

# **Sugarfoot Oaks/Cedar Ridge Preservation and Enhancement District Performance Review**

Prepared for:  
**The Florida Legislature's  
Office of Program Policy Analysis  
and Government Accountability  
(OPPAGA)**

August 4, 2025



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# Executive Summary

Section [189.0695\(3\)\(c\)](#), *Florida Statutes*, requires the Florida Legislature’s Office of Program Policy Analysis and Governmental Accountability (“OPPAGA”) to conduct performance reviews of the 21 neighborhood improvement districts located throughout the state. OPPAGA engaged Mauldin & Jenkins (“M&J”) to perform the reviews. For each district, M&J identified relevant background information, including the governance structure and the purpose for which each district was created. Through fieldwork and analysis of available documentation, M&J reached findings related to each district’s programs and activities, resource management, and performance management, as well as recommendations for remedying adverse findings.

The Sugarfoot Oaks/Cedar Ridge Preservation and Enhancement District (“District”) is a dependent special district of Alachua County (“County”), located just west of the City of Gainesville. Through multiple interviews with the County staff who administer the District’s programs and activities, observations gained through attendance at a Neighborhood Community Council meeting, and a review of District-provided and publicly available documentation, M&J reached the following overall findings for the District:

- The Alachua County Board of County Commissioners created the Sugarfoot Oaks/Cedar Ridge Preservation and Enhancement District on October 23, 2001, for the purpose of enhancing the safety and quality of life of the residents of the Sugarfoot Oaks, Cedar Ridge, and Sugarlane subdivisions.
- The District is governed by a Neighborhood Community Council comprised of District residents. The Neighborhood Community Council meets bimonthly to conduct business.
- The District conducts programs and activities related to infrastructure improvement, community beautification and landscaping, and public safety. The services are primarily facilitated and administered by Alachua County governmental departments.
- The District generates its annual revenues through a monthly special assessment on properties in the District’s service area. The District approved an increase in the monthly assessment amount from \$5 to \$10 halfway through the review period (October 1, 2021, through April 30, 2025).
- A full-time staff member within the Alachua County Department of Community Support Services administers the District as part of their regular duties. The District and the County do not have any staff members solely dedicated to District responsibilities.
- The Neighborhood Community Council annually reviews the District’s Neighborhood Enhancement Plan, which outlines its operational objectives and strategies.

# I. Background

Pursuant to s. [189.0695\(3\)\(c\)](#), *Florida Statutes*, the Florida Legislature’s Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability engaged Mauldin & Jenkins (“M&J”) to conduct performance reviews of the State’s 21 neighborhood improvement districts. This report details the results of M&J’s performance review of the Sugarfoot Oaks/Cedar Ridge Preservation and Enhancement District (“SOCRPED” or “District”), a dependent district of Alachua County (“County”). The review period examined District activities from October 1, 2021, through April 30, 2025.

## I.A: District Description

### Purpose

Chapter [163, Part IV](#) of the *Florida Statutes* establishes the framework for neighborhood improvement districts (also known as safe neighborhood improvement districts) within the State of Florida. The chapter defines the processes for the creation, governance, and dissolution of districts; the roles and responsibilities of district boards and advisory councils; the oversight authority of local governing bodies; and the intended purpose of these districts. The District’s statutory purpose, per s. [163.502](#), *Florida Statutes*, is “to guide and accomplish the coordinated, balanced, and harmonious development of safe neighborhoods; to promote the health, safety, and general welfare of these areas and their inhabitants, visitors, property owners, and workers; to establish, maintain, and preserve property values and preserve and foster the development of attractive neighborhood and business environments; to prevent overcrowding and congestion; to improve or redirect automobile traffic and provide pedestrian safety; to reduce crime rates and the opportunities for the commission of crime; and to provide improvements in neighborhoods so they are defensible against crime.”

County Ordinance No. [01-24](#) established the District (as discussed in section I.B: Creation and Governance of this report) “in order to more fully promote, protect, and improve the health, safety, and welfare of the Sugarfoot Oaks/Cedar Ridge neighborhoods for the residents, visitors, and property owners.”

The District’s Neighborhood Preservation Plan states that the District’s purpose is “to preserve and enhance the quality of life for the residents of the Sugarfoot Oaks/Cedar Ridge Preservation and Enhancement District.”

### Service Area

The District is located in Alachua County and encompasses approximately 73 acres. The District comprises three non-contiguous subdivisions: Sugarfoot Oaks, Cedar Ridge, and Sugarlane. Figure 1 is a map of the District’s service area.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> According to the Florida Department of Commerce’s special district profile for SOCRPED, the District’s registered address is 218 Southeast 24th Street, Gainesville, Florida 32641.



Figure 1: SOCRPED Service Area



Source: Alachua County Property Appraiser's Office, Alachua County Department of Community Support Services

## District Characteristics

The District is primarily residential, comprising 44 single-family residences; 182 multi-family residences with fewer than 10 units; three multi-family residences with ten or more units; a private school; and four County-owned properties, which include a County Health Department facility, a public playground, a community center operated by a local not-for-profit organization, and a drainage right-of-way. The service area also encompasses several common areas owned by private property management companies operating within the District.

## I.B: Creation and Governance

Alachua County created the Sugarfoot Oaks/Cedar Ridge Preservation and Enhancement District on October 23, 2001, through County Ordinance No. [01-24](#). The District was organized as a neighborhood preservation and enhancement district under s. [163.524, Florida Statutes](#). The County amended Ordinance No. [01-24](#) through County Ordinance No. [03-02](#) (February 11, 2023). Ordinance No. [01-24](#) is codified as ss. [71.02.01](#) through [71.02.09, Alachua County Code](#).

