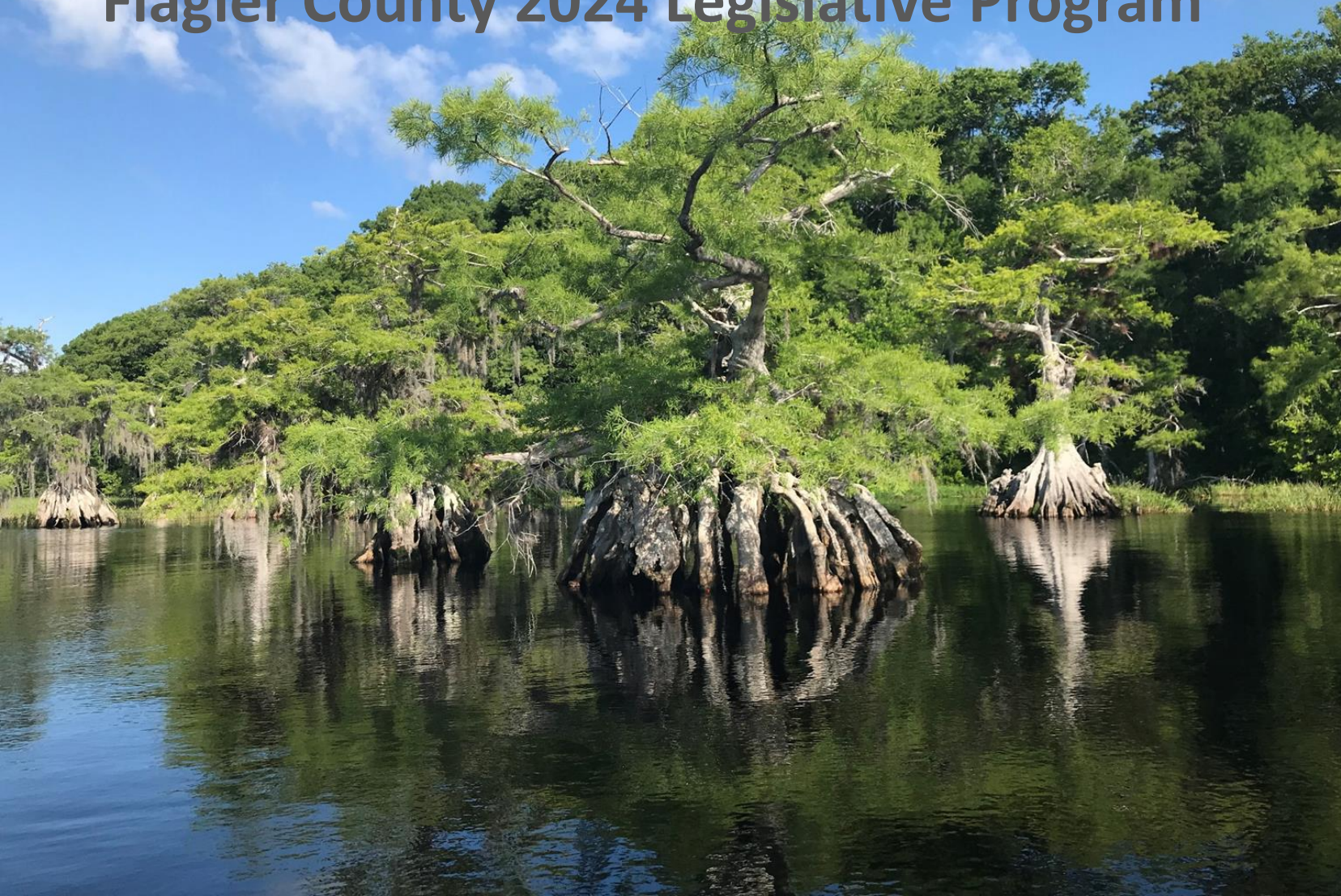
## **REQUEST AN AUDIT** of the Emergency Management Preparedness and Assistance Trust Fund (EMPA)

Urge the Legislature to direct the Florida Department of Revenue to audit how the Emergency Management Preparedness and Assistance Trust Fund (EMPA) surcharge is applied to all residential and commercial properties for compliance with s. 252.372, F.S.





# Flagler County 2024 Legislative Program



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