



# CITY OF MARCO ISLAND

To: Marco Island City Council  
From: Casey Lucius, Assistant City Manager  
Date: November 18, 2024  
Re: Proposed Marco Island Legislative Priorities

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## Background:

On September 10, 2024, City staff met with Rana Brown from Ron Book's office. She provided insights into the 2025 legislative session and potential budgetary constraints. Following Hurricanes Debby, Helene and Milton, she followed up with an email indicating that the key priorities for the legislature may be focused on emergency business loans, insurance, flood mitigation, and debris funding. As a result, we may experience a lean budget year with limited funds for nonessential projects. She also advised that any request be supported by a 50% match from the City.

Ron Book is scheduled to present to the City Council on December 9, 2024. The Florida League of Cities will publish a legislative platform, but it has not yet been published. The Collier County legislative delegation will meet in December, and the State legislative session begins in March 2025.

City staff is requesting that City Council consider the following legislative priorities:

- 1. Biological Active Filters:** To enhance drinking water quality and meet the increasing demands of regulatory compliance, the City will add Biological Active Filters at the Source Water Facility. The City's primary water source is the raw surface water reservoir located nine miles north of Marco Island at the Source Water Facility. This water contains high levels of organic compounds which leads to the degradation of the microfiltration membranes used in the treatment process. The proposed Biological Active Filter system will improve the City's water treatment by pre-treating the water to remove a substantial portion of the organic compounds before

it reaches the lime softening and microfiltration stages at the North Water Treatment Plant. This will restore the full lifespan on the membranes (8-10 years) and will help mitigate other water quality issues such as color, taste, and odor. The design for this project has been completed by Jacobs Engineering Group, and the project is in the permitting phase. The bidding was completed and the low bidder, Cardinal Contractors bid \$9,932,000. The City is requesting \$750,000 in State funding to support this project. The City's share will be \$9,182,000.

It is Ron Book's recommendation to keep the City's legislative appropriation requests around \$750,000 and to have a 50% match.

**2. Marco Island Tide Leveling and Canal Flushing Project:** Canal flushing is an integral part of the City's 2015 master plan for water improvement. In our recent water quality report, it was recommended that canal flushing will improve water quality in the canals by reducing nitrogen and phosphorus. In 2020, the City received \$425,000 for San Marco Tide Leveling, in 2021 the City received another \$416,745, and in 2023, we received \$400,000 totaling \$1.2 million. The project has already been designed, bid, and is shovel ready. However, when the project was put out to bid, the lowest bid was \$4.9 million. Even with a City match of approximately \$1 million, we are still short nearly \$3 million. The City Council has two options to consider:

- a. Ask the legislature for the full \$3 million to complete this project.
- b. Ask the legislature for \$750,000 with a City match of \$750,000. Then utilize the grant writer that is part of the FY25 budget to seek additional grant funding for the remaining \$1.5 million. It is Ron Book's recommendation to keep the City's legislative appropriation requests around \$750,000 and to have a 50% match.

**3. Use of State University and College Parking Lots/Garages during Emergency Evacuations:** This is a no cost request, but may require specific legislation to allow or require State Colleges and Universities to open their parking garages and parking lots to the public for parking during emergency evacuations. This request aligns with the State Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan, but may require specific legislation to benefit municipalities' and their residents.