County Ordinance No. [01-24](#) establishes a Neighborhood Community Council (“Council”) as the governing body of the District, comprised of five Council Members, who must be residents of the District. Council Members nominate and elect new members to the Council to fill vacancies. There were five vacancies during the review period (October 1, 2021, through April 30, 2025): Seat 2 was vacant in June 2023 and subsequently vacated in February 2025, Seat 3 was vacant from August 2022 through May 2023, and Seats 4 and 5 were vacant from the start of the review period through July 2022. The Council periodically throughout the review period appointed an Alternate Member who serves in place of an absent Council Member and who has the rights and responsibilities of the absent Council Member. As of April 30, 2025, four Council Member positions and the Alternate Member position were filled. Figure 2 shows the terms of the District’s Council Members during the review period.<sup>2</sup>

Figure 2: SOCRPED Community Council Terms

Seat	FY22				FY23				FY24				FY25			
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3 <sup>3</sup>	
1	Chuck Clark															
2	Miriam Gonzalez								Sadie McBroom				St.M. <sup>4</sup>			
3	T.M.			S.B.				Janice Clark								
4				Barbara Hanley												
5				Barbara Sacks												
Alternate							Sa.M.						Sadie McBroom			

Key: St.M.is Stacy McCullers; T.M. is Thomas McIntosh; S.B. is Sharon Bradley; and Sa.M. is Sadie McBroom.

Each fiscal year (“FY”) starts on October 1 and ends on September 30.

Source: District-provided statements (written and verbal), District Community Council meeting minutes

<sup>2</sup> The seat numbers in Figure 2 were assigned by M&J in alphabetical order of the Council Member’s last name for purposes of the report. The Council does not organize itself by seat numbers or groupings.

<sup>3</sup> FY25 Q3 through April 30, 2025

<sup>4</sup> Council Member McCullers never took her seat on the Council and was removed by the other members in the second quarter of FY25.

In addition to the Council, the Alachua County Board of County Commissioners approves the District's annual budget, special assessment, and any contracts procured on the District's behalf by Alachua County Budget and Fiscal Services.

## I.C: Programs and Activities

The following is a list of programs and activities conducted by the District during the review period (October 1, 2021, through April 30, 2025), along with a brief description of each program or activity. The District's programs and activities are further described in section II.A: Service Delivery of this report.

- **Infrastructure Improvements** – The District advocates for and funds roadway and sidewalk improvements and maintenance.
- **Community Beautification and Landscaping** – The District coordinates and funds regular lawn care and landscaping efforts, as well as addresses code violations, to maintain the aesthetic features of the neighborhood.
- **Public Safety** – The District collaborates with the Alachua County Sheriff's Office on efforts to decrease the likelihood of crime in the community.

## I.D: Intergovernmental Interactions

The following is a summary of federal agencies, State agencies, and/or public entities that the District interacted with during the review period (October 1, 2021, through April 30, 2025).

### *Alachua County Board of County Commissioners*

SOCRPED is a dependent special district of Alachua County, meeting the definition of a dependent district established by s. [189.012](#), *Florida Statutes*. The Alachua County Board of County Commissioners ("BCC") approves the District's annual budget, special assessment, and any contracts procured on the District's behalf by Alachua County Budget and Fiscal Services. SOCRPED is also a component unit of Alachua County, as determined by generally accepted accounting principles, meaning the District submits the annual budget and special assessment adopted by the Neighborhood Community Council ("Council") to the County's Office of Management and Budget, which incorporates the District's budget into the County's overall annual budget.<sup>5</sup>

The District coordinates with various offices under the jurisdiction of the BCC, both for programming and for regular operations of the District. The BCC employs a full-time staff member in the Department of Community Support Services who serves as a liaison to the District as part of the position's responsibilities. Prior to August 2023, the liaison role was assigned to the Housing Program Manager. Since August 2023, the liaison role is assigned to the Community Stabilization Program Manager. Supported by the full Department of Community Support Services, the liaison administers the District's programs and activities, facilitates communication between the Council and Alachua County offices, and assists the Council with meeting logistics and minute-taking. Other Department of Community Support Services staff attend Council meetings as necessary.

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<sup>5</sup> A component unit, per generally accepted accounting principles, is a legally separate entity (such as a special district) for which a local governing authority is financially responsible. Because the Alachua County Board of County Commissioners has influence over SOCRPED's finances, the District is considered a component unit of the County for accounting purposes.



The Alachua County Code Administration attends the Council meetings to report statistics related to code violations within the service area, as well as to address compliance and mitigation efforts. As many of the code violations noted relate to trash cans, household garbage, yard waste, and recycling issues, the Department of Solid Waste and Resource Recovery frequently attends Council meetings and coordinates mitigation efforts to address code violations and solid waste-related concerns with Code Administration and Council Members.

The Alachua County Department of Public Works, Department of Parks and Open Space, and Department of Environmental Protection attend Council meetings as needed and coordinate with the District on various projects and activities, including infrastructure improvements, beautification efforts, and general cleanup programs within the District's service area. The County Arborist and County Horticulturalist advise the District, as requested, on plantings and landscaping along the District's rights-of-way and around neighborhood signage.

A representative of the County Attorney's office regularly attends Council meetings and advises the District on issues, such as elections, protocols and procedures, document submission, vendor contracts, and Florida Department of State registration.

#### *Alachua County Sheriff's Office*

The District collaborates with the Alachua County Sheriff's Office ("ACSO") on matters related to District security and crime prevention efforts. ACSO deputies whose patrol zones include the District attend Council meetings to report on crime statistics and crime prevention initiatives. Deputies attend community events to establish a presence in the neighborhood and provide residents with safety-related information. Prior to May 2024, the District hosted security cameras rented from Cox Business on six properties, which provided for the safety and welfare of community members. The camera feeds were used by ACSO to address crime incidents and unfavorable traffic patterns. The District considered transferring the Cox Business account for the security cameras to ACSO, but the Council ultimately decided to transfer the account to a private property management company that operates in the service area, and encouraged the property management company to work with ACSO on future operation of the security cameras.

#### *Southwest Advocacy Group*

The Southwest Advocacy Group ("SWAG") is a not-for-profit organization founded in 2010 to advocate for community services in southwest Gainesville. SWAG works with over 40 governmental and non-governmental entities to improve the health and economic well-being of residents within the District. SWAG coordinated with the County to build a Family Resource Center, playground, and locate an Alachua County Department of Health clinic in the neighborhood. The District's Council meets at SWAG's Family Resource Center, the Chair of the SOCRPED Council serves on the SWAG Board of Directors, and the Chair of the SWAG Board of Directors often attends SOCRPED Council meetings. During an interview with M&J, County staff stated that SOCRPED and SWAG work collectively to provide integrated services to residents, with SOCRPED focused on the safety and aesthetics of the service area, and SWAG responsible for the health and personal well-being of residents.



