



# 2024/25 ANNUAL REPORT





Christopher Constance  
District 2

Joe Tiseo  
Chairman  
District 5

Bill Truex  
District 3

Ken Doherty  
Vice Chairman  
District 1

Stephen R. Deutsch  
District 4



## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- To be recognized as a community leader in quality-of-life issues.
- To improve Charlotte County government's morale and employee satisfaction.
- To increase and enhance the organization's and Charlotte County's productivity and performance.
- To enhance and improve our customers' satisfaction.
- To positively change the image of government.
- To improve communication both internally and externally.

## STRATEGIC FOCUS AREAS

### Economic and Community Development

To create a business climate that promotes a diversified, growing economy consistent with sustainable growth management plans, environmental stewardship and enhanced quality of life.

### Infrastructure

To build and maintain countywide infrastructure that meets our evolving needs and enhances our community appearance, improves public safety and protects our natural resources.

### Public Services

To maintain a safe and healthy community by delivering essential services from skilled, professional and dedicated public servants.

### Efficient and Effective Government

To manage fiscally sound county operations with a culture of transparency, accountability, citizen engagement and innovation.



## **OUR MISSION**

**Delivering Exceptional Service**

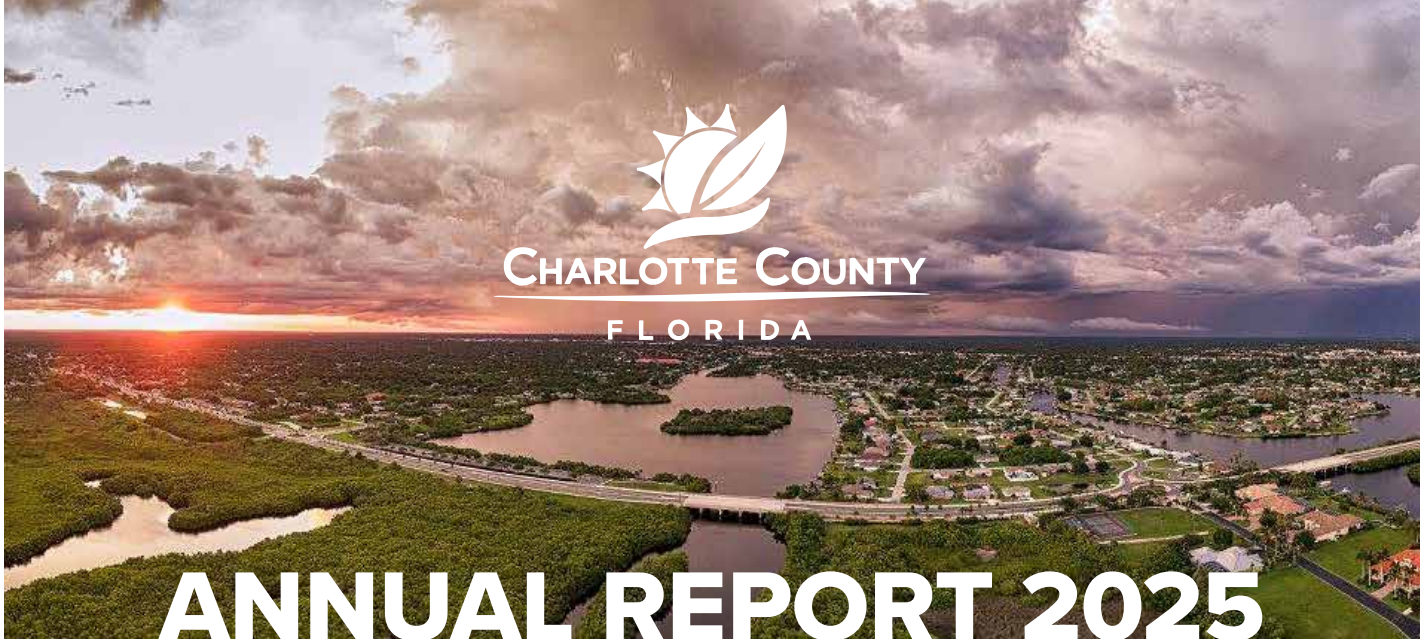
## **OUR VISION**

**To preserve and enrich our community's quality of life for those who live, work and play in our paradise.**

## **OUR VALUES**

**Charlotte CARES**

**Committed  
Accountable  
Resourceful  
Energetic  
Supportive**



The Charlotte County 2025 Annual Report looks back at the significant progress of the past fiscal year. It highlights the Board of County Commissioners’ commitment to providing the community their desired levels of service, investing in infrastructure, managing and being prepared for growth, and maintaining fiscal stewardship in times of economic challenges.

This past year, our community and organization again proved our resiliency, taking on the additional challenges brought on by back-to-back storm events in Hurricanes Helene and Milton. Recovery and rebuilding efforts are a constant part of our daily work and our projects in the short term and long term. The Board has put in place the systems and resources to ensure that together we become even more resilient.

Our dedicated staff across all departments continued to make progress on initiatives and projects. Their efforts are performed with the mindset of strategically advancing the Board’s goals and you’ll find the report is reflective of that. I want to recognize and thank all our teammates who are professional public servants that place the highest priority on our mission of Delivering Exceptional Service.

I want to thank the Board for their vision and developing their strategic focus areas & goals that guide & provide a framework for decision making related to our work efforts. I look forward to continued progress in 2026.

Thank you.

*Hector Flores*

County Administrator



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## ASSET MANAGEMENT

### Asset Management Plan

We continue to review our Strategic Asset Management Plan and are working on several of the recommended strategies and objectives. This Strategic Plan is a five-year plan implementing best practices and is aligned with the Board's Strategic Focus areas and will be reviewed annually by the Steering Committee. We now have over 30 key staff members who have obtained the Institute of Asset Management's Certificate designation and two staff members with the Distinguished Diploma.

Charlotte County staff presented a Case Study and Webinar to the North American Chapter of the Institute of Asset Management in July 2025. Staff was also chosen as a finalist in the Next Gen Award for the North America chapter of the IAM. The award winner will be announced at their meeting in October 2025.

### Cityworks Software System Update

Public Works, Utilities and Facilities have gone live with the new Asset Management Software system. Phase 2 for the software implementation includes upgrading the software to the latest version of Unity Maintain which is a cloud-based product. Community Services, as well as some other integrations such as the "Call Before You Dig" national line 811 and CC-TV, will be part of the implementation. In addition, we are migrating to ArcGIS Indoors for our vertical assets to allow for capturing better data and provide staff easier access to the data.

## LEGISLATIVE MANAGEMENT

Through advocacy efforts, Charlotte County successfully secured nearly \$14 million in state-appropriated funding to advance a series of critical projects that directly benefit the community. These investments include improvements to water quality through the Ackerman Septic-to-Sewer Conversion, which will remove hundreds of septic tanks and reduce nutrient pollution from entering Charlotte Harbor. Emergency response will be enhanced with the acquisition of high-water rescue vehicles, which ensure timely rescues during flooding events and provide added



firefighting support in dry seasons. Transportation safety and resiliency will be strengthened by hardening additional intersections with hurricane-resistant traffic signal infrastructure, keeping roadways operational and accessible after storms.

Additional funding supports the Flood Monitoring Response Network, providing real-time water level data to help emergency responders act swiftly during life-threatening flood events, and the construction of a permanent Tender House at the South Gulf Cove Lock, ensuring safe boating operations in the area while protecting wildlife. These critical investments strengthen Charlotte County's resilience, prioritize public safety, and support a higher level of emergency response across the community.

# WATER QUALITY & RESILIENCY

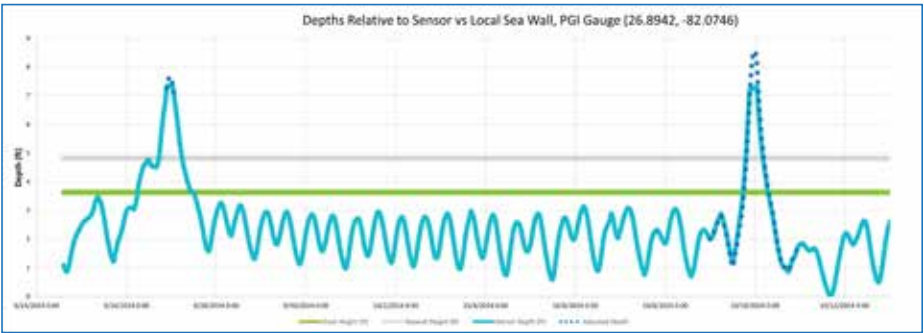
In FY 2025, the Water Quality program evolved into the Water Quality and Resiliency Program, expanding its mission in line with the Board’s One Charlotte, One Water vision. The team advanced continuous monitoring, strengthened storm response capabilities, and deepened partnerships with agencies, HOAs, and citizen scientists to better protect our waterways.

Through expanded sampling and digital monitoring tools, the program identified nutrient sources impacting Charlotte Harbor and implemented targeted testing during storm events. Post-hurricane surge monitoring allowed staff to quickly assess bacterial levels, improving public health response. A new GIS-based digital field form and centralized water data system now streamline reporting, improve accuracy, and provide more accessible information for decision-making.

Collaboration with universities, state agencies, and regional partners has strengthened our ability to analyze data, survey field conditions, and test innovative monitoring methods. The addition of an Environmental & Community Resiliency Coordinator has improved cross-department coordination, public education, and communication tools, including a redesigned online water quality dashboard.

Backed by \$2.5 million in new state appropriations, the program is scaling a comprehensive monitoring network and flood/stormwater adaptation strategy. These efforts expand knowledge of Charlotte Harbor’s health, promote interagency collaboration, and build community resiliency against rising seas, stronger storms, and flood risks.

Charlotte County is making measurable progress toward implementation of the One Charlotte, One Water plan, integrating monitoring, partnerships, and citizen engagement to safeguard water resources for future generations.





# BUDGET & ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

## REAL ESTATE SERVICES

### NACO Award - Post-Storm Site Planning & Usage

In fiscal year 2024-2025, Real Estate Services worked with Emergency Operations to develop a site usage tool for real-time utilization. This tool proved extremely valuable in the Emergency Operations function. Our task to identify sites, obtain owner approval for site use, and communicate our findings to Emergency Operations was ramped up tremendously. The site mapping asset allowed all agencies operating within the Emergency Operations to communicate to their respective teams the locations and services available. In excess of 75 sites were utilized during and after Hurricanes Helene and Milton.



### Strengthen Resiliency and Recovery

After Hurricane Milton, Real Estate Services worked with Public Works to create a solution for debris management and removal. Real Estate Services identified and utilized a number of parcels for sand collection and debris recipient sites. As part of the recovery process, Real Estate Services processed 146 private property debris removal agreements for public works to remove hurricane debris from Little Gasparilla Island. In addition, Real Estate Services facilitated usage agreements for various State and Federal agencies.



## PURCHASING

### Electronic P-Card Requests

With the assistance of Information Technology, Purchasing has successfully implemented an electronic submission process for all procurement card requests. This process allows department requesters to submit their procurement card forms via SharePoint, electronically route to their department director for approval and then will be submitted to Purchasing for processing.

This process is an accomplishment under the County's Strategic Focus Area of Efficient and Effective Government. The process of moving from paper to electronic submission is a cost savings, time savings, and offers flexibility and security.

## INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

### NACo GIS Awards 2025



Charlotte County's IT GIS team received two national awards for excellence in:

**911 Call Routing Optimization** - Through a multi-departmental GIS collaboration, the county improved data accuracy and emergency response efficiency during its urban transition. This initiative integrates input from departments such as IT/GIS, Community Development, Public Works, and 911 Mapping to ensure new developments meet county standards and support public safety.

**Water Quality Monitoring Enhancement** - Leveraging ArcGIS Survey123, the county modernized environmental data collection across Charlotte Harbor and its coastlines, replacing paper forms with digital workflows. This shift has reduced errors, increased data precision, and improved monitoring of key indicators like temperature, salinity, and pH. Interagency cooperation with state and regional partners ensures sound environmental management and empowers informed decision-making.

## FISCAL

### MUNIS Financials Go-Live

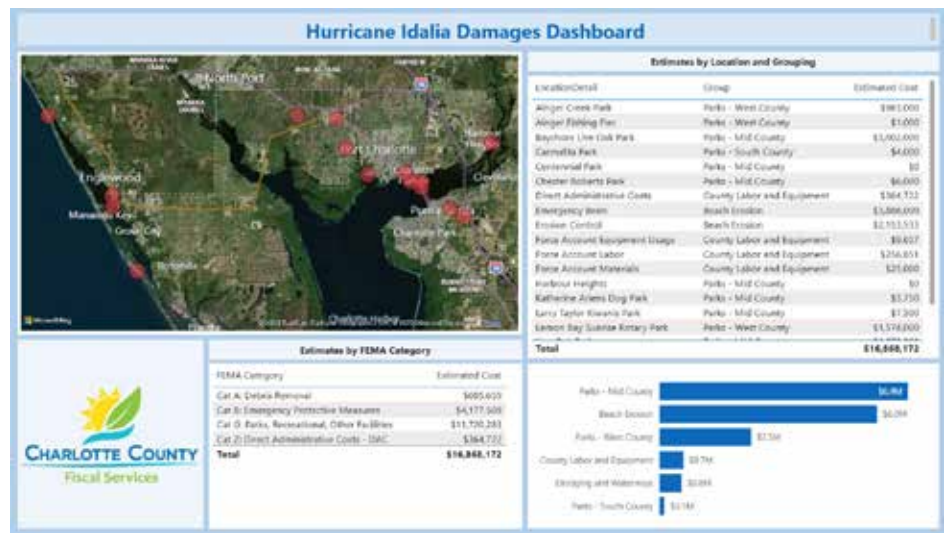
Fiscal Services successfully went live on Oct. 1, 2024 with the Financials modules of the County's new Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system, MUNIS. This marked a major milestone in the transition from the legacy Eden system, and the implementation has been smooth and well-received. The new system streamlines core functions such as accounting, budgeting, procurement, project and grant management, and has already begun to reduce redundancy and improve operational efficiency.

Fiscal Services continues to collaborate closely with the Charlotte County Clerk of the Circuit Court and the County Comptroller's Office as we move toward the next phase of the ERP rollout. Preparations for the Human Capital modules are actively underway, with staff engaged in process analysis, testing, and training to ensure another successful implementation.

