

## **Harbor Boulevard - Administrator's Update for 7/10/13**

### **By Ray Sandrock, County Administrator**

In May in the Parkside area, the Charlotte County community development department held a public meeting at the Cultural Center to present three design options and typical cross sections for the proposed Parkside Harbor Boulevard improvements. These improvements will be on Harbor Boulevard between US 41 and Olean Boulevard. At the meeting residents were encouraged to choose an option or provide comments on an alternative design. Ballots were available at the meeting and opportunities to vote via email were provided.

The consultant provided a summary report based on citizen's comments. From the comments received by the public, the majority supports that Olean Boulevard should eventually be widened to four lanes and that Harbor Boulevard remain a four-lane roadway. The construction of two sidewalks (both sides) of Olean Boulevard and Harbor Boulevard was not favored; however the inclusion of additional landscaping, lighting and benches was preferred. On-street parking along Harbor Boulevard or Olean Boulevard was perceived as not being needed at this time. With the input from the residents, an additional design option and cross section was created which represents the consensus gathered from the public comments. At the upcoming July 23 regular board meeting, staff and the design consultants will provide a presentation to the Board of County Commissioners for the selection of a preferred design option.

### **Harbor Boulevard sidewalks north of Parkside**

The Harbor Boulevard sidewalk project is part of the sales tax sidewalk program approved through voter referendum in 2008. This referendum allocated \$10,000,000 dollars to construct sidewalks throughout Charlotte County. Sidewalk locations were selected through a process that considered school board priorities, Metropolitan Planning Organization priorities, and public input.

Construction started in June on the Harbor Boulevard sidewalk, which will connect to a network of previously constructed Sales Tax Sidewalks. When the sidewalk is complete it will connect to sidewalks on Midway Boulevard, Quesada Boulevard, Peachland Boulevard, and Veterans Boulevard. The sidewalk will be approximately 11,000 feet long and 8 feet wide. The width serves to accommodate pedestrian traffic as well as bicycle traffic and classifies the project as "MURT" or a multi-use recreational trail. Along with the construction of the sidewalk, the existing drainage system will be realigned and conduit will be placed for future fiber optic facilities that serve as the "backbone" of Charlotte County's fiber optic network.

The sidewalk construction schedule is aggressive and construction is expected to be completed in about 6 months. The contractor began sidewalk, drainage, and driveway installation close to Veterans Boulevard. After mobilizing and installing the required signage, the contractor has poured approximately 300 feet of sidewalk and several driveways and installed over 1,000 linear feet of fiber optic conduit.

Status updates for the Harbor Boulevard improvements and sidewalk projects and other in-progress engineering projects are available on the county website. Visit [www.CharlotteCountyFL.gov](http://www.CharlotteCountyFL.gov) and click Project Status Updates in the "Popular Links" on the left. Community Development engineering project managers keep these postings updated in an ongoing basis.