## I.E: Resources for Fiscal Year 2023-2024

Table 1 quantifies and describes the District’s resources for Fiscal Year 2023-2024 (October 1, 2023, through September 30, 2024, herein referred to as “FY24”). The table includes both the resources owned or rented by the District and the resources provided to the District as in-kind contributions.

*Table 1: SOCRPED Resources for FY24*

Resource Item	FY24 Amount
<b>Special Assessment</b>	\$10.00 per property per month
<b>Revenues</b>	\$96,760
<b>Expenditures</b>	\$37,926
<b>Long-term Debt</b>	\$0
<b>Staff</b>	1 staff liaison employed by the Alachua County Department of Community Support Services
<b>Vehicles</b>	None
<b>Equipment</b>	6 security cameras
<b>Facilities</b>	Meetings were held at the SWAG Family Resource Center

*Source: District revenue and expenditure reports, District-provided statements*

## II. Findings

The Findings section summarizes the analyses performed and the associated conclusions derived from M&J's analysis of the District's operations. The analysis and findings are divided into the following three subject categories:

- Service Delivery
- Resource Management
- Performance Management

### II.A: Service Delivery

#### Overview of Services

The following subsection identifies the programs and activities that the District conducted during the review period (October 1, 2021, through April 30, 2025).

#### *Infrastructure Improvements*

During the first two fiscal years of the review period (FY22 and FY23), the District funded the installation of sidewalks by the Alachua County Department of Public Works along frequently traversed roadways within SOCRPED's service area in order to enhance pedestrian safety and limit the opportunities for pedestrian-motorist accidents. The District analyzed traffic patterns and incident reports, and solicited feedback from residents and community organizations (such as the Southwest Advocacy Group ["SWAG"]), in order to determine the roadways in the service area most in need of new sidewalks or sidewalk replacements. The remaining sidewalk installations identified by the District require expenditure amounts of capital outlay funds that exceed the District's annual revenues and current fund balance. As a result, the District did not fund sidewalk installations each year of the review period – instead opting to build multi-year reserves in order that are intended for future sidewalk installations and maintenance.

In addition to sidewalks, the District works with the Alachua County Department of Public Works to maintain the concrete medians and curbs located in and along County rights-of-way located in the District's service area. The District also submits requests to fill potholes that have formed on streets within the service area.

#### *Community Beautification and Landscaping*

The District collaborates with the County and private entities to maintain the aesthetic appeal of the County-owned rights-of-way within the service area. During the review period, the District used private vendors to install new neighborhood signage, maintain existing signage, conduct biweekly lawn care along rights-of-way, and plant flowers and other vegetation at the entrances to the three subdivisions within the service area. The District coordinates with various Alachua County departments (e.g., Public Works, Parks and Open Space, Environmental Protection, Solid Waste and Resource Recovery) to conduct regular trash collections on the County-owned rights-of-way and properties. The County Arborist and County Horticulturalist provide recommendations to the District on the best vegetation to plant and maintain within the service area, and the various departments provide in-kind services, such as the delivery of plants ordered and paid for by the District (with the installation of the plants conducted by the District's lawn service vendor).

The District’s Neighborhood Community Council (“Council”) Members frequently conduct walk-throughs or drive-throughs of the service area to identify properties within the neighborhood that do not adhere to property maintenance codes and standards. County Ordinance No. [01-24](#) establishes a series of minimum standards that restate or supplement the provisions of the *Alachua County Code* governing standards for:

- Vehicles
- Waste collection
- Property maintenance
- Noise
- Animals
- Nuisances
- Firearms<sup>6</sup>
- Property owner’s addresses

Council Members address noted code violations with the Alachua County Code Administration, either during Council meetings or in individual communications. Council meetings include discussions of frequently occurring violations and the discussion and implementation of initiatives to address common violations, in partnership with County departments. Code-related focuses of the District during the review period included proper storage of garbage cans, upkeep on the exterior appearance of District properties, and removal of vehicles improperly parked on District roadways. The District does not fund lawncare and beautification services for privately owned properties. Still, it provides education to residents on the landscaping and structural upkeep regulations included in the *Alachua County Code*, and community resources available to residents to help redress and mitigate code violations. In 2024, the Alachua County Code Administration began issuing notices of violations requiring property owners to appear in court for the possible assessment of fines, further encouraging compliance with the District’s minimum standards. The first set of court dates for code violations identified and issued as part of the initiative occurred in April 2025.

The District budgeted for a lighting study in both FY24 and FY25 to review the location and effectiveness of the streetlights located throughout the service area. The study is intended to determine if the streetlights provide adequate visibility to help ensure pedestrian and motorist safety, and enhance crime prevention efforts. Employees from County departments stated in the March 2025 Council meeting attended by M&J that tree limbs and other vegetation overhangs may impact the effectiveness of the streetlights and indicated that the appropriate County departments would review and remove tree limbs and vegetation overhangs as necessary. As of the end of the review period (April 30, 2025), the District had not started procuring a vendor for the study.

### *Public Safety*

The District coordinates with the Alachua County Sheriff’s Office (“ACSO”) on security initiatives and crime prevention efforts in the service area. In addition to conducting standard patrols of the District’s service area, ACSO deputies attend community events to interact with District residents and provide education on crime prevention methods and ACSO resources.

