



Marion County Tax Collector Newsletter



George Albright,
Marion County Tax Collector

Volume: 2016-1

Insurance Requirements for Registrations

When registering your vehicle for the first time or transferring a license plate from one vehicle to the other, you are required to show proof of valid Florida insurance. Proof of insurance is acceptable in the form of an insurance card, via electronic device or signing an insurance affidavit.

When providing insurance to our office, please keep a few requirements in mind. The insurance policy must be bound or effective the date your transaction is being processed. All insurance entered into our database goes through an electronic verification process. If the insurance is not effective on the date of the registration and your insurance company denies the policy information, the driver license system will automatically initiate a driver license suspension.

In addition, when providing insurance to our office, the State of Florida requires certain information be present on the insurance card. The insurance card must contain the name of the insurance company, the policy number, effective dates, 5 digit company code, type of coverage, name of the insured and year, make and VIN of the vehicle being insured. The insurance card must indicate "Florida Insurance Card" and also include the statement "*Not valid more than one year from effective date*", in addition to the following warning pursuant to Section 316.646(4) Florida Statutes "*Misrepresentation of insurance is a first degree misdemeanor*".

You will be asked to occasionally provide proof of insurance during a renewal. We ask that you always bring your proof of insurance with you while visiting our office for any registration transaction to expedite your visit.

Also, please take the time to double check the VIN number listed on your insurance card against your registration (if renewing) and/or the vehicle itself and the effective date of your policy. The most common errors we encounter are that the VIN number listed on the insurance card does not match the vehicle being registered and that the policy is not in effect at the time the customer is in our office to process their desired transaction.

To assist our customers, we also encourage you to call ahead for your local office fax number, so that your insurance company may fax proof of insurance to our office prior to your visit. Please call our Call Center at 352-368-8200 for assistance.

Alternate Proof of 2290 Program

The Marion County Tax Collector has made special arrangements with the IRS to make it easier for you to register your truck. At your option, we will forward your completed Form 2290, Schedule 1, and remittance to the IRS on your behalf. You will not need to wait for a receipted Schedule 1 from the IRS, we will renew your truck tag that same day! Your participation in this service is entirely voluntary.

If you choose to use this service, you must remit the completed original Form 2290, 2 copies of the Schedule 1, payment in full of the amount due made payable to United States Treasury (payment methods are personal check, money order, bank or cashier's check only).

Payment for your truck tag is separate and should be made payable to Marion County Tax Collector in the form of cash, personal check, money order, bank or cashier's check, or credit card. Please remember that the 2.5% convenience fee charged by the credit card processing company still applies. You are still required to provide proof of insurance in the form of a Certificate of Insurance and a lease agreement, if necessary.



We will review your return for completion of certain entries and mail your return and payment to the IRS on the business day following receipt of your return. Please note that the IRS does not consider your return filed for federal tax purposes until the IRS receives it. If the IRS receives the Form 2290 after the due date, the postmark date on the envelope will be the date the return is deemed filed. The IRS is not responsible for any delays or mishandling of your return or remittance before the IRS receives it. You are liable for any tax, penalties and interest that may be due. If the IRS determines you owe additional amounts, they will bill you directly after they receive your return.

Use of this voluntary program does not change the due date of your return and payment. This program will not work if you are registering vehicles in more than one state. Our office is voluntarily providing this service to registrants. We are not reimbursed for this service. We are not an agent or contractor of the IRS.

If you have any questions about your Federal Heavy Use Taxes, please contact the IRS at 1-866-699-4096 or visit your local IRS office.

If you have any questions about this program, please contact our Call Center at 352-368-8200.

How will you leave your mark on the world?
Save lives. Say "Yes". Register today.

