

Water Quality Septic-to-Sewer

Department & Contact: Utilities — Utilities Director Craig Rudy, Craig.Rudy@CharlotteCountyFL.gov
Area: Mid County
Location: Various
Category: Infrastructure

Focus Area(s): Infrastructure and Economic and Community Development

Need:

Charlotte County relies heavily on the natural waters that surrounds it to provide for its economy. Maintaining Charlotte Harbor's estuary water quality is critical to the future of the community. Charlotte Harbor is known as a world-class destination for recreational fishing. Most visitors are drawn to the area for the harbor and local beaches which generate an estimated \$526 million in economic impact at local restaurants, hotels, and attractions. Reducing pollutants entering the water bodies translates into fewer beach closures and improved fishing and recreational opportunities, which improves the quality of life for residents and enhances tourism to the County's shorelines.

Purpose:

The Septic-to-Sewer program provides an affordable community solution that addresses the common goal of improving and restoring water quality in the Charlotte Harbor Estuary and enhancing the community's quality of life.

Objectives:

To convert homes from septic tanks onto a centralized sewer system to increase water quality thus increasing our economy by reducing the amount of nitrogen loading in our surrounding waters.

Project Cost Prior Funding:	\$0
Project Cost Prior from Sales Tax:	\$0
Total Project Cost:	\$0
Project Cost Required New Sales Tax:	up to \$10,000,000
Annual Operating Cost:	\$0

Will the project impact public health and safety? If so, how?

Yes – by reducing or removing bacteria levels in the water, which present health and safety hazards to people, animals and marine life.

Will the project foster economic development and create long-term jobs? If so, how?

Yes – creating a reliable and efficient wastewater collection system is key to sustainable population growth and economic development. The project will impact Charlotte Harbor's rich historical and natural beauty which is key to attracting businesses and residents to the area.

The project will create some long-term and short-term jobs. Short-term jobs will be available to local residents during the time of construction phases of the various Septic-to-Sewer conversion projects. Long-term jobs will be created due to the additional

operating needs of maintaining the newly installed infrastructure.

Will the project result in decreased, increased, or no operation and maintenance (O&M) costs?

Yes – The project will result in increased O&M costs due to system expansion, which can be offset by additional customer base.

Will sales tax allow for application of grant funds from another entity?

Yes – A sales tax approval represents a commitment and an investment by the Charlotte County Board of County Commissioners and residents towards enhancement of Water Quality. This commitment will be utilized to leverage additional public funds including grants, legislative appropriations and matching grants.

Will the project enable furtherance of phased projects from 2014 sales tax extension?

No.

Project to be funded by the 1% Local Option Sales Tax Extension if passed by the voters of Charlotte County

Is this a joint project with another entity?

No.

Will the project meet a community obligation to serve a special needs segment of the County's population, such as: low-income, aged, or minorities?

Yes - The project will meet the Charlotte County Board of County Commissioner's obligation to serve all populations within the County, including low-income, aged and minorities.

Is the project included in a Master Plan, Comprehensive Plan, or Capital Needs Assessment?

Yes – The project is included in the Charlotte County Sewer Master Plan, Charlotte County Utilities Capital Needs Assessment and Charlotte 2050 Comprehensive Plan.

Will the project impact environmental quality of Charlotte County? If so, how?

Yes – Environmental quality is included in the Charlotte 2050 Comprehensive Plan and is one of the four cornerstones of Charlotte County's vision. This project will remove septic systems, which studies have shown are not sufficient for the treatment of nutrients and bacteria.

Will the project improve quality of life in Charlotte County?

Yes – Reducing pollutants entering Charlotte County's water bodies, such as Charlotte Harbor, translates into fewer beach closures and improved fishing and recreational opportunities.

Is the project state or federally mandated?

No.

Is the project dependent upon or connected with the completion of another project?

Yes. This project is connected to other existing projects depending on the geographic boundaries of the projects. These include other Charlotte County Public Works projects, such as repairing or installing new sidewalks or rehabilitation of existing utilities within current or planned capital projects.