2025 Legislative Session Local Priorities

City Council Pillars of Priorities

Strong Resilient Economy

Support the expansion and smart growth of both population and businesses to ensure success locally as well as regionally. Maintaining financial strengths within the City and promote fiscal responsibility to ensure future stability.

Civic Engagement

Build a cooperative and trusting relationship between the City and the community. Promote the opportunity for communication between the decision makers and the public and create a credible channel through which accurate and timely information from the City can be disseminated. Increase the public's understanding and support of the City's goals and strategies.

Sustainable Environment & Infrastructure

Build and effectively manage sustainable infrastructure that promotes clean water, integrated streets, and emphasizes green infrastructure. To anticipate the need for additional services and infrastructure to provide opportunities for mixed use development with goods, services, and employment while creating a sustainable framework of visual appeal by caring for our land, water, air, and wildlife.

Safe & Reliable Services

A safe community for all is the catalyst to ensure that residents and regional visitors enjoy quality amenities year-round. Recruiting and retaining a quality, talented workforce to maintain uninterrupted services to the citizens.

Legislative Priority Themes

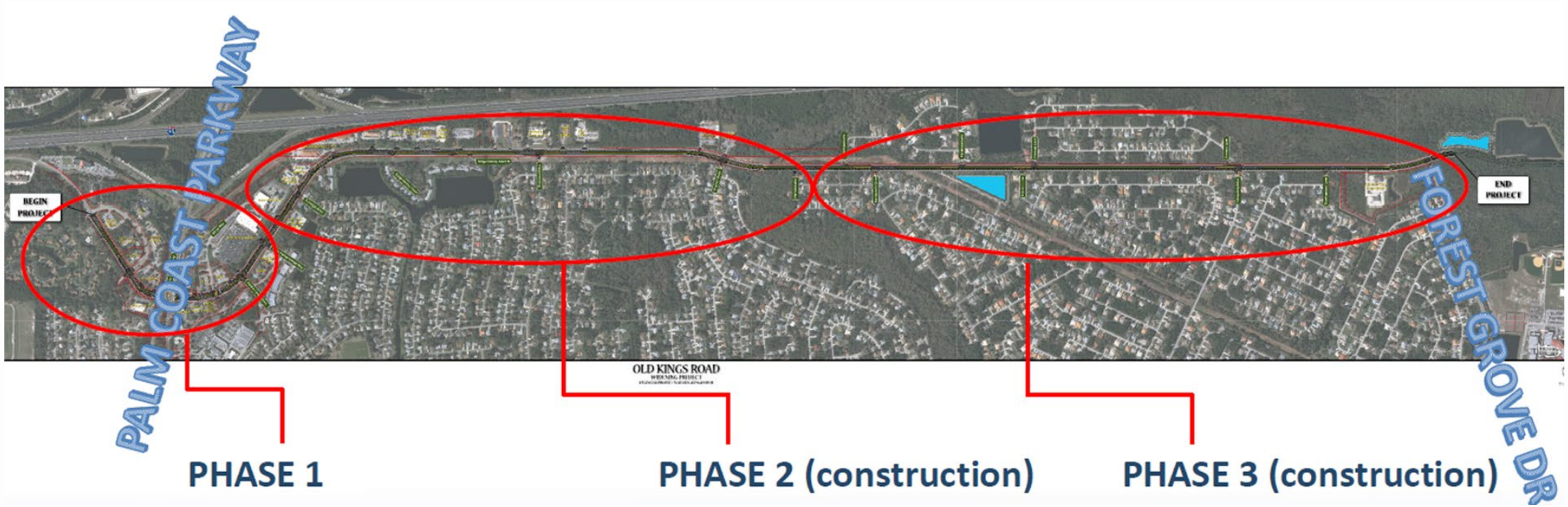
- Safety through Smart Growth
- Reduce the Risk of Flood
- Protection of Water Supply
- Protection of Water Quality
- Community Preservation

Northeast Florida Regional Council (NEFRC) – Regional Priority

Background:
Northeast Florida has experienced rapid population growth, resulting in increased demands on critical utility infrastructure. Water and wastewater are essential for public health, environmental protection, and economic development, yet the costs to expand and upgrade these systems have outpaced local revenue growth. Without additional funding, municipalities across our region struggle to keep up with the infrastructure demands tied to population growth, extreme weather events, and rising construction costs.

