Emerald Coast Regional Council
Board Meeting Agenda

Chautauqua Hall
95 Circle Dr., DeFuniak Springs, FL 32435
November 18, 2026 3:00p.m.

https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/3076466977710448734

Call to Order – Kurvin Qualls, Chair
Prayer and Pledge of Allegiance
Roll Call and Recognition of Online Members – Kurvin Qualls, Chair

PUBLIC FORUM – Please obtain a speaker request form from ECRC staff. Speakers are asked to limit their remarks to three minutes.

PROJECT UPDATES – Kandase Lee, *ECRC CEO*

CONSENT AGENDA – Approval of the following items

A. Approval of the August 27, 2026 Meeting Minutes View ↗
B. Approval of July - September 2026 Financial Statements View ↗

ACTION ITEMS

1. **Resolution ECRC 2026-13** - Approval and Adoption of the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Update
   Eric Christianson, ECRC Planner
2. **Resolution ECRC 2026-14** - Approval and Adoption of the Regional Rural Transportation Plan Minor Update
   Jill Nobles, ECRC Planner
3. **Resolution ECRC 2026-15** - Approval of Safe Streets for All Demonstration Project CEI RFP
   Kandase Lee, ECRC CEO
4. **Resolution ECRC 2026-16** - Recognition of Dawn Schwartz, CFO
   Kandase Lee, ECRC CEO

PRESENTATION ITEMS

5. Transportation Alternatives (TA) and the Transportation Regional Incentive Program (TRIP)
   Jill Nobles, ECRC Planner
6. Safe Streets for All (SS4A) Annual Report
   Jill Nobles, ECRC Planner

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Emerald Coast Regional Council
Meeting Minutes
The Chautauqua Building
95 Circle Dr, DeFuniak Springs, FL 32435
August 27, 2026, 11:30am

Members Present:
Kurvin Qualls, Governor Appointee, Chair
Councilmember April Sutton, Mary Esther, Vice Chair
Mayor Tracy Andrews, Chipley
Darryl Boudreau, NWFLWMD
Mayor Ben Boutwell, Century
Mayor Bob Campbell, DeFuniak Springs
Councilmember Paul Casto, Panama City Beach (Virtual)
Commissioner Doug Crosby, Bay County (Virtual)
Mayor Pamn Henderson, Callaway (Virtual)
Mayor Heather Lindsay, Milton
Elizabeth Orr, FLDEP (Virtual)
Mayor Pro Tem Bill Schaetzle, Niceville
Councilmember David Schmidt, Ft. Walton Beach (Virtual)
J.D. Smith, Governor Appointee
Commissioner Josh Street, Panama City
Commissioner Steve Stroberger, Escambia Co
Mayor Bobby Wagner, City of Destin
Mayor JB Whitten, Crestview

Members Not Present:
Commissioner Steven Barry, Escambia Co.
Tanya Branton, FDOT
Commissioner Danny Glidewell, Walton Co
Commissioner Jack Griffis, Springfield
Councilmember Casey Jones, Pensacola
Commissioner Carolyn Ketchel, Okaloosa Co
Commissioner Drew Palmer, Okaloosa Co
Commissioner Daniel Raffield, Bay County
Mayor JB Schluter, Gulf Breeze
Commissioner Kerry Smith, Santa Rosa Co
Commissioner Earl Stafford, Holmes County
Commissioner Colten Wright, Santa Rosa Co

Others Present:
Sydney Black, FDOT (Virtual)
Craig Carnes, Metric Engineering (Virtual)
Rafael Casasus, SICE (Virtual)
Edison Caetano, Metric Engineering (Virtual)
Cindy Campbell, FDOT (Virtual)
Macy Falcon, Kimley-Horn
Ben Faust, DRMP

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Cassidy Haney, FL Greenways & Trails
Lexi Harris, Citizen (Virtual)
Donnie Hicks, NWFL WMD
Latilda Hughes-Neel, City of Freeport
Renata Leach, Metric (Virtual)
Yue Liu, Kimley-Horn (Virtual)
Logan McDonald, 1000 Friends of Florida (Virtual)
Dave Murzin, Town of Century
Gary Quasebarth, MechDyne (Virtual)
Jarrod Simpson, Gray-Robinson (Virtual)
Lindsay Slautterback, Kimley-Horn (Virtual)
Steve Vancore, Clearview Research, (Virtual)
Bekah Wagner, Citizen
Cory Wilkinson, HDR
Kandase Lee, ECRC
Dawn Schwartz, ECRC (Virtual)
Renee Quick, ECRC (Virtual)
Karen Harrell, ECRC (Virtual)
Tiffany Bates, ECRC
Rae Emary, ECRC
Gary Kramer, ECRC (Virtual)
Leandra Meredith, ECRC
Tammy Neal, ECRC
Jill Nobles, ECRC
Jill Strickler, ECRC (Virtual)
Danielle Tartaglione, ECRC (Virtual)
Gina Watson, ECRC (Virtual)

Call to Order
Chair Qualls called the meeting to order.

Prayer and Pledge of Allegiance
The prayer was led by JD Smith, and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Roll Call and Recognition of Virtual Members and Attendees
Chair Qualls welcomed those in attendance and introductions were made.

Public Forum:
Chair Qualls opened the public forum. With no speakers or comments from the public, Chair Qualls closed the public forum.

Information Items

Item 1: 7-Layer Cake Achievement Milestones
Kandase Lee updated the board on ECRC's strategic initiatives using the "Seven-Layer Cake" model, reporting that the top four layers are complete as promised and highlighting funding secured for the remaining three projects: $11 million for regional plan implementation, $42.5 million for broadband and fiber deployment, and $22.5 million for the Regional Traffic Management Center.

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Item 2: Regional Rural Transportation Program Update

Jill Nobles, Transportation Planner, presented the draft Regional Rural Transportation Program (RRTP) Plan minor update, explaining that a full update to the Rural Transportation Plan is scheduled to begin in 2027. Jill Nobles further explained that interim updates to the projects included in the plan will be needed.

