



Meeting Date: March 5, 2026

Agenda Item: 6A-3

Report to Essential Services Advisory Board

Topic: Review and Recommendation of Capital Budget Priorities for FY 26/27.

Summary: Public Works Department Capital Projects and Equipment Preliminary Request for FY 26/27.

Suggested motion: Approval of each budget item the Board would like to recommend to the Town Council for consideration in the fiscal year 2026/2027 budget.

Requested by: Mr. Dunlap, Interim Public Works Director

Approved by: Mr. Disher, Town Manager



MEMORANDUM

Public Works Department

The Town of Ponce Inlet staff shall be professional, caring and fair in delivering community excellence while ensuring Ponce Inlet citizens obtain the greatest value for their tax dollar.

To: Essential Services Advisory Board
 From: Steve Dunlap, Acting Public Works Director
 Date: February 18, 2026
 Subject: Public Works Capital Projects and Equipment Preliminary Requests for FY 26/27

MEETING DATE: March 5, 2026

1. Boat Ramp Repairs - \$70,000 (General Fund)

The department is requesting funds for piling repairs at the Ponce Inlet Boat Ramp. A recent comprehensive inspection, conducted both above and below the waterline, revealed substantial deterioration of multiple support pilings on the east and west piers due to marine borer activity.

Several pilings have been rated in “serious” or “critical” condition, requiring structural reinforcement, while additional pilings require protective treatment to prevent further degradation. The proposed work will restore structural integrity, extend the service of life of the facility, and ensure continued safe use of the boat ramp for mooring and pedestrian access.

Timely completion of these repairs is essential to maintain public safety, protect Town infrastructure, and prevent more extensive and costly repairs in the future.

2. Stormwater Improvements - \$75,000 (General Fund)

Staff is requesting approval to complete critical stormwater system improvements at the Boat Ramp and along Cindy Lane. The project will include the replacement of deteriorated storm pipe and two stormwater basins at the Boat Ramp, as well as storm pipe and basin replacement on Cindy Lane where significant structural deterioration has been identified in all components. According to a recent assessment of all stormwater basins, these were the most critical for needing replacement.

These improvements are necessary to restore proper drainage function, prevent roadway damage and localized flooding, and address ongoing infrastructure degradation before failures occur. Proactively replacing these stormwater components will enhance system reliability, protect surrounding properties and roadways, and support the long-term integrity of the Town’s stormwater management system.

3. Radio Read Equipment - \$60,000 (Water Renewal and Replacement Fund)

The Department is requesting approval to purchase and install radio-read equipment on water meters along S. Atlantic Avenue. Implementing radio-read technology will allow for remote data collection, significantly streamlining the billing process, improving reading accuracy, and ensuring more consistent and timely usage data. Currently, staff manually collects meter readings each month using handheld wands, which is time-intensive, labor-intensive, and subject to potential human error. This upgrade will include the installation of radio read port couplers on approximately 100 single meter boxes and 60 double meter boxes, serving all properties along S. Atlantic Avenue.

In addition to operational efficiencies, this upgrade will substantially enhance employee safety. S. Atlantic Avenue is a heavily traveled corridor and requires technicians to perform manual wand readings along this roadway, which presents avoidable traffic hazards. Remote reading capability will reduce the need for staff to work roadside, minimizing exposure to vehicular traffic and improving overall workplace safety.

Investing in radio read equipment modernizes our utility infrastructure, enhances service delivery to residents, and represents a proactive step toward improving efficiency, accuracy, and safety within the Town's water system. This upgrade will also bring our metering operations in line with current industry standards and best practices for utility management, ensuring the Town maintains a reliable, technologically current, and professionally operated water system.

4. Public Works Vehicles - \$87,000 (Split 50% with General Fund and Water Fund)

Under the previous Public Works crew model, staff were grouped by function and transported together in shared vehicles. However, due to current staffing levels, the Department has returned to a north-side and south-side crew structure. This operational shift requires crew members to work more independently and have access to individual vehicles in order to respond efficiently to daily assignments and service calls. Compounding the need for additional fleet capacity, one vehicle was previously transferred to the Fire Department, reducing the number of available trucks.