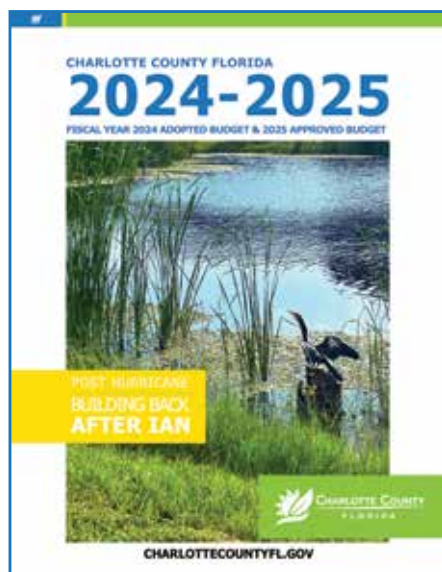
### Establishment of Disaster Recovery Management Division

This year, Fiscal Services successfully launched the Disaster Recovery Management (DRM) core service, marking a critical step toward strengthening the County's approach to post-disaster financial recovery. As a newly established function, DRM has taken the lead in guiding departments through the FEMA Public Assistance reimbursement process, ensuring compliance with federal requirements and laying the groundwork for more consistent and transparent financial recovery efforts. To support this work, a consultant was brought on board to assist with identifying opportunities for standardizing documentation, improving data management, and developing countywide processes.

DRM has also actively collaborated with Risk Management and the Emergency Management Department's newly formed Recovery and Resiliency working group. Through regular engagement with departmental staff and key stakeholders, the team has helped identify gaps in both the damage assessment, public assistance and insurance reimbursement processes, and is working to build consensus around recommendations for improvement. While still in its early stages, the division's work has already begun to shape a more coordinated, informed, and resilient approach to disaster financial management across the organization.



## GFOA Distinguished Budget Presentation Award



Fiscal Services was awarded the Government Finance Officers Association's (GFOA) Distinguished Budget Presentation Award for the FY2024–2025 biennial budget, marking a significant achievement for the department and the County. After conducting a dry run in the prior cycle to familiarize the team with the GFOA's rigorous criteria, staff dedicated substantial effort to enhancing the budget document's clarity, structure, and alignment with national best practices. Their work

paid off with the County earning the award on its first official submission.

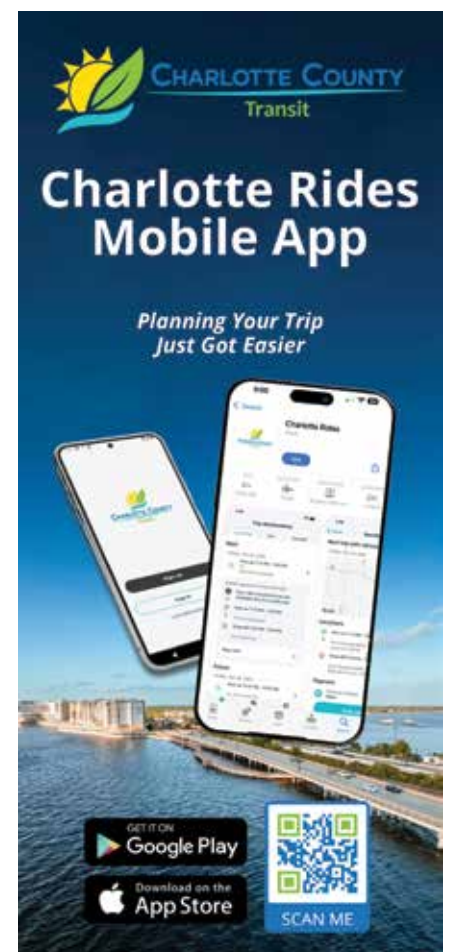
This recognition reflects a major step forward in the County's commitment to transparency, accountability, and strategic financial planning. The awarded budget serves as more than a financial plan—it functions as a policy guide, operational tool, and communication resource for both decision-makers and the public. The success of this initiative strengthens the foundation for future improvements in budget development and public engagement.

## TRANSIT

### NACo Award – Charlotte Rides Mobile App

In a continued effort to improve and enhance public transportation services, Transit launched the Charlotte Rides mobile app in November 2024. This innovative platform is designed to provide residents and visitors with seamless access to public transportation, offering real-time tracking, schedule management, trip planning, and enhanced accessibility features.

The Charlotte Rides mobile app is fully integrated with the vehicle dispatch scheduling software. This enables passengers the flexibility to efficiently schedule and manage their trips, improving mobility across the Charlotte County service area.



## Community Outreach & Engagement

One of the most impactful recent enhancements has been the development of Transit’s Community Outreach Team. This dedicated group attends County-sponsored events, HOA meetings, agency gatherings, and other public forums with a unified goal: to educate the community about Transit services in a fun, engaging, and productive manner. To date, the Outreach Team has successfully connected with over 3,000 individuals, increasing public awareness and understanding of the transportation options available throughout the County. Notably, this outreach work is in addition to their regular job responsibilities, a testament to their exceptional dedication and genuine passion for serving the community. Each team member takes great pride in representing Transit and ensuring that residents—especially those who are underserved—are informed and empowered to access critical transportation resources.

## Hurricane Response and Recovery

During Hurricanes Helene and Milton, Transit provided hundreds of evacuation trips, ensuring the safe transport of vulnerable residents and playing a vital role in life-saving emergency measures. The Transit team received commendation from the City of Punta Gorda Chief of Police for assisting in rescue missions by providing transportation for over 100 residents and 30 animals to County shelters.

In the aftermath of each storm, Transit worked closely with shelter managers to coordinate return transportation or relocate residents to safe alternate locations. Recognizing that many residents required longer-term sheltering, Transit implemented scheduled transportation services to ensure individuals could maintain essential routines such as medical appointments.

These efforts reflect Charlotte County Transit’s ongoing commitment to public safety, community resilience, and equitable access to essential services during times of crisis.

## WELLNESS

### Cigna: Healthy Workforce Designation Gold level

Wellness is fundamentally about the people within an organization. By fostering a genuine culture shift, healthy practices can be embedded into the workplace and beyond, reducing stress and burnout, lowering healthcare costs, and enhancing overall well-being and satisfaction.



Better well-being starts with better engagement: healthy employees drive a healthy business. The Cigna Healthy Workforce Designation evaluates organizations based on the core components of their well-being programs, including leadership and culture, program foundations and execution, policies

and accommodations, and additional areas. Organizations recognized with this designation set the standard of excellence for organizational health and vitality.

Cigna has awarded Charlotte County Government the Gold Level Healthy Workforce Designation for demonstrating a strong commitment to improving the health and well-being of its employees through a comprehensive workplace wellness program. At Charlotte County Government, employee health is our top priority, and it is an honor to be recognized with the Cigna Healthy Workforce Designation.

### Mental Health America - Bell Seal for Workplace Mental Health Platinum



The Bell Seal for Workplace Mental Health certification acknowledges employers dedicated to fostering mentally healthy workplaces. This certification evaluates organizations based on comprehensive criteria across four key areas: Workplace Culture, Benefits, Compliance, and Wellness.

We are proud to announce that Charlotte County Government has been awarded the Platinum Level Bell Seal for Workplace Mental Health for 2025. This prestigious recognition highlights our commitment to supporting the mental health and well-being of our employees. Recipients of the Bell Seal are nationally recognized for meeting or exceeding workplace standards that promote positive mental health and well-being, joining a community of leaders dedicated to advancing the workplace mental health movement.





## Onboarded Internal Communications Manager

- An internal communications manager position was created and filled in March 2025 to strengthen messaging throughout the organization.
- The work performed by the internal communications manager increases the line of sight between employees' daily tasks and the County Commission's Efficient and Effective Government strategic focus area.

## New Service Request Application

Served as project lead for implementation of a new service request application, OneView.

- OneView enables user to submit requests for information or report issues to the county via the county website or a smart phone app. The product is integrated with the county's asset management program Cityworks. The Facilities Management Department also uses the app to process and track facility work orders.



- The Charlotte County app furthers the County Commission's Efficient and Effective Government strategic focus area, specifically its bold goal to ensure a culture of continuous improvement.

## Website Graphics Improvements Project

Completed several graphics improvements to the county website to enhance the user experience and increase the usability of the public website.

- New background photos added to webpage sections help visually separate information.
- Created branded colored buttons and replaced key links with buttons throughout department pages to improve ease of navigation.
- Added a quickserve icon buttons to the home page to help users quickly find frequently visited pages.



## Contest Submissions to NACo and ICMA

Organized contest submissions to National Association of Counties Achievement Award and International City-County Managers Association's Strategic Leadership and Governance Awards.

- Received 31 Achievement Awards and the county's first ICMA award of any kind.
- The awards support the County Commission's Efficient and Effective Government strategic focus area, specifically its bold goal to ensure a culture of continuous improvement.



## Crisis Communications

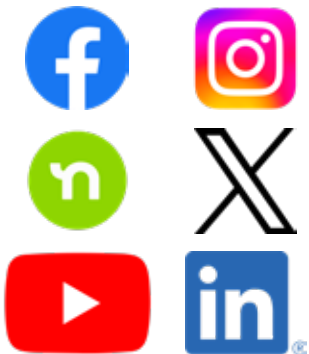


The entire Communications Department served in the Joint Information Center in response to hurricanes Helene and Milton.

- The JIC issued 264 hurricane-related news releases between Sept. 24, 2024 and March 28, 2025. The county's website had 1.3 million active users between Sept. 1, 2024 and July 10, 2025 and 5.1 million pageviews.
- The Communications Department's service in the Joint Information Center supports the County Commission's Efficient and Effective Government and Public Service strategic focus areas, specifically its bold goal to strengthen the resiliency and recovery capacity of the organization.



**264** News Releases  
of Hurricane-Related  
Information



## Onboarded New Social Media Manager

- County Facebook page followers reached 29,559, a 12.1% increase between Sept. 1, 2024 and July 11, 2025.
- County Facebook page had 64,541 Interactions (reactions, comments and shares, a 20.6% increase between Sept. 1, 2024 and July 11, 2025.
- The Communications Department's social media operation supports the County Commission's Efficient and Effective Government and Public Service strategic focus areas, specifically its bold goal to manage and communicate the complexities of a changing organization.



# COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

## POP-UP PERMITTING SITE IN WEST COUNTY

In response to the widespread damage caused by Hurricanes Helene and Milton in 2024, the Charlotte County Community Development Department quickly established a pop-up permitting site at the Mac V. Horton West County Annex in Englewood. This initiative addressed a longstanding concern among west county residents, who historically felt underserved in disaster recovery efforts that focused primarily on mid and south county areas. By bringing permitting services directly to the hardest-hit western portion of the county, the site made it easier for residents to obtain timely permits for residential storm-related repairs such as roofing, electrical, plumbing, and window replacements.

The pop-up permitting site has significantly benefited the public by reducing travel burdens, wait times, and permitting delays, allowing homeowners to begin repairs and return to normalcy faster. Its specialized focus eased the load on the county's main permitting office and provided face-to-face assistance that helped residents navigate complex permitting requirements with greater confidence. The successful launch and continued operation of this site into 2025 highlights Charlotte County's commitment to listening to residents' needs and improving disaster recovery processes.

The creation of the pop-up site required extensive collaboration across multiple county entities, including the Facilities Department, Tax Collector's Office, and

Supervisor of Elections, to integrate permitting services without disrupting critical government functions during an election year and peak tax season. Utilizing an existing government facility minimized costs, with investments focused on staffing, operations, and technology.

This initiative aligns closely with the County's Strategic Focus Area Goals. It advances Public Services by delivering essential, professional assistance that promotes a safe and healthy community. It supports Economic and Community Development by enabling quicker home repairs, stabilizing neighborhoods, and fostering a resilient local economy. It contributes to Infrastructure by facilitating the rebuilding of storm-damaged homes in compliance with codes, thereby protecting natural resources and public safety. Lastly, it exemplifies Efficient and Effective Government through transparent, coordinated operations that prioritize accountability, citizen engagement, and innovation, even amid complex circumstances.

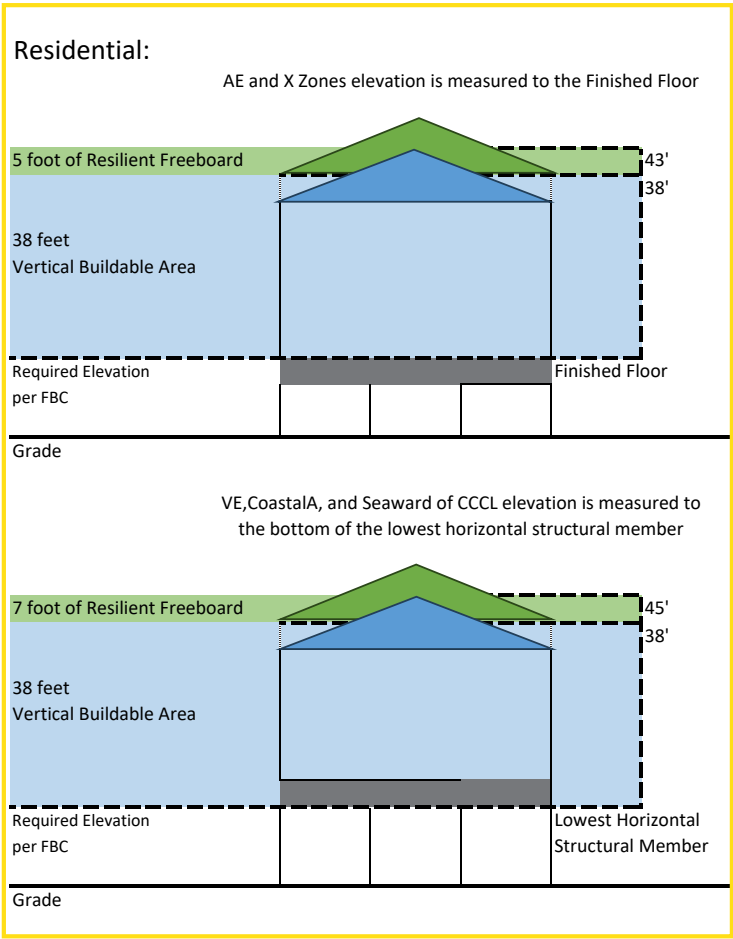


# MANASOTA SANDPIPER KEY OVERLAY CODE REVISION PROJECT

Following the severe flooding from hurricanes Helene and Milton in 2024, Charlotte County Community Development updated the Manasota Sandpiper Key Overlay Code to better protect the barrier island’s unique environment and community. This revised code, completed in November 2024, enhances flood resilience by allowing the reconstruction and elevation of older, non-conforming buildings to meet modern FEMA flood standards. It also introduced voluntary freeboard options for additional flood protection, adjusted height calculations to align with updated flood data, and maintained strict limits on building heights and prohibited high-rise developments to preserve the island’s low-density character.

This update benefits the public by providing clearer, more flexible regulations that support safer rebuilding and reduce future flood risk. Homeowners can now more easily restore their properties with protections that may lower flood insurance costs, while the community retains its natural beauty and character. The revised code also streamlines recovery by clarifying redevelopment requirements, fostering confidence and stability among residents and property owners.

