

**Project updates around the county
Administrator's Update for 5/14/14
By Ray Sandrock, County Administrator**

The Winchester Boulevard south extension project includes the construction of a new four-lane connector from Placida Road to the Charlotte/Sarasota County line, with a direct connection to I-75 via River Road within Sarasota County. The clearing and grubbing part of the project is complete and there will be no more vegetative debris burning. Storm drain installation is underway on the southern end of the project and is moving northward. Excavation of a stormwater pond is underway at Sunset Road, and the material excavated from this pond is being utilized as embankment to cross an existing pond further south in the project.

The design of the plans at the intersection of Winchester Boulevard North and State Road 776 include a right turn lane onto Winchester Boulevard North and a new traffic light. The construction within this intersection is part of the current construction contract and will begin in the summer of 2014.

We have received many inquiries about work taking place north of S.R. 776. This area will be utilized as a flood plain compensation site similar to the site that exists adjacent to Winchester Boulevard North. This flood plain compensation site is required to balance the fill that was placed within the Oyster Creek and Gondolier Waterway flood plain to build Winchester Boulevard.

Gulf Cove sidewalks

Construction is expected to be completed by the end of this month. This project began from a request from the Gardens of Gulf Cove MSBU committee that sidewalks be installed from the current end of the sidewalk on Coniston Street to Englewood Road, and also on Coliseum Boulevard from Englewood Road to Drucker Circle. The contractor has already installed new sidewalks along Drucker Circle and Coniston Street. A new fire hydrant has been installed and the old one removed.

Bridge replacement in progress

The Harborview Road bridge replacement project includes design and construction of a replacement Bridge over the DeSoto Canal on Harborview Road east of Rio de Janeiro Avenue. The new bridge will be constructed with a precast concrete deck. Construction is projected to be complete in the fall of 2014. As of last week, the top deck, five and eight foot sidewalks have been poured. The contractor is now working on forming the approach slabs.

Beach cleanup

The Charlotte County community services Beach Cleanup at Englewood Beach/Chadwick Park was a sunny success at the end of last month. Staff from Tringali Recreation Center and the park's crew helped with the cleanup, along with 40 volunteers. Keep Charlotte Beautiful provided trash bags, water and t-shirts for our volunteers, and all were treated to a cook out for a job well done. Thank you to the community and local businesses that helped to make our April beach cleanup a great success.

Hurricane Charley exhibit

The Charlotte County Historical Center recently opened a new exhibit "Rising From the Rubble: Hurricane Charley"! at the historical courthouse in Punta Gorda. This year in August is the tenth anniversary of this devastating storm. The exhibit will be moved to the Mid-County Regional Library later this month and will remain on display for the summer.