The minor update process officially opens August 27, 2026 with public outreach, to include a virtual workshop, begins in the September-October 2026 timeframe, with the RRTP TAC to consider the recommendation of approval of the minor update at the November 2026 meeting. Jill Nobles noted that the minor updated plan will be presented at the November 18, 2026 meeting for ECRC Board approval and adoption.

Item 3: Amendment 3 Update

Steve Vancore, President Clearview Research, provided updated information on Florida's Amendment 3, "Save our Homes from Excessive Property Tax".

The Florida Legislature passed joint resolution HJR 1, sending a constitutional amendment to the November 2026 ballot that would significantly increase homestead property tax exemptions, while capping non-homestead annual valuation increases at five percent (5%). Steve Vancore explained while aimed at providing property tax relief, the measure is estimated to reduce local government revenues without a clear funding replacement plan. To offset these losses, local authorities may be forced to raise millage rates on non-exempt properties, increase local sales taxes and service fees, or accept substantial local budget cuts that could weaken community infrastructure and public services.

Action Items:

Item 4: Approval of the May 20, 2026 Meeting Minutes

Chair Qualls asked for action on the May 20, 2026 meeting minutes.

Mayor Wagner moved to approve the May 20, 2026 meeting minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Mayor Whitten and was unanimously approved.

Item 5: Approval of April – June 2026 Financial Statements

Chair Qualls asked for action on the April – June 2026 financial statements.

Council Member Sutton moved to approve the April - June 2026 financial statements as presented. The motion was seconded by J D Smith and was unanimously approved.

Item 6: Resolution ECRC 2026-10, Approval and Adoption of the Regional Rural Transportation Program Public Participation Plan

Rae Emary, Marketing & Outreach Coordinator, presented the updated draft Regional Rural Transportation Program (RRTP) Public Participation Plan (PPP) for review and comment, explaining that the update includes revisions to reflect the RRTP's established brand identity, incorporation of additional planning strategies developed since adoption of the original plan, and general administrative updates including staff changes, contact information, and organizational details.

Rae Emary stated the draft PPP was distributed to the ECRC board members at the May 2026 meeting for review which opened the 45-day public review process.

J D Smith moved to approve Resolution ECRC 2026-10, approving and adopting the Regional Rural Transportation Program (RRTP) Public Participation Plan (PPP). The motion was seconded by Mayor Wagner and was unanimously approved.

Item 7: Resolution ECRC 2026-11, Approval of the ITS Demonstration Project Design-Build Firm

Kandase Lee, ECRC CEO, explained that Emerald Coast Regional Council (ECRC) applied for and was awarded a Demonstration and Planning Grant through the Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) Safe Streets for All Program. The grant agreement was finalized in the first quarter of 2026. Kandase Lee further explained that in February 2026, through Resolution ECRC 2026-11, the Board authorized staff to issue a Request for Proposals (RFP).

On May 1, 2026, ECRC issued an RFP seeking a design-build team to design, construct, and implement an ITS demonstration project along corridors identified in the Safe Streets for All Safety Action Plan in Escambia County on FDOT right-of-way and received four (4) letters of interest. The Technical Review Committee met to review the letters of interest, shortlist the responsive firms, and evaluate the technical proposals. They ranked the top three (3) firms as follows:

1. Sice/Metric
2. TCD/AtkinsRealis
3. Transcore/Halff

Mayor Wagner moved to approve Resolution ECRC 2026-11, accepting the Technical Review Committee's recommendation and authorizing the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) to negotiate and execute a design-build contract for Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) improvements in support of the Safe Streets for All Demonstration Grant. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Street and was unanimously approved.

Item 8: Resolution ECRC 2026-12, Approval of the RTMC Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

Kandase Lee, ECRC CEO, explained that the FL-AL TPO and Escambia County previously entered into a Construction Management Agreement governing administration of the Regional Transportation Management Center (RTMC) project. She further explained that Escambia County requested the MOU to clarify the roles and responsibilities of Escambia County, the FL-AL TPO, and the Emerald Coast Regional Council during construction of the RTMC. The MOU is intended to improve communication, facilitate coordination among the parties, and support effective project administration throughout construction.

Commissioner Street moved to approve Resolution ECRC 2026-12, approving and accepting the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for project administration between the Florida-Alabama Transportation Planning Organization (FL-AL TPO) and Escambia County. The motion was seconded by Council Member Sutton and was unanimously approved.

Item 9: Evaluation of the Chief Executive Officer

Chair Qualls reported that the Executive Committee met August 19, 2026, to discuss the annual evaluation of Chief Executive Officer Kandase Lee. Each Executive Committee member independently evaluated Kandase Lee and submitted individual scores. The Committee then discussed each evaluation category and reviewed the scores collectively. Based on the results of the evaluation, the Executive Committee recommended a 5% salary increase to the Board.

Mayor Pro Tem Schaetzle proposed a three percent (3%) salary increase with a monetary bonus, noting that staff are to receive a maximum increase of four percent (4%).

Mayor Campbell moved to increase Kandase Lee's salary by four percent (4%) with no additional monetary bonus. The motion was seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Schaetzle.

Further discussion included that the issue was not related to funding and that Kandase Lee's contributions to ECRC were invaluable. It was suggested that her role and compensation be reevaluated in six (6) months for a potential additional increase.

Mayor Wagner made a substitute motion to approve the Executive Committee's recommended five percent (5%) salary increase for Kandase Lee. The motion was seconded by Mayor Andrews and was unanimously approved.

Item 10: Approval of the FY2026-2027 Annual Budget and Work Program

Dawn Schwartz, ECRC CFO, presented the ECRC fiscal year October 1, 2026, through September 30, 2027 (FY2026-2027) budget and work program, totaling $13,655,982, and noted an increase from FY2025-2026. Dawn Schwartz explained that the budget includes additional funding from several 7-Layer Cake projects and welcomed questions or comments.

Mayor Campbell moved to approve the FY2026-2027 Annual Budget and Work Program. The motion was seconded by J D Smith and was unanimously approved.

Item 11: Nomination and Election of Chair & Vice Chair and Executive Committee to Serve October 1, 2026 – September 30, 2027

Chair Qualls opened the floor for nominations. Mayor Campbell stated he would like to retain the current ECRC officers and Executive Committee for the next fiscal year.