Prior to the start of the review period, the District installed six security cameras rented from Cox Business on various properties within the service area, along with the associated boxes, servers, and

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<sup>6</sup> County Ordinance No. 11-08 (September 27, 2011) repealed the minimum standards for firearms in all relevant sections of *Alachua County Code*. Ordinance No. 11-08 is not available online, but its effects are noted in the [Code Comparative Table – Ordinances](#) appended to the *Alachua County Code*.

equipment. The District coordinated with ACSO to identify locations for the security cameras that provided the highest level of visibility of the service area. ACSO used the security cameras to monitor suspicious activity and assist with investigations into crimes committed. In 2024, the District Council determined that the costs for maintenance and utilities for the security cameras, as well as the challenges related to locating servers in the attics of District properties, outweighed the benefits provided by the security cameras. As a result, the District executed an agreement in May 2024 with one of the private property management companies that owns properties in the District, transferring ownership of the Cox Business account that provided the security cameras and dedicated internet service to the property management company.

### Analysis of Service Delivery

The services and activities conducted by the District align with the District's statutory purpose and authorities, as identified in ss. [163.502](#) and [163.514](#), *Florida Statutes*, as well as the purpose established by County Ordinance No. [01-24](#).

The District strategically divides service delivery between private contracts (e.g., sign installation and upkeep, lawn maintenance, security cameras) and public contracts (e.g., sidewalk installation, maintenance of rights-of-way). The County provides administrative support, manages procurement and accounts payable, and coordinates among County offices involved in the District's service area. This reliance on County staff for administration allows the District to maintain low overhead costs and allocate most of its funding to direct service delivery.

While the Council briefly considered establishing an advisory council, meeting minutes indicate the decision was to maintain a single governing body. The Council determined that an advisory council would offer limited benefit and exceed the time available to the District's liaison for administrative tasks. M&J supports this decision, noting that a separate advisory council could create inefficiencies in a governance structure that already meets every other month and relies on various County functions. The District could consider forming temporary *ad hoc* committees as needed to research and advise on specific opportunities and programs, although M&J did not identify any current need for such committees.

### Comparison to Similar Services/Potential Consolidations

The District provides services to residents as part of a collaborative effort to improve security and personal welfare for the residents of the three subdivisions served by the District. The use of County resources creates an intentional overlap in the services provided by County departments to the entirety of unincorporated Alachua County, and the services provided by and on behalf of the District. The focus on neighborhood-specific services and use of an independent funding source allow the District to coordinate with the County government to deliver service levels that exceed those possible through County departments and general funding alone.



The District has an almost identical mission statement to the non-for-profit SWAG, which was founded with the aim to use County resources to improve the quality of life of residents of southwest Gainesville. SWAG operates a Family Resource Center, an Alachua County Health Department-affiliated clinic, the CHILD Center for Early Learning, and various programs intended to improve residents' quality of life within the District's boundaries. While the missions of SOCRPED and SWAG are similar, the focus of programs and services differs. SOCRPED aims to improve the lives of residents through public safety efforts and beautification and infrastructure projects – essentially the “outside” aspects of the service area (as described by District Council Members). SWAG aims to improve the lives of residents via family, health, and educational resources – essentially the “inside” aspects of the service area. The two entities maintain differing funding sources, and while efforts are often collaborative, the District maintains certain authorities and powers as a government entity that are not available to SWAG.

The District is not located in the service area of a Community Redevelopment Agency, or similar special district focused on development; the subdivisions within the District have not formed homeowners' associations, as many of the properties are owned by private property management firms that govern their specific properties; and the local chamber of commerce – Greater Gainesville Chamber – delivers programs related to economic development and commercial activities, rather than residential.

### Analysis of Community Council Meetings

Table 2 shows the number of times the District's Community Council meets each year of the review period.

*Table 2: SOCRPED Governing Body Meetings*

Fiscal Year	Number of Community Council Meetings
<b>2022</b>	4
<b>2023</b>	6
<b>2024</b>	6
<b>2025<sup>7</sup></b>	3

*Source: Neighborhood Community Council meeting minutes*

Section [189.015](#), *Florida Statutes*, requires that meetings of the District's governing bodies be noticed prior to the meeting and open to the public. This section has been amended twice during the review period, and M&J reviewed for compliance with the governing statute in effect at the time of each meeting date and applicable notice period.

The District provides notice of the Council's public meetings through the County's standard public notice procedure, as well as through the monthly calendar of events at the SWAG's Family Resource Center. As the County's public notice procedure is outside the scope of this performance review, M&J cannot provide an opinion on whether the requirements of s. [189.015](#), *Florida Statutes*, were met for meetings noticed and held during the review period.

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<sup>7</sup> FY25 through April 30, 2025

**Recommendation:** The District should consider reviewing its process for providing notice of Community Council meetings to ensure that the notices comply with s. [189.015](#) and ch. [50](#), *Florida Statutes*. The District should further ensure that it retains records that document its compliance with the applicable statutes.

## II.B: Resource Management

### Program Staffing

The District does not directly employ staff. The District is administered by a staff member of the Alachua County Department of Community Support Services, who serves as a District liaison in addition to other duties and responsibilities. Prior to August 2023, the liaison role was assigned to the Housing Program Manager. Since August 2023, the liaison role has been performed by the Community Stabilization Program Manager. The District does not contribute to the compensation of the position serving as District liaison.

The District also receives occasional support from employees of other Alachua County departments for the delivery of services and the conduct of financial functions.

The District does not use contract staff or volunteers other than the Neighborhood Community Council (“Council”) Members.

### Equipment and Facilities

The District does not own or rent vehicles or major equipment. The County staff assigned to support District operations have access to County-owned vehicles to conduct District business when needed.

The District does not own or rent any facilities. The County staff assigned to support District operations work out of offices located within the John Henry Thomas, M.D. Center – a government facility owned by the Alachua County Board of County Commissioners (“BCC”). Council meetings were held at three locations during the review period (October 1, 2021, through April 30, 2025): the Southwest Advocacy Group (“SWAG”) Family Resource Center, the Tower Road Branch Library (part of the Alachua County Library District), and a Community Service Office conference room (owned by the Alachua BCC”).

Prior to May 2024, the District rented six security cameras and associated equipment from Cox Business. The District paid for utilities related to the security cameras (e.g., internet), as well as for maintenance and upkeep of the security cameras. In May 2024, the District transferred ownership of the Cox Business account to a private property management company that owns various properties within the District.

