



# Pinellas County

## Staff Report

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File #: 22-1337A, Version: 1

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### **Subject:**

Wastewater Grant Program application with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, under the Protecting Florida Together Program, for the County's Septic to Sewer Program.

### **Recommended Action:**

Approval to grant the County Administrator the authority to sign the Wastewater Grant Program application with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, under the Protecting Florida Together Program, for the County's Septic-to-Sewer Program.

- Septic tank systems have a negative impact on the environment and introduces increased nutrient loading in natural water bodies.
- The Septic-to-Sewer program will reduce contamination of groundwater, surface water, drinking water wells through addressing and remediating failing septic tank systems throughout the County.
- Requested grant funding is \$10,000,000.00; required County match is \$10,000,000.00.
- County match will be funded through the already budgeted and approved American Rescue Plan Act and State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds.
- Request the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) Chairman to approve the County Administrator to sign the application on behalf of the Board of County Commissioners.
- This is a multi-year reimbursement grant project that will likely impact Fiscal Year 2023 - 2027.
- Application deadline is August 15, 2022, and a draft application will be approved and finalized by the State on August 16, 2022, pending BCC approval.

County PID: 005565A. Total project cost is \$20,000,000.00; Grant funding amount is \$10,000,000.00; County match of \$10,000,000.00 is required; Authorize the County Administrator to sign the grant application.

### **Strategic Plan:**

Ensure Public Health, Safety, and Welfare

2.1 Provide planning, coordination, prevention, and protective services to ensure a safe and secure community.

Practice Superior Environmental Stewardship

3.3 Protect and improve the quality of our water, air, and other natural resources.

Foster Continual Economic Growth and Vitality

4.2 Invest in infrastructure to meet current and future needs.

4.3 Catalyze redevelopment through planning and regulatory programs.

#### 4.4 Invest in infrastructure to meet current and future needs.

Deliver First Class Services to the Public and our Customers

5.2 Be responsible stewards of the public's resources.

5.3 Ensure effective and efficient delivery of county services and support.

#### **Summary:**

The Board is authorizing the County Administrator to sign the grant application for the County's Septic to Sewer Program due to time constraints. The application is currently being prepared by the County's consultant, Hazen and Sawyer, with anticipated completion at the time of this Board approval. The Board is scheduled for the same day the grant application needs to be confirmed to FDEP. The final application will be provided through a future delegated Legistar item.

The County is proposing to apply for \$10,000,000.00 in funding from the Wastewater Grant Program under the Protecting Florida Together Program. The funding will be used for the County's Septic to Sewer Program. This effort will connect approximately 216 identified properties, within Old Tampa Bay segment of the Tampa Bay Estuary Reasonable Assurance Plan area, currently on septic systems to the County's wastewater collection system.

This project will accomplish the elimination of the failing, aging, and inadequately maintained septic systems by connecting users to the County sewer collection system by hiring a qualified designer and construction contractor team. The goal of the project is to reduce nitrogen load into the Tampa Bay Estuary. The removal of onsite septic systems will result in a long-term improvement of surface, coastal, and tributary water quality. If these four project areas are successfully connected to the sewer collection system, an estimated 3,997 pounds of nitrogen per year is anticipated to be removed which will help improve and sustain water quality.

#### **Background Information:**

This is the first project under the new Septic-to-Sewer Program for which the County is requesting funding. The Septic-to-Sewer program's goal is to eliminate onsite septic systems throughout ranked and prioritized areas in Pinellas County.

The Protecting Florida Together Program provides grants to governmental entities for wastewater projects that reduce excess nutrient pollution within a basin management action plan area, alternative restoration plan adopted by final order, or rural area of opportunity. These four areas fall within specified areas of Tampa Bay Estuary Reasonable Assurance plan which meets the "alternative restoration plan adopted by final order" criteria requirements. This grant funding is provided through the Florida Department of Environmental Protection under the Protecting Florida Together Program.

#### **Fiscal Impact:**

This is a multi-year reimbursement grant project that will likely impact Fiscal Years 2023 - 2027 with award anticipated in Fiscal Year 2023. The requested funding is \$10,000,000.00 with a Pinellas County match of \$10,000,000.00. Matching funds will be derived from the ARPA and SLFRF and are currently budgeted. This initial Septic-to-Sewer Program project will utilize the \$20,000,000.00 to extend Pinellas County's Wastewater Collection System and convert septic tank systems to sewer collection system.

**Staff Member Responsible:**

Hillary Weber, Acting Director, Utilities

**Partners:**

FDEP

Pinellas County - Public Works

**Attachments:**

Notice of Funding Opportunity

OMB Intent to Apply

Project Location Map