

Neighborhood Benefits

News about your MSBU/TU

Neighbors and Charlotte County Government partnering for a better community.

MSBUS IN YOUR COMMUNITY



Line & Grade - South Access Rd.



Boom Mowing



Pipe Replacement - Bryson Rd.



Line & Grade



Street Paving



Pipe Replacement

NEIGHBORHOOD IN MOTION

ENGLEWOOD EAST STREET & DRAINAGE

Municipal Service Benefit Units (MSBU) and Municipal Service Taxing Units (MSTU) were created to provide specific services to different areas of the County. Advisory committees for each MSBU/TU and Charlotte County Government work together to provide these services.

The Englewood East advisory committee began in May 1984 as a homeowners' association. The Englewood East Street & Drainage MSBU was created March 19, 1985. Due to the request of many residents in the area, a formal committee was appointed by the Charlotte County Board of County Commissioners in 1995. There are five general members and one alternate member. There are approximately 190 miles of roads in this MSBU, and the primary concern of this committee for the last 20 years has been keeping these roads and drainage areas properly maintained.

In this MSBU plan there are 13 phases of paving. The first four phases of paving are scheduled for completion in 2006. Phases five through eight are scheduled for completion in

2007. The anticipated project completion date for phases nine through 13 is 2008. Drainage issues will also be addressed during the road paving phases and road crossing pipes will be replaced where needed. The total cost for the 2006 budget year is \$10.3 million. The total cost for all 13 phases of this project is estimated at \$24 million.

Also included in the annual budget for this MSBU are culvert cleaning, peppertree cutting, road and sidewalk maintenance, herbicide, swale maintenance, sign maintenance as well as trash pick up as a result of illegal dumping.

The current chairman of this committee is Granville Pennypacker. This committee meets on a quarterly basis at 10 a.m. at the Gardens of Gulf Cove Community Center. All residents in this MSBU are encouraged to attend. If you want to know what is happening at your committee meetings, you can request a copy of the minutes by calling Public Works at 941-575-3611.

MSBU/TU's Questions & Answers



WHAT ARE MUNICIPAL SERVICE BENEFIT UNITS (MSBU) AND MUNICIPAL SERVICES TAXING UNITS?

MSBUs and MSTUs are units within the County, created by ordinance, through which specific services are provided. These services include road maintenance and improvements, sign maintenance, drainage, as well as waterway dredging.

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A MSBU AND MSTU?

Services performed in an MSBU come from non-ad valorem (No-value) assessments. Services performed by an MSTU are produced by ad-valorem (value-taxes).

WHAT IS A NON-AD VALOREM ASSESSMENT?

These are assessments on your tax bill determined by a local government and certified to the tax collector for collection. Assessments may include, but are not limited to, garbage collection, storm water, road paving and community improvement projects.

WHAT IS AN AD VALOREM TAX?

An ad valorem tax is based upon the assessed value of property. The term property tax may be used interchangeably with the term ad valorem tax.

DO METHODS VARY FROM ONE UNIT TO ANOTHER WHEN CALCULATING ASSESSMENTS/TAXES?

Yes. They can be calculated by front footage, lots, acreage or value. The method used for each unit is defined in the ordinance levying the assessment or tax.

I HAVE NEVER HEARD OF A MSBU/TU. HOW ARE THESE SERVICES FUNDED IN OTHER STATES?

In most other states and counties these services are part of the normal annual property tax rate and are not identified as a separate tax.

CAN THE MONEY I PAY BE SPENT IN OTHER AREAS OF THE COUNTY?

No. All monies collected within a specific MSBU must be spent within that MSBU. Monies cannot be transferred or spent in a different area within the county, although it is possible for two MSBUs to jointly fund a project where both receive a benefit.

WHAT DEPARTMENT MANAGES THE MSBUs AND MSTUs?

Waterway, Stormwater, and Street & Drainage MSBU/MSTUs are managed by the Public Works Department.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF MSBU/TUs?

Street & Drainage is responsible for all aspects of road and drainage maintenance. This includes paving, street signs, grading, pipes, catch basins and right-of-way mowing in front of vacant lots. This may also include community signs, and median beautification. Waterway is responsible for channel markers, dredging, vegetation control and mangrove trimming. Stormwater maintains all major stormwater control devices.



WHY WERE MSBU/TUs INITIATED?