## Current and Historic Revenues and Expenditures

The District generates revenues from one source: collection of a non-ad valorem special assessment from District property owners, as authorized by s. [163.514](#), *Florida Statutes*, and County Ordinance No. [01-24](#). The special assessment was \$5 per property per month for FY22 and FY23. The District's Council, and subsequently the Alachua County BCC, approved an increase to the special assessment for FY24 and FY25 to \$10 per property per month. The District also receives interest on its financial reserves and excess fees from the Alachua County Tax Collector's office. Table 3 illustrates the categorized annual revenues generated by SOCRPED during the review period.

Table 3: SOCRPED Annual Revenues

Revenue Source	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25 <sup>8</sup>
Interest	\$149	\$734	\$755	\$0
Special Assessment	\$48,151	\$48,671	\$95,962	\$96,979
Tax Collector Excess Fees	\$56	\$24	\$43	\$0
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$48,356</b>	<b>\$49,430</b>	<b>\$96,760</b>	<b>\$96,979</b>

Source: District-provided financial statements

The District expends funds on its three services (Infrastructure improvements, community beautification and landscaping, and public safety), as well as on operational costs related to providing those services. Based on a review of the District's documentation, M&J has categorized the District's expenditures as follows:

- **Beautification** – Lawncare and landscaping contract, sign installation and maintenance
- **Infrastructure Improvements** – Installation and maintenance of sidewalks
- **Insurance** – Indemnity insurance policy
- **Operational Costs** – Administrative costs, supplies, postage, legal advertising, dues and registrations, other operating expenses
- **Public Safety** – Security camera rental, utilities (internet), monitoring fees

Most expenditure categories fluctuated based on service provision each year. The District only expended funds on sidewalk installations in FY22 and FY23, so infrastructure improvements dropped to \$0 in FY24. The replacement of neighborhood entrance signs resulted in moderately elevated beautification costs in FY23 and FY24. Public safety costs dropped to \$0 after the District transferred the Cox Business contract to a private property management company. Prior to FY25, the public safety costs increased at a steady rate based on year-over-year contract increases. The District began paying for indemnity insurance for the Council in FY24, resulting in a new expenditure category. Operational costs fluctuated based on the annual need to distribute information to residents, such as for notification of vacant Council seats. Table 4 and Figure 3 illustrate the categorized funds expended by the District during the review period.

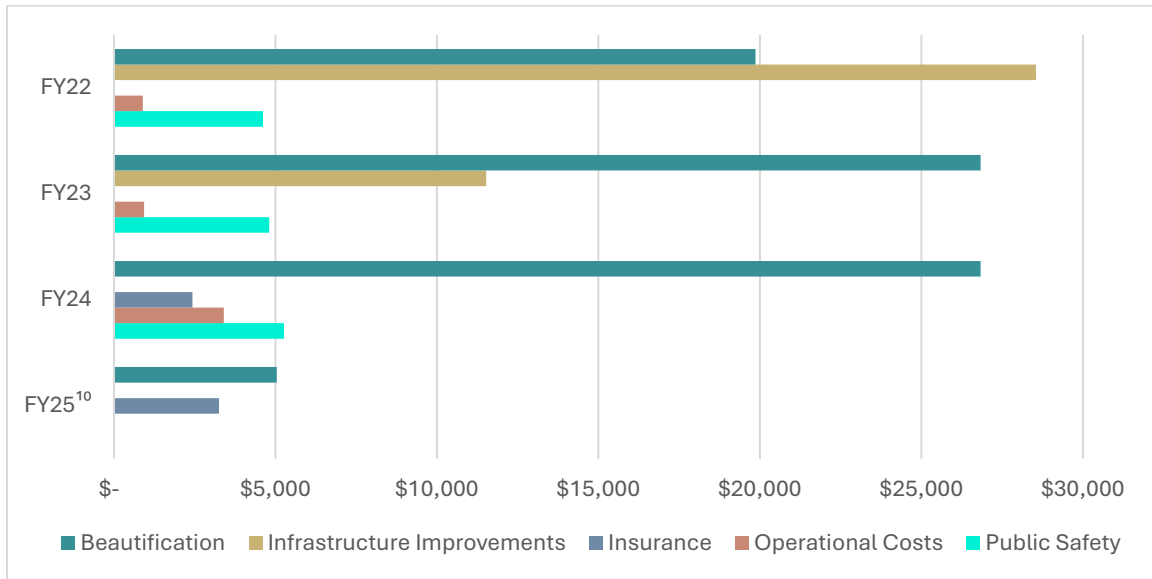
<sup>8</sup> FY25 through January 31, 2025

Table 4: SOCRPED Annual Expenditures

Expenditure Category	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25 <sup>9</sup>
Beautification	\$19,865	\$26,835	\$26,835	\$5,040
Infrastructure Improvements	\$28,546	\$11,527	\$0	\$0
Insurance	\$0	\$0	\$2,431	\$3,250
Operational Costs	\$894	\$932	\$3,399	\$0
Public Safety	\$4,612	\$4,807	\$5,261	\$0
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$53,917</b>	<b>\$44,101</b>	<b>\$37,926</b>	<b>\$8,290</b>

Source: District-provided financial statements

Figure 3: SOCRPED Annual Expenditures



Source: District-provided financial statements

As part of annual expenditures, the District pays for a single contracted service on an annual basis: indemnity insurance. Table 5 illustrates the annual costs of SOCRPED's contracted services. Table 5 does not include costs directly related to the conduct of programs and activities, including landscaping and infrastructure improvements.

Table 5: SOCRPED Contracted Services

Contracted Service	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25 <sup>11</sup>
Insurance	\$0	\$0	\$2,431	\$3,250

Source: District-provided financial statements

Based on financial statements provided by the County, the District's fund balance as of January 31, 2025, was \$292,394. The District does not hold any long-term debt.

