

State News for NSPE Members

FDOT Unveils 5-Year Infrastructure Plan with a Focus on Safety

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) recently unveiled a draft of its five-year infrastructure improvement plan. FDOT Spokesperson Ian Satter said they will prioritize safety when considering future projects, [Roads & Bridges reports](#).

“The top priorities, the safety projects, the things that will improve the people’s livelihoods, economic stability, as well as people working, be able to get to and from their homes and work and school,” Satter said.

The tentative work program attempts to find a balance between using taxpayer dollars appropriately while making sure they can complete projects communities need, across the region. Some projects outlined Thursday will improve pedestrian traffic in Bay, Walton, and Gulf counties through the SunTrail program.

“We have some that are looking at Walton County. We also have one currently being studied in Bay County and Mexico Beach. So a SunTrail also provides the ability for non-motorized vehicles and pedestrians and runners to be able to have a space to safely move along some of these major corridors. So US [Route] 98, for example, in Mexico Beach, we’re currently studying to put a SunTrail facility there which would allow people to walk and bike along that corridor without actually being on US 98,” Satter said. [Read more](#).

Audit Finds Issues with Milton's Wastewater Treatment Plant Construction Plan

A report by the Florida auditor general's office found numerous financial and accountability issues with the city of Milton over its construction of a new wastewater treatment plant, [The Center Square reports](#).

Auditors said the northwest Florida city and seat of Santa Rosa County wasn't compliant with a Florida Department of Environmental Protection consent order about the existing plant and its discharge into the nearby Blackwater River.

They also said Milton needed a comprehensive multi-year capital plan that included the proposed treatment plant, on which the city has already spent \$4.8 million without starting construction. According to the report, city officials may have forfeited some funds to complete the project due to a lack of established grant policies and procedures.

Auditors also questioned why the city hadn't conducted periodic water and sewer services rate studies and found that officials didn't remember the last time the city had performed one. The report says officials didn't take advantage of sales tax exemptions to directly purchase construction materials for the project and needed to improve city policies for contracted services, land acquisition and conflicts of interest. [Read more](#).

Controversial Florida Bridge Cleared for Construction

Years of legal battles between residents from the village of Florida's Palmetto Bay and Miami-Dade County over bridge construction came one step closer to an end this week, According to the [Roads&Bridges report](#).

A judge with the Florida Third District Court of Appeal ruled that county leaders have the authority to build a bridge on Southwest 87th Avenue over the Cutler Canal.

However, the village council could still seek clarification, request a new hearing, or appeal the ruling to the Florida Supreme Court. Vice-Mayor Elect Mark Merwitzer emphasized the need to focus on calming traffic, regardless of the legal outcome.

"More than anything, what we need to do as a community is move beyond this issue and start rebuilding our relationships," Merwitzer said to CBS News Miami. County engineers originally planned the SW 87th Avenue bridge years ago, but the village fought the project in court until Wednesday's decision. Opponents of the bridge project fear it will worsen congestion on already crowded roads, with some expecting drivers to divert onto side streets to save time.

Addressing traffic issues in a municipality with a \$23 million budget will require assistance from the county commission. "I'm excited," said Kevin Voitke, a resident of nearby Cutler Bay, to CBS News Miami. "I take my child to Palmetto Senior High, and the traffic is unbelievable." [Read More](#).

Stay up to date on legislative issues through the [NSPE Advocacy Center](#) .

Call for Nominations: NSPE Vice President and Treasurer

NSPE is seeking nominees for two key positions on the Board of Directors - Vice President and Treasurer. The Vice President serves four consecutive years as 2025-26 Vice President, 2026-27 President-Elect, 2027-28 President, and 2028-29 Immediate Past President. The Treasurer serves a two-year term, 2025-2027, with eligibility to run for a consecutive two-year term.



To learn more about qualifications, time and financial commitments, and the nominations process, [view the call for nominations packet in the leadership toolbox](#). **Nominations are due to the NSPE Secretary at executive@nspe.org by January 6, 2025.**

NSPECon25 - Call for Presentations Now Open

NSPECon25 is being held in Kansas City, Missouri, August 6-8, and NSPE needs your help to get the momentum started with a roundup of can't-miss sessions. This is your opportunity to share your expertise, innovative ideas, and research with a diverse audience of professional engineers.



We welcome presentation proposals in the areas of career development, leadership, and industry issues and trends. **The deadline to submit a presentation is January 6.**

[Submit a Proposal](#)

2025 Engineers Week—Design Your Future

Founded by NSPE in 1951, Engineers Week (February 16–22, 2025) is dedicated to ensuring a diverse and well-educated future engineering workforce. This year's Engineers Week theme “**Design Your Future**” is about celebrating engineers and engaging students! As we celebrate the accomplishments of engineers, past and present, who have designed the future we

currently live in, we also look to the next generation and how we can inspire kids to pursue engineering careers that will be focused on designing our future! [Access more information and promotional resources.](#)



Register for Upcoming Engineers Week Webinars

Are you looking for inspiration, ideas or advice for Engineers Week and Introduce a Girl to Engineering Day 2025 activities? DiscoverE will host two webinars in January to help you to increase engagement and plan successful events - [Engaging Kids in Engineering](#) (January 22) and [Celebrating Engineers & Promotion Tips](#) (January 29).

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