



# CITY OF MARCO ISLAND

To: Marco Island City Council

From: Casey Lucius, Assistant City Manager

Date: August 18, 2026

Re: Marco Island Legislative Priorities

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## Background:

After speaking to Representative Benarroch on August 7<sup>th</sup> City staff decided to focus on one legislative funding priority and ask for the maximum funding to complete this water quality project.

On September 8, 2025, the City's lobbyist Ron Book will present a recap of the legislative session and a future outlook to City Council. The Collier County legislative delegation will meet September 15, 2025. All materials and proposals are due for that session by September 3<sup>rd</sup>.

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

### **1. Marco Island Waterways Tidal Flushing:**

Marco Island's canal system, built in the late 1960s–early 1970s, contains hundreds of dead-end waterways with little to no tidal flushing. Decades of nutrient loading from former septic systems (eliminated in 2012) have left these canals with bottom sedimentation, poor water quality, and oxygen-depleted conditions that threaten marine life.

The Waterways Tidal Flushing project will aid in restoring circulation, improving dissolved oxygen levels, and enhancing the habitat for fish and other marine species. The project is fully designed, publicly bid, and shovel-ready.

Funding to date totals **\$1.16 million**. The lowest construction bid is **\$5 million**, leaving a **\$3.84 million gap**. **The City is requesting \$1.92 million from the state** to be matched by the city **to complete this project**. Without this final investment, the project cannot move forward, and environmental degradation will continue to worsen.

This is the **only funding request** from the City of Marco Island—and an opportunity to deliver lasting environmental benefits to our coastal waters.

2. **Protect Home Rule and Local Property Taxes:** **This is a no cost request.** Sixty-four percent of the City's General Fund budget is funded through property taxes. The State does not allow municipalities to collect sales tax or tourist tax, and there is no income tax remitted to cities in the State of Florida. There are few mechanisms for Cities to raise revenue. The City of Marco Island supports the levy of property taxes to provide critical services such as infrastructure, police, fire, recreational, and other necessary services to the public. Further changes or exemptions to property taxes undermines Home Rule, creates inequities, and generally strips Cities of their independence. We are asking our State representatives to leave the current property tax exemptions in place and not make any further changes to local property taxes.