<sup>9</sup> FY25 through January 31, 2025

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

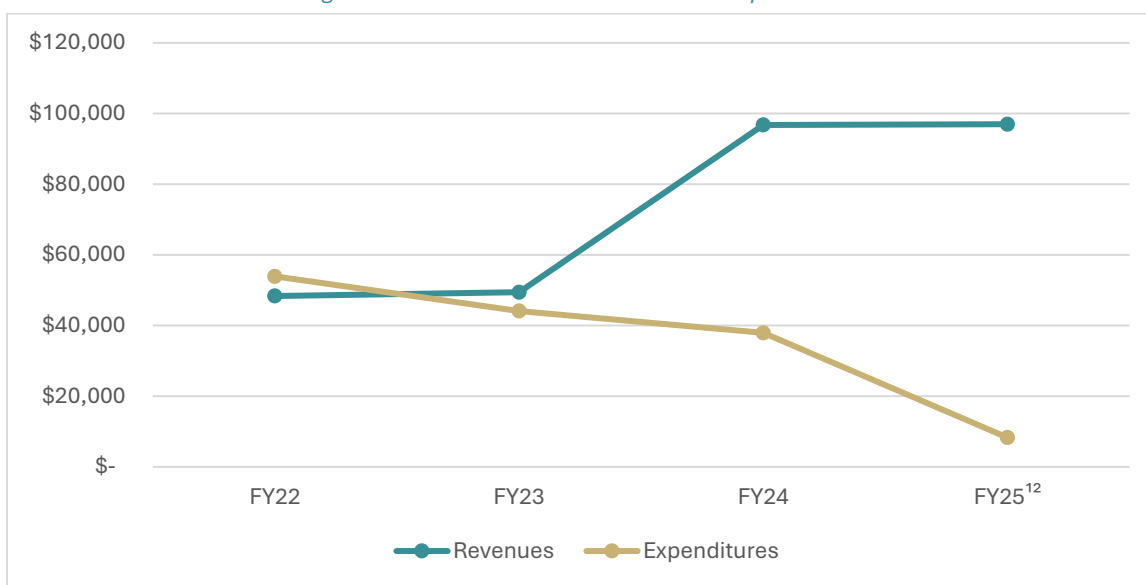


## Trends and Sustainability

The District had consistent revenue generation each year of the review period through a monthly special assessment, with the Council approving an increase from \$5 to \$10 per month per property starting in FY24.

As illustrated in Figure 4, the District's expenditures exceeded revenues for one year of the review period. District budget documents show that the District expected to use reserve funds, in addition to revenues collected, in order to fully fund sidewalk installations in FY22. As the District's revenues exceeded expenditures in FY23 and FY24, and because the District recognized the need to increase the special assessment amount to address rising costs and budgeted for the use of reserve funds in support a high-cost single-year expenditure, M&J does not have a recommendation related to the District's trends in revenue generation and fund expenditure.

Figure 4: SOCRPED Annual Revenues vs. Expenditures



Source: District-provided financial statements

Based on the District's revenue and expenditure trends over the review period, and the regular adherence to the annual budget, the District's programs and activities will remain sustainable in the future.

## II.C: Performance Management

### Strategic and Other Future Plans

Per the requirements of s. 163.524, *Florida Statutes*, the District developed a Neighborhood Enhancement Plan ("Plan") to serve as its strategic plan. The Plan builds on the District's purpose statement to develop objectives and strategies, as well as present an annual budget based on the programs and activities proposed to address the stated objectives. Additional sections present a legal description of the District and its boundaries, population information, land use zoning within the service area, and minimum standards for property maintenance within the service area. The District provided minor updates to the Plan each of the first three years of the review period (October 1, 2021, through April 30, 2025).

<sup>12</sup> FY25 through January 31, 2025

## Goals and Objectives

The Plan presents three objectives for the District:

1. **Partnership** – To actively engage landlords, property managers, tenants, and local businesses in a collaborative effort to improve the quality of life for residents and the overall community.
2. **Appearance** – To create an aesthetically pleasing appearance by establishing minimum standards in regard to the physical environment, buildings, law maintenance, and grounds.
3. **Crime** – To reduce crime and to become a safer community where all citizens thrive.

The Plan additionally presents strategies, categorized by overarching theme or responsible party:

- Community Improvement
  - Provide and install cameras at strategic locations throughout the District
  - Work with landlords and tenants to implement strategies for beautification
  - Minimum standards for property maintenance, building codes, and community aesthetics shall comply with Ordinance [01-24](#)
  - Continue to provide and install new sidewalks
  - Lease lighting for Cedar Ridge
  - Purchase landscaping materials and supervise planting
  - Bi-weekly lawn services
  - Work with landlords and tenants to education regarding solid waste and refuse
  - Provide and install new signs at entrances
- Community Council
  - Provide leadership for the District
  - Organize and hold quarterly meetings
  - Develop and implement programs to eliminate blighting influences
  - Continue collaboration with government and community agencies
- Administration
  - Assist in the development of the quest for proposal and selection of vendor
  - Implement and monitor contract services
  - Reconcile all invoices

The FY23 version of the Plan introduced an additional strategy for community involvement:

- Install fencing in Sugarfoot Oaks and Cedar Ridge

The FY24 version of the Plan introduced another additional strategy for community involvement:

- Provide and install new 8 plus 1 mailboxes for Housing Authority

The FY24 version of the Plan also refined the strategy for sidewalk installation:

- Provide and install connective sidewalks on Southwest 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue, connecting Southwest 67<sup>th</sup> Terrance and Southwest 70<sup>th</sup> Terrace.

The FY23 and FY24 versions of the Plan removed the strategy to provide and install new signs at entrances.

## Performance Measures and Standards

In a written statement, the District stated that it does not have performance measures and standards. M&J presents a recommendation related to this finding in the following subsection.

### Analysis of Goals, Objectives, and Performance Measures and Standards

The District's Plan provides direction for the District's activities and programs, and allows the District to develop strategies to implement the Plan. While the District uses the terminology "objectives" and "strategies," the objectives function more as high-level goals for the District's activities, and the strategies function as a combination of specific objectives and specific tasks to be achieved. Some of the strategies (e.g., provide leadership for the District) are higher level and are not measurable, while other strategies are clear, measurable, and address the District's statutory purpose (e.g., provide and install cameras in strategic locations, work with landlords and tenants to educate them regarding solid waste and refuse, install connective sidewalk on Southwest 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue connecting Southwest 67<sup>th</sup> Terrace and Southwest 70<sup>th</sup> Terrace). However, many of the measurable strategies are limited to one-time events and tasks, rather than present ongoing objectives that the District can use year over year.

