

## **URGENT COMMUNITY NOTICE: Gulf Gate Golf Course at Risk — Your Voice Is Needed NOW**

Dear Gulf Gate Neighbors,

Sarasota County is currently reviewing a proposed development on the land formerly known as the **Gulf Gate Golf Course**—a property that plays a *critical* role in protecting our neighborhoods from flooding. As many of us experienced during Hurricanes Ian, Debbie, and Milton, our drainage systems are already overwhelmed. Some families are still recovering nearly a year later.

Despite ongoing conversations about countywide storm resilience—including the Resilient SRQ efforts—this particular issue has **not** been adequately addressed. Development is moving forward, and unless we act, our community may face long-term and potentially irreversible consequences.

### **Why This Land Matters**

Civil engineer **Steve Suau**, a respected expert in watershed management across Sarasota County, has identified the former Gulf Gate Golf Course as *essential* to any functional stormwater plan for our area. This property:

- Absorbs and slows stormwater before it reaches our drainage basins
- Reduces flood risks for more than **7,500 homes** in the Matheny Creek and Elligraw Bayou basins
- Protects downstream neighborhoods from flooding and drainage failures
- Provides environmentally significant greenspace that improves water quality and supports wildlife

If dense residential development is approved here, our already-strained flood system could quickly become overwhelmed—putting homes, infrastructure, and taxpayer resources at risk.

### **A Call for County Action**

Many residents believe Sarasota County must take immediate steps to **halt further development** and instead consider acquiring the property for public benefit, including the use of **eminent domain** if necessary. This is not an extreme position—it is a responsible one when public safety and environmental stability are at stake.

By securing this property, the County can:

- Build a large-scale stormwater retention and filtration system
- Protect thousands of existing homes from future flooding
- Preserve greenspace vital for water and wildlife health
- Reduce long-term taxpayer burden by preventing avoidable infrastructure failures
- Prioritize forward-thinking resilience instead of reactive crisis management

We cannot continue the cycle of “build first, fix later.” The impacts of recent storms must guide smarter decision-making for our future.

### **How YOU Can Help — Take Action Today**

The County Commissioners need to hear directly from Gulf Gate residents. Personal letters from community members make a **significant impact**, especially when time is short.

**Please email the Sarasota County Commissioners ASAP at:**

 **[commissioners@scgov.net](mailto:commissioners@scgov.net)**

Share your concerns about development on the Gulf Gate Golf Course and urge them to protect this critical watershed land for the safety and resilience of our entire community.

Your voice matters—and time is of the essence.

Thank you for standing up for the future of Gulf Gate.

— *Gulf Gate Community Association*