



# CITY OF MARCO ISLAND

To: Representative Bob Rommel, Chair, Collier County Legislative Delegation

From: Greg Folley, Chair, Marco Island City Council

Date: September 1, 2023

Re: 2024 Marco Island Legislative Priorities

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The City of Marco Island is seeking financial support for four projects that will greatly benefit the residents of Marco Island, visitors to Collier County, and will improve water quality.

## 1. Exfiltration Swales

The City of Marco Island has over 120 miles of roadside swales. The swales are the only means to provide water quality detention and treatment prior to discharging to the waterways. However, since the existing swales do not efficiently percolate, they currently do not provide the necessary detention or treatment. The City has proposed reconstructing the swales with exfiltration French drains as part of its alternate water quality (category 4e plan) that has been reviewed by FDEP. The reconstructed exfiltration swales will allow the runoff to be absorbed through the vegetation and thereby uptake the nitrogen and phosphorous prior to reaching the waterways, improving water quality for residents and visitors. The swale reconstruction will be performed over the next four years with approximately 30 miles per year. The annual cost of the program is anticipated to be \$3 million. The City's is seeking 50% assistance in state funding for the first year in the amount of \$1,500,000.

## 2. Median Modifications to Minimize Reuse Runoff

The City's medians were constructed in the 1990's and are mounded in the center, and irrigated with reclaimed water that is high in nutrients. The nutrient rich reclaimed water runs off the medians and enters the storm sewer system which conveys the nutrient rich water directly to the waterways. The nitrogen and phosphorous nutrients contribute to algae growth in the waterways depleting the oxygen needed for marine life to thrive. The City's waterways are included in the state's impaired waters list and the City is currently undertaking the 4e plan

with FDEP to improve water quality. By rebuilding the medians and adding new landscaping to hold water, it will minimize the nutrient load on the waterways allowing the impaired waters to recover. This project has the added benefits of lowering the flooding risk on main roads and improving the sightline for drivers by removing the mounded medians. The project of reconfiguring the City's medians is expected to cost \$1,500,000 (one-time cost). The legislative request for state funds is \$750,000.

### 3. Isles of Capri Sanitary Sewer Collection System Design

The Isle of Capri community is located within the City's wastewater service area. Isles of Capri is a low-lying coastal area connected to the Gulf of Mexico. Most the area's single-family homes are on septic systems with limited filtering capabilities between the drain field and the receiving waters. Nutrients in the effluent of septic systems help promote algae blooms, which have a negative impact on receiving waters. The requested funding would be used to fund the design of a centralized sewer collection system for the area. The legislative request is for \$900,000.

### 4. Fire Rescue Boat

In Collier County there are 24,000 registered recreational boats as well as a large fleet of commercial fishing vessels. The City of Marco Island has more than 6,000 registered recreational boats. With this significant amount of boating activity, marine fire and emergency medical services are necessary to promptly respond to any type of emergency occurring in this vast marine environment. The closest United States Coast Guard station is in Ft Myers Beach.

Recognizing the need for immediate response to marine emergencies, the City of Marco Island, City Council approved the acquisition of a Fireboat in 2012. During eleven years of operation, the Fireboat has responded to approximately 1,200 marine emergencies resulting in numerous lives saved. The Fireboat is equipped with advanced life support and is staffed with Firefighter Paramedics who provide immediate advanced medical care to patients suffering from a traumatic injury, heart attack, stroke, and other serious medical emergencies.

The existing Fireboat has reached its end of service life and the City Council has approved the acquisition of a replacement at a cost of \$1.14M. Many of the people receiving the life-saving services from this boat are either from other areas of the state of Florida or out of state tourists. Therefore, the City is seeking financial support through a legislative appropriation to provide a 50% share in the cost of the City's new Fireboat, which is approximately \$570,000.