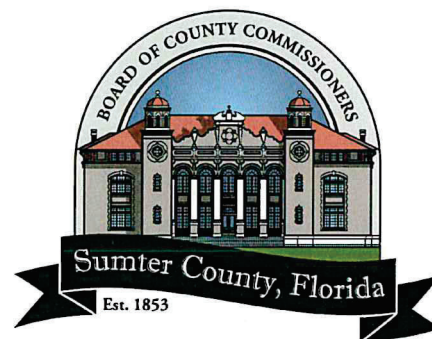


**Letter of Support: Sumter County BOCC to State
Legislators for Appropriations Request**

Board of County Commissioners Sumter County, Florida

7375 Powell Road, Suite 200 • Wildwood, FL 34785 • Phone (352) 689-4400 • FAX: (352) 689-4401
Website: <http://sumtercountyfl.gov>



February 3, 2025

Honorable Senator Blaise Ingoglia
Honorable Representative John Temple

RE: Sumter County Legislative Priorities

Dear Honorable Delegation,

On behalf of the Sumter County Board of County Commissioners, thank you for your service to the citizens of Sumter County and the State of Florida.

Sumter County is not a centralized water or sewer provider; however, economic development in our community is dependent on adequate capacity and operation of our five cities that provide this essential service. Sumter County is completing or completed over \$18 million of water and sewer projects for the cities from Sumter County's allocation of \$25 million from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA).

Sumter County also advocates for additional funding for our cities to continue the expansion of their centralized water and sewer facilities to meet the demands of growth led by The Villages® development.

The Sumter County Board of County Commissioners supports this year's appropriation request by our cities:

1. The City of Wildwood's 2025 legislative appropriation request is \$4 million for the purpose of its Water Reclamation Facility Expansion and Biological Nutrient Removal (BNR) Improvements project. The project has two components: improving the existing infrastructure to address aging equipment and increasing the wastewater treatment capacity to 5.5 million gallons per day. This BNR facility will meet Advanced Wastewater Treatment (AWT) standards set by the Department of Environmental Protection and will help protect our environment by reducing nutrient loading to water bodies and wetlands.

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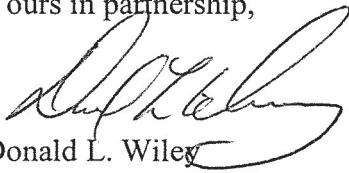
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Erin Munz, Clerk & Auditor
(352) 569-6600
215 East McCollum Avenue
Bushnell, FL 33513

County Attorney
The Hogan Law Firm
Post Office Box 485
Brooksville, Florida 34605

2. The City of Webster has two 2025 legislative appropriation requests. The first project is for funding of \$2.144 million to design a 0.5 MGD Regional Wastewater Plant project. The Regional Wastewater Plant would support the Cities of Webster and Center Hill. The second project is a request for funding of \$2.5072 million for the design and construction of a new Master Lift Station to support the planned Regional Wastewater Plan.
3. The City of Bushnell's appropriation request of \$1.75 million for a Water Distribution System Loop. This project is for the pre-construction, construction, and construction administration for the installation of a water main loop between the Bushnell water system and the Sumterville water system. This project will remove dead ends and result in a looped system that will not only provide redundancy to Bushnell's water systems in the event of a failure but also provide increased fire flow for the existing and planned industrial growth in this corridor. Sumter County completed its ARPA project to support the first major leg of this loop along C 475 adjacent to industrial-zoned property.
4. The City of Coleman's appropriation request of \$0.62 million for its Water Treatment Facility Project. This project includes replacing the high-service pumps/motors, electrical controls, chlorine contact tank, a Well Pump and rehabbing the iron filters to support the growth occurring adjacent to The Villages® development.