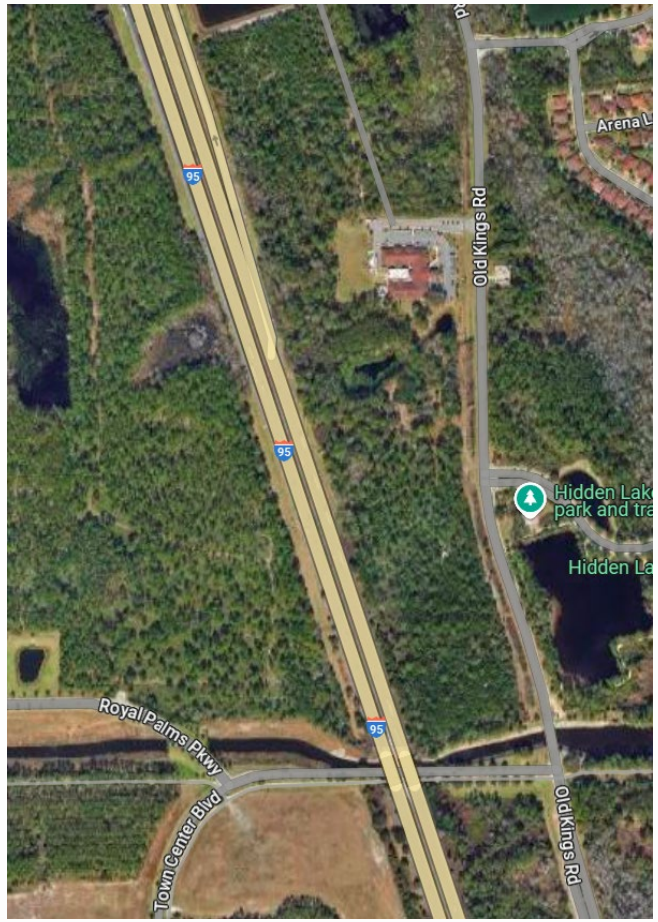
Priority:
The City of Palm Coast, in partnership with the Northeast Florida Regional Council, advocates for increased state assistance for utility infrastructure funding. We urge the Florida Legislature to expand grant opportunities and matching fund programs specifically aimed at supporting utility infrastructure in high-growth regions.

Old Kings Road Construction Phase III



Safety through Smart Growth

I-95 Parallel Facility – Old Kings Road phase 2A



Safety through Smart Growth

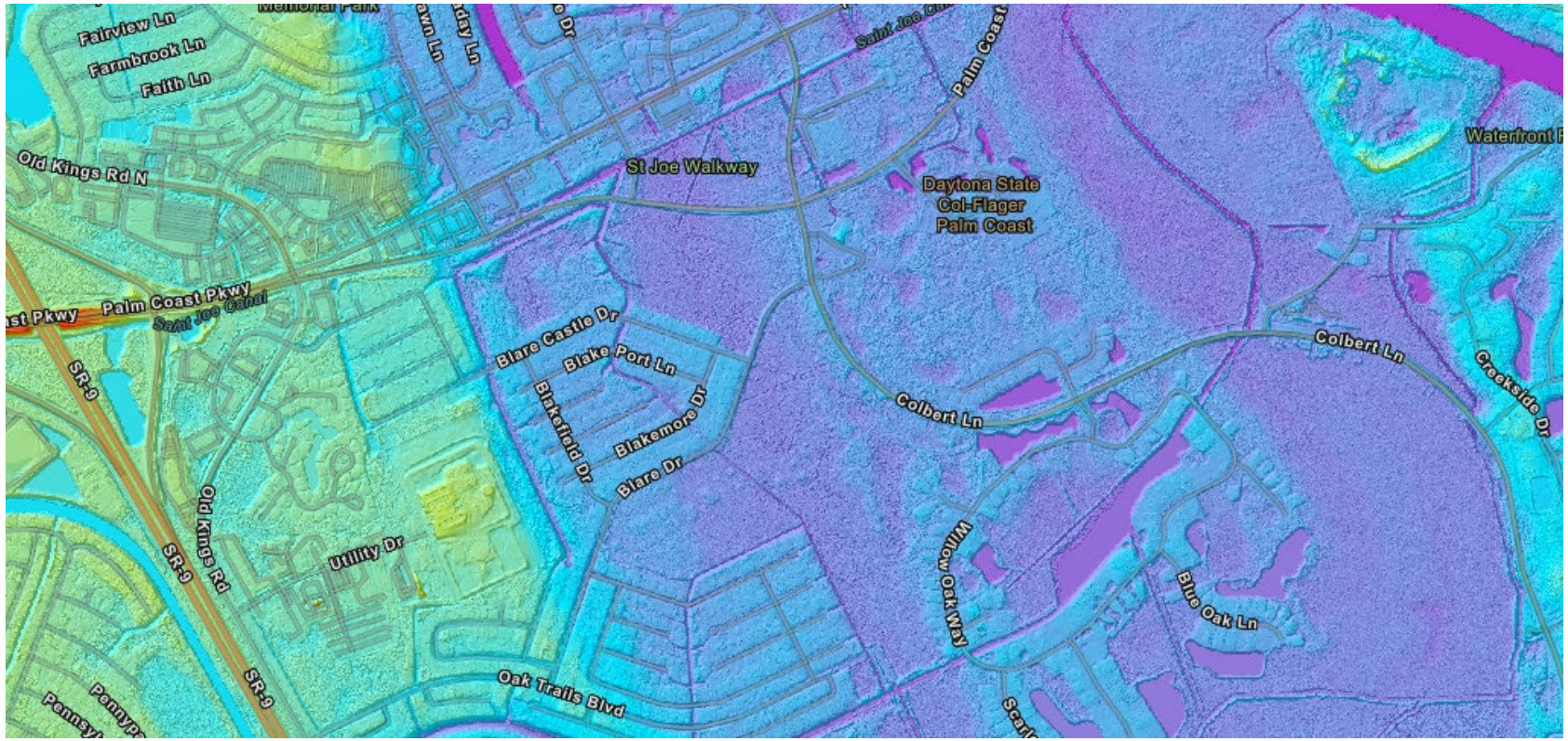
Support Funding for Maintenance Operations Center

