

Legislative Issue: FY 2023-24
Central Fueling Facility

Funding Request: \$ 966,593
County Match: \$ 311,500

Action

By securing funding for a central fueling facility for critical services, it allows Hernando County to proactively invest in both infrastructure and community resilience for the community. The County has critical facilities along the coastline and the availability of fuel in the identified area is essential when responding to and recovering from coastal storms and impacts from sea level rise. This project meets criteria in two objectives in the 2020 Local Mitigation Strategy as a necessary element of emergency operations. We are requesting \$966,593 to upgrade a functionally obsolete fueling facility.

Background

Hernando County identified the need for a central fueling facility in this vicinity in the Hurricane Irma After Action Report due to degradation of fuel storage and distribution capabilities during this emergency. This project was initially submitted for grant funding through the Florida DEO Irma CDBG-DR program and the Job Growth Grant Fund, but the County has not awarded either grant.

The County has finalized a cost estimate for the facility developed by a vendor with experience on infrastructure and fueling projects and the County owns the identified site for the facility. The estimate allows for compliance with federal regulations including Davis Bacon, preliminary construction plans have been completed, and local water management district has reviewed and approved the project. The County has allocated an additional \$311,500 as a match for the project.

State Interest

Implementation of a central fueling facility would not only address those known concerns during a disaster, such as fueling county vehicles, but also those unplanned concerns such as mutual aid fueling needs for other government agencies and the National Guard. This fueling station can also support additional requests that come through the Emergency Operations Center from Assisted Living Facilities and Skilled Nursing Facilities needing fuel for generator functionality.

Legislative Issue: FY 2023-24
Hernando Beach Wastewater Resiliency Project –
INFLOW AND INFILTRATION REDUCTION

Funding Request: \$2,450,000
County Match: \$1,650,000

Action

The Hernando Beach Wastewater Resiliency Project – Inflow and Infiltration Reduction consists of strategic upgrades and repair of conventional gravity sanitary sewer system in Hernando Beach.

Background

The Hernando County Utilities Department (HCUD) operates and maintains a conventional gravity sanitary sewer system in Hernando Beach. This type of system is susceptible to inflow and infiltration during coastal flooding and large storm events. During these intense events, the groundwater and stormwater can enter the sanitary sewer system through missing clean-out caps, cracks, leaking joints, manhole lids, and other imperfections. The infiltration and inflow (I&I) caused by unintended water entering the sanitary sewer system can lead to inundation and result in sanitary sewer overflows. This causes wastewater to discharge from the system and enter nearby surface waters and canals, having a detrimental effect to the aquatic ecosystem.

The project consists of the following strategic upgrades and repair of the system:

- Slip lining approximately 3,500 feet of gravity mains and 126 service laterals that are known to have the most leaks. This will significantly reduce groundwater from infiltrating into the system.
- Repairing and recoating approximately 319 manholes, reducing the groundwater infiltration that is entering the system from cracks and imperfections in the manhole structures.
- Upgrading and rehabilitating the Hermosa Lift Station. The lift station will be upgraded with new higher capacity submersible pumps with an additional standby diesel pump in case temporary power loss would occur.
- Installing new inflow protectors to seal manhole lids to prevent surface water intrusion
- Installing two manhole monitoring devices. These devices would help troubleshoot and detect future I&I issues, such as yard clean-out caps removed, or illicit connections caused from residences connecting stormwater drains to the sanitary sewer system.

The proposed total cost of the project is approximately \$4,100,000, and Hernando County has budgeted \$1,650,000 as a match for this initiative. Please see attached map for a breakdown in costs and locations of the improvements.

State Interest

Hernando Beach is a coastal community with canals and channels that are directly connected to the Gulf of Mexico. This community is vulnerable to storm surge and coastal flooding due to having lower grades that are close to sea level. The entire community is within the Coastal flood zones as identified in the FEMA flood maps.

Legislative Issue: FY 2023-24 Veteran's Memorial Monument

Funding Request: \$250,000.00
County Match: \$250,000.00

Action

By securing funding for a replacement Veteran's Memorial Monument, Hernando County can provide both a location for commemoration and place of honor for over 17,791 veterans currently residing in Hernando County and the citizens who appreciate their dedication of service and sacrifice. The monument will forever be a place to pay respects to servicemen and servicewomen from all military branches of the United States of America.