The project aligns with the County’s Strategic Focus Areas by advancing Public Services through expert planning and community engagement. It supports Economic and Community Development by encouraging sustainable growth and preserving quality of life. It enhances Infrastructure by promoting resilient building practices that protect communities and preserve the environment. It also exemplifies Efficient and Effective Government through fiscally responsible, transparent, and collaborative policy development.



# DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION OF THE NOTICE OF COMMENCEMENT PROCESS

In the summer of 2024, the Community Development Department successfully implemented a digital integration between our permitting software (Accela) and the Clerk of Circuit Court’s e-Record system to streamline the submission process for notarized Notices of Commencement. This important permitting document can now be uploaded electronically just once and is automatically shared between both agencies, eliminating the need for residents and contractors to physically deliver it to multiple offices. This improvement has significantly reduced the time and effort required by the public, cutting wait times by an average of 50%. The new system simplifies the permitting process, allowing customers to focus on their projects instead of administrative tasks. Additionally, this paperless approach decreases the likelihood of errors and supports environmental sustainability by reducing paper usage.

This initiative supports the County’s Strategic Focus Area Goals. It embodies Efficient and Effective Government by leveraging technology and interagency collaboration to streamline workflows and reduce costs. It enhances Public Services by providing a faster, more reliable permitting process. Finally, this improvement benefits Infrastructure by accelerating the approval of projects that maintain and enhance the county’s physical environment and public safety.



**ROGER D. EATON**  
Clerk of the Circuit Court & County Comptroller  
Charlotte County, Florida

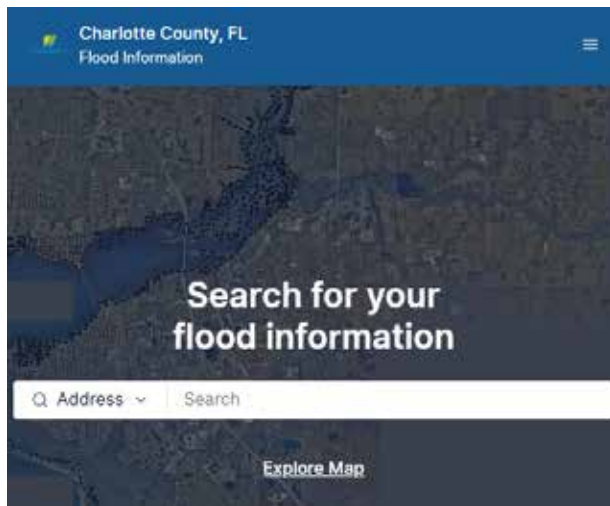


### CLERK & COUNTY STREAMLINE PERMITTING PROCESS

This innovative system allows for Permitting Notice of Commencements to be filed directly with the Building Department, and forwarded electronically to the Clerk's Official Records system. This new update simplifies inter-agency processes and enhances public service efficiency, allowing for a one-stop process for our customers.

#### KEY BENEFITS

- **Single-Step Filing:** No need to visit multiple offices. Apply for building permits and file notices of commencements seamlessly!
- **Saves Time & Money:** With a direct electronic link between the Community Development Department and the Clerk's records, applicants save both time and money.
- **Environmentally Friendly:** Reduces paper use, aligning with digital and sustainable service goals.



## FORERUNNER FLOODPLAIN MANAGEMENT PLATFORM

This year, our department made significant progress in improving public access to floodplain information and streamlining compliance processes by developing and launching a new online platform, Forerunner. Forerunner is designed to provide residents and stakeholders with accurate, up-to-date information about flood risk for properties within the county.

The platform offers several key features aimed at improving efficiency and accessibility. Users are able to search for a property's flood zone, base flood elevation, and other relevant compliance indicators. If an elevation certificate exists for a property, it will be accessible through the portal, eliminating the need for residents to request it separately. In addition, users have the ability to upload digitally-signed and sealed elevation certificates when submitting permit applications for structures in FEMA-designated flood zones. The site also includes a direct contact feature, allowing users to submit inquiries to the floodplain coordinators by providing a property address and short message.

Forerunner represents a major advancement in public service delivery. It improves transparency by giving residents self-service access to important flood data, saves time and costs associated with floodplain compliance, and supports better preparedness by helping property owners understand their flood risk. It also enhances operational efficiency by reducing staff time spent responding to individual document requests and inquiries.

This initiative supports the Strategic Focus Area Goals. It aligns with Public Services by helping maintain a safe and healthy community through professional, accessible floodplain management. It supports Infrastructure goals by enabling better compliance with floodplain regulations. Lastly, it advances Efficient and Effective Government by leveraging technology to improve transparency, streamline services, and increase citizen engagement.

## ACCELA OPTIMIZATION

Throughout this fiscal year, our department has been actively engaged in an Accela Optimization initiative with the Information Technology Division, a focused effort to enhance the performance and usability of the Accela Citizen Access (ACA) portal. This portal provides residents and contractors with the ability to apply for permits, submit Code Compliance cases, track application or case statuses, schedule inspections, and make payments online. The goal of the initiative is to assess current system functionality, identify challenges, and implement improvements that benefit both the public and internal users.

The Accela Optimization initiative improves access to essential services through a more efficient and user-friendly digital platform. With fewer steps and clearer processes, users can complete tasks online without the need for in-person visits, saving time and increasing transparency. Internally, staff gain access to a more streamlined system with better workflows, fewer manual tasks, and improved system reliability.

Key activities under this initiative included a two-day on-site workshop held in March 2025. During these sessions, day-to-day users shared feedback, described system pain points, and gave suggestions for improvement. A solution architect from Accela facilitated the workshops and offered recommendations on optimizing system processes. The full system assessment continued through the month of March 2025, with feedback from workshops and individual meetings informing the next steps.

The final meeting with Accela took place in May 2025, during which the remaining discussion items were addressed. The Accela solution architect has since provided a list of recommendations, which include automation opportunities, usability enhancements, ACA improvements, configuration adjustments, and training options. Management is currently reviewing these recommendations to prioritize the changes that are most impactful and feasible to implement moving forward.

This initiative aligns with the Strategic Focus Area Goal of Efficient and Effective Government by advancing a more transparent approach to service delivery. It also supports the Public Services goal by improving the tools available to our professional staff, allowing them to deliver services more effectively and meet the needs of the community.





# COMMUNITY SERVICES

## LIBRARY & HISTORY

### 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten/Preschool Prep



Our Youth Librarians kickstarted the 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten program, designed to enhance parent-child bonding through reading and give young children a strong foundation for early learning. Studies estimate that one in five children experience difficulties learning to read. By nurturing a love of reading early, families can give their child a head start! So far, two families have completed the monumental challenge.



Building on early literacy across the branches, five PreSchool Prep classes were taught by our Youth Librarians. This extended program, for children 3-4 years old, is designed to improve listening and group interaction skills while providing practice for the school environment. This year 54 students graduated from the program better prepared for preschool success.



### New Point Comfort Historical Marker

On Thursday, Feb. 20, 2025, History Services dedicated Charlotte County's 22nd historical marker, New Point Comfort. Originally settled in 1891, the land was purchased by Stanley Lampo in 1924 and became the first subdivision platted on the Charlotte County side of Englewood. The marker was generously sponsored by Mr. Jim Christman, Stanley Lampo's nephew, who spoke at the dedication ceremony along with Commissioner Bill Truex.

**Charlotte County's**  
**22<sup>nd</sup>**  
**Historical Marker**

## Florida Conference of Historians Banquet

On Saturday, Feb. 22, 2025, History Services hosted the Florida Conference of Historians banquet at the Punta Gorda Charlotte Library. Over 100 students and scholars attended the event and enjoyed dinner catered by Pioneers Pizza, generously sponsored by the Friends of the Punta Gorda Charlotte Library. Historian and Punta Gorda native Dr. Jason Vuic gave the keynote address, speaking on his book, *The Swamp Peddlers*.

## English Language Learner Tutoring Program

Recognizing the growing demand for English language support, evident from the number of walk-in requests for classes, Libraries & History took action to expand literacy opportunities for non-English speakers. In 2023–24, a dedicated volunteer led a weekly drop-in English class, and when she stepped down, we used the momentum to design a more sustainable model. In March 2025, we officially launched a volunteer tutor program that now includes both one-on-one tutoring and small group instruction. With nine trained tutors currently working with approximately 14 learners and another 15 individuals on the waitlist, the response has exceeded our expectations. Group sessions are now offered periodically at Port Charlotte Library, and the personalized support provided by our volunteers is already making a meaningful impact. This long-envisioned initiative is now a reality, and we are proud to be meeting a critical need in our community.

## Seed Libraries

This year, each library location launched a Seed Library. For the initial bounty of seeds, we received generous donations locally from Lowe's and Tractor Supply Co. and nationally from Baker Creek Heirloom Seeds. Patrons can now "check out" seeds from our libraries just like you would a book. While patrons don't have to return the seeds they check out, they can contribute to the seed library by donating seeds from their own harvest. As seeds from successful plants are donated, we'll build a

cycle of sustainability, ensuring this community-driven program thrives year after year. Whether you're a seasoned gardener or a beginner, the seed library offers a fantastic opportunity to learn more about sustainable gardening and native plants. Thanks to UF/IFAS Extension Charlotte County for providing expert tips as well.



## PARKS & NATURAL RESOURCES



### Natural Resources Coastal

Coastal staff has struggled with predation at our Shorebird nesting areas on all of our beaches, but thanks to the help of the new USDA Coastal Trapper, staff has seen a significant amount of shorebirds and sea birds that have not only nested here, but fledged more chicks from their nesting grounds than Charlotte County has seen in a long while. So far this season, on Stump Pass Beach State Park, 3 Wilson's Plover's have successfully fledged. At Palm Island Resort, 101 Least Tern chick have fledged so far with over 23 Least Tern chicks still running around. The Black Skimmers has nesting successfully for the first time in over 5 years and so far have 9 fully fledged chicks, with 38 chicks still running around. On Gasparilla Island North (GIN), or Boca Grande, 5 Least Tern chicks have fledged so far with 5 more chicks still running around. For the first time in a long time, successful shorebird and sea bird nesting has returned to Charlotte County!

**Successfully Fledged Chicks so far:**

**3** Wilson's Plovers, **106** Least Terns, **9** Black Skimmers



## Ballfields

Ballfields staff completed pitching mound renovations at Harold by recycling leftover sod from the field edging project. Staff took the initiative during regular maintenance to identify additional work and cost savings.



## Land Management

Land management began a habitat restoration project at Prairie Creek Preserve nearly 16 months ago. Florida Scrub Jay population numbers have been stable at Prairie Creek Preserve for a number of years and available habitat has been occupied for over 10 years.

Through established practices staff was able to encourage Florida Scrub Jays to move to previously unoccupied scrubby flatwoods.



## Parks

Parks Maintenance staff has worked hard this year recovering from Hurricanes Helene and Milton, balancing clean-up, repairs, re-openings and day to day maintenance with small repairs to keep as many amenities as possible safe and available for patrons. Parks staff did an amazing job with the installation of a new memorial marker at

William R. Gaines Jr. Veterans Memorial Park. The marker sponsored by the Hickory Bluff Chapter Daughters of the American Revolution honoring the Revolutionary War Patriots.

## Special Projects

Fiscal year 2025 included the implementation of the Lake Betty remaster plan. Phase one included the installation of a new 2- to 5-year-old playground, a 5- to 12-year-old playground, a ninja course, two picnic pavilions and a walking path. A portion of these improvements were funded by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection through the Florida Recreation Development Assistance Program. This fiscal year also saw the replacement of the Cedar Point playground with a bald eagle themed custom playground honoring the eagle families on site!

Parks and Natural Resources project staff also coordinated, facilitated and managed the Hurricane Helene and Milton FEMA Public Assistance Program for all Community Services (Category G) Projects, as well as the phased reopening of multiple parks that sustained damages on a scale not seen before in our parks.



# RECREATION

## 2025 National Association of County Awards

It was another stellar year with NACo awards for the Rec Division as 14 out of 15 nominations were recognized as Outstanding Programs in 2025:

- Capital Maintenance Plan
- Collegiate Swim Team
- Evening Water Aerobics
- Expanding Community Engagement Through Technology
- Facility Phased Reopening After Natural Disasters
- Great Garage Sale
- Lifeguard Rotation Schedules
- Livestream Summer Camp Decorating Challenge
- Mass Care Shelters
- Pickleball Leagues
- Quarterly Operational and Program Evaluations
- Quarterly Staff Survey
- Rec 2 U
- Summer Camp Training



## 2025 Youth Basketball League at Harold Avenue Recreation Center

The summer Youth Basketball League at Harold Avenue Regional Park is an exciting program serving over 300 participants on 32 teams and includes age groups from 6 and under through 17 and under. The players participate in weekday practices and games on Saturday, improving their basketball skills and learning teamwork and good sportsmanship. The season is 10 weeks long including playoffs. A combined 70 hours are dedicated every week by 35 volunteer coaches to make this program possible.

## Spring Training

In 2025, the Charlotte Sports Park hosted a total of 15 Spring Training Games with attendance of 61,811 (average attendance for each game was 4,120). There was a total of 95 County employees hired for security along with oversight and coordination for an additional 143 staff with Fan Host and Parking Operations. The total estimated economic impact for the 2025 Spring Training Season was \$9,454,900.



## Kid's Camp Connection Scholarships

**14** Camp Participants

**9** Families Represented

 **\$4,925** Awarded

## Summer Camp

Our 2025 summer camp program had 3,465 registered children ranging from kindergarten to 13 years of age. The recreation facilities hosting these camps were Centennial Park, Harold Avenue Regional Park, South County Regional Park, and Ann & Chuck Dever Regional Park. Fun activities this year included laser tag, bowling, movies, waterpark, video games, water slides, bounce houses, craft studios, and theater. Our guest speakers included Charlotte County Libraries, Drug Free Charlotte County, Drug Free Punta Gorda, MADD, and UF/IFAS Extension Family Nutrition Program. There were 14 camp participants (9 families) who received scholarships through the Kid's Camp Connection to attend this year's program (\$4,925 awarded).

# UF/IFAS EXTENSION SERVICE

## Master Gardener Volunteers

UF/IFAS Extension Charlotte County Master Gardener Volunteers proudly represented our county at the 39th Florida Master Gardener Volunteer Advanced Training Conference, held October 20–23, 2024, in Kissimmee. Sixteen dedicated volunteers attended, accompanied by the Extension Program Manager and Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ specialist.

The conference offered advanced training, educational exhibits, and statewide networking opportunities. Charlotte County was recognized in multiple categories, including a 2nd place finish in the horticulture judging team competition. One volunteer was honored for 20 years of service.

Notably, Joan Schneider received the 2024 Outstanding Master Gardener Volunteer award, celebrating her contribution of over 1,000 volunteer hours to our community.