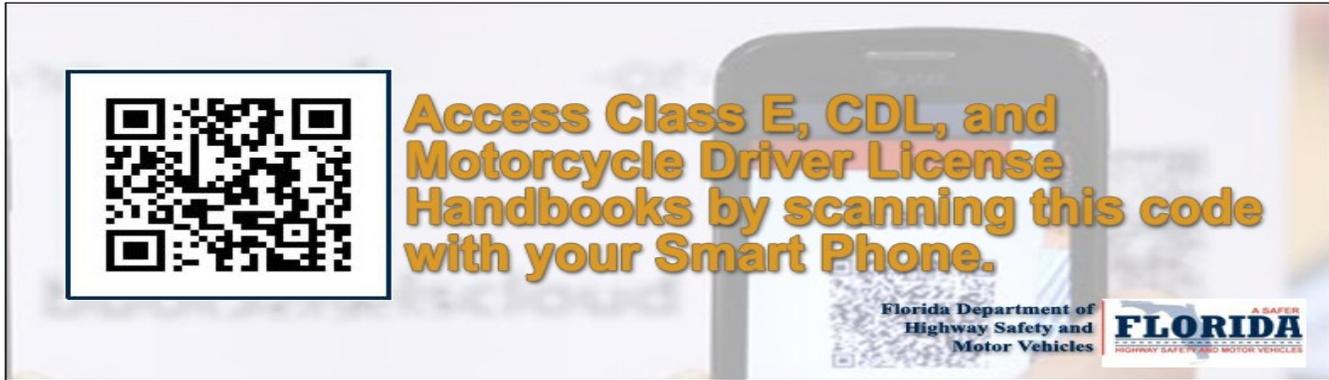


www.DonateLifeFlorida.org

Drivers Handbooks

Please visit www.floridadmbooklet.com to download or view the latest version of the Florida Drivers License handbooks as well as the CDL and motorcycle handbooks. They are available in English and Spanish.

Below you will find a QR code that will allow you to access the Drivers License handbooks using your Smartphone.



Florida Birth Certificates

Do you need your Florida birth certificate to renew your driver license? Did you know that the Marion County Tax Collector's Office began issuing Florida Birth Certificates in 2013.

We now offer the Birth Certificate services at 6 of our locations. You may visit our Main Office located at 503 SE 25th Ave in Ocala, the Belleview branch located in the Winn-Dixie shopping plaza, the Summerfield branch located in the Spruce Creek shopping plaza, the North Branch located in the Winn-Dixie shopping plaza, the Dunnellon branch located at 19995 SW 86th St in Dunnellon and our Forest branch located in the Winn Dixie shopping plaza in Silver Springs.

The cost to apply for a birth certificate in our office is \$18.00, plus \$7.00 for any additional certificates issued for the same person at the same time.

Please contact our Call Center at 352-368-8200 with questions regarding application requirements and office locations.

Call Center

In an effort to best serve the citizens of Marion County, Mr. Albright created the Call Center in 2006. We currently have a dedicated team of 8 employees to service your needs over the phone.

Over the years, their duties and responsibilities have changed in response to our ever growing commitment to serving the citizens to the best of our abilities.

In an effort to assist you and keep call times as low as possible, we ask that you have your account number, driver license number or vehicle information available when calling. We strive to be thorough and efficient while assisting your needs.

The best times to call our office are early in the mornings. Mondays and Fridays are always our busiest days of the week. Due to our daily lunch rotation, we do experience a large increase in call volume during that time.

We hope that your experiences with our Call Center are pleasurable and leave you with a smile on your face!

You're Invited!

Please join us for our 6th Annual Car Show on Saturday, March 12, 2016. If you have a car that you would like to show off, please contact our office to register. We look forward to seeing you next Saturday!



CAR SHOW

Free To The Public

TAX COLLECTOR
GREAT SEAL OF THE STATE OF FLORIDA
MARION COUNTY
IN GOD WE TRUST

6TH ANNUAL CAR SHOW SPONSORED BY
GEORGE ALBRIGHT, MARION COUNTY TAX COLLECTOR
SATURDAY, MARCH 12, 2016
9:00 AM - 3:00 PM

TAX COLLECTOR PARKING LOT 503 SE 25TH AVE.
PROCEEDS SUPPORT MARION COUNTY CHARITIES

Fun for the Whole Family!

DON MOORE

George & Tammy Albright

The sign features a checkered top border, a large red 'CAR SHOW' title, and a yellow starburst with 'Free To The Public'. It includes the Marion County Tax Collector seal and a photo of George and Tammy Albright with a vintage car. The bottom section has a diamond-plate background with event details and the slogan 'Fun for the Whole Family!'.

Upcoming Sales Tax Initiative on March 15th Ballot

In an effort to keep all Marion County residents informed regarding local initiatives on the upcoming ballot, we have included an informational packet about the 1—percent sales tax referendum.