To address these operational needs while maintaining fiscal responsibility, staff proposes a "fleet right-sizing strategy," involving the purchase of two new trucks. First, we recommend acquiring one new Ford Maverick Hybrid to serve in the Public Works Director's administrative and light-duty role. This vehicle provides sufficient capability—up to 1,500 pounds of payload capacity and 2,000 pounds of standard towing capacity—for site inspections, tool transport, and occasional trailer use, while offering reduced fuel consumption and lower total cost of ownership compared to a full-size truck. The Director's current F-150 would then be reassigned to the crew to restore fleet capacity. Second, the aging 2016 F-250 would be replaced with a new 2025 F-250 XL to ensure continued reliability and safety for heavy-duty daily operations.

This approach preserves necessary heavy-duty capability, restores appropriate fleet availability under the current crew model, improves operational flexibility and responsiveness, and reduces long-term ownership costs where feasible.

5. Public Works Facility Renovations - \$75,000 (Land Acquisition Fund)

The Public Works Department is requesting to renovate the existing Public Works facility to better meet the needs of our growing staff and daily operations. Currently, we do not have adequate locker space for all employees, and the existing break room table cannot accommodate the full team. With additional staff positions coming on board this year and next, these space limitations will become even more challenging.

The proposed renovations will create sufficient locker space for all employees, expand and reconfigure the break room and kitchen area to accommodate current and future staffing levels, and provide normal-sized offices for administrative staff. The plan also includes workstations and training space for field personnel to complete required certifications, safety trainings, and administrative tasks in a functional and professional environment.

These improvements will enhance workplace safety, organization, efficiency, and morale while ensuring the Department is properly equipped to support continued growth and maintain high service standards for the Town.

This item was first proposed to the ESAB for the FY 24/25 budget, then combined with the revised proposal for Building B in the FY 25/26 budget. With the Town Council’s recent direction to return to the simplified Building B design as primarily a storage facility, this request for locker rooms is to be budgeted and constructed separately.

6. Roof Replacement - \$65,000 – Public Works Roof (General Fund), \$55,000 – Community Center Roof (Community Center Fund via transfer from General Fund)

The department recently had a professional inspection of the roofs of all Town-owned buildings. This inspection included not only the roof surface but also the underlying panels and framing. The roofs of these two buildings were in the worst condition, with a remaining life expectancy of 1-3 years.

A. The department is requesting approval to replace the roof at the Public Works Building with a new metal roofing system at an estimated cost of \$65,000. The existing roof has reached the end of its useful service life and has experienced ongoing wear from prolonged exposure to harsh coastal weather conditions, including high winds, heavy rains, and salt air. Continued deterioration increases the risk of leaks, water intrusion, and potential damage to equipment, materials, and interior building components housed within the facility.

The Public Works Building serves as an essential operational hub for the Town’s infrastructure maintenance and emergency response activities. Given the building’s critical function, proactive replacement is recommended to ensure continuity of operations, protect Town assets, and prevent more costly structural or interior repairs in the future.

Installation of a metal roofing system will provide enhanced durability, improved wind resistance, and extended service life compared to traditional roofing materials. This investment supports long-term cost efficiency, reduced maintenance needs, and improved resilience of Town facilities.

B. The department is requesting to replace the roof at the Community Center. The existing roof has undergone prior repairs and is currently experiencing minor granular loss on both the hip, ridge, and field shingles. Based on professional assessment findings, the roof has an estimated remaining life expectancy of approximately one to three years.

The roof schematic report identifies approximately 9,241 square feet of roof area with multiple hips and valleys which increases vulnerability to weather exposure over time. Given the building's role as a primary public facility, proactive replacement is recommended to prevent water intrusion, interior damage, and higher long-term repair costs.

7. Street Paving - \$160,000 (Gas Tax Fund)

The department is requesting street resurfacing of some of the five worst-rated streets identified in the Town's professional roadway assessment: Daggett Circle (Rating 83), Daggett Cove (83), Sun Dunes Circle (82), Candlewood Lane (north and south) (80). The intersection at Beach Street and South Atlantic Avenue along with in front of 4355 S. Peninsula will be repaved.

The roadways have been identified as having the most severe surface deterioration, including cracking, base settlement, and patching issues. Resurfacing these priority streets will address structural deficiencies, improve drivability and safety, extend pavement life, and prevent further degradation that could result in more costly full-depth reconstruction in the future.

It should be noted that there are roads in worse condition that will be repaved as part of the Town's septic-to-sewer project. The roads listed above are not part of that project and must be repaved separately. This work allows the Town to proactively maintain infrastructure, protect its roadway assets, and improve overall conditions for residents.

Thank you for your continued support of the Public Works Department.