Additional accolades included:

- Outstanding Edible Garden
- Outstanding Mature Landscape
- Outstanding MGV and Agent Collaboration for the Charlotte County Rain Barrel Program
- Outstanding Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ Educational Campaign for the Rain Barrel Program



These honors showcase the impact and dedication of our volunteers, who in 2024 contributed 6,323 hours—valued at \$199,870.03—to promote horticultural education and sustainability. Master Gardener Volunteers bridge the gap between consumers and Florida's \$32 billion Green Industry, inspiring a love for gardening through research-based, community-focused outreach.



## Eyes on Charlotte Harbor Nutrient Dynamics

Charlotte Harbor, like much of Southwest Florida, faces increasing pressure from rapid population growth, straining natural ecosystems and the infrastructure designed to protect them. Over the past decade, the harbor has been impaired by excess nitrogen, harmful algal blooms, and significant seagrass loss—impacts that reduce ecosystem function, harm ecotourism, and degrade residents' quality of life.

Following a prolonged red tide and cyanobacteria bloom from 2017 to 2019, Charlotte County created a Water Quality Manager position reporting directly to the county commissioners. In response to persistent cyanobacteria blooms, this manager collaborated with the local Sea Grant Agent to convene a workgroup of researchers and managers focused on identifying research, management, and outreach priorities to address bloom impacts.

By December 2024, the workgroup had met twice and highlighted algal samples collected by Eyes on Seagrass volunteers as essential to identifying nutrient sources in Charlotte Harbor. With funding from the Charlotte County Boater Improvement Fund, these samples were sent for stable isotope analysis—expected to yield the first definitive evidence of whether human activity is fueling the blooms. Beyond addressing long-standing questions from county leaders, this effort validates the scientific value of community-collected data and reinforces the credibility of participatory science.

Launched in Charlotte County in 2019 in response to concerns from recreational fishers, Eyes on Seagrass documents seagrass conditions, which are vital

to shoreline stability, nutrient cycling, and carbon sequestration—but are in global and statewide decline. The program now monitors 70 sites across four counties at least twice per year, supplementing state monitoring efforts without requiring additional agency resources.

The program aims to develop a statewide, publicly accessible database and dashboard for natural resource managers to utilize. Thanks to ongoing standardization efforts, Eyes on Seagrass is expected to expand in 2025 to Pinellas, Lee, Volusia, Brevard, and St. Lucie Counties, led by Florida Sea Grant Agents and local NGOs. Since seagrasses are considered a “canary in the coal mine” for coastal health, the program not only gathers vital data but also cultivates stewardship among participants—evidenced by observed behavior changes and increased awareness of coastal ecosystem health.

## Family Nutrition Program (FNP)

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Ed) helps limited-resource families eat healthier on a budget and be more physically active to reduce the risk of obesity and chronic disease. UF/IFAS Extension FNP has provided SNAP-Ed programming in Florida since 1996. UF/IFAS Extension is a partnership between state, federal, and county governments, providing scientific knowledge and expertise to the public

In 2024, FNP provided free, evidence-based nutrition education classes for SNAP-eligible children and teens. Participants learned skills related to cooking, gardening, and making healthy food and physical activity choices.

In 2024, there were 1,915 youth reached with nutrition education amounting to 311 documented classes.

## 4-H Youth Development - STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, & Math)

Charlotte County 4-H is committed to the transformative power of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, & Math) education. Through in-school and after-school programs, clubs, and specialty camps, hundreds of youth engage annually in hands-on experiences that connect STEM concepts to real-world applications—such as animal care, dosage calculations, and modern agricultural technology. With STEM careers offering strong growth and high wages, Charlotte County 4-H seeks to spark lasting interest and prepare youth for future success in these fields.

In 2024, the 4-H Embryology program reached nine classes across two schools, including a self-contained special needs class. Students learned about chicken life cycles, chick anatomy, and animal care. The program boosted attendance and fostered responsibility, particularly among students with special needs, enhancing engagement and class participation.

Also in 2024, the Exploring the ABCs of 4-H program introduced STEAM concepts to seven kindergarten classes through hands-on, interactive activities. This early exposure helped cultivate curiosity and set the stage for ongoing participation in 4-H programs.

The self-directed summer craft project further supported STEM learning by integrating art with science and engineering practices. Activities like Pointillism and wind chime creation promoted creativity, problem-solving, and fine motor skills. Notably, 93% of participants reported increased confidence and willingness to apply new skills—demonstrating clear growth in STEM competencies and supporting 4-H’s goal of annually enhancing youth knowledge through innovative programming.



**4-H Youth  
Development**

**93%** of participants reported  
**increased confidence and  
willingness to apply new skills**



# FACILITIES MANAGEMENT

## 2020 1% LOCAL OPTION SALES TAX PROJECTS



### Sheriff Administration & Hardened 911

The Sheriff Administration and Hardened 911 Facility, located at 3100 Loveland Blvd., Port Charlotte, is a 62,441 square foot, hardened law enforcement and emergency response center for the Charlotte County Sheriff's Office. This state-of-the-art facility will house Sheriff's Administration including senior command and support staff units, a fleet maintenance garage, and a fully equipped Public Safety Answering Point. It will also include a Real Time Information Center, enabling advanced situational awareness and coordination during critical events.

This project directly benefits the public by enhancing public safety through improved emergency response capabilities, resilient infrastructure, and centralized law enforcement operations. By ensuring continuity of operations, it significantly strengthens the county's ability to protect its residents.

This effort aligns with our strategic focus area goal of public safety and emergency preparedness, reflecting our long-term commitment to building a more resilient and responsive public safety network for Charlotte County.

### Supervisor of Elections Warehouse

The Supervisor of Elections Warehouse, located at 3110 Loveland Blvd., Port Charlotte is a 21,229 square-foot climate-controlled facility designed to support the secure storage and operations of multiple county departments. The facility features a staging and receiving area, an elevated loading dock with levelers, a discharge ramp, and an additional ground-level delivery area for smaller vehicles. Staff will have access to shared restrooms and a lounge, along with dedicated parking and a safe vehicular/pedestrian access path integrated into the surrounding site improvements.

This facility benefits the public by ensuring the secure and efficient storage of sensitive polling equipment and election-related supplies, which is essential to maintaining the integrity and preparedness of the county's electoral process. The warehouse also supports operational needs for the Supervisor of Elections, Facilities Management, Sheriff's Office, and Emergency Management.



This Supervisor of Elections Warehouse project supports our strategic focus area goal of government accountability and operational excellence, reinforcing the county's commitment to maintaining reliable, secure, and efficient infrastructure that supports essential public functions.

## Sheriff Office District 4 Training Center

The Sheriff's Office District 4 Training Center, located at 25490 Airport Road, is a 22,000-square-foot facility with a training component. This state-of-the-art center is designed to prepare new deputies with the latest equipment and resources, including a physical fitness gymnasium, hand-to-hand combat training areas, a K9 station, and a multi-purpose training space that can accommodate up to 100 people. The opening of this facility on June 3, 2025, marked a significant step forward in strengthening public safety and enhancing community security. As our community continues to grow, this modern training center helps ensure our deputies are well-equipped to meet the evolving challenges of law enforcement in the 21st century.



This effort aligns with our strategic focus area goal of public safety and emergency preparedness, reflecting our long-term commitment to building a more resilient and responsive public safety network for Charlotte County.

## Port Charlotte Beach Recreation Center & Pool

The Port Charlotte Beach Recreation Center and Pool, located at 4500 Harbor Blvd, Port Charlotte, FL, has reached its end of life. The new proposed recreation center and pool house will be built to exceed current code standards, improving the facilities and enhancing our community's needs. The recreation center will provide a rentable venue for events, as well as a community facility for meetings and activities. These new structures will benefit the public and community for years to come.

The recreation center and pool project supports our strategic focus area goal of providing public services, reinforcing the county's commitment to maintaining a safe and healthy community by providing a place for the citizens to achieve their health goals and delivering essential services within the community facility.



## FACILITIES MAINTENANCE

### Capital Maintenance Plan

A Capital Maintenance Plan (CMP) has been in place and was adopted in October 2016 for fiscal year 2017 and beyond, proving to be an efficient and effective method of planning for deferred maintenance, predictive maintenance, operational improvements, capital repairs and replacements, renovations, and other needed items. Sources of project items include Facility Condition Assessment database; former subject-matter based multi-site CIP projects; department-driven needs; and a pro rated amount for unspecified but predictable needs of non assessed structures. Budgeted annual funding is provided within the Capital Improvement Projects Fund and allocated to accomplish these projects.

An internal task force of departmental stakeholders reached consensus to use a Construction Manager (CM) form of delivery to accomplish most of the work; however, depending on the scope of individual projects. Other construction delivery systems may include the use of in-house forces, consultants, and existing annual trades contractors. Funding primarily comes from the Ad Valorem Capital Projects Fund, but depending on the purpose of the individual projects, funding may also be required from other dedicated sources such as fire assessments, gas tax, lighting district, solid waste, utility, transit, and fleet.

### CMP: Records Center Asphalt and Parking Lot Fence and Gate

The asphalt pavement program with CMP funds allowed for repairs and overlay of severely deteriorated asphalt driveway and parking lot areas at the County’s Records Center Site. This project was unique because the entrance and the portions of driveways are owned and maintained by each parcel. The Records Center is on the corner parcel which encompasses a portion of the entrance apron which benefits all parcels of that site, so we paved the entire apron to clean up the enormous potholes within this apron and the driveway portion. The Gate was installed to provide for security control of the County’s business at this facility.

### CMP: Grace Street Annex Roof Replacement

The Grace Street Annex roof replacement project is an end-of-life project and was completed in July 2025. In 2018, Facilities had applied a roof coating product to extend the life of this roof to gain a few more years until it could be budgeted and fully replaced. The current project included replacing the full roof and lightweight underlayment.



### Small Projects - Gaines Kayak Launch



The completion of the ADA-accessible kayak launch and dock at the William R. Gaines Jr. Veterans Memorial Park was four years in the making. Facilities had to overcome Army Corp of Engineering, SWFWMD and DEP for the design and construction of this amenity. We recognize the importance of accessibility for everyone in our community and are proud to provide a safe and durable space for all to enjoy. The launch and dock have been constructed using quality materials and installed according to the plans approved by the Army Corps of Engineers. We look forward to seeing everyone experience the beauty of the park with this new addition.

### Work Orders

Work orders are among several mechanisms that Facilities utilizes to preserve and maintain the county’s infrastructure and provide levels of service to BCC departments and constitutional offices. From October 2024 through June 2025, 5,334 Facilities work order requests were submitted. Facilities Management receives work orders generated by two separate systems. Of the 5,334 work orders submitted this fiscal year, 2,540 were received through Cityworks for repair requests from all Board of County Commissioners’ departments and elected officials. The additional 2,794 work requests were originated by the Sheriff’s Spice Works program for repairs at the jail.

The scope of work requested through work orders includes carpentry, general labor, plumbing, fire and life safety, electrical and lighting and HVAC as well as custodial, preventive maintenance, and other types of work requests.



**5,334**  
Facilities  
work order  
requests



# HUMAN RESOURCES



## Emergency Response Role

Following Hurricanes Helene and Milton, the Human Resources Department wholeheartedly embraced their role in supporting the County's emergency response and recovery efforts. HR staff were deployed to assist with shelter duty assignments, ensuring the safety and well-being of displaced residents. They also delivered meals to County staff working in the most heavily impacted areas, helping to sustain operations under challenging conditions.

Additionally, HR oversaw the operation of comfort stations, providing a much-needed space for impacted citizens to shower and do their laundry. Beyond logistical support, Human Resources team members engaged directly with employees personally affected by the storms, offering compassionate outreach and connecting them with available recovery resources to aid in their return to stability.

## Total Rewards and Compensation

Human Resources staff worked collaboratively with the Public Works Department to develop an autoprogession program that establishes a clearly defined career pathway for employees. This initiative is designed to support workforce development by outlining skill-based benchmarks that allow employees to advance in their roles while increasing their earning potential. By investing in structured growth opportunities, the program encourages skill enhancement, retention, and internal mobility.

Similar autoprogession programs are already in place within the Community Development and Utilities departments, serving as effective models. In addition, Human Resources is currently partnering with the Community Services Department to design and implement a tailored autoprogession program to further expand these career-building efforts across their department.

# MAINTENANCE & OPERATIONS

## Roadway to Success

### MAINTENANCE WORKER (2020UN) to EQUIPMENT OPERATOR I (1605UN)

The following information is being given to describe potential opportunities as a Maintenance Worker with Charlotte County Public Works. The career ladder that this title currently follows has been illustrated in the diagram below. With specific types of experience, promotional or lateral movement between these lines is also possible. You may view the job bulletins for each title within the career ladder to review specific information about each job. It is encouraged to examine the options available, to be able to promote for what you qualify for. You may also visit the Charlotte County Website ([www.CharlotteCountyFL.gov](http://www.CharlotteCountyFL.gov)) for additional information related to jobs available within Charlotte County.

Maintenance Worker

Equipment Operator I

Requirements for each job classification are subject to change.

\*Minimum appropriate advancement required:

Street Sweeper, Paving Crew, etc.

Assistant Land Surveyor, etc.

Road Worker - all levels.

### Skills/Requirements:

Level One - Maintenance Worker Progression (Base Salary Range \$16.43 - \$21.77 - \$27.11)

| Basic                            |                         |                                                                                                      | Required Growth to EOI                          |                      |  |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|----------------------|--|
| Training                         | Category                | Equipment                                                                                            | Training                                        | Category             |  |
| Intermediate MOT                 | Technical/Certification | Dump Truck**<br>20 hrs installed<br>20 hrs non-installed                                             | Class A License<br>Trailer endorsements         | Technical            |  |
| PPE                              | Safety                  | Water truck**<br>36 hrs                                                                              | PPE                                             | Safety               |  |
| Equipment de down (25-50 hrs)    | Safety                  | Front part of tractor:<br>10 hrs backhoe<br>10 hrs clam bucket<br>10 hrs backhoe<br>(30 hrs working) | Equipment de down (25-50 hrs)                   | Safety               |  |
| First Aid/CPR                    | Safety                  | Ladder:<br>10 hrs backhoe<br>20 hrs backhoe pipe<br>20 hours working                                 | National Incident<br>Management System (NIMS)   | Safety               |  |
| Chainsaw Safety                  | Safety                  | Boom Mower**<br>120 hrs/maintenance ADP                                                              | Pipe safety/rigging                             | Safety/certification |  |
| Ladder Safety                    | Safety                  | Concrete Mixer<br>10 hrs                                                                             | Permit                                          | Safety/certification |  |
| Tree Trimming/<br>Chipper Safety | Safety                  |                                                                                                      | Confined Space                                  | Safety/certification |  |
| Defensive Driving - 2 hrs        | Safety                  |                                                                                                      | IS-100, 700B, ICS for PW Employees              | Safety/certification |  |
| Pipe Safety/Rigging              | Safety/certification    |                                                                                                      | TWOIST (Tractor Mower Operator Safety Training) | Safety/Technical     |  |
| Basic Trenching/Shoring          | Safety/Technical        |                                                                                                      | Asphalt crew (50 hrs)                           | Technical            |  |
| Brush Crew Equipment             | Safety/Technical        |                                                                                                      | Asset Management<br>Web Crime System            | Ad                   |  |
| Power Tools                      | Technical               |                                                                                                      |                                                 |                      |  |



### Talent Acquisition

In the aftermath of Hurricane Helene, Human Resources hosted a walk-in hiring event to recruit temporary employees to assist with critical recovery efforts, including clearing debris from parks and other public spaces. The event, held on a Saturday morning, was organized in close collaboration with the Communications Department, which helped promote it through a focused, one-day advertising campaign.