Yours in partnership,



Donald L. Wiley
Chairman

cc: Sumter County Board of County Commissioners
Mr. Jason McHugh, City Manager, City of Wildwood
Ms. Deanna Naugler, City Manager, City of Webster
Mr. Mike Eastburn, City Manager, City of Bushnell
Honorable Milton Hill, Mayor, City of Coleman

**Wildwood City Commission Resolution
Supporting Project and Submittal of
Appropriation Requests**

RESOLUTION NO. R2025-7

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF WILDWOOD, FLORIDA
AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO COORDINATE
LEGISLATIVE APPROPRIATION REQUESTS FOR THE
WATER RECLAMATION FACILITY PROJECT; PROVIDING
FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

WHEREAS, the city is a municipal provider of potable water, sanitary sewer, reuse water, and other public facilities and services; and,

WHEREAS, the city's ability to provide adequate and reliable infrastructure is vital to its residents and businesses, the economic prosperity of Sumter County, and the well-being of the environment; and,

WHEREAS, improvements to the city's water reclamation facility are needed to appropriately treat projected wastewater flows pursuant to the Conceptual Design Report prepared by the city's consulting engineer, CPH Inc., in September of 2022; and,

WHEREAS, the City Commission adopted the Conceptual Design Report on October 10, 2022, and directed the City Manager to move forward with the recommended improvements; and,

WHEREAS, the city's adopted FY 25 budget includes funding in support of the needed improvements; and,

WHEREAS, the city is seeking additional funding from the state of Florida to support to complete the needed improvements; and,

WHEREAS, the Wildwood City Commission requests the submissions of legislative appropriation requests by the Florida Senate and the Florida House of Representatives in support of the improvements.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF WILDWOOD, FLORIDA, THAT:

1. The recommended improvements contained within the Conceptual Design Report completed by CPH Inc., are necessary at the city's water reclamation facility in order for the city to appropriately treat projected wastewater flows in accordance with applicable laws and regulations. The project has two components: improving the existing infrastructure to address aging equipment and increasing the wastewater treatment capacity to 5.5 million gallons per day. This BNR facility will meet Advanced Wastewater Treatment (AWT) standards set by the Department of Environmental Protection and will help protect our environment by reducing nutrient loading to water bodies and wetlands. In addition, these improvements will support residential/commercial growth and economic vitality within the City and Sumter County.

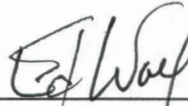
2. The planned improvements at the city's main water reclamation facility are hereby designated as a critical community project.

3. The City Manager is hereby authorized to coordinate the submission of legislative appropriation requests through the Florida Senate and Florida House of Representatives in the amount of \$4 million.

DONE AND RESOLVED this 27th day of January, 2025, by the City Commission of the City of Wildwood, Florida.



**CITY COMMISSION
CITY OF WILDWOOD, FLORIDA**



Ed Wolf, Mayor

ATTEST: Jessica Barnes
Jessica Barnes, City Clerk

**WESH2 News Report Regarding Need for New
Wastewater Facility to Support Development**



Advertisement

City of Wildwood to slow down new development approvals due to wastewater concerns

Updated: 5:49 PM EDT May 22, 2024

Infinite Scroll Enabled ☐

Senait Gebregiorgis   
Reporter

WILDWOOD, Fla. — Several new projects are in the works in Wildwood to keep



However, the city will now slow things down because there is not much room left for wastewater.

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A commercial building is coming soon to downtown Wildwood, and a new parking garage will be just a couple of feet away from the planned project.

The county economic development director Kristy Russell said rental units, homes and expanding The Villages are all part of the growth.

"Sumter County is the 12th fastest growing county in the United States," Russell said.

The new developments come as more people move to the city of Wildwood.

The population has **doubled in the last four years.**

Recommended



Peruvian fisherman rescued after 95 days lost at sea

"[There is] definitely a need for hospitality industry, medical care facilities," R

Wildwood City Manager Jason McHugh said if they don't move carefully, the growth may become too much for the city to handle.

"We're reaching a time where we're getting a little bit close to comfort with our wastewater capacity," McHugh said. "We're a very growing city, so we were once a rural city, but I don't think that we could really say that we are anymore."

The city will not approve new developments if they exceed the wastewater capacity.

The reduction will not affect projects that the city has already approved.

"We have a responsibility to the public to make sure that we're staying on top of these demands for public facilities and services, and wastewater is very important," McHugh said. "There's environmental considerations if you exceed your capacity. And we certainly don't want to get into that."

The city is working on a wastewater project that will create more space for future developments. When it's finished by early 2027, it will bring the city's total treatment capacity to 5.5 million gallons per day.

"It's not a moratorium by any means, it's simply just making sure that when we're reviewing comprehensive plan amendment applications that we've done our job to the public to ensure that what we sign up for we can adequately serve," McHugh said.