Commissioner Street suggested the possibility of rotating the Chair and Vice Chair position between the counties each year similar to the MPOAC structure in an effort to assure each area of the region has equal representation, continuity, and extensive team building.

Discussion included concerns about board tenure, experience, and the institutional knowledge those factors provide regarding ECRC and the region, as well as questions about limited participation.

Commissioner Stroberger volunteered for the Executive Committee.

Mayor Campbell moved to retain Kurvin Qualls as ECRC Chair and Councilmember April Sutton as ECRC Vice Chair, and to appoint Kurvin Qualls, Councilmember April Sutton, JD Smith, Mayor Pamn Henderson, and Commissioner Steve Stroberger to the ECRC Executive Committee, to serve October 1, 2026 – September 30, 2027. The motion was seconded by Mayor Wagner and was unanimously approved.

Commissioner Street noted that rotating the Chair and Vice Chair positions could encourage broader participation and ensure all members feel engaged and represented.

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Mayor Wagner expressed interest in being considered for the Chair or Vice Chair position for FY2027-2028.

Mayor Wagner moved to direct staff to prepare a resolution establishing a rotation for the Chair and Vice Chair positions and to present it to the Board for consideration at a future meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Street and was unanimously approved.

Adjournment

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:19pm.

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EMERALD COAST REGIONAL COUNCIL

Balance Sheet - Unposted Transactions Included In Report

As of 7/31/2026

	Current Year
Assets	
Current Assets	
Operating Cash	1,820,699.97
Operating Reserves	865,894.92
Accounts Receivable	1,986,812.75
Total Current Assets	4,673,407.64
Long-term Assets	
Property & Equipment	(7,327.92)
Total Long-term Assets	(7,327.92)
Total Assets	4,666,079.72
Liabilities	
Short-term Liabilities	
Accounts Payable	79,039.45
Deferred Revenue	401,897.74
Total Short-term Liabilities	480,937.19
Total Liabilities	480,937.19
Net Assets	
Net Assets	
Unrestricted	3,803,548.22
Total Net Assets	3,803,548.22
Current YTD Net Income	
	381,594.31
Total Net Assets	4,185,142.53
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	4,666,079.72

EMERALD COAST REGIONAL COUNCIL

Statement of Revenues and Expenditures - Unposted Transactions Included In Report

From 7/1/2026 Through 7/31/2026

	YTD Budget - Original	Current Period Actual	YTD Actual	YTD Budget Variance
PROJECT REVENUES				
Project Revenues	11,748,541.00	936,710.73	4,515,173.44	(7,233,367.56)
Project Fringe Reimbursement	0.00	(69,915.49)	95,562.70	95,562.70
Total PROJECT REVENUES	11,748,541.00	866,795.24	4,610,736.14	(7,137,804.86)
ADMIN REVENUE				
ECRC Membership Dues	156,691.00	0.00	155,205.00	(1,486.00)
Local Contribution	36,377.00	0.00	36,377.00	0.00
Ind Exp Reimb	522,809.00	36,451.54	400,712.71	(122,096.29)
Interest and Misc Income	0.00	3,518.12	56,790.52	56,790.52
Income/Loss Fixed Assets	0.00	0.00	24,100.00	24,100.00
Total ADMIN REVENUE	715,877.00	39,969.66	673,185.23	(42,691.77)
PROJECT EXPENSES				
Salaries & Fringe	2,846,843.00	207,144.66	2,097,007.41	749,835.59
Indirect Costs	522,809.00	36,451.54	400,712.71	122,096.29
Travel	50,000.00	467.98	40,367.55	9,632.45
Other Direct Expenses	8,432,043.00	602,172.39	1,999,793.17	6,432,249.83
Total PROJECT EXPENSES	11,851,695.00	846,236.57	4,537,880.84	7,313,814.16
ADMINISTRATIVE AND OPERATING EXPENSES				
Administrative: Salaries & Fringe	234,472.00	17,918.09	116,474.67	117,997.33
Administrative: Vehicle Purchase	75,000.00	0.00	117,247.00	(42,247.00)
Operating: Audit & Legal Fees	30,000.00	187.50	3,387.50	26,612.50
Operating: Current Accounting Fees	2,200.00	211.59	1,682.55	517.45
Operating: Expend/Debt Ser/Cap Lease	560.00	44.60	415.94	144.06
Operating: General Insurance	3,100.00	458.95	2,389.47	710.53
Operating: Memberships & Subscriptions	7,000.00	330.89	5,104.29	1,895.71
Operating: Office Expense	19,100.00	3,011.20	13,062.75	6,037.25
Operating: Personnel Training	8,000.00	727.00	6,131.55	1,868.45
Operating: Postage	400.00	28.37	352.52	47.48
Operating: Professional Services	9,830.00	48.52	20,318.02	(10,488.02)
Operating: Purchase of Equipment	7,870.00	0.00	807.47	7,062.53
Operating: Rent	9,900.00	1,657.04	9,055.82	844.18
Operating: Telephone	6,100.00	427.24	3,795.48	2,304.52
Operating: Travel - Admin	32,000.00	1,284.04	23,119.66	8,880.34
Operating: Travel - Council & Committee	10,000.00	2,568.00	7,580.18	2,419.82
Operating: Utilities	500.00	32.39	221.35	278.65
Total ADMINISTRATIVE AND OPERATING EXPENSES	456,032.00	28,935.42	331,146.22	124,885.78
COUNCIL EXPENSES				
Council Expenses	156,691.00	6,250.00	33,300.00	123,391.00
Total COUNCIL EXPENSES	156,691.00	6,250.00	33,300.00	123,391.00
NET INCOME	0.00	25,342.91	381,594.31	381,594.31