Despite the limited promotion, the event drew an impressive turnout of 627 applicants. From this pool, 119 individuals were hired on a temporary basis, providing much-needed manpower to support the County's recovery operations.



**48**

**Ambassador  
Program  
Graduates**

**46**

**Management  
University  
Graduates**

**16**

**Leadership  
Development  
Program  
Graduates**

### Employee Engagement and Development

Over the past year, the Human Resources Department continued to prioritize employee engagement and development by expanding learning opportunities and honoring the contributions of the County workforce. A significant milestone was the launch of a new Learning Management System titled Learn. This platform provides employees with greater access to training and professional development resources and is being introduced gradually across the organization, beginning with Utilities. The rollout is designed to ensure a smooth transition and personalized support for each department as they begin using the new system.

In addition to introducing Learn, Human Resources sustained its long-standing and successful engagement and development initiatives. The Ambassador Program, which fosters internal community and promotes the County's mission and values, graduated 48 employees. Management University, aimed at equipping supervisors and mid-level managers with essential leadership and operational skills, saw 46 participants complete the program. The Leadership Development Program, tailored for emerging leaders preparing to take on broader responsibilities, graduated 16 individuals. Together, these programs continue to build a strong pipeline of talent within the County.

To support the County's refreshed performance management system, the Human Resources team also conducted in-person training sessions for 907 employees. These sessions introduced a new self-evaluation process, promoting a more reflective and growth-oriented performance culture. By engaging employees directly, HR helped ensure a clear understanding of the new tools and their role in continuous improvement.

Additionally, the HR team organized and led the Administrative Professionals Day event, a meaningful occasion to celebrate and recognize the contributions of Administrative Support staff. This event underscored the Department's ongoing commitment to employee appreciation and engagement. Through these efforts, Human Resources continues to foster a culture of development, recognition, and continuous learning across the organization.





## Food Pantry

Charlotte County Human Service's food pantry plays a vital role in supporting residents facing food insecurity, offering access to nutritious groceries in a welcoming and respectful environment. From September 2024 through June 2025, Charlotte County Human Services provided food assistance to 597 households, serving a total of 1,469 individuals.

This program helps reduce barriers to healthy food access and ensures that residents do not have to choose between meals and other basic needs. By providing consistent, reliable support, the pantry strengthens community resilience and promotes well-being across the county.

Our goal is to continue building a stronger, healthier, and more compassionate Charlotte County, together. We collaborate with the Harry Chapin Food Bank's mobile pantry which visits the Family Services Center every other Thursday, providing free food and support to those in need. From September 2024 through June 2025 they served 3,533 households, total of 10,424 individuals. We also partner with Career Source, Transit, FPL, Senior Friendship Center and others to increase community engagement efforts while they are here.

During hurricane season last year, the Harry Chapin Food Bank's mobile pantry provided services each week in October 2024 to ensure the community had reliable access to food during difficult times. We are grateful for their continued service and commitment!

The food pantry initiative supports the County's Strategic Focus Area of Public Services by delivering compassionate, community-centered assistance. It also reflects the values of dignity, equity, and collaboration that guide Human Services in its mission to serve all residents with care and respect.

### *Human Services Food Pantry*

**1,469** individuals served

**597** households served

### *Harry Chapin Food Bank Mobile Pantry*

**10,424** individuals served

**3,533** households served

*from Sept. 2024 - June 2025*

## AGING AND ADULT SERVICES

Charlotte County Aging and Adult Services located at 21500 Gibraltar Drive in Port Charlotte has maintained a focus to address the social isolation of the seniors in our community. Since the closure of the Cultural Center, seniors in the Parkside community had expressed concerns of social isolation and no place to gather. Through the ad hoc of the Community Action Agency Alliance Board (CAAB) and the collaboration of many shared partners of the Family Services Center, we have made a commitment to holding quarterly social events for all seniors, disabled adults, and veterans. Through partnerships with other non-profits these socials include lunch, games, and various door prizes. The seniors of the community look forward to these events and regular reach out and inquire when the next one will be. These socials address the strategic goal of Economic and Community Development through actively providing and enhancement to the quality of life to many seniors by eliminating the barrier of social isolation.

## FAMILY STABILITY SERVICES

This year Family Stability Services has been hard at work assisting the citizens of Charlotte County with disaster recovery for Hurricanes Ian, Helene and Milton. We were awarded funds through the Community Services Block Grant Disaster Relief Supplemental Funding (CSBG-DRSF) in the amount of \$304,139. Our team utilized these funds to assist those directly impacted by these storms. When survivors lost income due to storm effected workplaces, we were able to assist with rent or mortgage to keep the families housed. When families lost the food in their homes, we were able to replenish their supplies. As families had to vacate unlivable homes, but could not afford both rent and mortgage, we stepped in to maintain their housing. We have been able to replace damaged furniture for those that have lost their belongings. Ultimately, with CSBG-DRSF funding, along with other disaster funds, Family Stability has assisted over 100 households in the past year in their recovery.

The Family Stability team partnered with COAD to utilize \$64,149 to create 250 disaster preparedness kits to distribute to income eligible households in the community; better preparing them for future weather events. The kits include items such as batteries, flashlights, weather radios, hygiene items, sunscreen, bug spray, and first aid kits. On July 10, 2025 the Family Stability team hosted the Safety Networks event, partnering with COAD and Emergency Management to share disaster preparedness information with Charlotte County citizens and get the disaster kits into their hands. The event not only gave the citizens the opportunity to be more physically prepared for future emergencies, but also armed them with the knowledge to be more mentally prepared as well.



## NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES

Neighborhood Services continues to support the Commissioners' bold strategic goal of increasing affordable housing inventory. Administering the Charlotte HOME program on behalf of the BCC, and the SHIP program, we assisted developers in accessing incentives, subsidies, and other funding toward the creation and preservation of affordable housing units.

Most notably in FY24/25 was the final completion, lease-up, and ribbon-cutting for the Verandas of Punta Gorda III. Norstar Development and the Punta Gorda Development Corporation have been working to leverage resources to complete this 72-unit phase of their Verandas portfolio since 2018. In 2022, they made a successful bid to FHFC for the 9% LIHTC competitive RFA. Through a multitude of partnerships and funding sources, the units were revealed at a May 22, 2025 ribbon-cutting, where the County's partnership with the Housing Authority, the City of Punta Gorda, HUD, Florida Housing Finance Corporation, developers, and investors celebrated the finalization of the replacement of remaining public housing units lost to Hurricane Charlie. The County's investment was a combination of Affordable Housing Trust Fund (AHTF) subsidies, impact fee waivers, a Board of County Commissioners loan and a SHIP loan, for a contribution of roughly \$2.3 million, approximately 10 percent of the total development cost.



Staff and a Commissioner participated in the celebration. The Human Services Department is proud of this accomplishment, not only because it produced much-needed affordable units, but it offered lessons learned on how best to partner in the creation and preservation of affordable units in our community.



## VETERAN SERVICES

Charlotte County Veteran Services continues to thrive in its' new home located within the Family Services Center at 21500 Gibraltar Drive in Port Charlotte. Having numerous community partners on site to assist with the wrap-around needs of veterans and their families is a wonderful plus and ensures first class services are provide to all.

During the year the Charlotte County Veteran Services Office was busy assisting Veterans and their dependents with claims for various benefits such as Service-Connected Disabilities, VA Pensions, VA Healthcare, Survivor Benefits, Burial Benefits, and other earned benefits. To date, Veteran Services has completed over 800 claims while directly servicing over 2300 clients. The value of the work is often hard to measure, but one statistic that is not difficult to evaluate is the economic impact the work Veteran Services has on the Veterans of Charlotte County. To date for claims awarded this year, Veterans have realized over \$2.5 million dollars in retroactive payments, along with almost \$700K in reoccurring monthly payments from the VA. Those amounts are staggering and make huge differences in the live of many veterans and their families.

The Veteran Services Office conducted dozens of hours of outreach at over 20 community events which engaged over 300 veterans and dependents. The services provided to the Veterans and dependents of Charlotte County help bring economic stability to many and raises the awareness of our community by assisting with access to Federal United States Department of Veterans Affairs benefits as well as benefits from the state of Florida Department of Veterans Affairs and Charlotte County. Throughout the year, the Veterans of Charlotte County continued to be served by the advocates at the Charlotte County Veteran Services Office.



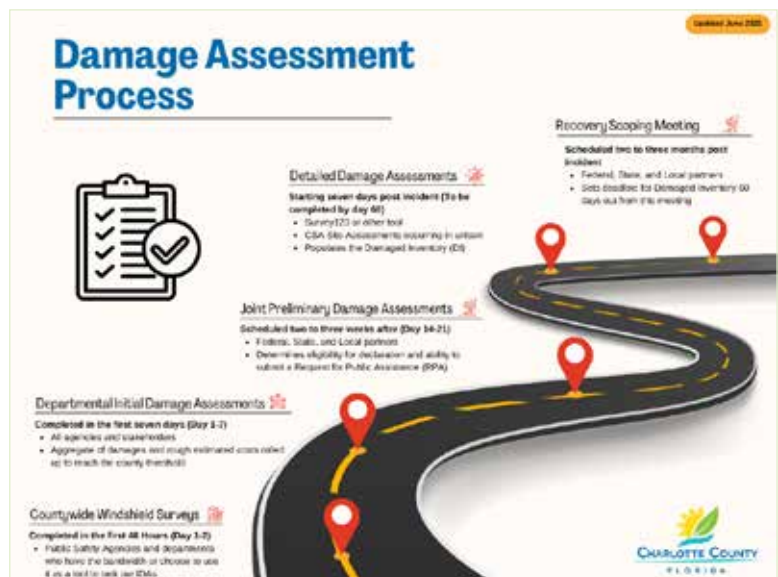
## EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

After having experienced several community-wide disasters over the past half-decade, County leadership identified the need to streamline the recovery process and establish a renewed focus on community and organizational resilience. Charlotte County's Recovery and Resiliency Initiative was born from this recognition and directly supports the county's Strategic Focus Area Goals by fostering a culture of preparedness, enhancing organizational and community resilience, and ensuring effective use of public resources. The initiative addresses the county's recurring exposure to disasters by establishing a structured, proactive recovery framework that transcends traditional silos. It aligns with strategic goals by streamlining coordination across departments, improving documentation standards, and ensuring compliance with state and federal requirements, including FEMA and FDEM programs.

Through regular training, cross-functional collaboration, and integration of mitigation into recovery planning, the effort promotes long-term risk reduction and adaptive growth. Dedicated staff have established damage assessment procedures and cross-departmental coordination through focus area meetings. By embedding resiliency into capital planning and infrastructure decisions,

Charlotte County ensures recovery efforts are not only effective in resuming service delivery but transformative, advancing sustainability and quality of life for all residents.

This initiative supports the Strategic Focus Area of Public Services by helping maintain a safe and healthy community through the delivery of essential services by skilled and dedicated professionals. It also advances the goal of Efficient and Effective Government by promoting fiscally sound operations and encouraging transparency, accountability, innovation, and public engagement.



# RADIO COMMUNICATIONS

## MCM Commshop

Radio Communications works closely with internal agencies within the county as well as external agencies such as the School Board, Sherriff's Office, Airport Authority, Property Appraiser, Health Dept and the City of Punta Gorda. The implementation of cloud-based MCM Commshop asset management software has improved the ability to track assets transparently and in real-time across all participating agencies. The MCM Commshop enhances the workflow, streamlines operations, optimizes resource use and provides valuable data analytics to support informed decision-making.



Cloud-based asset management improves transparency and provides real-time access to agency assets. The system allows staff to manage and monitor resources from any location, which increases efficiency and supports coordinated operations across departments.

This effort supports the Strategic Focus Area of Public Services by helping skilled and dedicated professionals deliver essential services more effectively. It also advances the goal of Efficient and Effective Government by encouraging transparency, accountability, innovation, and sound operational management.

## FIRE & EMS

### COPCN Ordinance & Process Update

A new Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity (COPCN) ordinance has been implemented, along with an updated application and review process.

The revised ordinance establishes clearer requirements for agencies seeking to provide emergency medical transport services within the county. The updated application ensures that all necessary documentation is submitted up front, streamlining the review and approval timeline. A formal review process was established to include administrative screening, technical evaluation, and stakeholder input, promoting transparency, consistency, and accountability.

This update strengthens oversight, improves system planning, and helps ensure that EMS providers meet the operational, financial, and clinical standards needed to serve the community effectively.

The COPCN Ordinance & Process Update supports the Strategic Focus Area of Public Services by helping skilled and dedicated professionals deliver essential care that protects public health and safety. It also advances the goal of Efficient and Effective Government by promoting accountability, transparency, and sound management practices.

## New Radio Deployments

Since Sept 2024 radio communications has been upgrading radios to leverage new technology and prepare for programming changes to come, such as signal encryption. To date, the new ruggedized Motorola radio replacements have been programmed and deployed to Fire & EMS and Animal Control. The new radios bring improved reliability and enhanced functionality including Bluetooth connectivity, Wi-Fi signal reception, Phase 2 TDMA digital technology and AES Encryption. The Wi-Fi features allow the radios to be updated wirelessly and remotely, instead of the one-by-one tethered updating previously required. This significantly makes the programming and updating process more efficient.

Upgraded radios with enhanced features improve communication between mission critical agencies. These improvements ensure faster and more reliable coordination during emergencies, which directly benefits the public by supporting timely and effective response.

This project supports the Strategic Focus Area of Public Services by helping skilled and professional teams deliver essential services that protect the safety and well-being of the community. It also advances the goal of Efficient and Effective Government by promoting sound operations, transparency, innovation, and public trust.

## HAZMAT Cost Recovery Ordinance

Charlotte County adopted a new Hazardous Materials Cost Recovery Ordinance which outlines the requirement of a responsible party to cover the financial impacts of emergency response and cleanup.