Please take the time to review the information provided by the Marion County Board of County Commissioners so that you can make an educated decision when you go to vote on March 15th. Any questions regarding the information located in the packet should be directed to the Marion County Board of County Commissioners at 352-438-2323.



Marion County Board of County Commissioners

Marion County, Florida SALES TAX INITIATIVE

Informational packet about the
1-percent sales tax referendum on
March 15, 2016

More information:

www.MarionCountyFL.org/SalesTaxInitiative
352-438-2323



Transportation Infrastructure

19 projects in two focus areas: capacity and pavement rehabilitation.

Capacity projects examples:

- NW 49th/35th St. – new 4-lane from NW 44th Ave. to Ocala city limits.
- CR 484 Interchange – new lanes and ramps from SW 20th Ave. Rd. to CR475A.
- SW 49th Ave./SW 40th Ave. – new 4-lane from SW 95th St. to SW 42nd St.

Pavement rehabilitation projects examples:

- County Road 464B from Levy County line to US 27.
- County Road 326 from Levy County line to US 27.
- County Road 475B from CR 475A to CR 475.
- County Road 316 from CR 315 to West of Eureka Bridge.
- Marion Oaks Boulevard from Marion Oaks Manor to Marion Oaks Manor.



Public Safety Communications

- 800 MHZ radio replacement.
- Additional tower.
- Back-up Communications Center buildout at Ocala Police Department.



Fire Rescue

- Rolling Greens fire station
- Ambulance replacements.
- Fire engine replacements.
- Ladder truck replacements.
- Brush/grass fire unit replacements.
- Water tanker replacements.
- Air pack replacements.



Marion County Sheriff's Office

- Vehicles.
- Aircraft.
- Evidence building construction.
- Mobile command unit.
- SWAT vests.
- Computer equipment and server to store law enforcement records.

More information:

www.MarionCountyFL.org/SalesTaxInitiative
352-438-2323



The Marion County Board of County Commissioners on Dec. 1 unanimously approved putting a sales tax option before county voters in the March 2016 presidential ballot.

The Commission voted on the sales tax referendum at a public hearing after months of citizen input, research and fact-gathering, and multiple public workshops.

What critical services would it fund?

If passed, the 1-percent sales tax would fund public safety equipment needs for law enforcement, fire rescue and emergency medical services, as well as transportation capital road projects for Marion County and its municipalities (Bellevue, Dunnellon, Ocala, Reddick and McIntosh).

How long would it last?

The temporary tax would be levied over a period of four years, starting on Jan. 1, 2017 and ending on Dec. 31, 2020. Revenue would encompass 5 budget cycles.

How much funding could the tax generate?

The sales tax is estimated to generate approximately \$166,220,685 over a period of 4 years. The tax revenue would be distributed among the county and municipalities in accordance with statutory provisions. All sales tax funds collected over the four-year period would pay for specified equipment and projects only.

Why a sales tax?

The sales tax would provide the most equitable funding source for much-needed priorities in our community; it would ensure that all county residents and visitors participate in paying for these essential services for all.

It is estimated that at least 25 percent of the projected revenue will be collected from visitors using our roads and adding demand on our public safety services.

Sales taxes are paid by all county residents and visitors at points of sale. As an example, a tourist or resident buying a \$1 beverage at a local convenience store would contribute \$0.01 toward the sales tax funds; the same client buying a \$100 gift at a local store would contribute \$1 toward the sales tax funds.

More information:

www.MarionCountyFL.org/SalesTaxInitiative
352-438-2323



What funding alternatives will be available if the sales tax doesn't pass?

Proposed sales tax revenue would be used to pay for a backlog of needs that are unfunded per future budget year projections (due to lack of projected revenue that would be sufficient to pay for them).

The sales tax would move those needs to the forefront and fund those items sooner. If the sales tax does not pass, those items would remain as unfunded and would have to be addressed during the regular county budget cycle for each fiscal year based on each year's projected revenue. If it is determined that some items need to be funded during a particular fiscal year, anticipated **funding alternatives would be potential increases in the millage and assessments rates, which would represent an increase in homeowner property taxes.** In that case, the projects would be paid for by property owners in Marion County and not all residents and visitors collectively, as the sales tax option would allow.

