

FLAGLER BOCC HEADLINES



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FDOT TO START BURIED SEAWALL CONSTRUCTION THE WEEK OF MARCH 11

Flagler County officials advise residents that the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) has scheduled buried seawall construction near South Central Avenue in Flagler Beach beginning the week of March 11. It is the first of two such projects FDOT is undertaking along State Road A1A in Flagler and Volusia Counties.

"This is not one of our projects but because it will impact Flagler County residents and visitors, we want to help get the word out to our community," said County Administrator Heidi Petito. "There are some expected lane closures as the work progresses, and we ask for your patience during the construction."

According to FDOT, drivers can expect single-lane closures as the contractor shifts the travel lanes on State Road A1A a few feet to the west within the existing asphalt. This will allow two-way traffic to continue during construction. All work will occur during daytime hours.

Once the lane shift has taken place, the contractor will begin to remove the rocks that were placed along the dune after the storms in late 2022 to protect the roadway, according to FDOT. Short, intermittent lane closures, with flagging operations, may be needed to accommodate trucks moving into and out of the work zone.

Additional information is available on the project webpage:
www.cflroads.com/project/452444-1



FLAGLER GREENWAYS PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE WINS 'NATIONAL RECOGNITION AWARD' FROM THE AMERICAN COUNCIL OF ENGINEERING COMPANIES

Flagler County was notified on February 27 that the Flagler Greenways Pedestrian Bridge over State Road 100 has earned the "National Recognition Award" from American Council of Engineering Companies (ACEC) in the 2024 Engineering Excellence Awards (EEA) competition – the "world's greatest celebration of engineering excellence." The award will go to Kisinger Campo and Associates, the engineering company that designed the bridge for the county.

"Kisinger, Campo, and Associates did an excellent job designing a unique, one-of-a-kind structure that would enhance the State Road 100 corridor leading to Flagler Beach," said Flagler County Engineering Department Project Manager Amy Stroger, who oversaw the project. "The inspiration for the design was drawn from the A-frame shape of the Flagler Beach Pier."

The Flagler Greenways Pedestrian Bridge added more than two miles of added trails to serve as a multimodal connection for the robust trail system that already exists in Flagler County. Benefits to the community are that it provides pedestrians and bicyclists with a safe way to cross a major four-lane thoroughfare. The ramps on and off the bridge are ADA compliant.

Stroger is thrilled about the accolades the bridge is receiving. This is its third award in as many months.

The Northeast Florida Regional Council in December 2023 announced that the Flagler Greenways Pedestrian Bridge was the recipient of its Annual Regional Awards for Excellence in the category of Transportation. Later that same month, it was one of seven "top tier" projects that took the "Grand Award" at the American Council of Engineering Companies (ACEC) Florida Engineering Excellence Awards – making it eligible to enter the ACEC Engineering Excellence Awards competition, which honors projects worldwide.

The National Recognition Award is a prestigious distinction honoring projects demonstrating exceptional engineering excellence at the national level.

"This is a wonderful project that adds so many benefits to our community," said County Administrator Heidi Petito. "What an honor it is to be recognized nationally for this project. Everyone who worked on this project did a great job."

'TUNE IN' TO MEETINGS

MARCH 4: BOCC REGULAR MEETING AT 9 a.m.
MARCH 12: PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT AT 6 p.m.
MARCH 18: BOCC REGULAR MEETING AT 5 p.m.
MARCH 20: CONTRACTOR REVIEW BOARD AT 9 a.m.

LIVE STREAM

www.youtube.com/flaglercounty/live

GOVERNOR RON DESANTIS AWARDS FLAGLER COUNTY \$4 MILLION FOR 'NEXUS CENTER' AS PART OF BROADBAND EXPANSION

Governor Ron DeSantis awarded \$4 million to Flagler County for its "Nexus Center" – a multi-purpose facility to house both a new library and the county's Health and Human Services Department – as part of a total \$223 million to expand broadband internet access to all Floridians. The funding includes \$135 million in state funding through the Broadband Opportunity Program, as well as \$86 million in federal funds through the Multipurpose Community Facilities Program.

