

INDIAN RIVER COUNTY, FLORIDA

M E M O R A N D U M

TO: Board of County Commissioners

THROUGH: John A. Titkanich, Jr., County Administrator

FROM: Chris Balter, Planning and Development Services Director

DATE: February 12, 2025

RE: County Initiated Request to Amend the 5-Year Capital Improvements Program of the Comprehensive Plan for the Period FY 2024/25-2028/29.

It is requested that the following information be given formal consideration by the Board of County Commissioners at its regular meeting on February 25, 2025.

BACKGROUND

Indian River County adopted its comprehensive plan on February 13, 1990. According to state law, all development activities must comply with the comprehensive plan, and all county activities must conform to its policies.

While local governments can amend their comprehensive plans periodically, there is no annual requirement to update them, except for the Capital Improvements Element (CIE). The CIE is the only element that must be amended every year in compliance with state regulations.

State law allows amendments to the Capital Improvements Program (CIP) schedule and its supporting data and analysis through local government ordinance adoption/amendment procedures. These procedures require only one hearing, while other comprehensive plan amendments involve multiple public hearings and several months of review.

To comply with state requirements, County staff has prepared the annual update of the County's existing Capital Improvements Program.

ANALYSIS

The process involved for updating the CIP involves collaborating with the Budget and Finance

departments to gather information about past and predicted revenues and expenditures, then working with each county department to determine the status of their capital improvements programs. For each department, data related to completed and proposed projects, costs, revenues, prioritization, and other factors were collected. The Budget department reviewed the projects and made necessary changes to ensure financial viability. Based on all of these inputs, Planning staff revised the tables and text of the 5-Year Capital Improvements Program and supporting data and analysis.

Proposed Changes to the Capital Improvements Element

- Capital Improvements Program

The Capital Improvements Program lists all programmed capital improvements for fiscal years 2024/25 through 2028/29. The projects included in the CIP were chosen based on their need and the County's financial capacity to complete them. As per the CIP, the total cost for all of the projects planned for the next five fiscal years is \$514,647,844.

The CIP is structured in ten categories: Coastal Engineering, Conservation and Aquifer Recharge, Emergency Services, Building and Facilities Services, Law Enforcement and Corrections, Recreation and Open Spaces, Sanitary Sewer and Potable Water, Solid Waste, Stormwater, and Transportation.

Coastal Engineering

Significant projects include beach renourishment efforts in Sectors 4 and 5, funded by FEMA, FDEP Grants, Optional Sales Tax, and the County's Coastal Engineering Fund. The total expenditure for projects in this category over the five-year period is \$15,968,887. Additional projects include artificial reef installations and improvements to coastal access sites such as Treasure Shores and Golden Sands, ensuring long-term shoreline stability and ecological sustainability.

Conservation and Aquifer Recharge

This category focuses on the preservation and restoration of historical sites. Enhancing public access to conservation lands by adding kayak launches, boardwalks, and trailheads. Additionally, stormwater quality improvement projects and habitat restoration initiatives are included. Key projects such as the Archie Smith Fish House restoration and Jones' Pier Conservation Area enhancements will help sustain local heritage and ecosystem integrity. Total expenditures for this category are estimated at \$14,348,595.

Emergency Services

The County is investing significantly in emergency services infrastructure, including new fire stations, fleet upgrades, and enhanced facility resilience. Major expenditures include Fire Station 7 construction (\$7.2 million), additional emergency power generators, and critical facility expansions. The total budget allocation for Emergency Services is \$71,501,799 over five years, ensuring adequate response capabilities for the growing population.

Building and Facilities Services

This category includes courthouse security enhancements, library renovations, and administrative office refurbishments. Notable projects include a \$3.5 million modernization of the North County Library and fiber optic connectivity improvements for government buildings. The total budget for these initiatives is \$29,261,785.

Law Enforcement and Corrections

The key projects include the expansion of the Sheriff's facility, crime scene lab improvements, and security enhancements for correctional facilities. These initiatives will ensure modernized infrastructure for law enforcement operations. The budget for this category is \$33,481,921.

Recreation and Open Spaces

The County continues to invest in park amenities, trail expansions, and aquatic center upgrades. The projects include the renovation of Gifford Aquatic Center and lighting enhancements for sports complexes. Over five years, \$46,110,548 will be allocated to these improvements.