YMCA Project

F.S. 23 / Burroughs Drive Stormwater Park

Reduce the Risk of Flood

Woodlands Subdivision Stormwater Capacity project

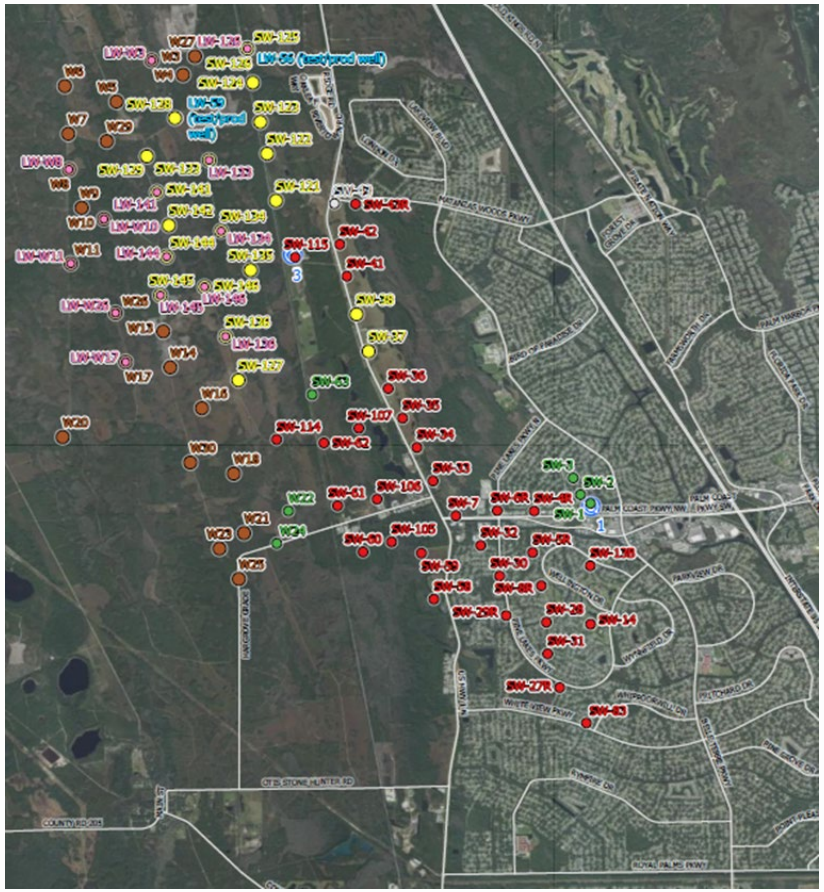


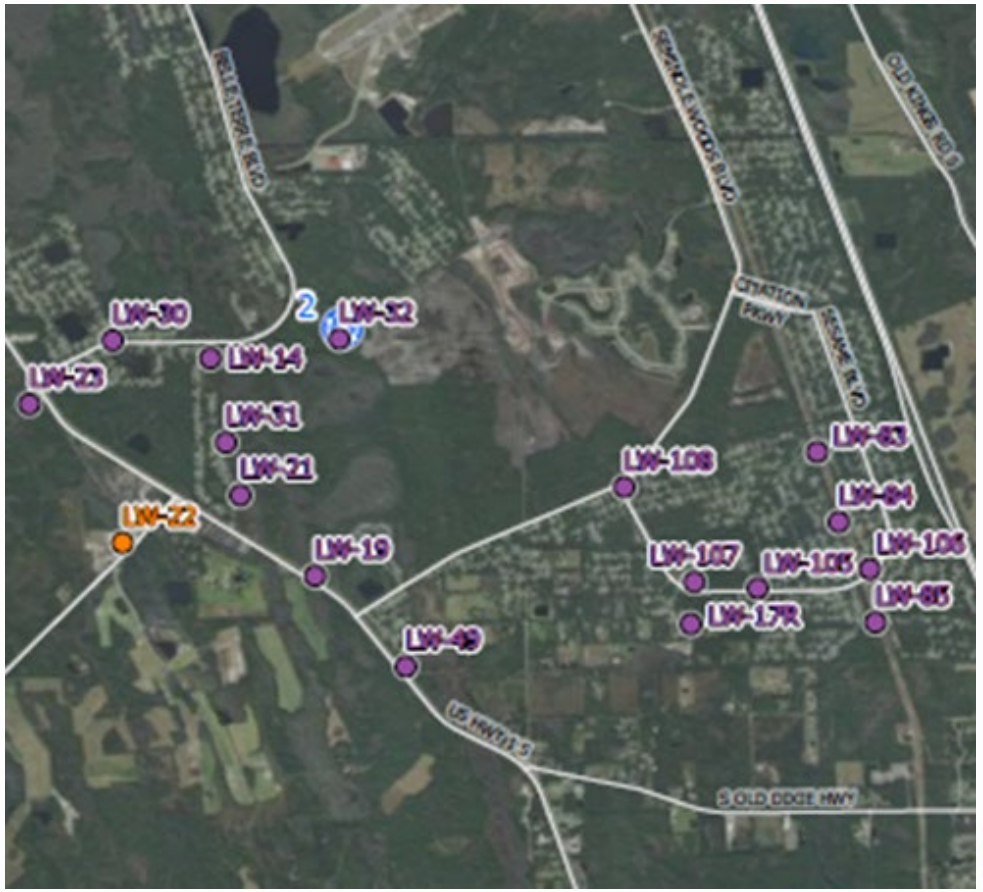
Reduce the Risk of Flood

Seminole Woods Dry Lake and Weir Project

Reduce the Risk of Flood

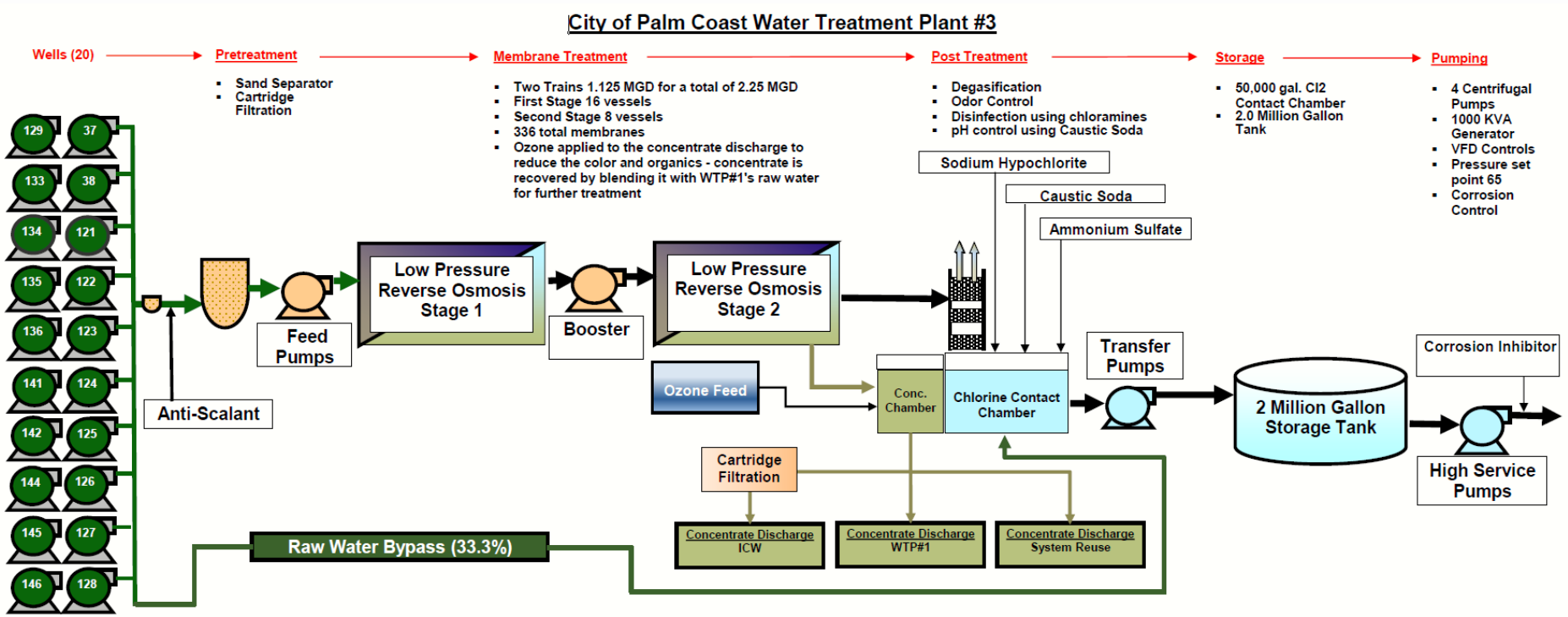
Future Wellfield Exploration





Protect Water Supply

Water Treatment Facility No. 3 Brackish Treatment



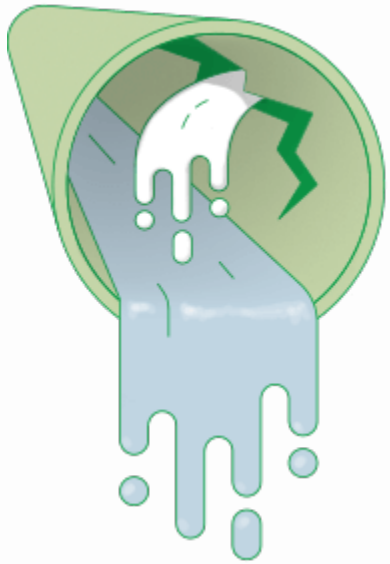
Protect Water Supply

Wastewater Treatment Facility No. 1 Advanced Water Treatment

Protect Water Quality

Wastewater Collection Equalization (EQ) Tank

Wastewater Inflow and Intrusion (I & I) Reduction Projects



Infiltration

Inflow

Historic Fire Station 22 Conversion

Next Steps and Schedule

APPROVE LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES RESOLUTION

SCHEDULE MEETINGS WITH LEGISLATORS BEFORE SESSION

INITIATED BY THE SOUTHERN GROUP

PRESENT AT LEGISLATIVE DELEGATION MEETING

DATE TBD

SUBMIT HOUSE APPROPRIATION BILLS

JAN/FEB

RESOLUTION 2024-___
STATE LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PALM COAST, FLORIDA, APPROVING THE 2025 STATE LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES; PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; PROVIDING FOR CONFLICTS; PROVIDING FOR IMPLEMENTING ACTIONS AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Palm Coast each year evaluates and develops a list of legislative priorities for transmittal to Flagler County, NEFRC, our state legislative delegation, and the City's state lobbyist; and

WHEREAS, each year the Northeast Florida Regional Council (NEFRC) requests legislative priorities from Counties for inclusion in their publication; and

WHEREAS, Flagler County has requested legislative priorities from the City of Palm Coast for inclusion in the annual legislative program.