Flagler County's award comes through the Multipurpose Facility Program that was designed to support community infrastructure projects that will provide internet access. This funding comes as the Federal Communications Commission recently enacted new rules relating to private companies' broadband expansion efforts, aimed at preventing "digital discrimination of access to broadband services based on income level, race, ethnicity, color, religion or national origin."

"Connecting Florida's small and rural communities to broadband internet will help them find jobs, access education resources and expand their businesses," DeSantis said in his announcement. "We will continue to make investments in broadband internet that support long-term growth for our communities, without federally imposed strings attached."

Chief of Special Projects and Library Director Holly Albanese heard about the federal \$4 million grant application opportunity in June 2023 from State Librarian Amy Johnson and worked diligently to prepare the application for October.

"It was a very complex grant with lots of requirements," Albanese said. "It is the most difficult grant application I have submitted."

Applications were scored and ranked. Flagler County needed to rank in the top 20.

"I am so proud of Holly," County Administrator Heidi Petito said. "She worked so hard and did a great job bringing this money into Flagler County."

Albanese made a presentation for the Nexus Center to the Board of County Commissioners more than two years ago that will provide expanded space for the Bunnell Branch Library, the Health and Human Services Department, a congregate meal site for seniors, and community rooms. The building will sit on county-owned property on Commerce Parkway near the Flagler County Sheriff's Office headquarters.

Flagler County has another \$9.6 million earmarked for this project, and another \$1 million in revenue from the Library's Passport Program. The county also secured a \$500,000 state grant last year.

BREAKERS

SAVE THE DATE: MAY 17 - 'FROM BLUEPRINT TO ACTION: LOCAL STRATEGIES FOR HOUSING POLICY ADVANCEMENT'

Housing officials from throughout Flagler County are encouraging those interested in housing policy – especially where affordability is concerned – to block out time from 11 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. on Friday, May 17, to attend the "From Blueprint to Action: Local Strategies for Housing Policy Advancement" luncheon-style forum. Participants will be able to ask questions of the panelists and provide their input on the topic.

"We know this is early notice, but we want to provide ample notice for people to get this on their calendars," said Flagler County Housing Program Manager Devrie Paradowski. "There will be a presentation by Florida Housing Coalition on local policy tools with updates on the Live Local Act: 'With Live Local Act, should local governments do anything more to facilitate affordable housing development?' among other topics."

Tickets to attend this luncheon forum are available through Eventbrite at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/housing-policy-forum-tickets-837483695277?aff=oddtcreator>

SFLAGLER, ST. JOHNS COUNTIES PRESENT PAUL RENNER WITH FEPA LEGISLATIVE ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Flagler County Emergency Management Director Jonathan Lord and St. Johns County Emergency Management Deputy Director Kelly Wilson spent part of "Emergency Management Day at the Capitol" presenting House Speaker Paul Renner with the Florida Emergency Preparedness Association (FEPA) Legislative Achievement Award.

"Under Speaker Renner's leadership, the Legislature has navigated the impacts of two catastrophic hurricanes – Ian and Idalia – in addition to Hurricane Nicole. In response to these significant disasters, the Legislature has passed historic legislation providing unprecedented funding and programs for local governments, businesses, and residents," Lord said in the nomination.

The FEPA Legislative Achievement Award is presented to a local, state, or federal Legislator for outstanding leadership in sponsoring legislation which improves Emergency Management in the State of Florida.

'DO DATE' EVENTS

03/02/24 **Book and Bake Sale | 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.**
Flagler County Public Library -- Palm Coast
2500 Palm Coast Parkway NW
Host: Friends of the Library of Flagler County
www.facebook.com/FlaglerCountyPublicLibrary