



Agenda Item Summary

File #: 23-00635

Agenda Date: 10/10/2023

Agenda Item Name:

2024 Legislative Priorities Discussion

Presenter:

Tom Griffin, Griffin Group

Description:

Hear a presentation on Alachua County's legislative priorities for 2024.

Recommended Action:

Approve the priorities and direct staff to present them at the Legislative Delegation Meeting on October 25.

Prior Board Motions:

NA

Fiscal Note:

NA

Strategic Guide:

Social and Economic Opportunity

Background:

All approved priorities will be presented at the legislative delegation meeting on October 25.

Alachua County is seeking up to \$10 million (which may be broken into phases) in legislative funding for a watershed scale project to improve water quality in Newnan's Lake. The proposed project will restore hydrologic function and floodplain connectivity through stream and wetland restoration and will help the County meet our Basin Management Action Plan (BMAP) load reduction requirements for the lake. Sheetflow restoration and vegetated filter strips will also be established to treat runoff from adjacent areas that are a source of nutrients. Restoration of stream function of Hatchet Creek and floodplain connectivity will provide hydrologic improvements, flood resiliency, and nutrient reduction through increased wetland area and contact time with wetland systems. In addition, phosphorus binding technologies will be applied in Gum Root Swamp to demobilize the bioavailable phosphorus contained in the sediment which will reduce bioavailable phosphorus loading, help improve water quality, and reduce algal blooms in Newnans Lake. We have applied for two grants from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection which would help offset project costs, if awarded.

Though not an appropriation for the County, the Board is asked to support an appropriation request of \$2.75 million from the State Legislative Delegation for the World Masters Athletics Indoor Championship to be hosted at the Alachua County Sports Events Center in 2025. The appropriation request will be submitted and administered by a non-profit organization specifically created to provide oversight of this event. The State funds will be used for operations and capital investments in support of the event.

Additionally, we would support funding for FDOT for the design phase of the conversion of State Road 24 (Archer Road) from SW 75th Street (Tower Road) to SW 122nd St (Parker Road) in Alachua County from a rural 2-lane undivided section to a 4-lane divided roadway. Alachua County estimates design costs for this project at \$2,500,000, with construction costs of approximately \$15,875,000. With a complete design in hand, Alachua County and the Florida Department of Transportation would stand on solid ground in applying for a construction grant from any number of Federal transportation grants.