Currently, there are no additional grants or any other forms of additional revenue projected to cover the expenses associated with the identified needs.

If voter-approved in March, what happens after the sales tax expires four years later?

At that time, the 1% sales tax collection would cease, at which point the BCC would determine future funding options.

Can the sales tax continue in the future?

The present referendum is for a 4-year collection period. Should the county consider another sales tax upon expiration of the first one, it would be brought before voters to approve in another referendum.

More information:

www.MarionCountyFL.org/SalesTaxInitiative
352-438-2323



What happens if there is sales tax revenue left over after all proposed projects are paid for?

In that case, the county would continue to use the funds in accordance with state statute **to cover any additional public safety or transportation infrastructure needs** that could arise. Per law, sales tax funds will never be used to pay for staffing, operations or salaries.

It is important to note that **sales tax funds cannot and will not go toward reoccurring expenses and would not require ongoing funding to sustain**. In other words, these would be one-time purchases using one-time money. Should the county consider holding another sales tax referendum upon expiration of the first one, a fresh list of needed projects would be identified at that time and citizens would have the option to choose if those needs should be funded through another sales tax.

How will the county maintain accountability of the funds collected, should the sales tax pass?

Marion County has a **track record of transparency and accountability in fiscal management**. You may recall similar initiatives, such as the voter-approved Pennies for Parks. Here's how the sales tax revenue would be accounted for:

- A **capital projects fund** would be established to receive the county's share of the proceeds from the sales tax.
- A budget would be established annually for this fund through the **regular budgeting process, which is open to the public** and detailed in public records.
- The Board of County Commissioners' (BCC) would **follow all standard and state-required finance and procurement processes to disburse the funds toward the appropriate projects in accordance with the planned expenses**.

As with any other fund, departments and agencies would submit their sales tax-eligible requests to the BCC for consideration and prioritization during each budget process. All equipment purchased for the Sheriff's Office would be transferred to the Sheriff's Office inventory.

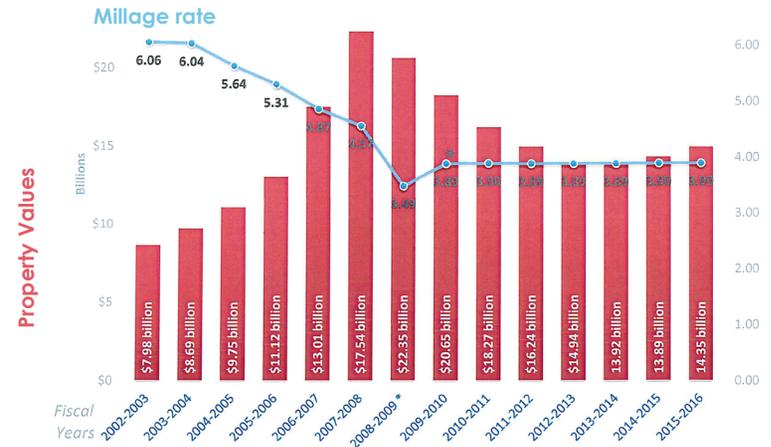
More information:

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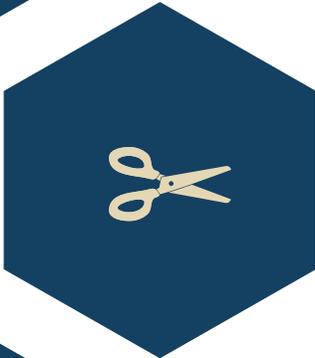




The Commission held the millage rate steady throughout years of declining property values.



Current financial picture



The county implemented a series of budget cuts to funds impacted by property values, which declined by 38 percent from FY 07-08 to FY 13-14 due to the Great Recession.

