

FLAGLER BOCC HEADLINES



A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER · MAY 2024 · VOLUME 3 · ISSUE 8

FDOT TO BEGIN CODY'S CORNER ROUNDABOUT CONSTRUCTION

Flagler County officials advise that motorists who regularly use State Road 11 and County Road 304 can expect delays and detours for the next six months. FDOT has begun roundabout construction at that intersection known as Cody's Corner.

"We want our residents to be aware of FDOT's work in the county so they can plan appropriately for travel," said County Administrator Heidi Petito. "We know this will affect traffic in and around Bunnell."

The FDOT construction operations will include the closure of the eastern side of County Road 304 at its intersection with State Road 11. This will necessitate a detour that will utilize U.S. 1 heading north to State Road 11 for access to the western portion of County Road 304.

During the construction, FDOT will install 3-way stop signs at the intersection of State Road 11 and County Rd 304. Rumble strips on the northbound and southbound approaches, as well as posted reduced speed limits are designed to help acclimate motorists to the new traffic pattern.

Additionally, State Road 11 will be resurfaced from the Volusia County border to U.S. 1 in Bunnell. Work will also include drainage and lighting upgrades, new signage, and pavement markings, as well as some small alignment shifts to encourage safer driving speeds.

For more information, go to the FDOT roundabout project webpage <https://www.cflroads.com/project/447082-1>.



VENDORS INVITED TO DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY FORUM AT 2 P.M. MAY 8 IN THE COUNTY COMMISSION CHAMBERS

The Flagler County Engineering Department is hosting a Design and Construction Industry Forum to inform prospective vendors of the county's Capital Improvement Plan Work Programs, and the opportunities available to them to work on the development and implementation of them.

During the forum, details will be released about upcoming "Request for Proposal" (RFP) and "Invitation to Bid" (ITB) to provide the vendors with the ability to discuss with Engineering Department staff the specifics of the scope of various projects before the RFPs and ITBs are advertised.

These opportunities primarily include the planning, design, permitting, and construction for:

- Roadways
- Trails
- Stormwater infrastructure
- Beach nourishment
- Vertical construction projects

Upcoming projects vary in size and complexity with professional services and construction services for projects to include but not limited to, planning, due diligence, architectural design, engineering design, coastal engineering, construction engineering & inspection (CEI), general engineering consultant (GEC), design-build (DB), and construction manager at risk (CMAR).

The Design and Construction Industry Forum will be held at 2 p.m. on May 8 in the Commission Chambers on the first floor of the Government Services Building, 1769 E. Moody Boulevard, Building 2, Bunnell.

For more information, contact the Engineering Department at 386-313-4006, www.flaglercounty.gov/departments/public-works/engineering.

'TUNE IN' TO MEETINGS

MAY 6: BOCC REGULAR MEETING AT 9 a.m.
MAY 14: PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT AT 6 p.m.
MAY 20: BOCC REGULAR MEETING AT 5 p.m.
JUNE 3: BOCC REGULAR MEETING AT 9 a.m.

LIVE STREAM

www.youtube.com/flaglercounty/live

FAA DEEMS UAS PROGRAM A 'PUBLIC AIRCRAFT OPERATOR' FOR THE BENEFIT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) granted Flagler County's UAS (unmanned aircraft systems, or drones) Program a "Certificate of Waiver or Authorization (COA)," thus making it a "public aircraft operator" for the benefit of public safety versus a "commercial entity operator."

"This COA allows us to operate outside of Part 107 (commercial drone pilot licensure)," said UAS Program Coordinator Bruno Luna. "This will allow us to better document and respond to emergency events like hurricanes, fires, as well as search and rescue missions, while also making it easier for us to secure other waivers and airspace authorizations in the future."

The application for the COA required Flagler County to establish that it has standard operating procedures within its UAS Flight Operations Policy Manual and its UAS Flight Operations Training Manual that are consistent with state and federal law. It also had to attest that the UAS Program is for the public interest utilizing its own "public aircraft" that are not used for commercial purposes.

"The UAS team has the discretion to operate under either the COA or part 107 regulations, as each one entails distinct operational requirements," Luna said. "It's worth noting that while part 107 regulations permit compensation, the COA does not."

Current FAA regulations restrict all commercial drone operations to under 400 feet. The county intends to apply for a waiver that would allow it to operate up to 600 feet, as well as a waiver for Beyond the Visual Line of Sight (BVLOS) operations that will facilitate long range missions that can cover our entire coastline.

"We have been working with the Engineering Department to document the 'near shore hard bottom rock' within the area of the Hammock for future dune restoration," Luna said. "This near shore hard bottom rock is a habitat for marine life, so you can't necessarily just top it with sand. We are trying to pinpoint where it exists and how extensive it is."

Expanded abilities would also allow Flagler County to use its newest fixed-wing drone – complete with a detect-and-avoid system and lidar – to measure sand shifts or losses more efficiently after weather events like nor'easters and hurricanes.

"Flying higher means each image (one per second) captures a larger area and is a smoother process when the software stitches them together. After Hurricane Ian and Hurricane Nicole, we mapped the coastline and it took six or seven days," Luna said. "Ideally, we would like to do that in one day because things can change quickly on the ground after a hurricane."

These considerations are especially important, for example, when the county needs documentation to apply for disaster reimbursements.

'DO DATE' EVENTS

05/16/24

A Survivor's Journey | 5 to 6:30 p.m.

Flagler County Public Library -- Palm Coast

2500 Palm Coast Parkway NW

Hosted by the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum

Gain insight into the human capacity for hope

BREAKERS

FLAGLER COUNTY'S S&P FINANCIAL RATING IMPROVES TO AA+

Flagler County's financial rating continues to improve, which is reflective of an improving economic climate and a stronger financial position in the county. The county received word that Standard & Poor's Rating Services boosted the county's rating from AA to AA+ for its general obligation rating and from AA to AA+ for its non-ad valorem debt rating.

"This upgrade reflects the hard work and dedication of each and every one of you in ensuring the success and stability of Flagler County," County Administrator Heidi Petito said. "It reaffirms our commitment to financial management and strategic decision-making."

The rating reflects the S&P view of Flagler County's:

- Significant tax base growth due to new residential development and robust housing demand due to a growing local economy;
- Strong operations because of conservative budgeting practices and stable revenues from local taxes (71%), leading to growth of very strong reserves that we expect will be largely maintained;
- Good management practices including conservative budgeting practices and regular budget monitoring, robust long-term financial and capital planning, and a target to maintain available reserves at a minimum of three months' (25%) operating expenditures; and
- Very strong debt and liabilities profile, including limited budgetary pressure from pension and other postemployment benefit costs (OPEB).

"About four years ago, the Board of County Commissioners made the hard choices necessary to begin moving Flagler towards a more fiscally stable position, and we were able to formulate a multi-level plan that included paying down debt and building up reserves," said Finance Director John Brower.

Operating surpluses, reflecting strong tax revenue, have enabled the county to grow reserves to \$49 million (43% of operating expenditures), providing flexibility for storm-related expenditures given its coastal location, according to the S&P report.

The best S&P rating is AAA.