



March 4, 2026  
Infrastructure Surtax Advisory Committee  
Meeting

The regular meeting of the Okaloosa County Infrastructure Surtax Advisory Committee was called to order at 10:00 A.M. in the Okaloosa County Courthouse, First Floor, Board of County Commissioners Chambers, located at 101 James Lee Blvd. E., Crestview, FL 32536.

Members present: District 4 representative: Chairman: Matthew Turpin; District 2 representative: Vice Chairman: Jeff Fanto; District 1 representative: Larry Ward; District 5 representative: Paul Sjoberg.

Also present were: John Hofstad, County Administrator; Jason Autrey, Deputy County Administrator; Faye Douglas, OMB Director; Brad Embry, Okaloosa County Clerk of Court and Comptroller; Roy Petrey, County Engineer; Rob VandenBroeck, Road Division Chief; Brittany Eager, Surtax Project Coordinator; Dylan Schroeder, Engineering Intern.

#### **Opening Remarks and Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes**

The meeting was opened by Chairman Mr. Matthew Turpin. Mr. Roy Petrey stated that the meeting had been properly noticed in accordance with section 286.011, Florida Statutes on January 8, 2026. He further noted the meeting is being recorded. It was further noted that four out of five members were present at the start of the meeting, which constitutes a quorum.

#### **Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes**

Chairman Turpin called for a vote regarding the approval of the meeting minutes. Mr. Paul Sjoberg made the motion, and it was seconded by Mr. Jeff Fanto. The motion passed unanimously with a 4-0 vote.

#### **Public Comments**

None.

#### **Presentations**

None.

#### **Project Updates**

Chairman Turpin initiated the discussion with an agenda item dedicated to project updates.

##### A. Project List Update –

Mr. Schroeder provided valuable insights into several projects that have made significant progress since the previous meeting.

- a. Beachview Drive Drainage Improvements (ST000002) / District 2 – 60% design; funded via RESTORE Act; FDOT CIGP grant application submitted for construction.
- b. John King Road Widening (ST000004) / District 1 – All right-of-way acquired; 100% construction plans being finalized; advertising for construction targeted for March 2026.

- c. Carmel & Beal Intersection Improvements (ST000010) / District 4 – 100% construction plans received; under county engineering and FDOT review.
- d. Overbrook Stormwater Improvements (ST000011) / District 4 – Environmental reports in progress; project split into two phases to accelerate construction start.
- e. Santa Rosa Boulevard Improvements (ST000024) / District 2 – FPL cost estimate pending for utility undergrounding; phase 1 100% construction plans underway.
- f. College Boulevard/Forest Road MUP (ST000030) / Districts 3 & 5 – Construction underway; ~70% complete with grading from each end.
- g. Echo Circle/Sylvania Heights Stormwater Park (ST000031) / District 4 – Public meeting held Feb 24; comments collected via cards and dedicated email; design underway. Project blends stormwater storage with recreational use (e.g., ballfield as dual-use stormwater area), coordination may involve City of Fort Walton Beach, USACE, and Eglin AFB/WWTP. Community feedback positive; this is an initial concept stage seeking input.
- h. Old River Road Improvements (ST000033) / District 3 – Stormwater & paving complete; bridge >60% complete; approach slabs poured (curing).
- i. Union Avenue Stormwater Improvements (ST000035) / District 5 – Construction anticipated to begin mid-March.
- j. Okaloosa Lane Realignment and Improvements (ST000038) / District 1 – Sidewalk added; 90% design under review; environmental permitting in progress.
- k. Public Safety Driving Pad (ST000040) / District 3 – Land clearing complete; under construction.
- l. Lancaster Drive Stormwater Project (ST000047) / District 5 – Preliminary design received (curb & gutter/open ditch concept); public meeting scheduled for March 5.
- m. Valparaiso Blvd Sidewalk (ST000052) / Districts 3 & 5 – Construction has begun on the project.
- n. FDOT LAP Sidewalks (ST000055) / Districts 1, 2, & 4 – Stillwell Blvd - Final change order in progress; proceeding to project closeout.
- o. Gap Creek Channel Planning Study (ST000056) / District 4 – Initiation phase: watershed assessment (Jonquil Ave to Beal Pkwy), inventory stormwater infrastructure, identify improvement projects.
- p. Griffith Mill Stormwater Improvements (ST000059) / District 3 – Task order proposal received for design; intend RESTORE Act funding for design and surtax allocation for construction.

Mr. Schroeder invited questions and discussions on the projects, hearing none the committee moved on to Surtax Revenue and Expense Summary.

B. Surtax Revenue / Expense Summary –

Mr. Autrey reviewed the project reconciliation spreadsheets, noting that the values are as of January 31, 2026.