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED BY THE CITY OF PALM COAST, FLORIDA:

SECTION 1. APPROVAL OF LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES. The City Council of the City of Palm Coast hereby approves the 2025 State Legislative Priorities as attached hereto and incorporated herein by reference as Exhibit "A."

SECTION 2. LEGISLATIVE AND ADMINISTRATIVE FINDINGS. The above recitals (whereas clauses) are hereby adopted as the findings of the City Council of the City of Palm Coast.

SECTION 3. APPROVAL OF GRANT AGREEMENT. The City Council of the City of Palm Coast hereby approves the terms and conditions of the (Entity) Grant agreement.

SECTION 4. AUTHORIZATION TO EXECUTE. The City Manager, or designee, is hereby authorized to execute the necessary documents.

SECTION 5. SEVERABILITY. It is hereby declared to be the intention of the City Council that the sections, paragraphs, sentences, clauses and phrases of this Resolution are severable, and if any phrase, clause, sentence, paragraph or section of this Resolution shall be declared unconstitutional by the valid judgment or decree of a court of competent jurisdiction, such unconstitutionality shall not affect any of the remaining phrases, clauses, sentences, paragraphs and sections of this Resolution.

SECTION 6. CONFLICTS. All resolutions or parts of resolutions in conflict with this Resolution are hereby repealed.

SECTION 7. IMPLEMENTING ACTIONS. The City Manager is hereby authorized to take any actions necessary to implement the action taken in this Resolution.

SECTION 8. EFFECTIVE DATE. This Resolution shall become effective immediately upon adoption.

DULY PASSED AND ADOPTED by the City Council of the City of Palm Coast, Florida, on the 3rd day of December 2024.

ATTEST: CITY OF PALM COAST

_____ _____

KALEY COOK, CITY CLERK MICHAEL NORRIS, MAYOR

APPROVED AS TO FORM AND LEGALITY

_____

MARCUS DUFFY, CITY ATTORNEY

Attachments: Exhibit "A" - 2025 Legislative Session Local Priorities

2025 Legislative Session – Local Priorities

List of Projects

Safety through Smart Growth
Old Kings Road Construction Phase 3
I-95 Parallel Facility Widening of Old Kings Road Phase 2A
Palm Coast Maintenance Operations Center Construction
YMCA project

Reduce the Risk of Flood
Fire Station 23 / Burroughs Dr. Stormwater Park design and permitting
Woodlands community stormwater capacity project design and permitting
Seminole Woods Dry Lake Weir lowering design and permitting

Protection of Water Supply
Future wellfield exploration
Water Treatment Facility No. 3 (WTP#3) brackish water treatment

Protection of Water Quality
Wastewater Treatment Facility No. 1 (WWTP#1) Advanced Water Treatment conversion
Wastewater Collection System Equalization (EQ) tank
Wastewater Inflow and Intrusion (I & I) reduction projects

Community Preservation
Historic Fire Station 22 conversion

Safety through Smart Growth

Old Kings Road Construction Phase 3
The top-priority transportation project for the city within the River to Sea Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) is the widening of Old Kings Road, which commenced under the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) in 2009. Phase 1, funded by FDOT in 2019, reached completion in 2022, and Phase II construction is scheduled for 2025. The River to Sea TPO ranks this project as the third highest among Regionally Significant Non-Statewide Infrastructure System (SIS) Projects. **Provide funding or legislative support for District 5 FDOT to include Old Kings Road Phase 3 in the 5year work plan.**

I-95 Parallel Facility Widening of Old Kings Road
In the past three years alone, I-95 in Flagler County has been completely shut down 63 times due to severe accidents, with the number of closures increasing each year. These frequent shutdowns place a significant strain on our city's road infrastructure and hinder our ability to provide critical emergency services. During these closures, Old Kings Road, which runs parallel to I-95 throughout the county, absorbs the diverted traffic nearly twice a month, creating substantial challenges.

To address these issues, we urgently request state funding for three essential initiatives: the widening of Old Kings Road to effectively handle increased traffic and serve as a reliable alternate route during I-95 closures, enhancements to evacuation routes to strengthen community preparedness, and public safety improvements to ensure the road's functionality and residents' safety during emergencies.

Phase 2A of this effort includes critical components such as the intersections at Town Center Boulevard, a narrow I-95 overpass, a section of the state trail system, and a major stormwater conveyance canal, all of which will be integrated into the construction plan. **Provide funding to add capacity to Old Kings Road north of SR 100 an I-95 parallel facility and vital evacuation route.**

Maintenance Operations Center Construction
The existing Public Works Facility was transferred to the City by Flagler County in 1999. Since then, Palm Coast has operated within this facility, making incremental improvements to address immediate needs and deficiencies. However, the current facility is insufficient in terms of storage and maintenance capabilities to meet the growing demands of the City of Palm Coast safely and efficiently.