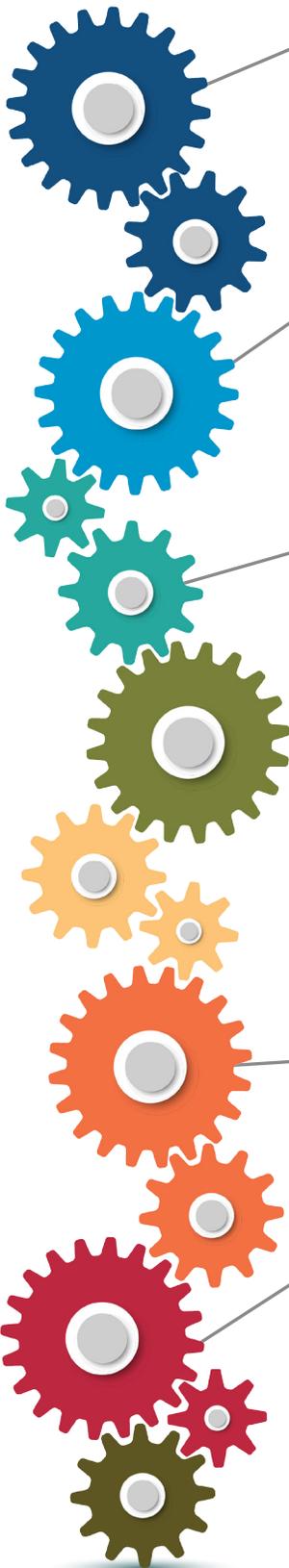


This created a backlog of projects, as focus remained on the most pressing priorities.

More information:

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352-438-2323





2008

Property values decreased sharply as a result of the recession. Property tax revenue, based on these values, is an important part of what funds county services, including public safety.

2008-2015

The **commission keeps the millage rates flat** to prevent an increase in residents' property taxes during the recession. County department budgets are cut to accommodate the reduced revenue from low property values.

2015

The **county is faced with a backlog of projects** (e.g., road maintenance and expansion for additional capacity) and equipment needs (e.g., public safety gear and vehicles). These investments were postponed to keep property taxes low during our community's economic downturn.

The BCC considered funding options: 1.) Raise property taxes, 2.) Continue building backlog, 3.) Place a sales tax option on the ballot. **On Dec. 1, the BCC voted to place the sales tax option on the ballot for Marion citizens to vote on.**

2016

Residents can vote on the sales tax initiative on the presidential primary ballot on **March 15, 2016.**

Future

If the sales tax passes, it would be in effect from Jan. 1, 2017-Dec. 31, 2020, and fund specified public safety and transportation infrastructure needs.

If the sales tax does not pass, options will include raising taxes, as current property tax revenue projections do not show sufficient funds to address the backlog of projects and equipment needs.

More information:

www.MarionCountyFL.org/SalesTaxInitiative
352-438-2323



SALES TAX INITIATIVE

Current funding: Public Safety & Transportation



Fire Rescue

- ✓ **General revenue:** a portion of the countywide millage rate (property tax), state-shared sales tax and other state-shared revenue.
- ✓ **Fire assessment:** a fee on all Marion County properties that have a structure/dwelling on them or land over 5 acres (with a cap of 640 acres), except for those in Ocala, Dunnellon and Rainbow Lakes Estates.
- ✓ **Fees:** ambulance fees, licenses and inspection fees, illegal burn fines.
- ✓ **Grants:** state and local government grant.



Marion County Sheriff's Office

- ✓ **General revenue:** a portion of the countywide millage rate (property tax), state-shared sales tax and other state-shared revenue.
- ✓ **Assessment:** law enforcement MSTU, a fee on all Marion County properties, except for Dunnellon, Belleview and Ocala, which provide their own police departments.
- ✓ **Fees and grants.**



Public Safety Communications

- ✓ **General revenue:** a portion of the countywide millage rate (property tax), state-shared sales tax and other state-shared revenue.
- ✓ **Fees:** paid by non-county department entities for services.



Transportation Infrastructure

- ✓ **Federal and state grants:** from Federal Highway Administration, Florida Departments of Transportation and Environmental Protection, and water management districts.
- ✓ **Assessments and fees:** stormwater assessment and engineering service fees.
- ✓ **Taxes:** local option gas taxes, communications service tax.
- ✓ **Surplus equipment sales:** outdated machinery and recycled material.

More information:

www.MarionCountyFL.org/SalesTaxInitiative
352-438-2323





Sales tax revenue would help fund the following:

Vehicles



Ambulances

For emergency medical services response.

About 80% of all MCFR calls are EMS-related.



Fire engines

For fire suppression, vehicle accidents and other calls.



Ladder trucks

For large square-footage or multi-story buildings, and high-angle rescues. Also carry specialized ladders for above-ground work.



