



MEMORANDUM

Date: January 5, 2026
To: Honorable Board of County Commissioners
From: Hector Flores, County Administrator
Subject: Organizational Structure Changes

The purpose of this memorandum is to outline and provide justification for several recommended organizational changes intended to strengthen leadership and departmental structures to better align with the County's operational priorities and organizational culture and also positions the County to more effectively meet both current and future service demands.

The changes will be included as an item for your confirmation on our January 13, 2026, BCC Regular Meeting agenda, with an effective date of January 14, 2026.

Appointment of Public Safety Director / Fire Chief

I intend to appoint Matthew McElroy as Public Safety Director and Fire Chief, removing the interim designation. Since assuming the interim role, Chief McElroy has demonstrated consistent leadership, operational stability, and strategic vision across Fire & EMS and Public Safety functions. Formalizing this appointment will provide continuity of leadership, reinforce accountability, and support long-term planning within one of the County's most critical service areas.

Establishment of Emergency Management as an Independent Department

I recommend establishing Emergency Management as an independent department, and I intend to appoint Patrick Fuller as Emergency Management Director. Emergency Management has grown in scope and complexity, particularly in light of increased storm activity, disaster recovery demands, and intergovernmental coordination requirements. Elevating Emergency Management

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will enhance organizational focus, improve preparedness and response capabilities, and ensure dedicated leadership attention to mitigation, response, recovery, and resilience efforts.

Realignment of the Transit Division

To better align services with the populations served, I recommend moving the Transit Division to the Human Services Department from Budget & Administrative Services. Transit services are closely tied to human service delivery, particularly for transportation disadvantaged residents who rely on coordinated access to healthcare, employment, and essential services. This realignment will improve program integration, enhance service coordination, and support a more client-centered approach to transportation services.

Renaming of the Human Resources Department

Finally, I recommend officially renaming the Human Resources Department as the People Operations Department. This change more accurately reflects the County's organizational culture and modern approach to workforce management, emphasizing employee engagement, development, performance, and organizational effectiveness. The new title better aligns with the County's commitment to valuing employees as its most important asset and fostering a people-centered workplace.

Pursuant to the Charlotte County Charter, Section 2.3 Executive Branch B (1) – County Department Heads: The county department heads, with the exception of the county attorney and the director of economic development, shall be appointed by the county administrator, with the advice and consent of the board of county commissioners, and shall be responsible to the county administrator.

Administrative Code sections 2.01 Charlotte County BCC Organizational Chart and 4.00 County Administration will be updated accordingly to reflect the changes. In addition, County Code Section 2-1-36 will also be amended to reflect the changes in the Office of Emergency Management. These changes will come to the BCC for ratification at the January 27, 2026 board meeting.

I respectfully request the Board's confirmation and support of these recommendations.

Please feel free to contact me should you require additional information or discussion on any of these items.

C: Emily Lewis, Deputy County Administrator
 Claire Jubb, Assistant County Administrator

Janette Knowlton, County Attorney
Thomas David, Deputy County Attorney