

## **A look ahead to 2022 for Charlotte County**

By Hector Flores

The start of the new year is a good time to look ahead at the opportunities and challenges it will present and provide an overview of what we'll be working on in the coming months.

No doubt the Omicron variant of the coronavirus will complicate plans and require us to be vigilant and flexible. We continue to strongly recommend visitors to county facilities wear face coverings and practice social distancing. We beefed up our online services early in the pandemic and are pleased with how many people, especially in the building trades, have adapted to doing business with the county online.

Filling vacant positions and replacing retiring employees is and will continue to be a challenge. Working in public service is a rewarding career and if you or someone you know is looking for employment options, please consider joining us. For job opportunities, visit [www.charlottecountyfl.jobs](http://www.charlottecountyfl.jobs).

The county has numerous capital projects underway, including design work on Phase 2 of the Family Services Center, the Placida Park boat ramp expansion, G.C. Herring Park, Port Charlotte Beach Park recreation center replacement and Lake Betty Park.

A new Fire Station 10 on Don Pedro Island is expected to be completed next month and a new Fire Station 2 in Murdock is expected to follow in the spring. We're also working with a consultant to determine the locations for replacements for stations 3, 6 and 17.

This year we will be hiring a design firm for the next phases of the Edgewater Drive expansion, which will ultimately four-lane Edgewater from Midway Boulevard to Flamingo Boulevard, including a rerouting of Flamingo to straighten the existing route and improve the intersection at State Road 776.

We have a lot of work ahead of us, but we're excited to continue to deliver exceptional service to our residents and stakeholders in the coming year.

### **Water quality**

Three meetings have been scheduled to solicit public input about the county's draft water quality monitoring strategy to be implemented this spring. Each meeting will provide an overview of the monitoring priorities throughout the county, with additional details on specific regions of focus. The meeting times, dates and locations are:

- 6-8 p.m., Jan. 19, 2022, Charlotte Harbor Event and Conference Center.
- 5:30-7:30 p.m., Jan. 20, 2022, Ann and Chuck Dever Regional Park Recreation Center
- 6-8 p.m., Jan. 26, 2022, Charlotte Harbor Event and Conference Center

No pre-registration is required, but seating is limited. For information regarding the draft water quality monitoring strategy, visit [www.charlottecountyfl.gov/waterqualitygis](http://www.charlottecountyfl.gov/waterqualitygis).

### **Traffic advisory**

The intersection of Olean and Harbor boulevards will be closed to all traffic beginning Monday, Jan. 10 until Monday, March 7. This closure is required for the safety of the motoring public and pedestrians in the area during the construction of the intersection as part of the Olean Boulevard project. Signs will be in place to direct traffic to both hospitals. Detour signs will be in place directing traffic around the work zone. Travelers are encouraged to choose an alternate route.

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