Background

Hernando County identified the need for a replacement Veteran's Monument at the Hernando County Veteran's Park located in Spring Hill. The existing monument is located at the entrance of the park and shows signs of deterioration and weathering. The location of the existing monument does not allow for visibility from the multiple athletic fields within the park. This is critical as the National Anthem played during sporting events is done so without appropriate National banners flown in proximity view. Also, the existing monument needs to be updated to include all six military branches of the United States of America.

The County has finalized a proposed cost estimate for the project. The estimate allows for preliminary design and construction. The County has allocated an additional \$250,000.00 as a match for the project.

State Interest

The replacement of the existing Veteran's Monument would commemorate those who have honorably served our Country. The State of Florida has more than 1,492,176 veterans who proudly served in our military branches. This monument would not only honor the veterans of the local community but also the State of Florida as a whole.

Legislative Issue: FY 2023-24
State Aid to Public Libraries Grant Program

Action

The State Aid to Libraries program rewards a county for local dollars spent on the public library. Florida Statutes allow the State to match up to 25 cents for each local dollar spent. In 2001, State Aid to public libraries was \$33.4 million. Public Libraries that receive State Aid to Public Libraries funding invest approximately \$559 million annually in delivering library services to the public. This grant funding goes directly towards day to day operating expenses to ensure libraries doors remain open to the public. Restoring the funding for State Aid to public libraries to the 2001 level is a sound investment that provides a great value to the local communities served. For 2022-2023, the available funding for State Aid grants is \$19,304,072, Operating Grants total \$11,630,650; Equalization Grants total \$4,841,295; and Multicounty Grants total \$2,832,127.

The Federal Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) also provides Florida with about \$9 million annually. The State's minimum "Maintenance of Effort" required to receive those matching dollars is \$21.2 million. These Federal dollars are leveraged to provide services State-wide that impact all libraries with critical programs like the Florida Electronic Library, Interlibrary loan services, and grants to local libraries.

Hernando County Public Library System

State Aid to Libraries completely funds the Hernando County Public Library System materials collection, electronic resources, electronic subscriptions and electronic devices provided to the public. Funds have been used to purchase supplies for public and staff printing, data processing, and for needed hardware and software to perform and carry out ongoing and new library services functions. State Aid also allowed for the renewal of software, hardware, and communications maintenance subscriptions and enabled the continued improvement of Inter-Library Loan Services. State Aid enabled the renewing of site licensing for movie programs and funded the copy machine lease and print services. It also provides the upkeep of the general maintenance of the interior of the library to provide a safe and comfortable environment to the patrons. State aid also provides the County with funds to bring educational, informative and fun programs to all ages of library patrons.

Florida's public libraries are critical to the state's economy and provide a foundation for education at all levels. State Aid funding for services and operations as well as opportunities for expansion and innovation will make our communities more competitive economically and give our residents the educational tools they need to succeed.

Legislative Issue: FY 2023-24 ***Index Gas Tax to Inflation***

The Florida Association of County Engineers and Road Superintendents (FACERS) has proposed the following legislation for the 2023 Legislative Session.

Indexing Local Gas Taxes

FACERS encourages legislation to index local gas taxes to the Consumer Price Index (CPI) in the same way State gas taxes are determined. Alternative Fueled Vehicles will need to be addressed at some point.

The Fuel sales tax was 6.9 cents per gallon in 1997 and had risen to 15 cents per gallon in 2022. The State Comprehensive Enhanced Transportation System Levy was originally a maximum of 4 cents per gallon and had risen to a maximum of 8.3 cents per gallon in 2022, for a total of 23.3 cents per gallon collected for the State.

Background

The motor fuel taxes are the principal source of funding for the construction, maintenance, and operation for most of Florida's local agencies. The costs of transportation system construction and operation are linked to the costs of goods and services, which continues to rise. As the costs of goods and services – measured by the Consumer Price Index – continue to rise, the buying power from the revenue generated from motor fuel taxes will continue to decrease.

