

Brevard County Board of County Commissioners

Departmental Input/Recommendations

2025 Legislative Initiatives

Natural Resources

Indian River Lagoon and St Johns River

- **SUPPORT** \$100 million recurring appropriation for the Indian River Lagoon Protection Program with state cost-share for Water Projects that **reduce** pollution sources, **remove** legacy loading, **restore** critical ecosystem functions and provide sound, applied **research** for the Indian River Lagoon, St. John's River Upper Basin and Lake Washington. Water Project funding encourages local governments and agriculture to improve stormwater and wastewater treatment, remove legacy loads and restore critical ecosystem functions. Recurring funds are critical to the Indian River Lagoon National Estuary Program.
- **SUPPORT** algal bloom, bacteria and PFAS monitoring and remediation. Harmful algae (brown tides, red tides, and blue-green cyanobacteria) continue to bloom in the Indian River Lagoon and St Johns River, annihilating seagrass habitat, releasing toxins and occasionally creating hypoxic fish kills. Research is needed on the causes and remediation options for harmful blooms. Excess bacteria and PFAS pose health risks to humans and wildlife. Action is needed to track sources and develop cost-effective remediation options.
- **SUPPORT** funding for aerial surveys for manatee population and habitat assessment. Manatee surveys are needed in response to the extensive loss of seagrass in the Indian River Lagoon that has reduced the carrying capacity for manatees and contributed to unprecedented starvation. The aerial surveys will inform risk assessments and help to prioritize urgent habitat restoration.
- **SUPPORT** legislative actions that provide local governments with authority to manage jurisdictional waterways for the purpose of boating safety and to protect infrastructure by limiting long-term, on-water vessel storage and the occurrence of derelict vessels.
- **SUPPORT** the development of a program, process and emergency funding source for removing hurricane debris, including derelict vessels that pollute state waters or impede navigation.
- **SUPPORT** legislation to reduce the risk of pollution from biosolids land applications.
- **OPPOSE** preemption of county authority to regulate water quality to achieve TMDLs.
- **OPPOSE** preemption of county authority to regulate the use and application of fertilizer.

Resiliency

- **SUPPORT** dedicated state funding of at least \$50 million for cost-share grants to sustain sand on Florida's beaches. Healthy funding levels for this cost-share program are critical to support the state's tourism brand, economic well-being and, in Brevard, our globally important sea turtle nesting beaches, including the Archie Carr National Wildlife Refuge.

- **SUPPORT** funding for a federal Feasibility Study to elevate roads over the lagoon and allow for causeway removal. Existing causeways interfere with natural circulation patterns in the lagoon. Stagnant waters contribute to harmful algae blooms. Low-span bridges will improve resilience to storm events and allow for causeway removal to restore natural circulation and flow.

Petroleum Clean-up and Pollutant Storage Compliance Verification Program

- **SUPPORT** legislation that upholds state funding for the Petroleum Restoration Program, Chapter 62-780, F.A.C., and the FDEP Storage Tank Compliance Verification Program, Section 376.3073 F.S.

Public Works

Bridge Infrastructure

- **SUPPORT** funding for the replacement of the **West Central Avenue Bridge (#704024)** located just west of Porpoise Street on Merritt Island. The purpose of the construction project is the replacement of the W. Central Avenue Bridge which is a single span bridge built in 1965. The bridge, at approximately 18 feet in length, crosses a navigable canal connected to the Banana River. The bridge, with noticeable deterioration of the structure and supporting walls, was classified “structurally deficient” in a bridge inspection report dated November 18, 2020. Long-term maintenance due to deterioration of the bridge structure over time will become cost-prohibitive, making replacement more feasible.

The replacement project will include new drainage and a new bridge span consisting of two (2) 12-foot travel lanes with 16-inch shoulders and two (2) 5-foot sidewalks to accommodate pedestrians and other active transportation options. The superstructure will consist of Florida Slab beams and 24-square-inch prestressed concrete pile foundation elements. The existing bridge serves an adjacent residential neighborhood and connects residents to Banana River Drive, SR-A1A and SR-520.

