



CITY OF VENICE FISCAL YEAR 2026-2027

FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

South Jetty Restoration

Venice is known for the beauty of its downtown business district, public parks, pristine beaches, and the South Jetty – a popular fishing and picnicking site, and most importantly the engineered structure that protects the Venice Inlet, a critical navigational access to the Intracoastal waterway (ICW). The Jetty is owned and maintained by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). It has been a tremendously popular destination for residents and visitors for over 50 years. Two back-to-back hurricanes in 2024, Helene and Milton, caused unprecedented damage to the South Jetty, ripping away the stone armament protecting the Venice Inlet and access to the ICW. The ICW is a critically valuable marine channel for commercial and recreational boating activity, with a significant ripple effect on the local and regional economy.



The hurricane impact severely damaged both the rock revetment and bulkhead infrastructure and caused major erosion of portions of the site interior. With this critical navigational structure compromised, any delays in enacting a plan of restoration creates a greater threat to the Venice Inlet channel itself. An FY26 appropriations request has been submitted for \$100 million in USACE funding.

FY 27 Request: To restore the South Jetty rock revetment and bulkhead – serving as a critically valuable gateway to the Intracoastal Waterway and marine channel – the City of Venice requests that the Army Corps of Engineers and its local affiliate, the West Coast Inland Navigation District (WCIND) be given funding support for the engineering and construction needed to rebuild the Jetty.

Flamingo Ditch Project

The Flamingo Ditch area is one of the City's most flood-prone zones, serving as a primary outfall for a 212-acre residential drainage basin. City-owned streets are routinely impassable during storms, limiting emergency access and endangering vulnerable residents. Homes and vehicles are frequently exposed to floodwaters, increasing insurance claims and driving up premiums. The existing drainage and conveyance system is both hydraulically and functionally inadequate, particularly under modern storm conditions and changing climate patterns. Without mitigation, this area will continue to suffer repetitive loss, risk to life and property, and escalating recovery costs.



The City has recently completed a Flamingo Ditch Feasibility Study that identifies several drainage project phases with costs. The City has also secured control of an adjacent property to provide project ownership and control.

The Feasibility Study estimates the cost of Phase 1 improvements (excavating a vacant lot for additional stormwater storage and installation of a real-time water level monitoring system) at \$1.5 million and the cost of Phase 2 improvements (increasing the size of an existing pipe and installing a one-way valve) at an additional \$500,000.

FY 27 Request: The City respectfully requests funding of \$2,000,000 of the project cost to mitigate the Flamingo Ditch area and help reduce these impacts.

Utilities Water Plant Project

The City of Venice Utilities Department provides drinking water to approximately 30,000 permanent residents, and services a burgeoning tourist and seasonal population. An explosive building phenomenon in Florida's southwest corridor has led to a residential growth plan to add an additional 9,000 homes to the Venice community. The current potable water plant is located in a flood plain and is very vulnerable during periods of high winds, hurricanes, and flooding. Sea level rise has exacerbated this existing risk and the water plant has been identified as a vulnerable city facility in several existing studies. The City has purchased a potential site for relocation of the water plant, or the existing facility must be hardened and secured in place. Moving the water plant to a safe location with adequate elevation would ensure a reliable source of public drinking water for the future.



A new water treatment facility and related infrastructure requirements for the raw water and potable distribution systems is projected to cost between \$100 million and \$150 million. The City is committed to upgrading this critical utility but will require external funding support to accomplish the goal. The City is investing in a feasibility plan and a preliminary engineering study to determine the appropriate method to reduce vulnerability and provide a more exact cost for project construction.

FY 27 Request: The City respectfully requests funding to support 50% of the project cost.

Beach Renourishment

As the City of Venice progresses toward the end of the 50-year contract with the Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) to renourish the beaches lining the Venice shoreline, it is important to extend this successful partnership. The 10-year cycle is necessary to counteract shoreline erosion caused by natural tidal flow and exacerbated by the documented impacts from the Venice Inlet. Renourishing the beach is critical to protect the safety and welfare of this Florida coastal community. Renourishment is important for storm protection, marine turtle nesting, and as a tourism and economic driver. The City of Venice appreciates the funding that has been received through a partnership with ACOE, enhanced funding based on storm impact analysis and looks forward to the next scheduled renourishment event in 2026.

FY 27 Request: The City of Venice supports the continued allocation of Federal funds for shoreline renourishment, funding to restore storm impacts, and working together to extend this successful partnership agreement.

Seaboard District Redevelopment – Streetscape Project

The City recently completed and adopted a Master Plan for the Seaboard District which provides the conceptual redevelopment plans and design for this area. The design will include economic development for an existing industrial district, including the addition of several new mixed uses including a marina, residential, commercial, and retail use.



The project will also incorporate extensive streetscape improvements, including landscaping, street parking, pedestrian improvements, stormwater and utility infrastructure upgrades.

FY 27 Request: The City respectfully requests funding of \$5,000,000 of the Seaboard Streetscape project cost.

Affordable Housing

Area businesses including critical service providers like the local hospital and public safety agencies have conveyed to the City that they have difficulty in hiring and retaining employees due to a lack of affordable housing. Additionally, local land and construction costs preclude developers from creating residential units at affordable prices for low- and moderate-income workers.

In data presented at a Sarasota County Affordable Housing Workshop in October, area rental units with lower rents from \$500 to \$999 per month have decreased by 59% since 2019, while units with higher rents from \$2,000 to \$2,499 per month have increased by 396% in the same timeframe, through 2023. Data from 2023 also shows that cost-burdened households in the county spend more than 30% of their income on housing costs, and severely cost-burdened households spend more than 50% of their income on housing. It should be possible for working families and our more vulnerable citizens to afford housing and still have enough money for basic expenses like groceries and gas.

The City supports the Venice Housing Authority with a potential partnership to utilize the current Venice Fire Station 52 property on Grove Street for expanded affordable housing, as the station moves to a new facility on East Venice Avenue.

FY 27 Request: The City respectfully requests Federal program initiatives, tax incentives and supplemental appropriations to facilitate the creation of workforce housing geared to providing residential opportunities for low- and middle-income residents.

Water Quality – Red Tide Research

The presence of *Karina Brevis*, commonly known as red tide, in local waters creates a significant public health risk and imparts a devastating blow to the area's economy. The continued prevalence of the algae impacting area beaches, shoreline activity local tourism, and public health generally, is a vivid indication that continued research is needed to more precisely identify causes and develop counter measures to prevent the proliferation of the algae in populated areas.

FY 27 Request: The City of Venice supports Federal initiatives to further the research and testing of methods to predict, counteract and control the unhealthy presence of red tide.