The District does not identify and track measures and standards that evaluate the District's performance, which limits SOCRPED's ability to make performance-data-driven decisions on programs and activities. The standards outlined in County Ordinance No. [01-24](#) are recitations of the County's codes on property maintenance, building codes, and community aesthetics, and serves as expectations for residents rather than standards for measuring District performance.

**Recommendation:** The District should consider developing and then adopting a set of objectives that build on the District's purpose and goals, as defined in the Neighborhood Enhancement Plan. The objectives should contemplate measurable progress, capturing the results of the District's efforts and ensuring a consistent direction forward for the District's future prioritization of programs and activities.

**Recommendation:** The District should consider identifying performance measures and standards as part of the development and refinement of goals and objectives to enable the District to better assess its overall effectiveness in meeting its intended purpose. The District should then track the identified performance measures against established standards and use the collected data to monitor the District's performance, evaluate progress toward the goals and objectives that the District adopts, and support future improvements to the District's service delivery methods.

## Annual Financial Reports and Audits

The County is required per s. [218.32](#), *Florida Statutes*, to submit an Annual Financial Report to the Florida Department of Financial Services within nine months of the end of the County's fiscal year (September 30). As a component unit of Alachua County, as defined by generally accepted accounting principles, SOCRPED is included in the County's Annual Financial Report.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> A component unit, per generally accepted accounting principles, is a legally separate entity (such as a special district) for which a local governing authority is financially responsible. Because the Alachua County Board of County Commissioners has influence over SOCRPED's finances, the District is considered a component unit of the County for accounting purposes.

According to the Florida Department of Financial Services' online database, the County submitted the FY22, FY23, and FY24 Annual Financial Reports, with the District's information included, within the compliance timeframe. The County has until June 30, 2026, to submit the FY25 Annual Financial Report, with the District's information included.

The County is required per s. [218.39](#), *Florida Statutes*, to engage an independent certified public accountant to conduct an annual financial audit and submit the audit report to the Florida Department of Financial Services and the Florida Auditor General within nine months of the end of the County's fiscal year. As a component unit of Alachua County, SOCRPED is included in the County's annual financial audit.

According to the Florida Department of Financial Services' online database, the County submitted the FY22, FY23, and FY24 audit reports, with the District's information included, within the compliance timeframe. The County has until June 30, 2026, to submit the FY25 audit report, with the District's information included.

The County's FY22, FY23, and FY24 audit reports did not include any findings relevant to the financial positioning or operations of the District.

### Performance Reviews and District Performance Feedback

In a written statement, the District stated that it has not been part of a performance review during the review period (October 1, 2021, through April 30, 2025).

In the March 2025 Neighborhood Community Council ("Council") meeting attended by M&J, Council Members referenced a survey of the District's residents conducted prior to the review period. The Council conducts annual ranking of priorities based on Council Members feedback and any verbal feedback from residents, both at Council meetings and on an *ad hoc* basis. The District does not have a system for ongoing collection and review of feedback.

**Recommendation:** The District should consider implementing a system for the ongoing collection of feedback from residents and other stakeholders, and creating a process to systematically review feedback. The District should consider using the findings from the review of feedback to refine the District's service delivery methods.

### Website Compliance and Information Accessibility

Sections [189.069](#) and [189.0694](#), *Florida Statutes*, establish website maintenance and minimum content requirements for special districts. M&J reviewed the District's webpage on the County's website for compliance with these sections. While the webpage provides some of the required information, the District can improve its compliance with statutory requirements by including additional information, including the District's annual budget and any amendments to it; goals and objectives for each program and activity undertaken by the District; and performance measures and standards to determine if the District's goals and objectives are being achieved.

**Recommendation:** The District should consider coordinating with the County to enhance the District's webpage on the County's website by including the information required for special district web presence by ss. [189.069](#) and [189.0694](#), *Florida Statutes*.



### III. Recommendations

Table 6 presents M&J’s recommendations based on the analyses and conclusions identified in chapter II. Findings of this report, along with considerations for each recommendation.

*Table 6: Recommendations*

Recommendation Text	Associated Considerations
The District should consider reviewing its process for providing notice of Community Council meetings to ensure that the notices comply with s. <a href="#">189.015</a> and ch. <a href="#">50</a> , <i>Florida Statutes</i> . The District should further ensure that it retains records that document its compliance with the applicable statutes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential Benefits: By routinely reviewing the process of providing public notice of Community Council meetings, the District can improve transparency and provide more opportunities for public engagement.</li> <li>• Potential Adverse Consequences: None</li> <li>• Costs: The District may incur costs if it chooses to publish notices in a newspaper or on a news agency’s website.</li> <li>• Statutory Considerations: The District should ensure it is following the procedure established by the version of ch. <a href="#">50</a>, <i>Florida Statutes</i>, in effect at the time of the meeting notice publication.</li> </ul>
The District should consider developing and then adopting a set of objectives that build on the District’s purpose and goals, as defined in the Neighborhood Enhancement Plan. The objectives should contemplate measurable progress, capturing the results of the District’s efforts and ensuring a consistent direction forward for the District’s future prioritization of programs and activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential Benefits: By adopting objectives that contemplate measurable progress and are not restricted to one-time events and tasks, the District can better develop specific actions to take to address the community’s needs, as described in the Neighborhood Enhancement Plan.</li> <li>• Potential Adverse Consequences: None</li> <li>• Costs: The District could incur costs if a third party is used in the development of the goals and objectives.</li> <li>• Statutory Considerations: The District should ensure that the identified goals and objectives align with the District’s statutory purpose and authorities described in ss. <a href="#">163.502</a> and <a href="#">163.514</a>, <i>Florida Statutes</i>, as well as the purpose and authorities established by County Ordinance No. <a href="#">01-24</a>.</li> </ul>

