



New Hanover reaches 100 conference wins

SPORTS, 1B

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Water Street in downtown Wilmington saw flooding during Tropical Storm Debby in August. MADISON LIPE/STARNEWS

City officials address often flooded roadways

Molly Wilhelm
Wilmington StarNews | USA TODAY NETWORK

During heavy rainfall, several roadways within Wilmington's city limits are prone to flooding. But just how serious is the problem?

Dave Mayes, the city's public works director and former stormwater services manager, offered insight into the Port City's drainage systems. With more than 17 years of experience on city staff, Mayes discussed a few problem spots and solutions underway to address them.

Residents with stormwater drainage and pollution concerns can contact the city through its web-page.

Which city-maintained streets are prone to flooding?

The city identified several key projects to tackle ongoing flooding concerns along Wilmington roadways.

One of the areas at the top of the city's list is a neighborhood located off Greenville Loop Road. Approximately eight years ago, the first half of a drainage project was completed between Patricia Drive and Dogwood Lane, Mayes said.

"We replaced large culverts under Patricia Drive, Clearbrook Drive, Shuney (Street), Brittain

"Floodplains are going to be floodplains no matter how much drainage infrastructure you put in the ground. The intent is that ... we replace the culvert under Dogwood Lane, under Plover Court, and then work our way all the way up (to) Verbenia (Drive).

Dave Mayes
Wilmington public works director and former stormwater services manager

(Drive) and then a handful of driveways for residents along Dogwood Lane," Mayes said. The city also acquired several "repetitive loss" properties -- homes with a history of multiple flood insurance claims -- and transformed them into small wetlands.

The city gained "permanent long-term maintenance access" for systems in the area, a necessity for ongoing upkeep and flood prevention efforts. Moving into phase two of the project off Greenville Loop Road, the city is looking to expand its legal access to maintain nearby drainage systems.

"The intent is that ... we replace the culvert under Dogwood Lane, under Plover Court, and then work our way all the way up (to) Verbenia (Drive)," Mayes said.

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SKYLINE CENTER UPGRADES

Council allocates millions

Molly Wilhelm
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USA TODAY NETWORK

In mid-July 2023, the city acquired nearly 12.5 acres of property for \$68 million, gradually consolidating office space for numerous departments. Future plans for the building include an upfit to transform its interior, meeting the city's needs and preferences.

That same year, the city hired LS3P Architecture PLLC for design, bid, and construction management services, according to the city's Skyline Center Upfits Project history timeline. In March 2024, the city contracted Monteith Construction for design consulting, cost efficiency evaluation, and cost estimating services for the center's upfits project.

At the Wilmington City Council meeting on Oct. 1, several million dollars were allocated for the construction phase of the proposed upfits, with some councilmembers expressing support while others voiced disapproval.

How much funding was allocated to the upfits project?

The Wilmington City Council agreed to appropriate \$6.3 million to the Skyline Center project. The funding will cover the cost of construction and design under current contracts

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Skyline Center in downtown Wilmington. OWEN HASSELL/STARNEWS



A woman walks along a flooded street in the aftermath of Hurricane Milton in Osprey, Fla. The hurricane made landfall as a Category 3 hurricane in the Siesta Key area. SEAN RAYFORD/GETTY IMAGES

Milton leaves trail of destruction in Florida

John Bacon, Trevor Hughes and Thao Nguyen
USA TODAY

TAMPA, Fla. — Hurricane Milton howled across the Florida Peninsula on Thursday, tearing a path of destruction from the Gulf of Mexico to the Atlantic as it knocked out power to millions, flooded neighborhoods, destroyed homes, tore the roof off a major sports venue and toppled a massive crane into an office building.

At least two deaths were reported — at a retirement community following a suspected tornado in Fort Pierce on the

state's east coast, St. Lucie County Sheriff Keith Pearson told local TV stations. More than 3.3 million homes and businesses were dark by early Thursday, according to USA TODAY power outage data.

"The storm was significant, but thankfully this was not the worst case scenario," Gov. Ron DeSantis said at a briefing Thursday. "The storm did weaken before landfall and the storm surge as initially reported has not been as significant overall as what was observed for Hurricane Helene.

"Our state is a peninsula in the middle of a tropical environment. I mean,

we are just built to be able to respond to hurricanes," DeSantis said. "We'll survey the damage and get people on their feet. We'll get through this."

Meteorologist Tyler Fleming confirmed to USA TODAY that Tampa Bay apparently was spared a massive storm surge. Instead, a reverse storm surge took place that drove water away from the shoreline. But state Division of Emergency Management, in a post on social media, warned residents not to walk out into receding water because "the water WILL return through storm

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