

Charlotte County update for 2/17/21

## **Site visits reveal progress on county projects**

By Hector Flores

My administrative team and I have been touring facilities in recent weeks to review progress on construction projects. We visited the Charlotte County Justice Center to see the renovations, including a new secure-entry pavilion, new courtrooms, and expanded or reconfigured spaces for the offices of the state attorney, public defender and clerk of court. The work also included the installation of a generator that will allow the Justice Center to continue operating during power interruptions. That part of the project was funded by the 1% local option sales tax approved by voters in 2014.

The Justice Center was originally designed with future space allocations in mind, so all of the changes were performed on the same footprint with the exception of the security pavilion. Most of the added space was formerly occupied by county records, including plat books dating back decades. The clerk has been digitizing records for several years and a new leased storage facility is housing physical records that must be preserved.

A separate project at the Justice Center repaired damage caused by Hurricane Irma and included mitigation measures to prevent future storm damage.

Our site visits also included the new Family Services Center in Port Charlotte, which is moving along very quickly since we held a groundbreaking ceremony there in October. The 17,000-square-foot center is another 2014 sales tax project and will house the county's 211 department as well as community nonprofit partners providing vital services to residents. The new building is the first of two phases for the project. Funding for Phase 2 will be provided the 2020 1% local option sales tax approved by voters in November.

Another sales tax project making quick progress is the community sailing center at Port Charlotte Beach Park. The workshop building is dried in and the event pavilion and boat storage pole barn have been erected. Site work continues on paving and landscaping with the completion date expected at the end of next month.

Last month, we visited the new Centennial Park recreation center and pool and the renovated Tringali Park recreation center, both 2014 sales tax projects that have been completed and open to the public since last year. We also toured the sites for 2020 sales tax projects at G.C. Herring Park and the Placida Boat Ramp expansion in Englewood. I look forward to future visits to those projects and will provide updates on our progress in delivering the amenities voters approved in past and current sales tax measures. I have worked for Charlotte County for 25 years and assure you the difference has been transformative.

For information about all county capital projects, visit [www.charlottecountyfl.gov/projects](http://www.charlottecountyfl.gov/projects).

**Spring training**

Pitchers and catchers report! For baseball fans, that phrase signals the beginning of spring training. Tampa Bay Rays pitchers and catchers reported to Charlotte Sports Park Wednesday for the start of their 13<sup>th</sup> training camp in Charlotte County.

As you know, the Rays are coming off an American League Championship season and a trip to the World Series. The team has 15 games scheduled at the sports park between Feb. 28 and March 28. All home games begin at 1:05 p.m. For more information visit [www.mlb.com/rays/spring-training](http://www.mlb.com/rays/spring-training).

### **Vaccine update**

As of Wednesday, nearly 26,000 people have been vaccinated in Charlotte County, according to the state vaccination database. Nearly 8,500 have received both doses. To view the latest vaccination update, visit [tinyurl.com/FLvaccinations](http://tinyurl.com/FLvaccinations). The tally is updated daily.

For more information, visit [www.CharlotteCountyFL.gov](http://www.CharlotteCountyFL.gov) and click Vaccine Information.

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