The ordinance allows Charlotte County Fire & EMS to recover costs associated with hazardous materials responses, including personnel time, equipment use, containment supplies, and contractor services. This ensures taxpayer resources are protected and promotes accountability for those who cause or contribute to hazmat incidents. The cost recovery process is standardized, with invoicing based on documented response efforts and itemized costs.

The Cost Recovery Ordinance helps protect taxpayers by assigning the places the additional expenses associated with a hazardous materials response and mitigation on the responsible party and their insurance, offsetting the cost to taxpayers.

This ordinance supports the Strategic Focus Area of Public Services by helping skilled and professional teams deliver essential emergency response services that keep the community safe. It also advances the goal of Efficient and Effective Government by promoting fiscal responsibility, transparency, and accountability in managing public resources.

## Second Peak-Load Rescue

Charlotte County Fire & EMS has placed a second peak-load rescue unit into service to help manage increased EMS call volumes during high-demand hours. This unit operates during peak times to improve response efficiency, reduce strain on full-time units, and enhance service reliability across the county.

Adding this resource helps improve service coverage and response times and increases reliability. By targeting high-demand periods, the approach also helps manage costs effectively while maintaining strong service levels.

This effort supports the Strategic Focus Area of Public Services by helping skilled and dedicated professionals deliver essential services that protect the health and safety of the community. It also advances the goal of Efficient and Effective Government by encouraging responsible financial management, transparency, and innovation.

## ANIMAL CONTROL

### Humane World for Animals MOU

Charlotte County Animal Control has entered a Memorandum of Understanding with the Humane World for Animals Organization (formerly known as Humane Society of the United States). This agreement provides a mechanism for assistance in large-scale cruelty cases or natural disasters, providing trained personnel, equipment, and logistics. They can assist in setting up temporary shelters or provide support in existing shelters to house displaced pets and rescued animals. Through this partnership, Charlotte County Animal Control is strengthening the resiliency and recovery capacity of the community in response to emergencies and disasters.

The Humane World for Animals Organization partnership provides for additional services such as:

- Food and supplies for animals: They help in delivering pet food, farm animal feed, crates, and medical supplies to affected areas.
- Search and rescue: Their Animal Rescue Team conducts field rescues for stranded or injured animals.
- Medical care: They deploy mobile veterinary units and pop-up clinics to provide urgent treatment.
- Community support: Beyond physical aid, they offer emotional support to overwhelmed residents and local responders.



This effort benefits the public by providing essential community support and access to vital services such as veterinary care, animal rescue and relocation, and emergency sheltering. These resources help protect both animals and residents during times of need.

The partnership supports the Strategic Focus Area of Public Services by helping skilled and dedicated professionals deliver critical services that promote health and safety. It also advances the goal of Efficient and Effective Government by encouraging responsible operations, transparency, and community engagement.

## Outreach Initiative

Animal Control launched a comprehensive Outreach Program designed to strengthen engagement with community pet owners through diverse channels, including public presentations, educational events, and social media platforms. This initiative aims to promote greater visibility and proactive communication between Animal Control and the public. This initiative fosters transparent communication, leverages innovative engagement strategies, and promotes accountable service delivery.



Enhanced outreach efforts help raise public awareness about pet safety, local regulations, county events, and important community issues. These efforts give residents the information they need to make thoughtful decisions for their animals and neighborhoods.

This work supports the Strategic Focus Area of Public Services by helping skilled and dedicated professionals deliver essential information that promotes safety and well-being. It also advances the goal of Efficient and Effective Government by encouraging transparency, public engagement, and responsible communication.

## Dangerous Dogs

Animal Control continues to review and revise Dangerous Dog regulations to better serve the Charlotte County community. As new protocols emerge and align more closely with updated Florida Statutes, corresponding updates to county ordinances are being implemented to ensure legal consistency and public protection.

These enhancements support a more effective approach to managing dangerous dog cases. They support safer neighborhoods and provide better protection for residents, pets, and animal control officers.

By helping dedicated staff provide essential services that keep the community safe and healthy, this project supports the Public Services goal. It also strengthens Efficient and Effective Government through responsible management and a commitment to openness and accountability.



## New Pet-Licensing Program

In collaboration with the Information Technology Division, Animal Control designed and launched a custom Pet Licensing Program built on the SharePoint platform. This initiative was driven by a strategic evaluation that identified significant issues and challenges with the existing system. Over several months, teams worked together to develop a solution that aligns with current operational needs and fully integrates with the newly implemented Nintex database. Through this innovation we strengthened accountability and have data-informed service delivery.

The upgraded system improves efficiency, increases transparency, and strengthens responsiveness. These enhancements make it easier to reunite lost pets with their families and help build public trust in the services we provide.

This effort supports the Strategic Focus Area of Public Services by enabling skilled professionals to deliver essential services that protect the well-being of the community. It also contributes to Efficient and Effective Government by encouraging transparency, accountability, and sound operational practices.



# MOSQUITO AND AQUATIC WEED CONTROL

## Evaluating a New Adulticide and Its Efficacy Against Salt Marsh Mosquitos

A new adulticide was approved for use by the Environmental Protection Program (EPA) named ReMoa Tri. It was tested by others on Culex mosquitoes with positive results. We tested it against salt marsh mosquitoes, Ades sp, and the following conclusions were noted:

- Across all trials – did not achieve 100% mean knockdown
- Increased droplet size - no noticeable effect
- Wild population vs known susceptible colony - no noticeable effect
- Multiple occurrences of mosquito resurrection

Overall, not as effective against salt marsh mosquitos, but effective against other types of Culex mosquitos.

Evaluating the adulticide supports the Strategic Focus Area of Public Services by ensuring only the most effective and safe tools are used to protect public health. Thoroughly testing new products before widespread use helps maintain a safe and healthy community through informed, science-based decision-making.

This work also aligns with the goal of Efficient and Effective Government by promoting responsible operations and data-driven evaluation.

## Determining Swath Width from Various Drones for Mosquito Products

In combination with Leading Edge and Frontier Precision Technology, Charlotte County Mosquito Control hosted a survey to determine the swath width or area covered by a drone releasing granule larvicide products.



Several large capacity drones were tested averaging 20-30 lbs. of material and the drones costing 55K to 1025K. Swath width was also measured with light breezes at an average of 40-50 feet in height. Coverage was approximately 250 feet in width making them a potential tool for small area disbursement of product for both aquatic and mosquito programs.

This project supports the Strategic Focus Area of Public Services by exploring innovative tools that help skilled professionals deliver mosquito and aquatic control services more effectively. It also advances the goal of Efficient and Effective Government by improving public health protection through targeted and efficient treatment methods.

# SOLID WASTE

## Illegal Dumping & Environmental Crimes

A total of 572 incidents were reported and addressed through coordinated response efforts. As a result of these investigations, seven arrests were made, and one trailer used in a felony-level illegal dumping case was confiscated by the Sheriff's Department.

This work supports the Strategic Focus Area of Public Services by helping protect community health and safety through enforcement and response.

## Small Quantity Generator Business Inspections

There were 296 businesses representing 20% of the small quantity generators of hazardous waste in Charlotte County successfully inspected to be in full compliance with Florida Department of Environmental Protection guidelines.

## Keep Charlotte Beautiful

Keep Charlotte Beautiful conducted 213 community cleanup events with the help of 1,654 volunteers who collected 74,030 pounds of trash and 1,511 pounds of recyclables.

KCB also hosted the annual recycling event, which saw participation from 592 vehicles. During the event, staff collected 14,214 pounds of electronics, shredded 20,000 pounds of paper, gathered 143 pounds of expired medicine, and received 842 pounds of food for donation to a local food bank. This event was made possible through collaboration with the Solid Waste Division, Waste Management, and the Charlotte County Sheriff's Department.

The second annual tire amnesty event, funded by a grant from the Florida Department of Transportation, resulted in the collection of 7,340 pounds of tires. KCB also continued the tradition of the annual student art calendar contest,

which received 981 entries. The winning artwork is featured in a calendar distributed throughout local schools and the community.

These programs support the Strategic Focus Area of Public Services by promoting a cleaner, safer, and more informed community through active public participation and coordinated service delivery.



KCB raised \$33,014 to support the funding of the many community programs throughout Charlotte County.

# ENGINEERING

## South Gulf Cove Bridges Rehabilitation Project



This project, funded by the South Gulf Cove MSBU, is scheduled for construction completion in July 2025. It focuses on rehabilitating four of the MSBU bridges to increase the longevity of their service life. One of the priorities for this project was to make the sidewalk connections to each bridge. At the completion of this project, we will have rehabilitated the bridges and enhanced pedestrian safety and connectivity within the community.

### Second Annual Tire Amnesty Event

**7,340 lbs**  
of Tires Collected



The Charlotte County Board of County Commissioners has prioritized infrastructure improvements, and this project directly supports that Strategic Focus Area by creating a safer, more accessible and walkable community.

**Project Highlights:**

**Four Bridges Rehabilitation**

- 014053 Keystone Boulevard over the Santa Cruz Waterway
- 014054 Appleton Boulevard over the Santa Cruz Waterway
- 014055 Keystone Boulevard over the President's Waterway
- 014056 Ingraham Boulevard over the President's Waterway

**Benefits:**

- Rehabilitation provides longevity for the bridge's service life
- Improved pedestrian safety
- Enhanced walkability and community connectivity

## Fruitland Avenue and Avenue of the Americas Sidewalk Improvement

This project, funded through the 2020 1% local option sales tax, is scheduled for completion in May 2025. It focuses on the construction of a continuous sidewalk along Fruitland Avenue and Avenue of the Americas, enhancing pedestrian safety and connectivity within the community. The new sidewalk will link to the existing Gulfstream Boulevard pathway and provide access to LA Ainger Middle School, Vineland Elementary School, and Ann and Chuck Dever Regional Park on San Casa Drive.

The Charlotte County Board of County Commissioners has prioritized infrastructure improvements, and this project directly supports that Strategic Focus Area by improving walkable connectivity in a safer, more active environment for residents.

**Project Highlights:**

- 9,008 Linear Feet of new 6-foot-wide sidewalk
- 17 stormwater structures
- 1,947 Linear Feet of stormwater pipe

**Benefits:**

- Improved pedestrian safety
- Enhanced walkability and community connectivity
- Stormwater management infrastructure to support sidewalk improvements



## MAINTENANCE & OPERATIONS

### Kings Highway and Veterans Boulevard Road Crossing



Public Works was notified on social media of a depression forming in the roadway on the southeast side of the Kings Highway and Veterans Boulevard intersection. The depression gradually became worse, and staff closed a portion of the roadway to conduct a small point repair in order to line the road crossing pipe.

This work supports the Strategic Focus Areas of Efficient & Effective Government and Infrastructure. By conducting drainage enhancements and addressing citizen concerns with the resources available, it also aligns with the Bold Goal of strengthening the resiliency of the community and organization and ensuring a culture of continuous improvement.

### Midway Boulevard Watermain Break

Public Works was notified by Utilities that a contractor had hit a 16-inch water line on Midway Boulevard near Achilles Street in a school zone that impacted 3 lanes of traffic.

Public Works stepped in to assist with the open road cut and make the road passible until final asphalt restoration could be completed the following day.

This work supports the Strategic Focus Areas of Efficient & Effective Government and Infrastructure. By streamlining department collaboration to ensure timely, effective repairs with minimal impact to the public, the work aligns with the Bold Goal of strengthening the resiliency of the community and organization and ensuring a culture of continuous improvement.

## TRAFFIC, SIGNS, AND MARKING

### Striping Truck

The Traffic Signing and Marking Division placed a new striping truck into service. This modernized vehicle allows for longer operational runs between refills, significantly boosting our productivity and efficiency.



In just a short period, nearly 300,000 linear feet of roadway has been striped. With this increased capability, our goal of reaching 1,000,000 linear feet is well within reach. After a full year of operations with this truck, achieving this goal will be not only realistic but expected.

In boosting productivity and efficiency for infrastructure components, these operations enhancements support the Strategic Focus Areas of Efficient & Effective Government and Infrastructure.

## LIGHTING DISTRICT

### Winchester Street Lights

The Lighting District has been upgrading and auditing our fiber optic network throughout the county. Switches at each intersection, along with all standalone Pan-Tilt-Zoom cameras on the network, were replaced to enable higher-speed functionality and improved communication. Our contractor continues to resolve polarity and connectivity issues and is creating a detailed map documenting repairs.

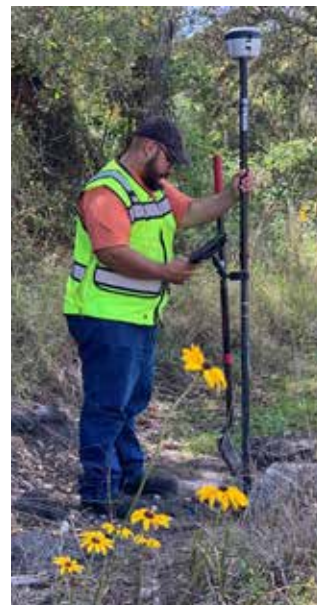
The Manasota Key commercial district received a major upgrade—all outdated low-pressure sodium light poles were replaced with new, turtle-friendly LED fixtures. This improvement is a welcome sight, especially considering the devastating damage sustained across the island.

These efforts support the Strategic Focus Areas of Public Safety and Infrastructure by strengthening the resiliency of the infrastructure and increasing the community's safety.

## ASSET MANAGEMENT

Asset Management work accomplishments over the past year:

- 645 GIS updates completed
- 2,736 assets updated or edited
- 52 pipes inspected with tv truck
- Data collection completed on Vincent Avenue
- Data collection completed in the Quesada area for improved drainage; assets added to GIS
- Data collection started in South Gulf Cove prior to paving



These accomplishments align with the Strategic Focus Area of Infrastructure by furthering the collection of data to assist with data-driven decision-making.

## BUSINESS SERVICES

### Training and Onboarding

With over 9,000 hours of training, the training team has been extremely busy this past year. We focused on vendor led, peer to peer, and some soft skills, covering everything from: forklift safety, excavator, CPR, mower safety, vac truck, and time management to name a few. Five team members also successfully obtained their CDL license.



Over  
**9,000**  
Hours of Training



The training team created the department's onboarding program which has been a huge success. They held nine sessions and onboarded 38 people. The day consists of a presentation covering what our department is responsible for and a tour of our facilities and a chance to meet with all levels of staff.

These programs align with the Strategic Focus Area Goal of Efficient and Effective Government by advancing a culture of sound operational management, service delivery, and accountability.

## Cemetery Repository and GIS project

Business Services partnered with the IT Business Analyst team to improve internal processes through a multi-phase project focused on reducing redundancies and streamlining recordkeeping. Previously, cemetery records were stored on paper in fireproof safes in perpetuity and digitally in two separate databases. The goal was to create a central repository of all records and a system that simplifies tasks such as creating and updating records, generating intake forms, and processing space purchases.

