

Construction begins on Midway Boulevard widening

Administrator's Update for 9/30/15

By Ray Sandrock, County Administrator

Work on the Midway Boulevard widening project began this week with the installation of silt fences and clearing of pond sites areas east of Achilles Street to Kings Highway. Road work is scheduled to begin in mid-October.

This project will complete the widening of Midway Boulevard from Sharpe Street (just east of Harbor Boulevard) to the intersection of Kings Highway (about 2.25 miles). This project was selected for inclusion in the 2008 sales tax referendum approved by Charlotte County voters. The design includes four lanes of traffic with center turn lanes, new sidewalks on both sides, a closed drainage system, new traffic signals at Beacon Drive, new pedestrian crossings at the schools, new lighting and a new water and sewer system along the corridor.

Temporary sidewalks, meeting the ADA requirements, will be installed during construction to maintain all pedestrian access. Midway Boulevard may be closed to through traffic at times, however, mail delivery, emergency services and access to local residences will be maintained during construction. Construction is scheduled to be completed in the summer of 2018.

For information and updates, including detours and projects maps, go to midwayupdate.com.

Media visits

Earlier this month, the Charlotte Harbor Visitor and Convention Bureau hosted three journalists on two separate trips to showcase the destination. Ashley Gibbins and Ann Meador are UK-based travel journalists for the publication AllWays Traveller and visited Sept. 15-18. German-based writer Holger Jacobs on assignment for the German travel publication American Journal visited Sept. 20-23.

During both trips, the journalists were provided with itineraries and suggested places to visit with an emphasis on ecotourism since those activities resonate with international visitors. Activities included a snorkel stand-up paddleboard trip with Hooked on SUP in Englewood, a sunset cruise in Punta Gorda with King Fisher Fleet, a visit to Florida Tracks and Trails in Punta Gorda and fishing with Capt. Rhett Morris of Beyond Borders Outfitters.

The three journalists were in Florida for about three weeks conducting research. Although they have been to Florida several times, this was the first visit to Charlotte County for the UK-based journalists and a return visit for Mr. Jacobs. When editorial content is generated, such as articles from these journalists, it provides a third-party endorsement about the destination and enhances the bureau's marketing efforts in promoting the area.

Battlebots

Beginning Thursday from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m., teens are encouraged to visit the Mid-County Regional Library to take part in a Battle-Bot Workshop. Participants will design, build and deploy

robots in head-to-head arena-style battles. The program covers basic robotics, design concepts, symmetry, automatic, manual and autonomous controls. The program is free for teens 12 to 18. Visit the library to register.

GIS website

Geographic Information Systems staff recently released an upgraded version of the county's GIS mapping website. After 14 years of service, the technology used to support the old GIS website is no longer supported by the vendor and most modern web browsers. The focus behind the replacement was to include as many of the functions of the old website as possible while leveraging the performance improvements and usability the new technology has to offer.

In addition, the site will now function on all of the updated browsers including Internet Explorer 10+, Google Chrome, Mozilla Firefox, and Apple Safari. This includes mobile versions of these browsers, therefore the site will now work on most modern tablets and smartphones. The old site will be available for a transition time with a planned shutdown of no earlier than the end of the calendar year. Documentation on how to navigate the new site can be found using the question mark link located on the upper right side of the application. Visit www.CharlotteCountyFL.gov and click the GIS Maps button above the calendar. Please contact cggis@charlottecountyfl.gov for more information.

Lakeshore house

Housing and Community Initiatives Manager Bob Hebert recently met with a representative from Residential Options of Florida, a not-for-profit Collier County organization that works with people with physical and/or mental disabilities. The organization had requested a meeting to talk about the county's Lakeshore Circle special needs house. The Lakeshore Circle property is a housing unit developed and constructed utilizing neighborhood stabilization grant funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. The Lakeshore house is one of the first of its type in the state. The representative from ROOF was provided a tour and spoke to several of the residents, who were very positive about their home.

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