EMERALD COAST REGIONAL COUNCIL

Balance Sheet - Unposted Transactions Included In Report

As of 8/31/2026

	Current Year
Assets	
Current Assets	
Operating Cash	2,307,109.88
Operating Reserves	865,904.01
Accounts Receivable	1,493,283.50
Total Current Assets	4,666,297.39
Long-term Assets	
Property & Equipment	(9,770.56)
Total Long-term Assets	(9,770.56)
Total Assets	4,656,526.83
Liabilities	
Short-term Liabilities	
Accounts Payable	(23,832.21)
Deferred Revenue	424,037.18
Total Short-term Liabilities	400,204.97
Total Liabilities	400,204.97
Net Assets	
Net Assets	
Unrestricted	3,803,548.22
Total Net Assets	3,803,548.22
Current YTD Net Income	
	452,773.64
Total Net Assets	4,256,321.86
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	4,656,526.83

EMERALD COAST REGIONAL COUNCIL

Statement of Revenues and Expenditures - Unposted Transactions Included In Report

From 8/1/2026 Through 8/31/2026

	YTD Budget - Original	Current Period Actual	YTD Actual	YTD Budget Variance
PROJECT REVENUES				
Project Revenues	11,748,541.00	339,768.43	4,854,941.87	(6,893,599.13)
Project Fringe Reimbursement	0.00	25,901.71	121,464.41	121,464.41
Total PROJECT REVENUES	11,748,541.00	365,670.14	4,976,406.28	(6,772,134.72)
ADMIN REVENUE				
ECRC Membership Dues	156,691.00	0.00	155,205.00	(1,486.00)
Local Contribution	36,377.00	0.00	36,377.00	0.00
Ind Exp Reimb	522,809.00	36,881.27	437,593.98	(85,215.02)
Interest and Misc Income	0.00	3,539.05	60,329.57	60,329.57
Income/Loss Fixed Assets	0.00	0.00	24,100.00	24,100.00
Total ADMIN REVENUE	715,877.00	40,420.32	713,605.55	(2,271.45)
PROJECT EXPENSES				
Salaries & Fringe	2,846,843.00	197,033.57	2,294,040.98	552,802.02
Indirect Costs	522,809.00	36,881.27	437,593.98	85,215.02
Travel	50,000.00	2,730.61	43,098.16	6,901.84
Other Direct Expenses	8,432,043.00	76,105.49	2,075,898.66	6,356,144.34
Total PROJECT EXPENSES	11,851,695.00	312,750.94	4,850,631.78	7,001,063.22
ADMINISTRATIVE AND OPERATING EXPENSES				
Administrative: Salaries & Fringe	234,472.00	11,742.52	128,217.19	106,254.81
Administrative: Vehicle Purchase	75,000.00	0.00	117,247.00	(42,247.00)
Operating: Audit & Legal Fees	30,000.00	0.00	3,387.50	26,612.50
Operating: Current Accounting Fees	2,200.00	231.88	1,914.43	285.57
Operating: Expend/Debt Ser/Cap Lease	560.00	44.60	460.54	99.46
Operating: General Insurance	3,100.00	75.77	2,465.24	634.76
Operating: Memberships & Subscriptions	7,000.00	33.11	5,137.40	1,862.60
Operating: Office Expense	19,100.00	2,822.43	15,885.18	3,214.82
Operating: Personnel Training	8,000.00	499.75	6,631.30	1,368.70
Operating: Postage	400.00	0.00	352.52	47.48
Operating: Professional Services	9,830.00	667.73	20,985.75	(11,155.75)
Operating: Purchase of Equipment	7,870.00	0.00	807.47	7,062.53
Operating: Rent	9,900.00	828.52	9,884.34	15.66
Operating: Telephone	6,100.00	427.59	4,223.07	1,876.93
Operating: Travel - Admin	32,000.00	2,163.46	25,283.12	6,716.88
Operating: Travel - Council & Committee	10,000.00	2,587.35	10,167.53	(167.53)
Operating: Utilities	500.00	35.48	256.83	243.17
Total ADMINISTRATIVE AND OPERATING EXPENSES	456,032.00	22,160.19	353,306.41	102,725.59
COUNCIL EXPENSES				
Council Expenses	156,691.00	0.00	33,300.00	123,391.00
Total COUNCIL EXPENSES	156,691.00	0.00	33,300.00	123,391.00
NET INCOME	0.00	71,179.33	452,773.64	452,773.64

EMERALD COAST REGIONAL COUNCIL

Balance Sheet - Unposted Transactions Included In Report

As of 9/30/2026

	Current Year
Assets	
Current Assets	
Operating Cash	1,026,549.64
Operating Reserves	872,643.15
Accounts Receivable	2,994,125.13
Total Current Assets	4,893,317.92
Long-term Assets	
Property & Equipment	(12,213.20)
Total Long-term Assets	(12,213.20)
Total Assets	4,881,104.72
Liabilities	
Short-term Liabilities	
Accounts Payable	285,295.78
Deferred Revenue	364,439.78
Total Short-term Liabilities	649,735.56
Total Liabilities	649,735.56
Net Assets	
Net Assets	
Unrestricted	3,803,548.22
Total Net Assets	3,803,548.22
Current YTD Net Income	
	427,820.94
Total Net Assets	4,231,369.16
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	4,881,104.72

EMERALD COAST REGIONAL COUNCIL

Statement of Revenues and Expenditures - Unposted Transactions Included In Report