As a result of this collaboration, a new database was developed and is now available on the County website. This tool allows residents and others to search for information about individuals interred in cemeteries and includes a new feature that enables users to request to purchase a space online. This level of access increases transparency and improves public engagement with cemetery services.

Phase II of the project is currently underway and will introduce an interactive GIS layer. This feature will allow users to view maps of active cemeteries and search for general information such as space availability and basic interment details.

This project supports the Strategic Focus Area of Efficient and Effective Government by improving operational efficiency, enhancing transparency, and providing user-friendly digital services that meet the needs of both staff and the public.

# HURRICANE HELENE & MILTON RESPONSE 2024

## Engineering - Overwash Sand Recovery Program

The focus of this FEMA-funded Storm Recovery Project was to return overwashed sand that was deposited on the roads and private property. The sand was collected and delivered by the Public Works Maintenance and Operations, Ashbritt and private contractors to the sand recipient sites on Manasota Key



and Don Pedro Knight Island. Ashbritt and their subcontractor ICS were tasked with the screening of the sand to remove hurricane and construction debris. Once screened the sand was placed back on the critically eroded shoreline.

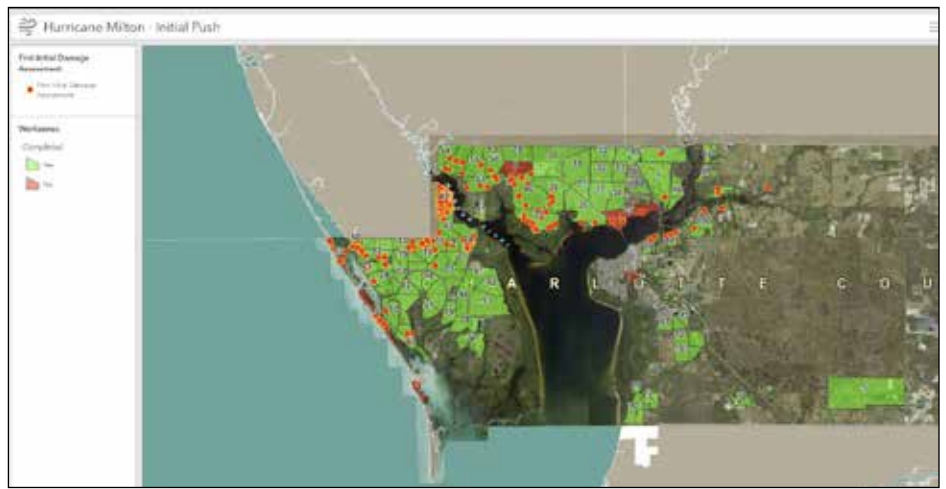
### Project Highlights:

- Approximately 140,000 cubic yards of sand sifted and returned to Manasota Key shoreline
- Approximately 5,700 cubic yards of sand sifted and returned to Don Pedro Knight Island

## Maintenance & Operations Response

Charlotte County received back-to-back record tidal surge events that had not been experienced in decades. With this brought new challenges, specifically with sand inundation on the barrier islands. Public Works quickly responded, clearing the roads and rights-of-way on Manasota Key and Don Pedro Knight Islands.

A sand recipient site was stood up for the public and contractors to dump sand from properties. A total of 4,599 loads of sand were cleared from Manasota Key, sifted and placed back on the beach. Hurricane Milton resulted in approximately 140,000 tons of sand.



## Asset Management - Initial Push Dashboard

The Initial Push Hurricane Dashboard was created to track important information during the first phase of storm response, such as debris removal, road access, and initial damage assessment. The dashboard helps crews see progress and focus on the harder hit areas.



## Traffic, Signs, and Marking Response

In addition to deploying road closure signs around various points of the county, TSM also assisted Community Services retrieving a dock from the Port Charlotte Beach Complex that became dislodged, and recovered a fender system that broke away from the South Gulf Cove Lock blocking access to the lock.

## Lighting District Response

Hurricane Ian had a significant impact on street lighting in Charlotte County. The most heavily affected corridor was Winchester Boulevard, which had 114 light poles. Of these, 65 poles were missing, and the damage ranged from dislodged bases to twisted luminaire arms.

To make matters worse, after Hurricane Milton, approximately three miles of wire feeding the streetlights were stolen. With no contractor available to take on the work, the Lighting District's dedicated team stepped up. They rented a digger truck and began restoring all 114 pole locations—straightening arms and base and pulling in over three miles of replacement wire.





Tourism faced a tough start to FY 2025 after Hurricanes Helene and Milton disrupted travel plans, damaged dozens of vacation rentals and lodging properties on the west side, and led to the cancellation of 10 events. That included two of the county's largest annual draws, the Florida International Air Show and Englewood Beach Waterfest, each typically generating more than \$5 million in economic impact. Despite limited beach access and fewer available accommodations, Tourist Development Tax collections remained steady, reflecting the resilience of Charlotte County's tourism economy and its role in supporting Economic and Community Development.

Through May 2025, TDT collections were only down 0.8% versus the same time last year. Two primary factors that can be applied to this is that demand for our destination has remained strong and Sunseeker Resort's meetings and convention business more than doubled in its second year of operation. As lodging inventory continues to rebuild and re-open, and the beach parking re-opens fully, we are confident the influx of lost visitation will return.

Although our most recent quarterly research report, which covered the months of January-March 2025, showed a 5.1% decrease in visitors compared to the same timeframe in 2024, direct expenditures and total economic impact only decreased by 2.6%. In addition, the number of room nights sold actually increased by 1%, however, TDT was negatively affected by the 9.1% decrease in average daily room rates.

Looking to the near future, we are optimistic, barring any natural disasters or other unforeseen circumstances, that tourism will continue to grow through the return of our signature events, a continued increase in the meetings and convention market which should be boosted by Sunseeker's impending affiliation with a major hotel brand and the gradual maturation of the international market. In addition, there are several lodging projects on the horizon that will only add to the choices available for potential visitors.

Overall, the Tourism Development Department, with the unwavering support of County Administration and the Board of County Commissioners, has shown resilience by overcoming adversity to produce another successful year, which is evidenced by the following reports reflecting each component of our core services.

# LEISURE SALES

## Economic & Community Development

In its second year of strategic expansion, the Punta Gorda/Englewood Beach Visitor and Convention Bureau continues to make measurable progress in enhancing destination visibility and increasing visitation from domestic and international markets. Through the dedicated efforts of our in-house sales team and international representation firms in Germany and the United Kingdom, we have broadened our brand's reach and engaged industry professionals through face-to-face meetings, educational training, co-op marketing opportunities, and familiarization (FAM) trips. These initiatives are central to our mission of promoting Charlotte County as a premier leisure travel destination.

## Domestic and International Leisure Sales

In FY 2024–25, the leisure sales department executed a well-rounded, global sales strategy that included high-impact participation in key industry events such as targeted sales missions in the UK and Germany, Domestic Travel Agent Trainings, Florida Huddle, IPW, ITB Berlin, Brand USA Travel Week, IBO Friedrichshafen Travel Show, Discover Airlines Travel Show, Belfast Holiday Show, Travel & Adventure Shows and UNITE. We connected directly with decision-makers in the travel trade, showcasing the region's diverse offerings to the international travel trade professionals & consumers.



Domestically, we engaged thousands of potential travelers at major consumer shows in New York, and Washington, D.C., and participated in the NorthStar Visit Florida Travel Ambassador FAM and Webinar series. These events resulted in the direct distribution of over 2,000 visitor guides and travel agent trainings building brand awareness and new relationships with travel advisors and media representatives.

Internationally, our representation firms facilitated media exposure, trade education, and sales development in the German, Austrian, and UK markets. We participated in the direct distribution of over 3000 guides at local shopping malls and consumer shows. FAM trips and local in-market sales and training activations helped familiarize receptive tour operators, travel agents, and wholesalers with our destination, resulting in overwhelmingly positive feedback and increased product inclusion.



A key highlight in June 2025 was the launch of an ambitious Rhine River sales mission, reaching more than 600 travel agents across 14 cities in just seven days. This initiative brought Punta Gorda/Englewood Beach in direct contact with German and Austrian-based travel professionals, generating excitement and expanding distribution potential in Central Europe.

### Impact and Future Goals

These integrated efforts are crucial to driving visitation and supporting nearly one million travelers who explore Charlotte County each year. By increasing destination awareness and forging strategic partnerships, we continue to stimulate economic growth, create employment opportunities, and foster cultural exchange.

Looking forward, our focus remains on growing and expanding domestic awareness, deepening engagement in the UK, Germany & Austria markets, and potentially expanding into Switzerland, the Netherlands, and the Republic of Ireland by FY2027.

## MARKETING REPORT

The Punta Gorda/Englewood Beach Visitor & Convention Bureau continues to elevate Charlotte County’s visibility through strategic marketing designed to attract high-value visitors—those who make a meaningful economic impact for our residents and businesses. Our efforts focus not only on bringing in new guests but also on encouraging repeat visitation by showcasing the destination’s unique appeal.

Outreach efforts were expanded across key audiences, including consumers, sports rights holders, meeting planners, and the travel trade, both domestically and internationally. This year, several new initiatives further supported our mission: advocacy, the golf guide launch, the sales and marketing plan, award recognition and destination optimization.

### Advocacy

Destination marketing organizations often work behind the scenes, promoting to external audiences rather than locally. To bridge that gap, we developed an advocacy program to communicate the value of tourism to our own community. At the heart of the initiative is a new advocacy video, highlighting the beauty of Charlotte County while demonstrating the positive economic and quality-of-life impacts tourism provides. The video is used in public presentations and is complemented by our annual Tourism Highlights brochure. View the video at [PureFlorida.com/advocacy](http://PureFlorida.com/advocacy).

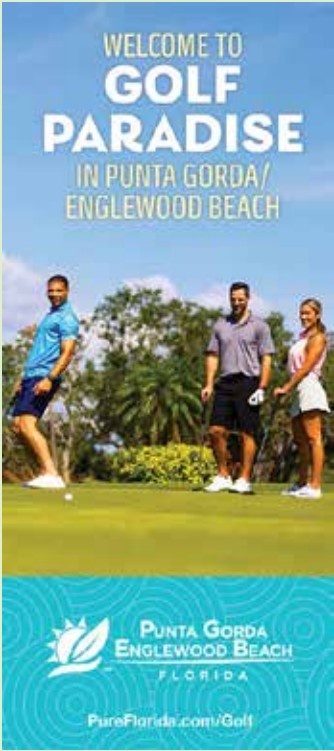


### Sales & Marketing Plan

In the spirit of transparency and collaboration, we created a comprehensive FY 2025 Sales & Marketing Plan, which was shared with our tourism Partner businesses. The plan outlines our mission, strategic goals, media and public relations efforts, and detailed sales initiatives for Leisure, Sports, and Meetings. It was well-received and reinforced our role as a committed partner in the local tourism economy.

### Golf Guide Launch

Recognizing golf’s renewed popularity as a travel motivator, we introduced a new Golf Guide that highlights local courses including the prestigious Aileron Golf Club and Webb’s Reserve. This guide serves as both a planning tool and a promotional asset for golf enthusiasts.



### Award Recognition

Our efforts gained national attention from the North American Travel Journalists Association (NATJA), which awarded our “Pure Florida” creative campaign the Silver Award for Marketing and the Bronze Award for Best Destination Video in the 33rd Annual NATJA Awards. These honors reflect excellence in destination marketing, photography, and travel journalism across the industry.



## Destination Optimization

We launched a new partnership with Miles Partnership to enhance the digital presence of our local tourism businesses. The program includes auditing and optimizing Google and Tripadvisor listings for 250 Partner businesses. Identified gaps will be addressed with fresh content, and Partners will benefit from personalized “office hours” with the Miles team as well as two educational sessions to help them maximize their online visibility.

## MEETINGS & CONVENTIONS

### Spotlight on Meetings & Conferences: Building Momentum in Charlotte County

The Punta Gorda / Englewood Visitor & Convention Bureau's (VCB) strategic partnership with Sunseeker Resort and the Charlotte Harbor Event & Conference Center continues to elevate Charlotte County as a premier meetings and conferences destination. This fiscal year marks a successful collaboration between the VCB and Sunseeker Resort. Together, we have established a strong record of cooperation and achievement.. Clients and attendees consistently highlight the convenience of the “under one roof” experience while appreciating the flexibility of nearby hotels, the Event Center, and our lively downtown.



To keep our meetings pipeline strong, the VCB staff is actively engaging with the industry. This Spring, the Senior Meetings Manager attended the Florida Society of Association Executives (FSAE) and XSITE trade shows. This summer, she is scheduled to participate in four additional industry events to expand our reach and build relationships with new potential clients.



The VCB hosted two FAM Tours, nine meeting planner executives with Prestige and 10 meeting planner executives with HelmsBriscoe in June, giving meeting planners with active RFPs (Request for Proposal) an up-close look at what Charlotte County has to offer. These meeting executives had the opportunity to experience Sunseeker Resort, tour the event spaces, visit Fishermen's Village, the Visual Arts Center, the Military Heritage Museum, and explore the surrounding area. Both Prestige and HelmsBriscoe executive feedback has been overwhelmingly positive, and we're excited to see how these visits translate into future business for our destination. VCB staff worked with the local meeting planners and local partners to host three booths at conferences taking place at Sunseeker Resort, including one that supported the Charlotte County Economic Development Department which hosted the Florida Economic Development Council Conference in May. While hosting these booths showcased the destination and local attractions to help individual attendees plan their free time during their stay. This also allowed attendees to bring information about our destination home, in hopes they will return in the future with their conferences or families.

#### Sample meetings/conventions booked:

Fusion Education Group, Jan. 6 - 9, 2025,  
710 Room Nights

Novartis RLT Meeting, March 24 - 28, 2025,  
1934 Room Nights

Exit Planning Institute, May 4 - 6, 2025,  
2044 Room Nights

Florida Economic Development Council, May 13 - 17,  
2025, 426 Room Nights

2025 Florida Sheriffs Association, May 12 - 15, 2025,  
220 Room Nights

# PUBLIC RELATIONS AND SOCIAL MEDIA

Fiscal year 2024/2025 started with a whirlwind of hurricanes that had a major impact in Charlotte County which impacted the tourism industry. Just as businesses had completed clean up from Hurricane Debby in August, they were hit by two stronger hurricanes, Helene and Milton, back-to-back. These storms caused extensive damage to the beach and downtown Punta Gorda, our most highly visited areas.

Social media posts that would normally include beautiful beach photos had to be paused until recovery took place. We did not start doing beach promotions until June 2025. The Sunseeker Resort had little damage and Punta Gorda was able to recover and open in a shorter timeframe, so visitors had non-beach options to stay and experience.