Presently, the facility faces several shortcomings, including inadequate parking and material storage areas, aging buildings with structural issues, and an inadequate number of fleet mechanics' bays, which don't provide sufficient space for servicing many of the City's larger work trucks, heavy equipment, and fire apparatus.

The existing Public Works facility cannot adequately meet the current operational requirements and must be upgraded in terms of safety, technology, capacity, traffic flow, and workflow. Establishing this new Public Works facility is crucial to maintaining a high level of service to our residents and addressing the present and future needs of the community. The work carried out by our Public Works teams has a significant impact on every resident, visitor, and City employee, and an appropriate facility is essential for staff to work with maximum efficiency.

Being proactive in anticipating and addressing both current and future community demands is a key part of our strategy to ensure that we can maintain the expected service levels needed to properly manage City facilities and public assets such as parks, community centers, rights-of-way, City fleet and equipment, and effectively respond to emergency and disaster situations without exposing our employees to additional risk.

The new facility, situated on a 128-acre parcel along US Highway 1, is strategically located in the city to support operations at full buildout. This complex will cater to all City departments and will include a Fleet Maintenance Building, Fuel Depot, Fleet Wash Building, and an Administrative Building housing warehouse and shop spaces. To enhance sustainability, the complex will feature rooftop photovoltaic systems, partially powering it and aiming for LEED Silver Certification. To date the city has committed more than $20M to this project in land acquisition, design, infrastructure engineering, and sitework.

Furthermore, the Maintenance Operations Center will be constructed as a critical, fortified facility, doubling as the City's Emergency Operations Center. The site will include designated areas for debris storage, storm event material staging and storage, and the distribution of public sandbags. It will be the primary facility for coordinating staff and equipment during storm events and during the recovery process. **Provide funding to construct Phase 2 of the Maintenance Operations Complex to provide a safe workspace for city staff directly related to citizen service delivery.**

YMCA Project

Bringing a YMCA to Palm Coast would provide numerous benefits to the community. A YMCA serves as a central spot for health and wellness, offering fitness programs, sports facilities, and recreational activities for people of all ages. These resources promote physical and mental well-being while encouraging community involvement and social connections.

In addition to fitness, YMCAs often host educational programs, workshops, and classes that support personal growth and lifelong learning for residents. They also address the need for safe, supervised after-school programs, giving kids a productive and enriching environment while their parents are at work.

The YMCA's focus on inclusivity ensures its services are accessible to people of all backgrounds and income levels, fostering equality and strengthening social bonds in the community. A YMCA in Palm Coast would be a valuable addition, improving the quality of life and supporting the city's focus on health and wellness.

The Volusia Flagler YMCA has already secured over $2 million to design a new facility in Palm Coast, and the city has identified public land to support the project. **Support funding a YMCA providing health and wellness opportunities to seniors and families.**

<u>Reduce the Risk of Flood</u>

Fire Station 23 / Burroughs Dr. Stormwater Park Design and Construction

Expanding stormwater capacity in the B-section of Palm Coast, specifically on the 28.7-acre parcel owned by the City on Burrows Drive, offers numerous community benefits. This land, located next to Fire Station 23 and linked by a ditch to Bird of Paradise Lake, can play a critical role in mitigating flooding issues. During periods of heavy rainfall, the lake frequently overflows, flooding surrounding streets and disrupting daily life for residents.

A well-designed stormwater capacity project on this site would alleviate these issues by managing rainwater more effectively and preventing the lake from spilling over. By using innovative approaches like those seen in London Waterway Stormwater Park, the project could create dual-purpose infrastructure and a functional stormwater system that also serves as a recreational area.

Increasing stormwater capacity will reduce flooding risks, particularly during extreme weather events. Improved drainage will protect nearby homes, streets, and other infrastructure, reducing property damage and enhancing public safety.

Incorporating a passive neighborhood park into the project would create a valuable community space. Features like walking trails, benches, and open green areas could enhance quality of life by providing a place for residents to exercise, relax, and enjoy nature.

By turning this 28.7-acre parcel into a stormwater retention area with added recreational amenities, the City of Palm Coast can solve a persistent flooding issue while simultaneously enhancing the neighborhood's livability and resilience. **Provide funding for design and permitting for the Fire Station 23 / Burroughs Dr. Stormwater Park project**

Woodland's Subdivision Stormwater Capacity Project Design and Construction
The City of Palm Coast seeks legislative funding to address critical drainage issues in the Woodlands and Wild Oaks Subdivisions, residential communities prone to flooding after heavy rainfall. The area's proximity to a restricted outfall exacerbates water retention, leaving parts of the subdivisions inundated for extended periods during significant rain events.

Following Hurricane Milton, many Woodlands residents were stranded in their homes as floodwaters rendered streets impassable to personal vehicles. It took several days for the water to recede, significantly disrupting daily life and posing potential risks to health and safety. Recent trends of more intense storms have worsened these conditions, raising concerns about repetitive loss and ongoing threats to the community's well-being.

To alleviate flooding and improve stormwater management, the city plans to utilize publicly owned parcels to develop retention areas. These retention ponds will provide critical stormwater storage along upstream upland areas, reducing the burden on the restricted outfall and allowing floodwaters to drain more effectively.