From 9/1/2026 Through 9/30/2026

	YTD Budget - Original	Current Period Actual	YTD Actual	YTD Budget Variance
PROJECT REVENUES				
Project Revenues	11,748,541.00	2,296,879.65	7,151,821.52	(4,596,719.48)
Project Fringe Reimbursement	0.00	(29,699.15)	91,765.26	91,765.26
Total PROJECT REVENUES	11,748,541.00	2,267,180.50	7,243,586.78	(4,504,954.22)
ADMIN REVENUE				
ECRC Membership Dues	156,691.00	0.00	155,205.00	(1,486.00)
Local Contribution	36,377.00	0.00	36,377.00	0.00
Ind Exp Reimb	522,809.00	37,462.03	475,056.01	(47,752.99)
Interest and Misc Income	0.00	10,734.80	71,064.37	71,064.37
Income/Loss Fixed Assets	0.00	0.00	24,100.00	24,100.00
Total ADMIN REVENUE	715,877.00	48,196.83	761,802.38	45,925.38
PROJECT EXPENSES				
Salaries & Fringe	2,846,843.00	191,506.94	2,485,547.92	361,295.08
Indirect Costs	522,809.00	37,462.03	475,056.01	47,752.99
Travel	50,000.00	3,837.09	46,935.25	3,064.75
Other Direct Expenses	8,432,043.00	2,068,693.37	4,144,592.03	4,287,450.97
Total PROJECT EXPENSES	11,851,695.00	2,301,499.43	7,152,131.21	4,699,563.79
ADMINISTRATIVE AND OPERATING EXPENSES				
Administrative: Salaries & Fringe	234,472.00	13,185.57	141,402.76	93,069.24
Administrative: Vehicle Purchase	75,000.00	0.00	117,247.00	(42,247.00)
Operating: Audit & Legal Fees	30,000.00	158.00	3,545.50	26,454.50
Operating: Bad Debt Expense	0.00	784.00	784.00	(784.00)
Operating: Current Accounting Fees	2,200.00	91.47	2,005.90	194.10
Operating: Expend/Debt Ser/Cap Lease	560.00	89.20	549.74	10.26
Operating: General Insurance	3,100.00	0.00	2,465.24	634.76
Operating: Memberships & Subscriptions	7,000.00	186.74	5,324.14	1,675.86
Operating: Office Expense	19,100.00	3,639.42	19,524.60	(424.60)
Operating: Personnel Training	8,000.00	840.47	7,471.77	528.23
Operating: Postage	400.00	0.00	352.52	47.48
Operating: Professional Services	9,830.00	10,325.22	31,310.97	(21,480.97)
Operating: Purchase of Equipment	7,870.00	43.00	850.47	7,019.53
Operating: Rent	9,900.00	0.00	9,884.34	15.66
Operating: Telephone	6,100.00	736.39	4,959.46	1,140.54
Operating: Travel - Admin	32,000.00	2,478.40	27,761.52	4,238.48
Operating: Travel - Council & Committee	10,000.00	6,013.99	16,181.52	(6,181.52)
Operating: Utilities	500.00	49.78	306.61	193.39
Total ADMINISTRATIVE AND OPERATING EXPENSES	456,032.00	38,621.65	391,928.06	64,103.94
COUNCIL EXPENSES				
Council Expenses	156,691.00	208.95	33,508.95	123,182.05
Total COUNCIL EXPENSES	156,691.00	208.95	33,508.95	123,182.05
NET INCOME	0.00	(24,952.70)	427,820.94	427,820.94

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Action Item Number: 1

SUBJECT: Consideration of Resolution ECRC 2026-13, Adopting the Annual Performance Report for the 2022-2026 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)

BACKGROUND: In 1995, the ECRC region was designated an Economic Development District (EDD) by the U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration (EDA). Developing a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) is a prerequisite for most EDA planning programs. The CEDS is a working document used by both the private and public sectors and is aimed at helping expand private-public partnerships. The 2022-2026 major update, which is required every five years, was adopted on June 16th, 2022. Every year an annual performance report is required. This document represents the 2026 Annual Performance Report for the 2022-2026 CEDS.

The draft CEDS Annual Performance Report can be viewed at the following link: CEDS FY2022-2026 DRAFT 2026 Annual Performance Report

ATTACHED:

- Resolution ECRC 2026-13

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Approval of Resolution ECRC 2026-13, adopting the 2026 Annual Performance Report for the 2022-2026 CEDS. Contact Ada Clark, Community and Economic Development Director, at 1-850-332-7976, Ext. 278, or ada.clark@ecrc.org, if additional information is needed.

RESOLUTION ECRC 2026-13
A RESOLUTION OF THE EMERALD COAST REGIONAL COUNCIL ADOPTING THE ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT FOR THE 2022-2026 COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY (CEDS)

WHEREAS, the ECRC region was designated an Economic Development District (EDD) by the U.S. Department of Commerce and Economic Development Administration (EDA) in 1995; and

WHEREAS, development of a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) is a prerequisite for most EDA planning programs; and

WHEREAS, ECRC's current 2022 – 2026 CEDS is a working document used by both the private and public sectors, and is aimed at helping expand private-public partnerships, requiring major updates every five years and an Annual Performance Report;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE EMERALD COAST REGIONAL COUNCIL THAT:

The Emerald Coast Regional Council hereby adopts the 2026 Annual Performance Report for the 2022 – 2026 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS).

Duly passed and adopted by the Emerald Coast Regional Council on this 18th day of November 2026.

BY: _____
Kurvin Qualls, Chair

ATTEST: _____
Kandase Lee, Chief Executive Officer ECRC

← BACK TO AGENDA

Action Item Number: 2

SUBJECT: Consideration of Resolution ECRC 2026-14, Approval of the Rural Transportation Plan Minor Update

BACKGROUND: In February 2021, the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) and the Emerald Coast Regional Council (ECRC) began a contractual services agreement to develop the first Regional Rural Transportation Plan for the seven counties served by ECRC. ECRC provides staff support to the Florida-Alabama, Okaloosa-Walton, and Bay County Transportation Planning Organizations (TPOs). The Bay County TPO Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA) boundary includes all of Bay County, while the Florida-Alabama and Okaloosa-Walton TPO MPA boundaries extend through approximately the southern half of Escambia, Santa Rosa, Okaloosa, and Walton counties. The remaining non-MPA areas of Escambia, Santa Rosa, Okaloosa, and Walton counties, along with all of Holmes and Washington counties, make up the Rural Study Area for the Rural Transportation Plan.

A full update to the Rural Transportation Plan is scheduled to begin in 2027. In the meantime, interim updates to the projects included in the plan are needed. The proposed schedule for this minor update is outlined below:

- August 27, 2026: Officially open the minor update process
- October 22, 2026: Virtual workshop
- November 18, 2026: RRTP TAC to consider recommending approval of the minor update
- November 18, 2026: ECRC Board to consider approval of the minor update

The RRTP can be viewed at www.ecrc.org/RRTP.

