

Charlotte County update for 3/17/21

Sales tax projects nearing completion

By Hector Flores

I like to update you on the progress of our 1% local option sales tax projects to ensure people know we are delivering on our promise to invest the tax dollars voters approved for infrastructure and amenities.

The community sailing center at Port Charlotte Beach Park is near completion, with sod and security fencing installed, new sidewalks poured and the new asphalt driveway completed. Interior electrical work and window installation on the workshop continues. The pavilion for special events and youth sailing training classes and the covered boat storage area have been completed.

The sailing center is a Tier 2 project from the 2014 1% local option sales tax. We were able to fund it because revenue exceeded projections for all the projects on the Tier 1 list.

The Family Services Center on Gibraltar Drive in Port Charlotte is ahead of schedule and under budget. Interior drywall installation has been completed and tile work is underway. Exterior stucco, paint and brick work has been completed. The 17,000-square-foot facility will house Charlotte County's 211 department, non-profit youth services and community partners. It is being funded by the 2014 1% local option sales tax.

Phase 2 of the Family Services, which is on the project list for the 2020 sales tax extension approved by voters in November 2020, will be located adjacent to Phase 1 on the six-acre site. Using proceeds from the 2014 sales tax, we plan to put the Phase 2 design out to bid later this year, with construction slated for 2022.

Work is progressing on another 2014 sales tax project, the widening of Olean Boulevard in the Parkside Community Redevelopment Area. As you may have noticed, Olean Boulevard is closed between Harbor Boulevard and Easy Street while the contractor installs stormwater drainage and utility pipes.

One of the busiest local roads in the county, Olean Boulevard serves our medical district and connects U.S. 41 and Kings Highway and all the residential neighborhoods in between. The finished project will feature five lanes, with two travel lanes in each direction and a turn lane in the middle.

The project also includes sidewalks on both sides from Aaron Street to Easy Street, LED decorative lighting and new traffic signal systems with pedestrian crossings at Aaron Street and Harbor Boulevard. The project also includes multi-use paths and utility expansions on Aaron Street and Gertrude Avenue. Completion is projected for this fall.

For the latest information on all county capital projects, including those funded by the sales tax, visit www.charlottecountyfl.gov/projects.

Centennial Gala

Charlotte County will commemorate the 100th anniversary of the county's creation with a Centennial Gala, 6-11 p.m., April 23 at the Charlotte Harbor Event and Conference Center. This gala will include a cocktail hour, dinner, cash bar, dancing and live entertainment.

Tickets are \$65 per person and can be purchased by April 9 at charlottecounty100.com/centennial-gala. The Charlotte Harbor Event and Conference Center is located at 75 Taylor St. in Punta Gorda.

For information, contact Cindy DiGiacomo at 941-235-5009 or Cynthia.Digiacom@CharlotteCountyFL.gov.

Vaccine update

As of Wednesday, nearly 60,000 people have been vaccinated in Charlotte County, according to the state vaccination database. More than 27,000 people have received both doses. To view the latest vaccination update, visit tinyurl.com/FLvaccinations. The tally is updated daily.

To preregister, visit MyVaccine.FL.gov or call 866-200-9160 (or 833-990-3549 for TTY users).

For more information, visit www.CharlotteCountyFL.gov and click Vaccine Information.

Readers may reach Charlotte County Administrator Hector Flores at Hector.Flores@CharlotteCountyFL.gov.