The city is committed to being a partner in this solution. It will contribute the land needed for stormwater retention as an in-kind match, demonstrating local investment in the project. Additionally, recent stormwater studies/designs/plans resulting in ongoing upgrades to stormwater infrastructure within this affected area, including replacing old pipes with larger ones to enhance flow capacity, are part of the City's proactive efforts to improve conditions in the Woodlands.

This project addresses an immediate need to mitigate the impact of increasingly frequent and severe rain events. Legislative funding is essential to expedite the necessary improvements and ensure the safety, accessibility, and quality of life for Woodland's residents. This request represents an opportunity for the state to invest in resilience infrastructure, reducing long-term costs associated with repetitive flood loss.

Residents of the Woodlands and Wild Oaks subdivisions have expressed growing concerns over the recurring flooding events and support the City's efforts to find a sustainable solution.

The city respectfully requests state funding to supplement its investment in improving the drainage infrastructure of the Woodlands subdivision. Together, we can provide residents with the reliable stormwater management system they need to weather future storms safely. **Provide funding for design and permitting for the Woodland's Subdivision Stormwater Capacity Project**

Seminole Woods Dry Lake Weir Lowering Project
The City-Wide Stormwater Master Plan, finalized in November 2019, highlights flood risk areas along Seminole Woods Boulevard, Citation Parkway, and several nearby residential streets tied to the Little Canal system.

The City owns a 46-acre vacant property known as Dry Lake, which currently acts as overflow floodplain storage for the Little Canal. A study was conducted to explore ways to maximize Dry Lake's potential for flood storage and better integrate it with the surrounding canal systems.

The primary goal of this proposed project is to improve flood protection by increasing storage capacity in southern Palm Coast, helping reduce flooding in nearby areas. In addition, the lake will enhance stormwater treatment and improve the quality of water discharged into the environment.

As part of this project, a fixed weir will be constructed just west of the Little Canal and Seminole Woods Boulevard. This will maintain upstream water levels at elevation 21.5, which is the current control elevation for the L-1 basin. The L-1 control elevation near I-95 can then be lowered by two feet to 19.5 via a weir replacement/retrofit, expanding Dry Lake's flood storage capacity. Combined, the lake excavation and weir adjustment project to create 124 acre-feet (over 722,000 gallons) of additional flood storage between the 100-year peak stage and the new control elevation. **Provide funding for design, permitting, and construction for Seminole Woods Dry Lake Weir lowering project.**

Protection of Water Supply

Future Wellfield Exploration
The City of Palm Coast operates 69 wells that supply groundwater to three water treatment plants. By leveraging advanced technologies, the city maximizes efficiency, ensuring every drop of groundwater, including concentrate water from reverse osmosis processes, is treated, and delivered as potable water to the community.

To maintain environmentally responsible operations, Palm Coast rotates its wells regularly, allowing aquifers time to rest and recharge. The city also implements a proactive program for well rehabilitation and redrilling to extend the lifespan of its existing wells. However, wells naturally deteriorate over time, and some still in use today date back to the 1980s. To sustain the water supply needed for the growing community, these aging wells must eventually be replaced with new ones in alternative locations.

As the city continues to grow, additional wells will be necessary to meet future water demands. The current wellfield spans within city limits and extends to areas west of the city. However, available sites in the existing wellfield have become limited. Exploring new areas is essential to assess the viability of potential well locations. This exploration helps the city develop, budget, and implement water supply plans effectively and on time. **Provide funding to explore future wells sites to ensure an adequate water supply.**

Water Treatment Plant 3 Brackish Treatment

As Palm Coast continues to grow and water demand rises, securing additional source water is essential. The brackish water treatment at WTP3 plays a vital role in meeting this need. With a brackish water permit from the St. Johns River Water Management District (SJRWMD), the city is actively operating monitoring wells to assess regional impacts. This approach ensures the responsible management of our water supply, preventing degradation or long-term damage, while adding 4.5 MGD of capacity to ease the burden on the existing wellfield.

Palm Coast currently maximizes the use of its water supply, treating 100% of the source water pumped. Even the concentrate water from our two reverse osmosis plants is recovered, treated, and delivered as potable water. WTP3 was specifically designed for brackish water treatment, and advancements in technology have made this process even more efficient. Palm Coast remains committed to optimizing our limited water resources for the benefit of the entire community. **Provide funding to add brackish water treatment to Water treatment Plant 3.**

Protection of Water Quality

Advanced Water Treatment Conversion for Wastewater Treatment Facility #1
The City of Palm Coast is seeking funding from the legislature to convert its existing Wastewater Treatment Facility #1 (WWTF #1) to an Advanced Water Treatment (AWT) system, aligning with Governor Ron DeSantis' priorities for enhancing water quality across Florida.

Advanced Water Treatment technologies significantly improve the quality of treated water, removing additional nutrients, contaminants, and pollutants. AWT ensures compliance with increasingly stringent water quality standards while supporting Florida's environmental goals. Converting WWTF #1 to an AWT system will reduce nutrient loading into surrounding ecosystems, safeguard water resources, and contribute to sustainable water management practices.