W. Central Avenue Bridge is one of a cluster of four bridges on Merritt Island that have reached their potential lifespan. A Feasibility Analysis was completed for all four bridges in November 2023 at approximately \$10,000,000. The other bridges include Girard Blvd Bridge (#704016), North Banana River Drive (#704014), and North Banana River Drive (#704015). Brevard County is anticipating submitting a grant application to the USDOT/FHWA Bridge Improvement Program (BIP) for the replacement of the Girard Boulevard Bridge in November 2025. Out of the four bridges on Merritt Island, it is the only bridge eligible for federal funding since it is on the National Bridge Inventory (NBI). However, the other three bridges are not federally eligible, making the funding delta approximately \$7,500,000. This replacement project will assure that the new bridge span at W. Central Avenue will be eligible for the NBI in the future. Design work on the W. Central Avenue Bridge is approximately 45% complete. Final Design is anticipated by Q2 FY25. The County is seeking funding in this year’s appropriation at an estimated construction cost of \$2,526,365.

Stormwater Draining Projects

- **SUPPORT** funding for the implementation of the **Scottsmoor North Stormwater Master Drainage Project**. The planning effort completed in August 2024 consists of upgrading and replacing drainage systems to achieve effective flood control in the Scottsmoor region (Basin IX). Five areas of flooding concern include Aurantia Road, Burkholm Canal, Lawrence, Ravencrest and Shamrock-Bouganvilla, however, impacts of the flooding goes far beyond these areas of concern. The plan includes replacing or adding structures such as culverts, inlets, and weirs, clearing or dredging channels and implementing detention measures where feasible. For efficiency and budgetary purposes, the project has been broken down into several phases to ensure a logical progression for flood mitigation and cost effectiveness. The estimated cost associated

with the drainage project (design, survey, permitting and construction) is \$9.3 million. The County is seeking funding in this year's appropriation for Phases 1-3 with an estimated construction cost of \$3.1 million.

- **SUPPORT** funding for the implementation of the **Indialantic Stormwater Drainage Project**. The master planning effort, completed in December 2022, recommended improvements to the drainage systems. The focus area is bound by SR-518 to the north, Paradise Boulevard to the south, the Indian River to the west and SR A1A to the east. The scope of work has been broken down into phases to allow for a logical progression of improvements that include a change in drainage patterns to lessen reliance on rear lot drainage easements in residential backyards and to make improvements from downstream to upstream within the drainage systems. Funding for design, permitting and engineering services has been secured for Phases 1B, 2, and 4 in the amount of \$652,526. Construction funding has been secured for Phase 1 in the approximate amount of \$3.5 million. The total estimated cost associated with the remaining phases (2 - 9) identified in the 2022 Study is approximately \$22 million based on the actual design and construction cost for Phase 1. Brevard County is seeking funding in this year's appropriation for Phase 2 with an estimated construction cost of \$3.5 million.

Utility Services

Port St. John Wastewater Treatment Facility

- **SUPPORT** funding for a new Advanced Wastewater Treatment facility to serve the Port St John service area. This new facility may serve as the treatment facility for future wastewater flow from Space Florida and potentially other wastewater utilities requesting to transfer their flows from the barrier islands to a mainland facility (Port St. John).

The new wastewater treatment plant will operate using Advanced Wastewater Treatment (AWT). AWT is the highest treatment technology available. AWT provides the highest removal of nutrients. This project's disposal will utilize 2 deep injection wells. In order to transfer wastewater flows from the barrier islands to a new facility in Port St John, a new force main transmission will need to be constructed going underneath the Indian and Banana River.

Estimated construction cost is \$625 million.

South Brevard Water and Wastewater Treatment Facility

- **SUPPORT** funding for the South Brevard Water and Wastewater Treatment Facility. These new facilities will be a replacement to the Barefoot Bay facilities and serve the southeast portion of Brevard County to the Sebastian River. This new facility will provide water and sewer to future developments.

The new water treatment plant will operate using Reverse Osmosis (RO). This is a proven technology to provide the highest level of water treatment. RO uses the brackish water for its raw water source which is the desired water source use by the St John River Water Management District. RO is proven to remove PFAS and any pharmaceutical drugs.

The new wastewater treatment plant will operate using Advanced Wastewater Treatment (AWT). AWT is the highest treatment technology available. AWT provides the highest removal of nutrients. This project's disposal will utilize 2 deep injection wells.

Estimated construction cost is \$125 million.

Mims Water Treatment Plant Expansion

- **SUPPORT** funding for the Mims Water Treatment Plant Expansion. This new facility will expand the water treatment that serves Mims and North Brevard.

The new water treatment plant will operate using Reverse Osmosis (RO). This is a proven technology to provide the highest level of water treatment. RO uses the brackish water for its raw water source which is the desired water source use by the St John River Water Management District. RO is proven to remove PFAS and any pharmaceutical drugs. This project's disposal will utilize 2 deep injection wells.