Water tankers

For transportation of additional water to larger fire scenes or fires far from hydrants.

Equipment



Air packs

Enables firefighters to breathe while in dangerous environments.



Bunker gear

For proper crew safety.



Computers/technology

For crews to use on-scene, as well as for storing data to enhance response.

Fire station



Rolling Greens Fire Station

A new building is needed due to high volume of calls in southeast Marion County. This would also give crews a permanent home.

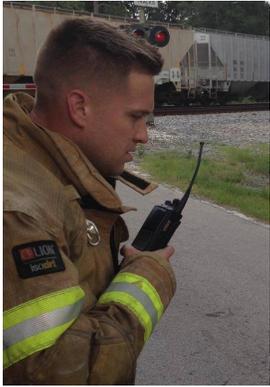


More information:

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352-438-2323



Sales tax revenue would help fund the following:



800 MHz radio replacement

The 800 MHz system is the radio system that is **used by all Public Safety personnel** to communicate important emergency response information. The end user radios (handheld and mobile) currently in use by local first responder agencies are no longer being produced and are ending their support life.

Why: The upgrade to the new radios will **provide citizens with the assurance that the public safety professionals responding to their needs will be able to communicate.**



Additional Tower Site – South End

Towers are structures that hold telecommunications antennas, which in turn facilitate transfer of communication from one device to another.

Why: The proposed tower would **increase the radio system coverage in the southern portion of Marion County.**

Back-up Communications Center Build Out



At present, **there is no back-up location large enough to handle the amount of employees necessary to run the Marion County Communications Center in the event an evacuation would be needed.** Currently, the Communications Center serves as the back-up to Ocala Police Department, as it has space for that agency should its communications dispatch staff need to leave their building. However, there is space at the Ocala Police Department next to its communications center that could be built out to accommodate space needs.

Why: A back-up location for the communications center would ensure continuity of emergency dispatch should an evacuation of the primary location be required.

More information:

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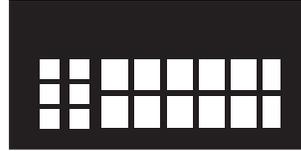


Sales tax revenue would help fund the following:



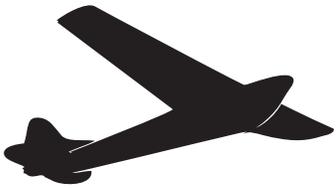
Vehicle replacements

Law enforcement personnel rely on patrol vehicles to respond to emergency and non-emergency calls for service. Law enforcement vehicles are on the road for 12 hours at a time and accumulate a high amount of mileage each year.



Evidence building construction

A new evidence building is needed for universal housing of all the evidence departments. An increase in property storage, climate-controlled work stations and improved work space for a healthier and safer work environment is needed.



Aircraft

A manned, fixed-wing aircraft with imaging equipment would respond to emergency calls and conduct routine security flights within the community. The aircraft would be used for search of missing persons or to assist patrol in pursuits of fleeing suspects. An upgrade of camera platform/moving maps, GPS systems and thermal imaging is needed to improve the collection of evidence and surveillance from the air.



SWAT and tactical bullet-proof vests

SWAT and tactical bullet-proof vests and equipment, which carry an expiration date, must be replaced to keep up with industry standards.



Computers and servers

An upgrade of the agency's computer system is needed to make communication, both internally and externally, more efficient. Also, an overall upgrade of the internal phone system is needed along with updated desk and laptop computers.



Mobile command unit

The MCSO mobile command unit is also outdated and is in need of replacement for activation operation purposes.

More information:

**www.MarionCountyFL.org/SalesTaxInitiative
352-438-2323**





Sales tax revenue would help fund the following:

Capacity projects

As our community grows, some roads also need to grow to accommodate the additional vehicle traffic. Several county roadways have been in need of additional lanes or entrance ramps to enhance traffic flow and reduce congestion.



NW 49th/35th St. with I-75 Interchange

New four-lane with interchange at I-75, from NW 44th Ave. to Ocala city limits.

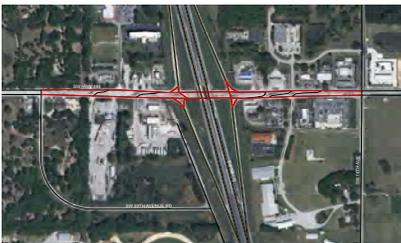
Why: Construct a new four-lane roadway including an interchange at I-75 which will enhance the opportunity for economic development in the general area leading to jobs.