By upgrading WWTF #1, Palm Coast will bolster its environmental stewardship and reinforce its commitment to protecting the region's vital water resources. The project directly supports the City's reclaimed water reuse initiatives, enhancing the efficiency of water recycling systems that are essential for irrigation and groundwater recharge.

Legislative support will ensure the successful conversion of WWTF #1, allowing Palm Coast to continue delivering high-quality water services while fulfilling the state's mission of preserving and enhancing water quality. **Provide funding for Wastewater Treatment Plant # 1 AWT conversion project.**

Collection System Equalization (EQ) tank
An EQ (Equalization) tank is an essential component of a wastewater treatment plant, serving as a buffer to stabilize the flow and pollutant load entering downstream treatment processes. Wastewater flow rates can fluctuate significantly throughout the day due to factors like residential usage patterns and industrial activity. The EQ tank addresses these fluctuations by storing excess wastewater during peak flow periods and releasing it at a controlled rate during low-flow periods, ensuring a more consistent flow for downstream processes. Additionally, it helps buffer pollutant concentrations by mixing and diluting varying levels of pollutants such as organic matter, nutrients (nitrogen and phosphorus), and toxic substances. This reduces peak concentrations and creates a more uniform pollutant load for treatment.

EQ tanks equipped with aeration systems that introduce oxygen into the wastewater, prevent the growth of anaerobic bacteria. This reduces the risk of foul-smelling gases and maintains wastewater

quality. By providing a consistent flow and pollutant load, the EQ tank enhances the efficiency of downstream treatment processes, including biological and chemical treatments. Ultimately, the EQ tank plays a vital role in ensuring the smooth and reliable operation of a wastewater treatment plant by stabilizing flows, equalizing pollutant loads, and preventing septicity, which collectively contribute to producing cleaner and safer treated effluent. **Provide funding to pipe and install an Equalization (EQ) tank in the collection system.**

Wastewater Inflow and Intrusion (I & I) reduction projects

Utility I&I refers to Inflow and Infiltration in wastewater systems. It describes the unintended entry of water into sanitary sewer systems from various sources, which can overwhelm the system's capacity and reduce its efficiency. Funding is needed to accelerate the city's pipelining and manhole cover replacement to reduce I & I.

The requested funding will provide several critical benefits for the community. First, it will help mitigate infiltration during heavy rainfall. Currently, stormwater infiltration overwhelms the wastewater system, leading to increased operational costs and sewer backups. By lining gravity mains and manholes, infiltration, and inflow (I&I) will be significantly reduced, preserving system capacity during wet weather and decreasing the risk of sanitary sewer overflows (SSOs). Second, the funding will protect public roadways. Aging infrastructure beneath roadways contributes to subsidence, potholes, and road hazards. Restoring the structural integrity of gravity mains and manholes will prevent further roadway damage, enhancing safety and reducing maintenance costs. Finally, the funding will support public health and environmental quality. SSOs pose a risk by contaminating local waterways and creating health hazards. Reducing infiltration will lower the frequency of SSOs, protecting the environment and ensuring the community's well-being. Provide funding for I & I reduction projects. **Provide funding for projects that will reduce I & I in the wastewater collection system.**

Preserve Historic Fire Station 22

Preserving Historic Fire Station 22 in Palm Coast is essential to maintaining the city's unique identity and honoring its rich history. This historic landmark serves as a tangible link to the past, offering residents and visitors a glimpse into the early days of the community's development. By preserving this iconic structure, Palm Coast can ensure that future generations continue to appreciate the historical context and evolution of firefighting services, fostering a sense of pride and connection to the local heritage. Moreover, repurposing the building for community use, such as a museum or cultural center, would provide a valuable space for educational programs and events, promoting a deeper understanding of the area's history. In embracing its past, Palm Coast can create a legacy that enhances both its sense of place and its sense of community. This request is for state funding to accomplish required building code updates to repurpose the building for an assembly use. **Support funding to preserve historic Station 22 for future generations to enjoy as a cultural center.**

NEFRC Regional Priority

Legislative Priority: State Funding Assistance for Utility Infrastructure in Northeast Florida

Background: Northeast Florida has experienced rapid population growth, resulting in increased demands on critical utility infrastructure. Water and wastewater are essential for public health, environmental protection, and economic development, yet the costs to expand and upgrade these systems have outpaced local revenue growth. Without additional funding, municipalities across our region struggle to keep up with the infrastructure demands tied to population growth, extreme weather events, and rising construction costs.

Priority: The City of Palm Coast, in partnership with the Northeast Florida Regional Council, advocates for increased state assistance for utility infrastructure funding. We urge the Florida Legislature to expand grant opportunities and matching fund programs specifically aimed at supporting utility infrastructure in high-growth regions.

Justification: Additional funding for utility infrastructure will enable local governments to maintain safe and reliable services while reducing the financial burden on residents. State support will also help mitigate the impacts of future growth on Florida's natural resources by ensuring that new and upgraded systems are built to sustainable standards. By investing in utility infrastructure, Florida can support local economic development, protect public health, and enhance quality of life across our rapidly growing communities.

Action: We respectfully request the Florida Legislature allocate dedicated funding for utility infrastructure projects in Northeast Florida as part of the upcoming legislative session. Specific funding mechanisms may include increased grant availability, expansion of SRF loan program limits, or matching funds to encourage regional solutions to growing utility needs.