Estimated construction cost is \$85 million.

Merritt Island Redevelopment Agency

Veterans Memorial Center – Medal of Honor Tribute

- **SUPPORT** funding for the Medal of Honor Tribute honoring the legacy of the brave men and women who have selflessly served our country. The Medal of Honor Tribute project will be located at the 80-acre Lakeside Veterans Memorial Park on Merritt Island. When total funding has been obtained and construction completed, the Medal of Honor Tribute will serve as the Park's crowning feature.

The project needs \$600,000 in additional funding to develop the 3-acre Medal of Honor lakeside tribute within the Veterans Memorial Park's master plan. With a total project cost of \$1 million, a \$400,000 commitment from the Merritt Island Redevelopment Agency (MIRA) has been recommended by the MIRA Board, contingent upon the remaining \$600,000 being secured by the Veterans. Once all sources of funds are available, we can create an inspiring space dedicated to Medal of Honor recipients, including those awarded the Congressional Space Medal of Honor. This tribute will provide a profound educational experience honoring the courage and sacrifice of these exceptional individuals.

The funds raised will support the construction of the Medal of Honor Tribute, which will include features such as educational displays, landscaping, lighting, benches, flag poles, structural engineering, permitting, parking, lighting, and a seawall along the lake.

The Memorial Park includes a museum, lakes, and an amphitheater, with annual visitor projections in total exceeding 263,000. These visitors will have the opportunity to learn about and honor Medal of Honor recipients at the Tribute site, enhancing the Park's role as a place of remembrance and learning.

Mosquito Control

Mosquito Control Biology Laboratory Building

- **SUPPORT** fixed capital outlay funding for the construction of a Mosquito Control Biology Laboratory Building. Brevard County Mosquito Control Department, a state-certified Mosquito Control District, has allocated partial funding to construct a new Laboratory Building. The current biology lab, which houses specialized equipment and supplies for Countywide mosquito and disease surveillance and testing, is a 13-year-old singlewide trailer. The current laboratory is not large enough to support the growing mosquito and disease surveillance and testing program, is not rated to withstand hurricane-force winds, and has

required significant repair and maintenance to remain operational. A new laboratory would assist Mosquito Control in building a more robust public health protection program by providing a state-of-the-art facility to ultimately help reduce the local community's risk of exposure to West Nile virus, eastern equine encephalitis, dengue fever and other mosquito-borne illnesses detected throughout Florida. To help offset the new laboratory construction cost and facilitate an increased level of service while housed in the existing facility, American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding was recently utilized to purchase \$300,000 worth of laboratory-related equipment. This has already assisted the Mosquito Control Department in increasing pesticide resistance and efficacy testing as well as mosquito-borne virus monitoring capabilities. For the new laboratory construction project, Mosquito Control has allocated \$3 million in the fiscal year 2024-2025 budget, and construction plans are underway. The new Mosquito Control Biology Laboratory Building is estimated at \$4 million, so legislative funds in the amount of \$850,000 are being sought to address the remaining funding shortfall.

Transit Services

Transit Fleet Electrification Initiative

- **SUPPORT** funding for Transit Services to transition from aging diesel vehicles that exceed federal useful life to modern-, low-, and zero-emission battery electric buses (BEBs) and Hybrid Electric (HE Vehicles). This initiative will improve the reliability and affordability of transit services while achieving significant environmental and cost-saving benefits. To transition from its aging diesel vehicles, which have far exceeded their federal useful life, Transit Services plans to adopt modern, low-and/or zero-emission Battery Electric Buses (BEBs) and Hybrid Electric Vehicles (HEVs). This transition entails the acquisition of Gillig-style BEBs averaging \$1.2 million per unit and paratransit vehicles costing approximately \$260,000 each.

Modernizing Transit's fleet with battery electric buses is a vital step forward and supports compliance with federal guidelines, significantly reduces harmful emissions, lowers operational costs, and improves service reliability and accessibility.

Construction of New Administration, Operations and Maintenance Facility

- **SUPPORT** funding for the construction of a new facility which will allow for future vehicle and employee expansion as we are currently at capacity with no room for growth in either area. Estimated costs for engineering, design and construction will be in the range of \$20 million to \$40 million dollars. Completed Steps to date include property appraisals, FTA consultation, and relocation site identification.

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