

**INDIAN RIVER COUNTY, FLORIDA
MEMORANDUM**

TO: Jason E. Brown, County Administrator
FROM: Richard B. Szpyrka, P.E., Public Works Director
SUBJECT: Update on Unmaintained County Roadways
DATE: July 26, 2018

DESCRIPTION AND CONDITIONS

On October 3, 2017 the Board of County Commissioners discussed the issue of unmaintained County roads. The Board discussed several options for a possible long-term policy/solution to address the current situation whereby the County does not maintain roadways that have not been physically constructed to a maintainable roadway standard and therefore are designated as unmaintained County roadways.

On June 12, 2018 Staff presented to the Board information regarding issues the County will encounter for the construction of unpaved roadways within sub-standard rights-of-way. The issues discussed were the availability of right-of-way, design and permitting requirements, and the cost for design and construction. Staff also provided funding options to the Board for consideration. The Board continued this matter to allow staff time to meet with St. Johns River Water Management District to discuss possible options for permitting of unpaved roadways within unmaintained right-of-ways.

Staff met with SJRWMD (District) staff on July 5, 2018 to discuss possible permit exemptions for the improvement of unmaintained unpaved roadways within the County. Staff provided District staff with current conditions of unmaintained roadways within the County that are being used for access to residential homes. Due to the existing conditions of the unmaintained roadways, District staff agreed that most of the unmaintained roads within the County unmaintained rights-of-way could qualify for permitting exemptions under Florida Administrative Code (F.A.C) 62-330.050 and 62-330.051. It was agreed that on a case by case basis, the County would submit a Request for Verification of an Exemption form to the District for a determination. The submittal fee is \$100.00 for each request. This will allow the County to receive written verification from the District that a certain unmaintained unpaved road is or is not exempt from permitting. With this information we will be able to prepare a more accurate cost for improving the roadway.

Unmaintained right-of-ways that are exempt from permitting will reduce the cost of design and construction, and in most cases allow the County to construct an unpaved roadway within the current right-of-way or within the current location of the path, 18-foot minimum, travelled by residents using the unmaintained right-of-way for access.

Each unmaintained right-of-way is different and will require some type of preparation work prior to the installation of 8-inches of stabilized material. The preparation work could be fill material to fill holes, removal of grass to prepare for installation of the stabilized material, stormwater pipe work to replace or extend existing pipes, stormwater inlets to address drainage issue, and other types of work needed to prepare for the installation of stabilized material. Based on minimum preparation work it is estimated that one mile of an 18-foot wide unpaved roadway can be constructed by a contractor

for \$50.00 a linear foot or \$264,000. This is a decrease from \$65.00 a linear foot or \$343,200 from previous estimates provided to the Board on June 12, 2018 which included stormwater treatment.

This cost could be further reduced if County forces were utilized to prepare and construct the unpaved roadway. However, due to the limited availability of Public Works staff and equipment, this option would require that ongoing maintenance activities such as failed culvert replacements, roadway paving, drainage maintenance, and other special projects would be sacrificed to construct unpaved roadways. This is not recommended, as we have not recovered from the delayed maintenance activities during the economic downturn.

Based on the positive feedback from the District and the reduction in the overall cost for unpaved roadway construction, staff is requesting the Board consider the following options and provide direction to staff.

- **Option #1** – Establish an MSTU or MSBU in 1, 2, or 3 of the study areas to fund existing roadway maintenance; add new County maintained roadway segments by extending the petition paving/milling process to unpaved roadways with construction costs funded by assessment (75% benefited property owners – 25% County) and maintenance funded by the MSTU or MSBU. (75%/25% split)
- **Option #2** – Establish an MSTU or MSBU in 1, 2, or 3 of the study areas to fund existing roadway maintenance and a multi-year expansion program to construct and maintain new County maintained roadway segments.
- **Option #3** – Continue existing roadway maintenance as currently funded by the Transportation Fund: add new maintainable unpaved roadway segments by extending the petition paving/milling process to unpaved roadways with construction costs funded by assessment of 75% of the cost to the benefited property owners and 25% contributed from the Transportation fund. After construction is completed, the maintenance is to be funded by the Transportation Fund.
- **Option #4** – Continue maintaining roadways in the current fashion and do not add additional unpaved roadway segments to the current maintenance routes.

FUNDING

Funding for improvements would depend upon the option selected. Once an option is selected and a cost estimate determined, a funding plan will be submitted to the Board.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends Option #3.

ATTACHMENTS

None

APPROVED AGENDA ITEM FOR August 14, 2018