

MEMORANDUM

Date: January 7, 2021  
To: Utility Advisory Committee  
From: Joseph Helfenberger, City Manager  
Re: Proposal for Water Route Study



I am asking for re-consideration of supporting the water route study proposed by Jones Edmunds on November 30, 2020 for the following reasons:

First, there are existing water capacity problems with supplying potable water to the prison. For example, when hydrants are being flushed at the airport, the water pressure is greatly reduced at the prison.

Second, a potable water extension to the NFMIP is needed regardless of whether any industrial development happens. There is a residential component to the development at the North Florida Mega Industrial Park (NFMIP) that is planned to take place soon and it will need potable water. This housing development will be on the west side of the NFMIP, closest to the City water plant. The range of housing projected is between 300 to 700 new residences. It is anticipated that a new housing development would occur much quicker than the industrial development and there is a critical shortage of housing in our community.

Third, there is a greater possibility that the NFMIP will be annexed into the City for future tax base if the City provides the potable water service that is needed in a timely manner. There is already 130,000 gallons per day of sewer capacity available and 30,000 CFS of natural gas available for the NFMIP. The residential property tax base would be estimated to increase in a range from \$51,900,000 to \$121,100,000 (Average residential home value in Columbia County (\$173,000) times the number of projected homes (300 to 700 homes) at full build out.

The study would provide an estimate of the time to design and construct the water extension and would also be helpful information when applying for grants and other funding sources for the project.

The water route study will need to be done for any master plan efforts and the cost of the study is not expected to change significantly depending upon the timing of the work. The cost is \$38,900 and it is expected to take approximately 90 days to complete the study from the time Jones Edmunds would be given authorization to begin.

I am recommending that the Utility Advisory Committee recommend to the City Council to approve this proposal.