Sec. 206.41(f) and (g), Florida Statutes allows for the State Comprehensive Enhanced Transportation System Tax and the FDOT portion of the "fuel sales tax" to be indexed to the Consumer Price Index. The local share of the "fuel sales tax" and the fuel taxes authorized to be levied by counties, (contained in Sec. 206.41(1)(a)-(f) and Sec. 206.60, Florida Statutes) are not indexed. Since the annual adjustment of the state share of the fuel tax is determined by changes in the CPI, the tax increases do not require further legislation. Please refer to Figure 1 - 2022 Motor Fuel Taxes in Florida (next page):

2022 MOTOR FUEL TAX RATES: 51.8-57.8 CENTS PER GALLON

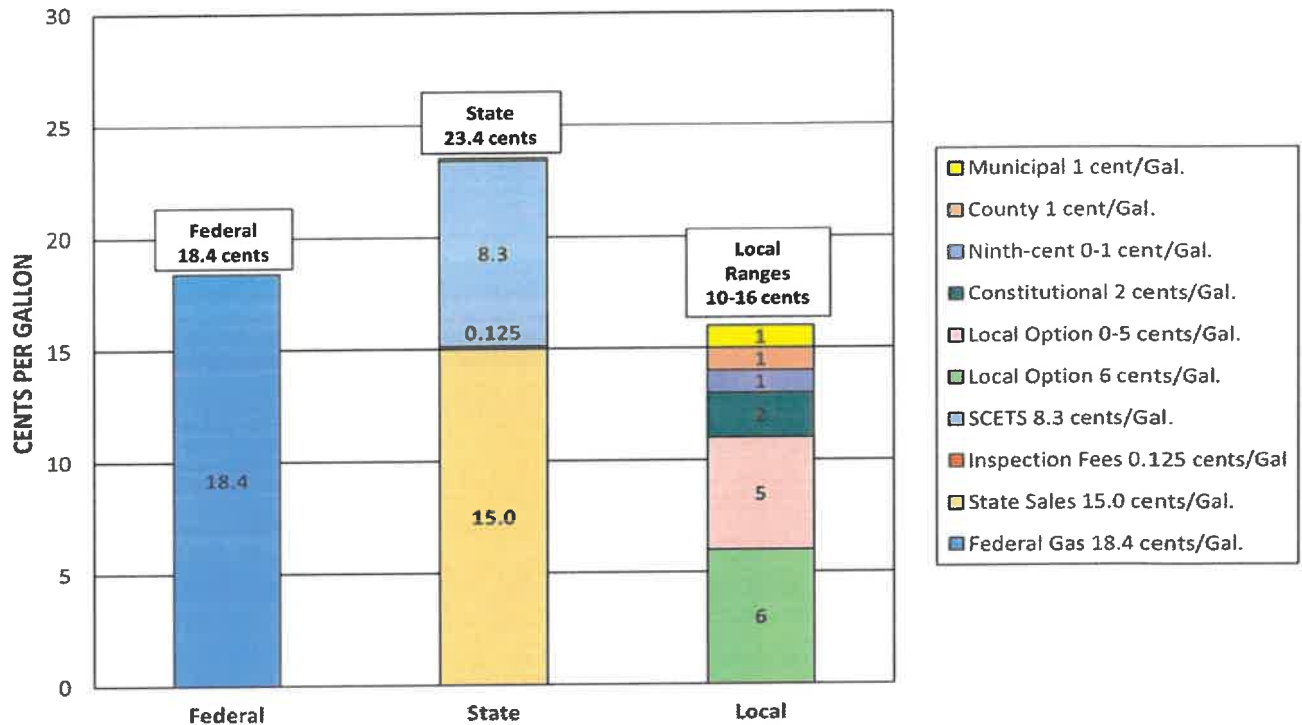


Figure 1 shows the motor fuel taxes authorized in Florida for 2022. This figure shows the maximum local option taxes permitted recognizing that not all counties have levied the maximum local option. County by county details are available at the following link: <http://edr.state.fl.us/content/local-government/data/county-municipal/2022LOFTrates.pdf>

Florida's local governments play an integral role in funding Florida's local, regional, and state transportation system and that system will see increasing deterioration if this vital funding source is not reinforced.

In aligning the state and counties with the same indexing system, it would allow counties to strategically fund projects from revenue generated within their county thus allowing for a more targeted control of maintenance, development, and investment. According to the FDOT website, "The department (FDOT) received about \$797 million additional revenue in fiscal year 2020-2021 when compared to what collections would have been without fuel tax indexing." If aligned, counties would likewise see a funding increase.

Financial Impact

Figure 2 from FDOT 2022 version of Florida's Transportation Tax Sources: A Primer shows the relative increase in historical fuel taxes by entity and shows the rate at which the rate would have increased.

Cents Per Gallon

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
LOCAL	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16
FEDERAL	18.4	18.4	18.4	18.4	18.4	18.4	18.4	18.4	18.4	18.4
STATE	20	20.3	20.6	20.7	20.8	21.3	21.9	22.2	22.5	23.3