In the early 1980s General Development Corporation platted thousands of lots and then went bankrupt. This left the County responsible for maintaining all of the roads. The road conditions varied greatly. Some areas were in much better condition than others. Each area was put into their own MSBU based on the condition of that area's road. This system evenly distributed cost among developed and undeveloped property owners.

WHAT IS THE BENEFIT OF AN MSBU OR MSTU?

The costs for services, within a specific area, are fairly assessed on each property within the benefit unit. Benefits are calculated for the entire unit.



HOW ARE MSBUs AND MSTUs MANAGED?

MSBUs and MSTUs are managed by Public Works, along with input from Advisory Committees to deliver quality services to the citizens of Charlotte County.

HOW DO I BECOME A MEMBER OF AN ADVISORY COMMITTEE?

Volunteers are always appreciated. If you or someone you know is interested in becoming a member of an Advisory Committee, contact Public Works at (941) 575-3600.

WHEN ARE MEETINGS HELD?

Committee meetings are generally held every quarter and more often if needed during special projects.

HOW DO I FIND OUT ABOUT MEETING DATES AND TIMES?

To view meeting dates and times go to our website at www.CharlotteCountyFL.com or call (941) 575-3600

MSBU/TU TERMS

Ad Valorem Tax - a tax based upon the assessed value of property. The term property tax may be used interchangeably with the term ad valorem tax.

Assessed value of property - an annual determination of the just or fair market value of an item or property or the value of the homestead property.

Levy - the imposition of a tax, stated in terms of millage, against all appropriately located property by a governmental body authorized by law to impose ad valorem taxes.

Millage Rate - applies to a single levy of taxes or to the cumulative of all levies. A mill translates into a \$1 per \$1,000 of taxable property.

Municipal Services Benefit Unit (MSBU) - Revenue is derived by non-ad valorem assessments. The cost of the annual work program is divided by the total number of assessment units (ERUs) within the MSBU resulting in an assessment per ERU. A single residential lot is often defined as 1 ERU.

Municipal Services Taxing Unit (MSTU) - Revenue is derived by ad valorem taxes. The millage rate is determined by allocating the cost of the services among the taxable value of all property within the unit.

Non-Ad Valorem Assessments - assessments on your tax bill determined by a local government and certified to the tax collector for collection. These assessments may include, but are not limited to, garbage collection, stormwater, road paving, waterways and community improvement district assessments.

Taxing Authority - entities that have been given the authority to levy taxes on real estate and tangible personal property to fund operations and services. The Florida Constitution directly authorizes counties, school districts and municipalities to levy ad valorem taxes. It also provides that special districts may be created and authorized by law to levy ad valorem taxes.

Tax Notice - the tax bill sent to taxpayers for payment of any taxes or special assessments.



Alligator Creek

Chairman Describes Challenges of Dredging Creek

Alligator Creek, a primary tributary of Charlotte Harbor, is located in southwest Punta Gorda. At one time it was the primary water supply for Punta Gorda. Today the waterway is used by recreational boaters and commercial fisherman who sell their catch at local marinas. Professional fishing guides bring tourists and citizens to this waterway when the harbor is too rough for fishing.



**Dr. David Phelen,
Chairman of the Alligator
Creek Waterway
Advisory Board**

Fishermen as well as boaters have problems navigating these waters. Dredging permits usually allow dredging to a depth of 5 feet mean low tide. During the months of mid-December through mid-March, the tide levels are lowest. The result is that boaters, especially when shoaling occurs, often experience depths of only two feet or less in the main channel, especially during low tide periods. This means boats requiring a depth of greater than two feet are prevented from using the waterway during these times.



It is a challenge to keep Alligator Creek at a navigable depth. Funding for dredging, day markers and maintenance of this tributary has been provided for many years through an MSTU created on Dec. 8, 1987. The Charlotte County Board of County Commissioners amended this ordinance to change the method of collection from an MSTU to an MSBU on Jan. 24, 2006. This method of assessment is equal for all property owners within the unit.



MEETING DATES

To view meeting dates and times
go to our website at
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FOR MORE INFORMATION, WATCH
YOUR MONEY, YOUR COUNTY: WHAT ARE MSBU/TUs?
Premiering in May on CCTV20

Neighborhood Benefits is distributed by the Charlotte County Board of County Commissioners.



- Tom D'Aprile, District 1
- Adam Cummings, District 2
- Tom Moore, District 3
- Matthew DeBoer, District 4
- Sara Devos, District 5

If you have any questions or comments, we would love to hear from you. You can contact the Communications & Marketing Department at communications@charlottecountyfl.com or call 941-623-1092.