Recommendation Text	Associated Considerations
<p>The District should consider identifying performance measures and standards as part of the development and refinement of goals and objectives to enable the District to better assess its overall effectiveness in meeting its intended purpose. The District should then track the identified performance measures against established standards and use the collected data to monitor the District's performance, evaluate progress toward the goals and objectives that the District adopts, and support future improvements to the District's service delivery methods.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential Benefits: By establishing performance measures and standards, the District can measure program successes and assist in creating more education decisions regarding future programming. Performance measures and standards can also help improve the transparency of District operations.</li> <li>• Potential Adverse Consequences: None</li> <li>• Costs: The District could incur time and financial costs related to data gathering or systems necessary for monitoring the District's performance.</li> <li>• Statutory Considerations: Performance measures and standards should be developed in alignment with the District's statutory purpose and authorities described in ss. <a href="#">163.502</a> and <a href="#">163.514</a>, <i>Florida Statutes</i>, as well as the purpose and authorities established by County Ordinance No. <a href="#">01-24</a>.</li> </ul>
<p>The District should consider implementing a system for the ongoing collection of feedback from residents and other stakeholders, and creating a process to systematically review feedback. The District should consider using the findings from the review of feedback to refine the District's service delivery methods.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential Benefits: By implementing a system to collect feedback from residents and other stakeholders, the District will establish for itself an additional source of information to use in evaluating the performance of the District's services and activities and may help the District to identify and/or evaluate potential improvements to service delivery methods.</li> <li>• Potential Adverse Consequences: None</li> <li>• Costs: The District could incur costs related to data collection and storage fees.</li> <li>• Statutory Considerations: None</li> </ul>
<p>The District should consider coordinating with the County to enhance the District's webpage on the County's website by including the information required for special district web presence by ss. <a href="#">189.069</a> and <a href="#">189.0694</a>, <i>Florida Statutes</i>.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential Benefits: By including all statutorily required information on and regularly reviewing the information on the District's webpage, the District can improve its transparency and public access to information.</li> <li>• Potential Adverse Consequences: None</li> <li>• Costs: The District may incur costs if it contracts a webmaster or similar service.</li> <li>• Statutory Considerations: The District should ensure that its webpage meets the content requirements in ss. <a href="#">189.069</a> and <a href="#">189.0694</a>, <i>Florida Statutes</i>.</li> </ul>

## IV. District Response

Each neighborhood improvement district under review by M&J and its local governing authority were provided the opportunity to submit a response letter for inclusion in the final published report. The response letter received is provided on the following pages.

# ***Sugarfoot Oaks/Cedar Ridge Preservation and Enhancement Special District***

Chauncey “Chuck” Clark, District Chair

## **Sugarfoot Oaks/Cedar Ridge Preservation and Enhancement District**

### **Performance Review Management Response**

#### **Recommendation #1:**

The District should consider reviewing its process for providing notice of Community Council meetings to ensure that the notices comply with s. 189.015 and ch. 50, Florida Statutes. The District should further ensure that it retains records that document its compliance with the applicable statutes.

#### **Management Response #1:**

To ensure the District continues to provide notice of community council meetings to comply with state statute 189.015 and chapter 50, the County host various strategies in which to notify the public of the District’s meetings, as listed below:

- District meetings are listed on the County’s sponsored District’s webpage which includes each meeting day, time, and location:  
<https://alachuacounty.us/Depts/CSS/SpecialDistrict/Pages/Home.aspx>
- The County posts monthly meetings on the County’s event calendars which highlights monthly meetings for the entire calendar year: <https://alachuacounty.us/events/Pages/default.aspx>
- The County will coordinate with the SWAG Resource Center to notice the meetings within the community calendars and within the center’s information board
- Public hearings will be posted on the County’s online legal notice platform

The County will keep accurate records of retention to remain in compliance in accordance to applicable statutes.



**Recommendation #2:**

The District should consider developing and then adopting a set of objectives that build on the District's purpose and goals, as defined in the Neighborhood Enhancement Plan. The objectives should contemplate measurable progress, capturing the results of the District's efforts and ensuring a consistent direction forward for the District's future prioritization of programs and activities.

**Management Response #2:**

The District will adopt a more formal process in which goals and objectives are reviewed annually. This process will include performance measures to track community progress and help prioritize programs and activities.

**Recommendation #3:**

The District should consider identifying performance measures and standards as part of the development and refinement of goals and objectives to enable the District to better assess its overall effectiveness in meeting its intended purpose. The District should then track the identified performance measures against established standards and use the collected data to monitor the District's performance, evaluate progress toward the goals and objectives that the District adopts, and support future improvements to the District's service delivery methods.

**Management Response #3:**

The District will review and update its Neighborhood Enhancement Plan; to identify performance measures and standards in accordance with the statutory powers of neighborhood improvement districts and in accordance to the District's current goals; develop and implement community surveys to collect data to monitor the District's performance and evaluate progress toward the goals and objectives of the District; collaborate with the SWAG Resource Center and community health department to discuss community concerns and issues related to areas within the District's boundaries.

**Recommendation 4:**

The District should consider implementing a system for the ongoing collection of feedback from residents and other stakeholders, and creating a process to systematically review feedback. The District should consider using the findings from the review of feedback to refine the District's service delivery methods.

**Management Response #4:**

The District will illicit feedback and review surveys from community residents and review reports/assessments from community partners such as Alachua County Sheriff's Office, Alachua County Code Administration, Alachua County Solid Waste, Alachua County Community Support Services, Alachua

County Public Works, and housing property managers on the District's statutorily required goals and objectives to include promoting the health, safety and general welfare, community beautification, establish, maintain, and preserve property values, preserving improving or redirecting automobile traffic, and providing pedestrian safety, and aid to reducing crime and increasing public safety. The District will review the feedback from community partners and the community to develop action plans to address community concerns and maintain a positive presence within the community.

**Recommendation 5:**

The District should consider coordinating with the County to enhance the District's webpage on the County's website by including the information required for special district web presence by ss. 189.069 and 189.0694, Florida Statutes.

**Management Response #5:**

The District will coordinate with the County's Communications Office on methods to increase visibility to the District's webpage in accordance with state statutes 189.069 and 189.0694