ATTACHED:

- Resolution ECRC 2026-14

RECOMMENDED ACTION: A motion recommending the ECRC chair sign Resolution ECRC 2026-14, approving and adopting the Rural Transportation Plan Minor Update. Contact Gary Kramer, ECRC staff, at gary.kramer@ecrc.org or 850-332-7976 ext. 219 if additional information is needed.

RESOLUTION ECRC 2026-14
A RESOLUTION OF THE EMERALD COAST REGIONAL COUNCIL TO APPROVING THE MINOR UPDATE OF THE RURAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN

WHEREAS, the Emerald Coast Regional Council (ECRC) is the designated Regional Transportation Area to serve the regional needs of Escambia, Santa Rosa, Okaloosa, Walton, Bay, Washington, and Holmes counties; and

WHEREAS, in its role as the Regional Transportation Area, ECRC has assumed the role of creating a Regional Rural Transportation Plan, which commenced on February 1, 2021 through a contractual services agreement with FDOT; and

WHEREAS, the Regional Rural Transportation Plan was adopted by ECRC on February 8, 2023; and

WHEREAS, public outreach efforts included presentations, email blasts, and a public workshop on October 22, 2026;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Emerald Coast Regional Council that

The ECRC approves the Rural Transportation Plan Minor Update.

Duly passed and adopted by the Emerald Coast Regional Council on this 18th day of November 2026.

EMERALD COAST REGIONAL COUNCIL

BY: _____
Kurvin Qualls, Chair

ATTEST: **_____**
Kandase Lee, ECRC Chief Executive Officer

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Action Item Number: 3

SUBJECT: Consideration of Resolution ECRC 2026-15 authorizing staff to begin procurement of a Construction, Engineering and Inspection services for the Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) Demonstration grant, establish a Selection Committee and authorizing the Chief Executive Officer to negotiate and execute a professional services contract

BACKGROUND: In 2024, the Emerald Coast Regional Council (ECRC) applied for and was awarded a Demonstration and Planning Grant through the Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) Safe Streets for All Program. The grant agreement was finalized in the first quarter of 2026. In December of 2024, through Resolution 2024-14, the Board authorized staff to issue a Request for Proposals (RFP).

On May 1, 2026, ECRC issued an RFP seeking a design-build team to design, construct, and implement an ITS demonstration project along corridors identified in the Safe Streets for All Safety Action Plan in Escambia County on FDOT right-of-way. ECRC received four letters of interest. The Technical Review Committee met to review the letters of Interest, shortlist the responsive firms, and to evaluate the technical proposals. The Technical Review Committee ranked the top three firms.

On August 27, 2026, the Board approved the recommendation of the Selection Committee and authorized the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) to negotiate with the top-ranking team and enter into a contract on behalf of the ECRC. ECRC entered into a contract with the SICE, Inc, and Metric team. A Notice to Proceed was issued on October 19, 2026.

The project requires the services of a Construction, Engineering and Inspections (CEI) engineering firm to provide contract administration, inspection, and materials sampling and testing. As the SICE/Metric team is near 60% design completion, time is of the essence in procuring and selecting a firm to provide CEI services prior to 100% design completion.

ATTACHED:

- Resolution ECRC 2026-15

RECOMMENDED ACTION: A motion authorizing the ECRC chair to sign Resolution ECRC 2026-15, authorizing staff to issue procurement, establish a selection committee, authorize the Chief Executive Officer, or her designee to negotiate with the highest-ranked proposer and execute a contract with a Construction, Engineering and Inspection services firm. The Agreement will be presented to the ECRC Board for ratification at the next scheduled ECRC

meeting. If negotiations with the highest-ranked proposer are unsuccessful, staff may begin negotiations with the second-ranked proposer. For more information, please contact Kandase Lee at (850) 332-7976, ext. 201 or kandase.lee@ecrc.org.

RESOLUTION ECRC 2026-15

A RESOLUTION OF THE EMERALD COAST REGIONAL COUNCIL AUTHORIZING STAFF TO ISSUE AN LOI FOR CONSTRUCTION, ENGINEERING AND INSPECTION SERVICES FOR THE SAFE STREETS AND ROADS FOR ALL (SS4A) DEMONSTRATION GRANT, ESTABLISH A SELECTION COMMITTEE, AND AUTHORIZING THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER TO NEGOTIATE AND EXECUTE A PROFESSIONAL SERVICES CONTRACT

WHEREAS, in 2024, the Emerald Coast Regional Council (ECRC) applied for and received a grant from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) under the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), and was awarded $10 Million for planning and demonstration activities identified in the SS4A Safety Action Plan; and

WHEREAS, the grant agreement outlines three (3) components: 1) Pre and post-implementation data analysis and reporting; 2) Design of the demonstration activities; and 3) Construction of the demonstration activities; and

WHEREAS, on December 12, 2024, the ECRC Board approved Resolution 2024-14, which authorized the Chief Executive Officer and Staff to undertake the required actions in procuring the services in support of the grant, not limited to the development and issuance of a request for proposals and the establishment of a selection committee, as required to undertake the project; and

WHEREAS, on August 27, 2026, the ECRC Board approved Resolution 2026-11, which approved the Selection Committee's recommendation and authorized the Chief Executive Officer and Staff to execute and negotiate a contract for design and construction services; and

WHEREAS, the project requires the services of an engineering firm to provide Construction, Engineering and Inspection services, and

WHEREAS, time is of the essence, as design services have begun and construction is near;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE EMERALD COAST REGIONAL COUNCIL THAT:

I. The ECRC Board of Directors authorizes staff to open a Letter of Interest (LOI) based solicitation, establish a selection committee consisting of Board Member Mayor Heather Lindsay, CEO Kandase Lee, and Senior Planner Jill Nobles, for the selection of a Construction, Engineering and Inspection services firm.

ii. The Chief Executive Officer, or her designee, is authorized to negotiate with the highest-ranked proposer. If negotiations with the highest-ranked proposer are unsuccessful, staff may begin negotiations with the second-ranked proposer.

iii. The Chief Executive Officer is authorized to execute the contract on behalf of the Emerald Coast Regional Council and shall present said Agreement to the ECRC Board for ratification at the next scheduled ECRC meeting.