Mr. Autrey provided additional information regarding Southwest Crestview Bypass opening schedule and assured that the budget is healthy. Mr. Autrey will host a “Walk-Across-The-Bridge” grand opening.

Chairman Turpin invited questions; hearing none, the meeting proceeded to the Surtax Webpage Dashboard.

C. Surtax Webpage Dashboard –

Ms. Eager presented static dashboard pages from the infrastructure website through January 31, 2026. Ms. Eager highlighted 45 Active Projects; \$252M Total Budget: \$97M Surtax, \$96M Grants, \$59M Other.

Chairman Turpin invited questions; hearing none, the meeting proceeded to the annualized funding projection.

D. Annualized Funding Projection –

Mr. Autrey reviewed updated project budgets and future expenditure estimates through 2029 highlighting that the program remains financially healthy and on track to complete the committed project list, with the understanding that the budgets will tighten as we continue to go through the remainder of the projects.

Chairman Turpin invited questions from the committee. Hearing none, the meeting moved on to Agenda Items and Discussions.

**Agenda Items and Discussions**

Chairman Turpin initiated the Staff Reports discussion.

A. CR 393 Phase 3 Reconstruction Project (ST000032) / District 1 –

Mr. Petrey gave the committee some background information regarding the project and introduced the request to allocate \$600,000 of FY 26 Surtax Reserves to complete the design of Segment 2 of the project. Mr. Petrey also advised that staff is pursuing a \$1 Million dollar grant through FDOT for construction on this project.

Mr. Autrey adds that this project has been accounted for in the Annualized Funding Summary for future Construction allocation.

Chairman Turpin opened the floor for a motion. Mr. Ward motioned, and Mr. Fanto seconded. The motion was approved unanimously with a 4–0 vote.

B. Public Safety Driving Pad (ST000040) / District ALL –

Mr. Petrey gave the committee some background on the project and the request for allocation of \$100,000.00 for construction contingency costs.

Chairman Turpin opened the floor for a motion. Vice Chairman Fanto motioned, and Mr. Ward seconded. The motion was approved unanimously with a 4–0 vote.

### **Office of Management and Budget**

Ms. Douglas stated that we are on track to meet the projected budget of \$22 Million for FY2026 for a cumulative surtax revenue of \$144 Million since 2019.

Mr. Autrey notified the committee that the Board of County Commissioners approved the ordinance to place the next Surtax Referendum on that ballot in November 2026 at their March 4, 2026 Regular Board Meeting. Mr. Autrey also stated that the language is largely the same with minor updates to add specific language regarding sidewalks, equipment, and the purchase of property to clarify what is allowed.

Mr. John Hofstad, County Administrator, praised the committee for the work that they do to put forth recommendations to the Board of County Commissioners and working with staff to ensure that needs are addressed within Okaloosa County. He also shared information regarding the impact that Florida Legislation HJR 203, the House proposal to eliminate homesteaded property taxes, could have on Okaloosa County. He shared that the estimated impact is \$39 Million that has been provided by Florida Association of Counties. Mr. Hofstad has requested additional clarification if the \$39 Million is inclusive of Okaloosa County's 9 municipalities or if that is the direct impact on Okaloosa County. If the municipalities are included, he expects that the impact would be closer to a \$25 Million direct impact.

### **Clerk of Court and Comptroller**

Mr. Embry stated that there is nothing from the Clerk's office at this time.

### **Additional Discussion**

Chairman Turpin invited questions or comments from the committee.

Vice Chairman Fanto asked for clarification from Mr. Autrey about the ordinance not going before the committee for review prior to going to the Board of County Commissioners for approval. Mr. Autrey stated that he had received input individually, but due to timing he was unable to bring the ordinance to the committee for review prior to submitting it to the Board of County Commissioners and needing to present the ordinance to OPAGA for review and audit.

Mr. Fanto also asked for a follow up regarding using Surtax Funds for fire districts. Discussion ensued and Mr. Autrey informed the Vice Chairman that there was not an appetite from the Board of Commissioners to use Surtax funding for separate taxing districts at this time, but they are welcome to partner with the Board for projects. Mr. Fanto expressed hope for this to be changed for the future.

Chairman Turpin asked Mr. Autrey for clarification about the additional language to be included with the new ordinance and Mr. Autrey assured the committee that the new language is just to clarify what has already been approved, and in regards to equipment, it would be equipment that only lasted the lifespan of a Surtax project.

**Schedule Next Meeting**

The next meeting is scheduled for 10:00 a.m. on Tuesday, May 12, 2026, at the Okaloosa County Admin Building in Shalimar.

**Adjournment**

Mr. Larry Ward motioned to adjourn, seconded by Vice Chairman Jeff Fanto. Motion approved unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 10:54 am.

Respectfully Submitted,

Brittany Eager

Surtax Project Coordinator