Sanitary Sewer and Potable Water

This category covers new water main installations, sewer system conversions, and upgrades to the South Oslo Water Treatment Facility. The total expenditure for projects in this category for fiscal years 2024/25 through 2028/29 is \$122,047,984.

Solid Waste

The major projects under Solid Waste include expanding the existing landfill infrastructure and a partial closure of Segment 3 Cells 1 & 2. The total expenditure for projects in this category for fiscal years 2024/25 through 2028/29 is \$33,448,040.

Stormwater

The projects in this category focus on stormwater retention and water quality improvements with a total budget of \$3,401,710. This includes a Stormwater Master Plan and the implementation of advanced water treatment technologies.

Transportation

The transportation projects constitute the largest funding category, supporting road widening, intersection improvements, additional turn lanes, and the expansion of sidewalks and bicycle lanes throughout the County. The total expenditure for projects in this category for fiscal years 2024/25 through 2028/29 is \$145,076,576.

The following comparison table illustrates the changes in funding from the previous year's CIP to the current one.

Comparison of Existing (Last) 5-Year CIP Expenses by Category to Proposed 5-Year CIP Expenses by Category				
Category	FY 2023/24-2027/28	FY 2024/25-2028/29	Difference \$	Difference %
Coastal Engineering	\$28,029,149	\$15,968,887	-\$12,060,262	-43%
Conservation & Aquifer Recharge	\$14,025,675	\$14,348,595	\$322,920	2%
Emergency Services	\$48,522,558	\$71,501,799	\$22,979,241	47%
Building and Facilities Services	\$31,277,765	\$29,261,785	-\$2,015,980	-6%
Law Enforcement & Corrections	\$31,843,479	\$33,481,921	\$1,638,442	5%
Recreation & Open Spaces	\$33,810,393	\$46,110,548	\$12,300,155	36%
Sanitary Sewer & Potable Water	\$72,241,620	122,047,983	\$49,806,363	69%
Solid Waste	\$25,950,000	\$33,448,040	\$7,498,040	29%
Stormwater	\$4,100,000	\$3,401,710	-\$698,290	-17%
Transportation	\$199,209,928	\$145,076,576	-\$54,133,352	-27%
Total	\$489,010,567	\$514,647,844	\$25,637,277	5%

Consistency with the Comprehensive Plan

Comprehensive plan amendment requests are reviewed for consistency with all applicable policies of the comprehensive plan. As per section 800.07(1) of the county code, the comprehensive plan may be amended only in such a way as to preserve the internal consistency of the plan.

The comprehensive plan consists of goals, objectives, and policies that are crucial for directing the Planning and Development Services Department. Policies are statements that outline the actions the County will take to achieve these goals. They serve as the basis for all decisions related to land development in the County. Although all policies are important, some are more relevant than others when reviewing amendment requests.

Comprehensive plan amendment requests are reviewed for consistency with all applicable policies. The proposed amendment aligns with Future Land Use Element Policy 14.3, as changes in revenue projections, completed projects, and shifting priorities justify the update. Additionally, policies within the Capital Improvements Element—such as Policies 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.5, 1.9, 1.10, and 1.11—mandate periodic updates to ensure alignment with evolving infrastructure needs.

- Capital Improvements Element Policy 1.9

Capital improvements element policy 1.9 states that the county shall include all capital expenditures in excess of \$100,000 in its schedule of improvements. Since the proposed CIE update amendment identifies all capital expenditures in excess of \$100,000, the proposed amendment is consistent with capital improvements element policy 1.9.

While the referenced policies are particularly applicable to this request, other comprehensive plan policies and objectives also have relevance. For that reason, staff evaluated the proposed amendment for consistency with all applicable plan policies and objectives. Based upon that analysis, staff determined that the proposed amendment is consistent with the comprehensive plan.

RECOMMENDATION

Based on the analysis conducted, staff recommends that the Board of County Commissioners approve the update to the 5-Year Capital Improvements Program for the period FY 2024/25-2028/29 and supporting data and analysis of the comprehensive plan by adopting the attached ordinance.

ATTACHMENTS

- 1.) Comprehensive Plan Text Amendment Adoption Ordinance
- 2.) Appendix A 5-Year Schedule of Capital Improvements
- 3.) Appendix B-C
- 4.) Business Impact Statement