Duly passed and adopted by the Emerald Coast Regional Council on this 18th day of November 2026.

EMERALD COAST REGIONAL COUNCIL

BY: _____
Kurvin Qualls, Chair

ATTEST: **_____**
Kandase Lee, Chief Executive Officer ECRC

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RESOLUTION ECRC 2026-16
A RESOLUTION OF THE EMERALD COAST REGIONAL COUNCIL RECOGNIZING DAWN SCHWARTZ FOR 30 YEARS OF SERVICE TO EMERALD COAST REGIONAL COUNCIL

WHEREAS, on December 23, 1996, Kimberly Dawn Schwartz was hired as Chief Accountant and currently holds the Chief Finance Officer position; and

WHEREAS, through three decades of service, Dawn has served as a trusted steward of public funds, upholding the highest standards of accuracy, transparency, and accountability in the ECRC's financial operations; and

WHEREAS, Dawn's professionalism, institutional knowledge, and steady guidance have earned the respect and appreciation of the Board, staff, and the partners and communities the ECRC serves; and

WHEREAS, the ECRC has remained fiscally sound and continues to enjoy a strong financial position as a result of Dawn's diligent leadership; and

WHEREAS, after serving 30 years, Dawn has announced an upcoming retirement date of December 18, 2026.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE EMERALD COAST REGIONAL COUNCIL THAT:

The Emerald Coast Regional Council Board of Directors hereby recognizes and commends Dawn Schwartz for 30 years of commitment, dedication, and lasting impact on the Emerald Coast Regional Council and the region it serves.

The Board extends its sincere gratitude for Dawn's exemplary service and wishes her health, happiness, and fulfillment in her retirement.

Duly passed and adopted by the Emerald Coast Regional Council on this 18th day of November, 2026.

EMERALD COAST REGIONAL COUNCIL

BY: _____
Kurvin Qualls, Chair

ATTEST: _____
Kandase Lee, Chief Executive Officer ECRC

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Presentation Item Number: 5

SUBJECT: Presentation of the FDOT District Three Transportation Alternatives (TA) Program and the Transportation Regional Incentive Program (TRIP)

BACKGROUND: FDOT District Three (D-3) is scheduled to announce the upcoming Transportation Alternatives (TA) Set-Aside and Transportation Regional Incentive Program (TRIP) application cycles for FY 2028 – FY 2033 Tentative Work Program.

Transportation Alternatives (TA)
The TA Set-Aside is intended to fund a variety of small-scale transportation projects such as pedestrian and bicycle facilities, recreational trails, safe routes to school projects, community improvements such as historic preservation and vegetation management, and environmental mitigation related to stormwater and habitat connectivity. **Transportation Alternatives Program (fdot.gov)**

The Transportation Alternatives (TA) Set-Aside provides funding for programs and projects consistent with the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) also known as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. These set-aside funds include all projects and activities defined as TA: on- and off-road pedestrian and bicycle facilities, infrastructure projects for improving non-driver access to public transportation, community improvement activities, environmental mitigation, and projects for planning, designing, or constructing boulevards and other roadways largely in the right-of-way of formerly divided highways.

Transportation Regional Incentive Program (TRIP)
The Transportation Regional Incentive Program (TRIP) was created as part of major growth management legislation enacted during the 2005 Legislative Session (SB 360). The purpose of the program is to encourage regional planning by providing state matching funds for improvements to regionally significant transportation facilities identified and prioritized by regional partners.

As the Regional Transportation Planning Organization, ECRC ranks and prioritizes all TRIP applications in the ECRC region. ECRC TRIP Criteria can be found at the following link: https://www.ecrc.org/programs/transportation_planning/northwest_florida_regional_tpo/plans_and_documents.php in the dropdown menu located on the bottom of the page.

Schedule

- Monday, November 2, 2026: TA and TRIP application solicitation starts.
- Wednesday, November 18, 2026 at 2:00 pm: **ECRC – Regional Rural Transportation Plan – Technical Advisory Committee** https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/3385856356094915674, also at Chautauqua Hall in DeFuniak Springs, FL.
- Monday, December 7, 2026 at 10:30 am: **Florida-Alabama TPO** TA & TRIP Informational Workshop https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/2832291833928134743
- Monday, December 7, 2026 at 1:00 pm: **Okaloosa-Walton TPO** TA & TRIP Informational Workshop https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/2734759654986342492
- Monday, December 7, 2026 at 3:00 pm: **Bay County TPO** TA & TRIP Informational Workshop https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/3598181947023074393
- https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/4475831912047651930
- Friday, January 15, 2027: TA and TRIP applications are due in FDOT's Grant Application Program (GAP)

ATTACHED:

- FDOT TA & TRIP Flyers

RECOMMENDED ACTION: This is an information only item. Contact Jill Nobles, Planner, ECRC at jill.nobles@ecrc.org or 850-332-7976 ext. 212 or Tanya Branton, FDOT staff, at Tanya.Branton@dot.state.fl.us.

Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside (TA)

What is the TA Program?

The Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside (TA) Program was established by Congress to support small-scale transportation projects that enhance communities and promote alternative travel. Eligible projects include:

- Pedestrian and bicycle facilities
- Recreational trails
- Community improvements (historic preservation, vegetation management)
- Environmental mitigation (stormwater, habitat connectivity)

New This Year:

A Local Funds Construction Contingency (LFCC) must be included in all LAP construction phase project estimates. The amount must be the greater of 0.5% of the contract value or $10,000. This requirement applies in the year the project is scheduled to be let.

Who is Eligible?

- Local governments
- Regional transportation authorities
- Transit agencies
- Non-profit entities
- Other eligible organizations



How to Apply:

Applications and forms can be found on the Florida Grant Application Program (GAP) at **www.flgap.com**. You may request credentials by clicking the link at the bottom of the webpage that says, “Request User Access” or contact Tanya Sanders Branton at the information below.

Contact Information:
Tanya Sanders Branton
District 3 TRIP/TA Coordinator

850.330.1550

Tanya.Branton@dot.state.fl.us

Transportation Regional Incentive Program (TRIP)

What is TRIP?