SW 49th Ave./SW 40th Ave.

New four-lane from SW 95th St. to SW 42nd St.

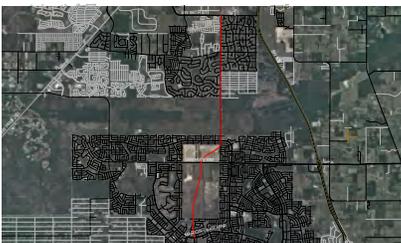
Why: A three phased project that will boost the traffic-carrying capacity in the area west of I-75 and south of SW 42nd St. all the way to SW 95th St.



CR484 Interchange at I-75

New lanes and ramps from SW 20th Ave. Rd. to CR 475A.

Why: Provides measures such as additional turn lanes, signal modifications and enhanced access management to improve the flow of traffic through this interchange.



SW 49th Ave.

New four-lane from Marion Oaks Manor to Marion Oaks Trail.

Why: The two-phased project will boost the traffic-carrying capacity in the area west of I-75 by extending the SW 49th/SW 40th Ave. project to Marion Oaks Manor.



CR 484

Add two lanes from SW 49th Ave. to Marion Oaks Course.

Why: The project will match the capacity of the SW 49th Ave. project into Marion Oaks.

More information:

www.MarionCountyFL.org/SalesTaxInitiative
352-438-2323



SALES TAX INITIATIVE

Pavement rehab projects

Transportation



Sales tax revenue would help fund the following:

Pavement rehabilitation projects

Our roadways are used by hundreds of thousands of vehicles each day. Due to this normal wear and tear, some existing roadways are in need of rehabilitation to provide the safest driving conditions and extend the life of the pavement.

County Road 464B

From the Levy County line to US 27

County Road 326

From the Levy County line to US 27

County Road 475B

From County Road 475A to County Road 475

Marion Oaks Boulevard

From Marion Oaks Manor to Marion Oaks Manor

County Road 25A (Gainesville Road)

From County Road 329 to US 441

S. Highway 314A

From Southeast 95th St. Road to Southeast 24th St. Road

SE 182nd Ave. Road

From County Road 42 to Southeast 95th Street Road

County Road 320

From I-75 to US 441

Emerald Road

From Maricamp Road southwest to Oak Road

County Road 316

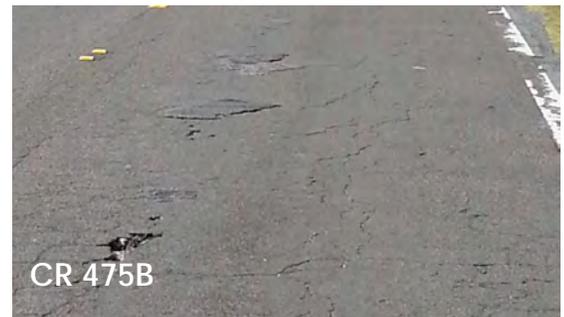
From County Road 315 to west of Eureka Bridge

County Road 315

From County Road 316 to County Road 318

County Road 42

From US 441 to County Road 25



More information:

www.MarionCountyFL.org/SalesTaxInitiative
352-438-2323



Sales Tax Capacity Projects

Capacity Projects

Streets

- Interstate
- Major Road
- Municipality

NW 49th/35 ST
 1.2 Miles
 New 4 Lane Divided
 With Interchange
 \$37,900,000

**SW 49th AVE/
 SW 40th AVE PH 2 & 3**
 2.9 Miles
 New 4 Lane Divided
 \$10,700,000

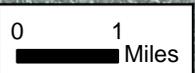
**SW 49th AVE/
 SW 40th AVE PH 1**
 2.1 Miles
 New 4 Lane Divided
 \$7,800,000