In May, we took a bold approach by launching a 31-day social media revival campaign, focused on increasing daily organic content to boost visibility and engagement. The results speak for themselves!

On Facebook, we saw strong gains across the board, including a 24% increase in post engagements and an impressive 412% surge in post clicks. Instagram also performed well, with a 106.9% increase in post reach, and a 48.6% increase in post likes. These metrics show that not only are more users seeing the content, but they're also interacting with it at much higher rates.

Overall, the campaign significantly increased visibility across platforms, re-energized our audience, improved algorithm performance, and positioned the brand for stronger reach and sustained impact moving forward.

We rescheduled several FAM trips to either a later time in the year or re-focused their itinerary showcasing other things to do instead of the beach. Family vacations, culinary, and outdoor adventures such as kayaking, Babcock Ranch Eco Tours, Peace River Botanical & Sculpture Gardens, King Fisher Fleet boat cruises, and independent restaurants were areas of focus for FAM trips, social media and public relations.

So far this year, we have hosted 13 FAMs with 24 journalists, photographers and families.

## Public Relations Highlights include:

### Content Partnership

Content creator, Kelly Rizzo has 432k followers. Kelly is the widow of the late Bob Saget, Full House TV actor and comedian. This was a partnership with Visit Florida and Sunseeker Resort for promoting travel and culinary interest in our destination.



### TV Segment

We were honored to host a German film crew who created a German TV segment of "Farmer Wants a Wife." It aired in Germany on June 23, 2025 and had over 1.5 million viewers.



### Fishing FAMs

We hosted three separate Fishing FAMs where five journalists from the Association of Great Lakes Outdoor Writers (AGLOW) experienced and promoted Tarpon fishing, catching a Goliath Grouper, and catching a Florida Inshore Slam - Snook, Trout, and Red Fish on the same day.



This resulted in the creation of numerous social media posts with our partners and fishing guides, producing several podcast shows and articles in Hunting and Fishing publications.

We continue to build relationships with new journalists and travel writers by attending conferences such as the North America Travel Journalists Association, Association of Greater Lakes Outdoor Writers, Outdoor Writers Association of America, and others to increase our exposure domestically and internationally.

# SPORTS MARKET DEVELOPMENT

The Punta Gorda Englewood Beach Visitor & Convention Bureau Sports Division always looks for creative ways to host unique sports in our community since we do not have the expanded venue options like neighboring counties and others throughout Florida. This dynamic requires providing competitive bids on sporting events that don't utilize the typical sports venue, like a softball or soccer complex. With that, the sports division of the Tourism Development office was awarded six national sports bids, including two national sports conferences. These unique events awarded include the Professional Pickleball Association Challenger Series, American Junior Golf Association Championship, USA BMX Florida State Championship, and the American Kennel Association Agility and Dock Diving State Championship. These unique events continued to provide economic impact and support to our local hotels, restaurants, and attractions. Below is a small example of our top five unique sports venues utilized to host our non-traditional sports that still enhance the quality of life for our residents by providing them the opportunity to participate or come cheer as a fan.

## PICKLEPLEX OF PUNTA GORDA

- 23 National, International, Regional and State Tournaments and Clinics
- 2 Broadcast live streaming with destination commercial with one on ESPNU and CBS Sports
- 2,193 National & International Athletes
- 9,300 Short term accommodations room nights
- \$9.5 million generated in Economic Impact

## CENTENNIAL PARK POOL



- 7 Events and NCAA College winter swim and dive training
- 1,096 National and International athletes
- 1,985 Short term accommodations room nights
- \$2,603,000 million generated in Economic Impact

## BRATTY PAWS DOGPLEX

- American Kennel Association Agility & Dock Diving State & Regional Championship
- 3 Florida State and regional events with three disciplines
- 675 Competitors
- 1012 Short term accommodations room nights
- \$1,407,758 million generated in Economic Impact

## CHARLOTTE BMX TRACK



- USA BMX Florida State Championship
- 791 State athletes (current record)
- 2,534 Short term accommodations room nights
- \$2,978,601 million generated in Economic Impact

## AILERON GOLF CLUB

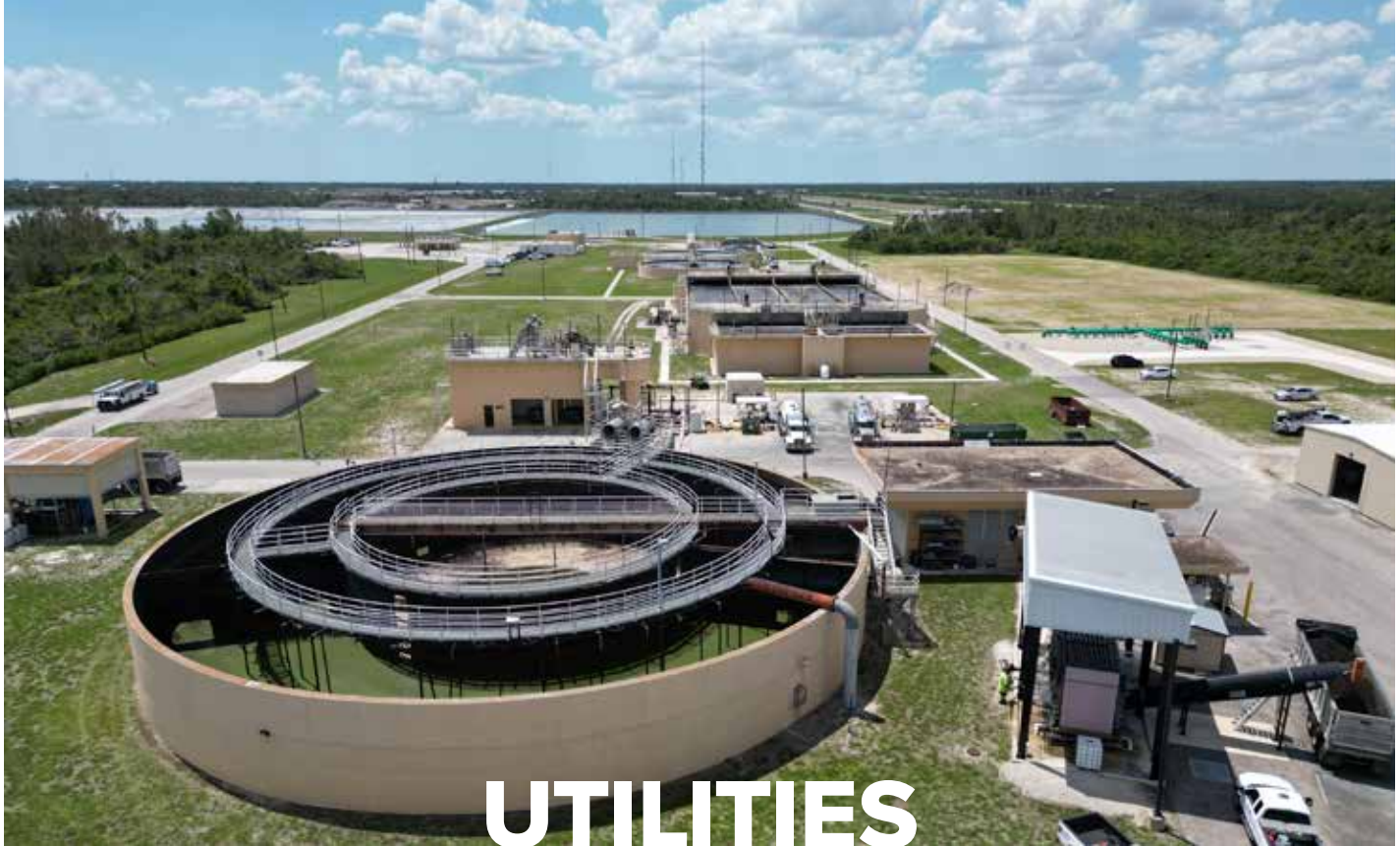


- American Junior Golf Association Championship
- 156 Top amateur national and internationals amateur athletes participating
- 6 Countries represented
- Live stream broadcast with destination commercial

## Total Amateur & Collegiate Sports Event Impact\*

- 73 Tournament/Events Hosted
- 18 Different Sports
- 31,000 Room Nights Booked
- \$39 Million Economic Impact

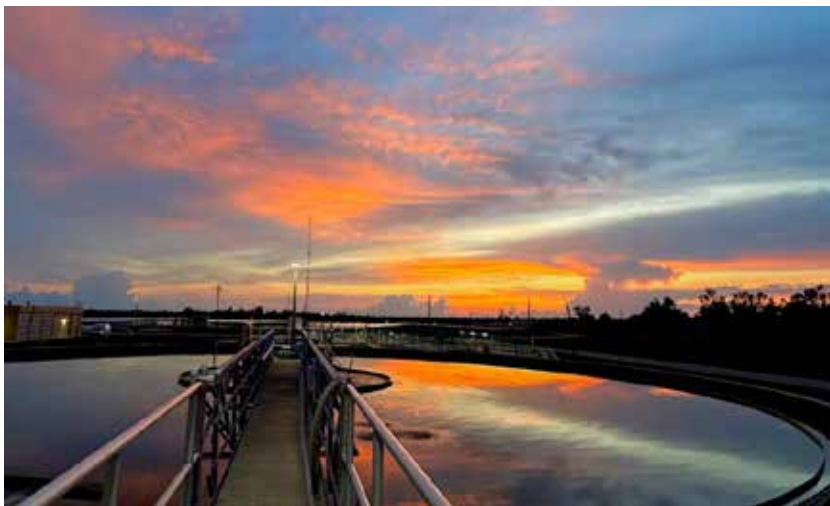
\*(Note: 10 events were canceled due to hurricanes Helene and Milton, including two marquee events: the Florida International Airshow and Englewood Beach Waterfest)



# UTILITIES

## 2024 Sewer Master Plan Update

The Charlotte County 2024 Sewer Master Plan (SMP) Update guides the Charlotte County Utilities Department in delivering safe, reliable and adequate wastewater services to current and future customers. The SMP focuses on creating a dependable and efficient wastewater system that meets existing demands while prioritizing the transition of high-priority areas from on-site septic systems to centralized sewer service. The plan is guided by four core principles: affordability, sustainability, efficiency and reliability. This framework ensures the 2024 SMP Update not only meets immediate infrastructure needs but also supports Charlotte County's broader objectives of protecting public health, promoting sustainable community growth and exercising prudent financial management. The SMP reinforces the County's commitment to delivering essential public services, enhancing infrastructure, fostering economic development and maintaining an efficient and effective government.



## Capacity Assessment and Assurance Program Report and Study

The Charlotte County Utilities Department operates a wastewater collection system serving over 48,000 connections in Charlotte County and parts of Lee County. Under a Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) consent order, CCU developed and submitted a Capacity, Management, Operations and Maintenance plan in 2021, which included the creation of a Capacity Assessment and Assurance Program (CAAP).

A formal CAAP and Flow Monitoring Program framework ensures the wastewater collection system operates efficiently and reliably. By identifying system gaps and implementing robust monitoring protocols, the program helps prevent overflows, reduces environmental impacts and protects public health. This proactive approach supports Charlotte County's strategic goals of maintaining regulatory compliance, enhancing infrastructure resilience and delivering effective public services. By strengthening the WWCS, the CAAP contributes to sustainable community growth and prudent resource management, reinforcing the county's commitment to long-term utility system excellence.

## SRF Funding - South County Improvements and the Eastport WRF Expansion

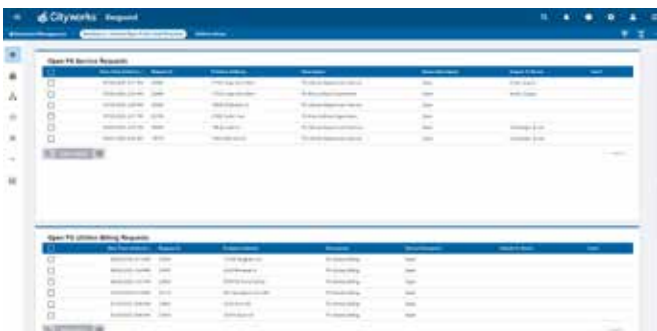
In October 2024, the Charlotte County Board of County Commissioners approved two FDEP loans totaling \$30.8 million with 100% principal forgiveness and 0% interest. The \$19.8 million loan funds the East Port Water Reclamation Facility Plant Expansion, while the \$11 million loan supports construction of an elevated storage tank and water booster station in south county. Both projects are part of the Hurricane Ian Supplemental Appropriations which prioritize hurricane recovery and community resilience improvements.



These projects benefit the public by enhancing water infrastructure reliability, capacity and emergency preparedness, ensuring safe and sustainable water services during extreme weather events. They align with Charlotte County's strategic goals of strengthening critical infrastructure, promoting environmental sustainability, and increasing community resilience to natural disasters.

## Cityworks CMMS Implementation and Expansion

The department's asset management program has evolved. The Cityworks system is improving maintenance planning, asset tracking and performance reporting.



Early efforts focused on developing detailed mapping of plant and linear assets and creating customized workflows, inspections, service requests and dashboards to meet operational and regulatory needs. The department continues to enhance GIS accuracy, standardize data entry and provide staff training. Integration with Banner, which houses customer data and Public Stuff, used for customer service requests, have streamlined communication and enabled more automated, data-driven work management.

The department is now exploring Cityworks performance budgeting to support long-term financial planning and further align planned work with field activities. These improvements benefit the public by enhancing service reliability, improving response times and ensuring more efficient use of resources, all while supporting the County's Strategic Focus Areas of efficient and effective government, infrastructure sustainability and financial stewardship.

## Implementation of the Meter Changeout Program



The Charlotte County Utilities Department is replacing and repairing water meters that are 10 years or older to modernize and improve their quality. This effort has successfully reduced manual reads from 24% in October 2024 to about 2% today. Since January 2025, the department has cleaned and repaired more than 2,500 meter boxes and replaced more than 9,500 meters.

These improvements benefit the public by enhancing the accuracy and reliability of water billing, reducing service interruptions and improving response times for meter-related issues. This work reinforces the Strategic Focus Area on infrastructure, promoting operational excellence and providing superior customer service to the community.

## Internship and Workforce Development Program

The Charlotte County Utilities Department facilitated an eight-week high school summer internship program designed to create awareness of the diverse careers and opportunities within the utilities industry. The program provided students with hands-on, meaningful experiences that highlight the essential services the department delivers to the community.

The program benefits the public by cultivating a skilled and knowledgeable future workforce dedicated to maintaining and improving essential utility services. It supports Strategic Focus Areas including Public Services and Efficient & Effective Government—by promoting workforce development and innovation.





**CHARLOTTE COUNTY**

FLORIDA