The Transportation Regional Incentive Program (TRIP) was created in 2005 (SB 360) to encourage regional planning. It provides state matching funds of up to 50% for improvements to regionally significant transportation facilities identified and prioritized by regional partners.

Who is eligible?

- Two or more contiguous MPOs
- One or more MPOs with one or more contiguous counties not in an MPO
- A multi-county regional transportation authority created by law
- Two or more contiguous counties not in an MPO
- MPOs comprised of three or more counties

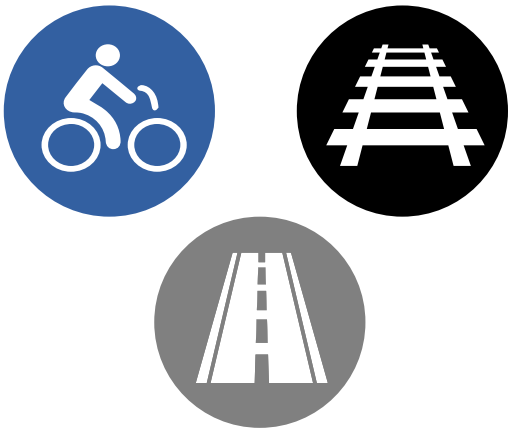
How to Apply:

Applications and forms can be found on the Florida Grant Application Program (GAP) at **www.flgap.com**.

You may request credentials by clicking the link at the bottom of the webpage that says, “Request User Access” or contact Tanya Sanders Branton at the information below.

Key Benefits:

- ✓ Encourages collaboration across regions
- ✓ Provides matching state funds
- ✓ Improves significant transportation facilities
- ✓ Supports growth management and regional mobility



Contact Information:

Tanya Sanders Branton
District 3 TRIP/TA Coordinator
850.330.1550
Tanya.Branton@dot.state.fl.us

FDOT TRIP Program Information
Northwest Florida Planning Resources

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Presentation Item Number: 6

SUBJECT: Emerald Coast Safety Action Plan Annual Report

BACKGROUND: The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) established the new SS4A discretionary program, with $5 billion in appropriated funds over 5 years, 2022-2026. The SS4A program funds regional, local, and tribal initiatives through grants to prevent roadway deaths and serious injuries. As a recipient of an SS4A grant, ECRC produced a Safety Action Plan. The Safety Action Plan will assist the ECRC and the TPO regions in achieving the target of zero fatalities and serious injuries.

The Emerald Coast Safety Action Plan was adopted on December 12, 2024. In dedication to the implementation of the safety projects identified in this plan, it is important to continue monitoring progress toward reducing traffic deaths and serious injuries. Yearly reporting will help determine which projects are effective in reducing traffic fatalities and serious injuries. The Safety Action Plan and Annual Report are published on the ECRC project website at: https://www.ecrc.org/programs/transportation_planning/transportationsafety_initiatives.php.

ATTACHED:

- Draft SS4A Annual Report

RECOMMENDED ACTION: This item is for information only. Contact Jill Nobles, ECRC staff, at 850-332-7976, Ext. 212 or jill.nobles@ecrc.org if additional information is needed.

2026 EMERALD COAST REGIONAL COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT

SAFE STREETS FOR ALL
AN ECRC 2.0 INITIATIVE

DRAFT

PERFORMANCE MEASURES	Escambia		Santa Rosa		Okaloosa		Walton		Bay		Washington		Holmes		ECRC	
	2024	*2025*	*2024*	*2025*	*2024*	*2025*	*2024*	*2025*	*2024*	*2025*	*2024*	*2025*	*2024*	*2025*	*2024*	*2025*
Total fatalities	60	62	26	19	19	23	24	19	36	23	9	6	6	4	180	156
Fatality rate	1.51	1.54	1.09	0.77	0.78	0.87	1.40	1.06	1.63	1.00	1.26	0.82	1.21	0.79	1.29	1.08
Total serious injuries	230	188	104	70	125	115	63	61	156	220	30	31	38	39	748	724
Serious injury rate	5.78	4.68	4.38	2.85	5.14	4.36	3.68	3.41	7.06	9.60	4.19	4.23	7.65	7.71	5.37	5.02
Number of pedestrian fatalities and serious injuries on all roads	32	31	11	3	11	10	5	4	21	22	1	0	2	2	83	72
Number of bicyclist fatalities and serious injuries on all roads	13	24	4	7	8	12	4	6	22	17	0	0	0	0	51	66
Number of safety projects constructed on HIN	5	0	0	0	3	2	3	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	11	3
Number of implemented safety improvements in prior calendar year	7	1	3	1	7	7	3	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	22	9

SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS IMPLEMENTED ON THE **HIGH INJURY NETWORK (HIN)**

NICEVILLE

- **Palm Blvd (from 27th St to Bayshore Dr)**
  Multi-use path
- **Bayshore Dr**
  800' of sidewalk

BAY COUNTY

- **CR 2337 Sherman Avenue at SR 30A/US 98/15th Street**
  Intersection improvements

OTHER SAFETY PROJECTS **NOT** ON HIGH INJURY NETWORK (HIN)

ESCAMBIA COUNTY

- **Pedestrian and Traffic Safety Upgrade Project**
  Lanier Drive (from Creighton Road to Toni Street)

SANTA ROSA COUNTY

- **SR 30 (US 98) Navarre Parkway @ Sunrise Drive**
  Traffic signal update, upgraded span wire signal to mast arm, install reflective back plate, and provide left turn phases.

DESTIN

- **Beach Drive at Mountain Drive**
  Added crosswalks and pedestrian activated rapid flashing beacons across Beach Drive
- **Gulf Shore Drive**
  Installation of rapid flashing beacons where road lanes reduce
- **Gulf Shore Drive at Durango Road**
  Installation of rapid flashing beacons

FORT WALTON BEACH

- **Beal Pkwy SW at First St SW**
  Installation of flex posts to prevent left turns onto Beal Pkwy

NICEVILLE

- **Bailey Dr. (from Highway 20 to 27th St)** Sidewalk
- **Valparaiso Blvd** New sidewalk installation *Partnership with Okaloosa County.
- **Updated the school striping around Plew Elementary**

DRAFT