SW 49th AVE PH 2
 3.4 Miles
 New 4 Lane Divided
 \$24,100,000

CR 484 Interchange @ I-75
 0.6 Miles
 Add Lanes/Ramps
 \$12,000,000

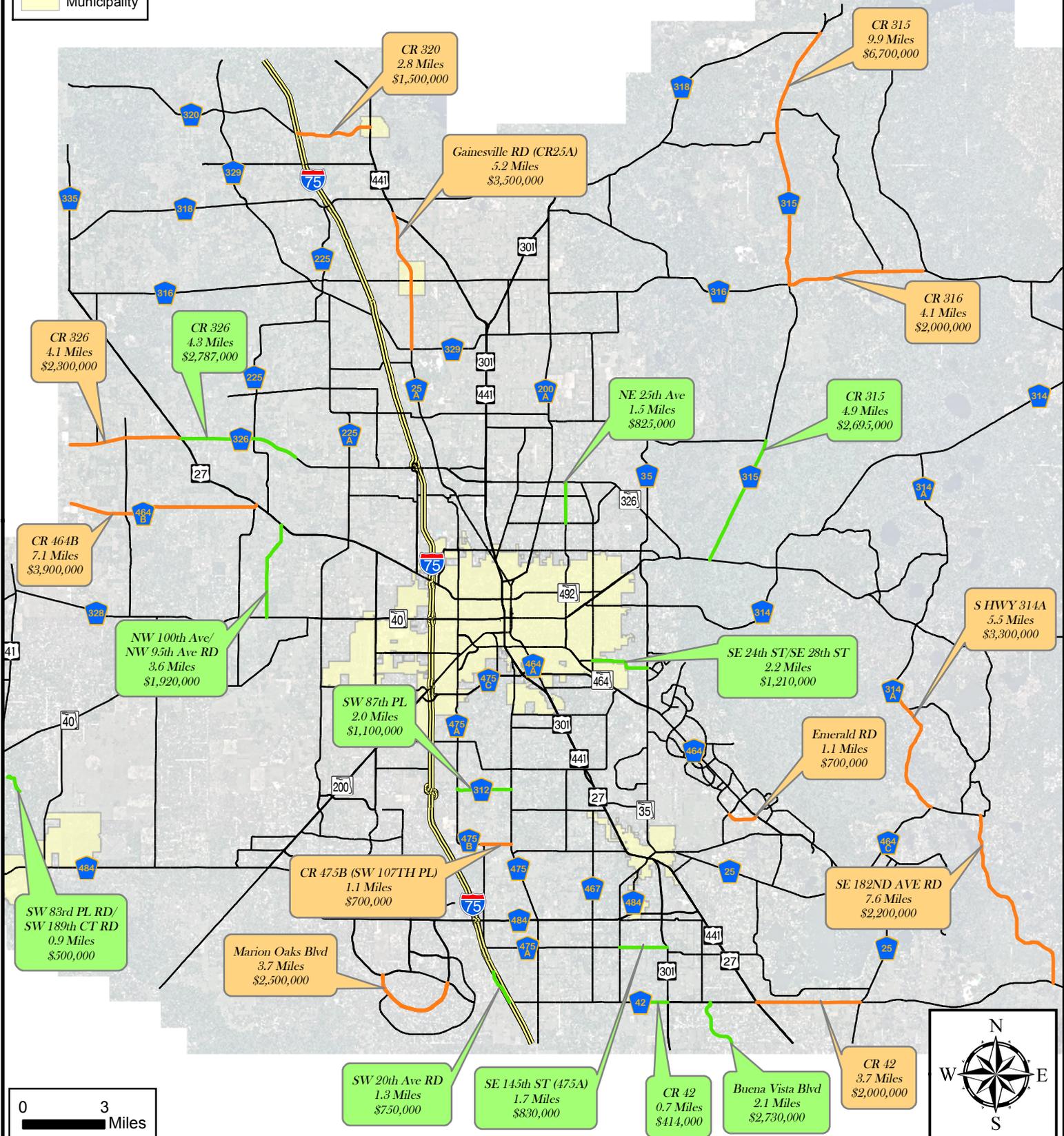
SW 49th AVE PH 1
 3.0 Miles
 New 4 Lane Divided
 \$21,400,000

CR 484
 0.9 Miles
 Add 2 Lanes
 \$4,300,000



Sales Tax and Gas Tax Rehabilitation Projects

- Rehab Projects**
- Sales Tax
 - Gas Tax
- Streets**
- Interstate
 - Major Road
 - Municipality





**Road Project
pending
Sales Tax
approval**