TOP PICKS

Universal Orlando debuts official first look inside Epic Universe

Measles cases have topped last year's numbers with 9 months left in 2025

**Villages News Article About Need for Wastewater
Treatment Facilities to Support Development Flows**

NEWS

Explosive growth forces Wildwood into stopgap wastewater treatment option

by **Marv Balousek**

December 2, 2024

To handle explosive growth, Wildwood will employ a temporary wastewater treatment plant until its permanent plant is functional.

City Manager Jason McHugh told commissioners Monday that the \$4-million DAVCO field-erected treatment plant could process up to a million gallons daily and can be installed in about a year.

He offered a comprehensive report at the special meeting on cost estimates and funding sources for the new plant along with daily flow estimates.

Wastewater capacity has loomed as the city's biggest issue due to residential and commercial growth, fueled by home building in the Villages of Southern Oaks and rental projects. Wildwood's population has doubled to 31,337 since the 2020 census.

Current wastewater capacity is about 3.6 million gallons a day. By January 2026, Wildwood will need to boost its capacity by a million gallons and the DAVCO plant could meet that demand, McHugh said. The temporary plant can be sold or used for a different purpose when it is no longer needed.

Capacity will reach 5.5 million gallons daily by March 2027, when the new plant is completed.

McHugh said water from this fall's hurricanes flowed into the system, causing it to exceed capacity. The next hurricane season could pose a similar challenge.

He said most of the inflow is caused by "old infrastructure."

The city has spent \$8.6 million so far on renovating the existing wastewater treatment plant and on engineering and pre-construction services for the new plant, expected to cost about \$150 million.

Another \$8.1 million will be spent this month, but much bigger spending will come early next year.

The first phase of construction will cost \$35 million by late January and the second phase will cost \$55 million by March. Another \$55 million will be spent later on the third phase.

Revenue bonds of \$121 million will fund the bulk of the project. Wildwood also received a state water quality improvements grant of \$9.3 million and will transfer \$9 million to the project later this month from city funds. Wastewater fees will generate \$15 million and two additional grant applications could net \$9.3 million.

[Want all the latest news from The Villages delivered directly to your email inbox? Click here to subscribe! Hurry and lock in your price now before rates increase in 2025!](#)

**Daily Commercial News Article Regarding
Need to Slow Development Until New
Wastewater Facility is Completed**

DAILY COMMERCIAL

DAILY COMMERCIAL

proposed developments' wastewater treatment needs

Frank Stanfield For the Daily Commercial

Published 2:35 p.m. ET May 22, 2024

WILDWOOD – The city will be taking an especially close look at future [proposed developments](#) to make sure they do not exceed its wastewater treatment capabilities.

It will not affect The Villages, which has blown the doors off the old [city limits](#) sign and turned pastures into pickleball courts. The mega retirement community has its own treatment plants.

Nor will it impact [projects](#) already approved. City Manager Jason McHugh told city commissioners that “new comprehensive plan amendment applications will be subject to delays,” according to a Monday press release.

“We don’t have a list,” said Melanie Strickland, director of development and servicing. Nor is there a “magic number,” she told the Daily Commercial.

The city is increasing its capacity in phases with the goal of 5.5 million gallons per day in 2027.

The Villages march from Wildwood to the Leesburg city limits has exceeded all expectations, Strickland said. The Villages also includes part of Marion County.

Villages expand: [The Villages starts building thousands of homes on land it bought from Leesburg in 2018](#)

Strickland told the Daily Commercial in January that of the 60,449 units entitled by The Villages south of State Road 44, roughly 17,000 have been constructed or are currently under construction. Approximately, 14,700 have been sold or occupied.

DAILY COMMERCIAL

That growth has attracted businesses and other developments wanting to snuggle up next to the mega retirement community.

“They’ve got to go shopping somewhere,” she said.

Strickland has seen dramatic changes since she started working with the city 22 years ago. Teachers in schools were warning graduates to expect to find jobs anywhere but Sumter County. And she has witnessed the effects of the pandemic and a recession. Now, there is inflation and high interest rates.

“I keep hearing that it will be slowing down, but it’s not yet,” she said. Nor has she heard about people rushing to unload property or seek new entitlements.

“We get three to five inquiries a week. That’s a lot,” she said.

McHugh praised city commissioners for taking a long view.

“Wildwood prides itself on its level of service in all areas,” McHugh said. “As the city grows, it is essential we manage our growth in a way that does not compromise that service.”