



# Off the beaten path at our least-visited national parks

NEAPOLITAN, 1D



# Naples Daily News

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## Fort Myers Beach pier awaits rebuild



**In the Know**  
Phil Fernandez  
Naples Daily News  
USA TODAY NETWORK - FLORIDA

Lee County officials say there is no specific timeline as they deal with damage to parks, recreation areas

While it's on the minds of government leaders, they say there is no specific timeline. Here are six questions related to the pier and parks:

County, which is sorting through the priorities of taking care of at least \$295 million in costs and damages inflicted on its government facilities on Sept. 28.

### 1. What entity is responsible for the Fort Myers Beach pier?

A lot of folks think it's the town, but it's not. It falls under the responsibility of Lee

### 2. What kind of damage did the parks have?

"Out of our 114 parks that we See FERNANDEZ, Page 4A



Lightning strikes off the Fort Myers Beach pier in July 2016. The pier was extensively damaged by Hurricane Ian. ANDREW WEST/THE NEWS-PRESS

It's been one of the popular questions by readers since Hurricane Ian slammed into Fort Myers Beach six months ago, as put succinctly by Amber Foulke:

"When are they planning to start rebuilding the pier?"



Roads leading to Vanderbilt Beach and other Collier County venues remained closed two weeks after Hurricane Ian hit. Six months later, roads are busy and cleared of debris, and beaches have reopened. PHIL FERNANDEZ/NAPLES DAILY NEWS

## Vanderbilt Beach area recovering and evolving

Heavily damaged Ritz-Carlton resort not expected to reopen until midsummer

**Laura Layden**  
Naples Daily News  
USA TODAY NETWORK - FLORIDA

Vanderbilt Beach has come a long way since Hurricane Ian, but it's still missing one of its "crown jewels." The Ritz-Carlton, Naples remains

closed. Credited with putting Naples on the map, the heavily damaged resort is still under repair and it's not expected to reopen until midsummer. The sudden storm-induced shutdown forced the Ritz, one of the county's larger employers, to lay off nearly

600 employees. Rarely has it closed. Ian hit the Vanderbilt Beach area in North Naples particularly hard, with its fierce winds and even fiercer storm surge on Sept. 28. A USGS Flood Event Viewer shows a storm surge of more

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## City OKs design changes to Naples Beach Club

Resort will have fewer condos, better views

**Laura Layden**  
Naples Daily News  
USA TODAY NETWORK - FLORIDA

Naples City Council has unanimously approved market-driven modifications to the Naples Beach Club resort development.

On Wednesday, Council greenlighted design changes to three mid-rise residential buildings planned on the waterfront, overlooking the Gulf of Mexico.

The changes will allow The Athens Group to reposition the buildings and to build fewer condos, so it can offer larger residences with better views and more outdoor living.

Council's approval of the site plan amendment came after much discussion and a meticulous focus on the finer details of the five-star development, from stormwater management and traffic to trash pickup.

With his myriad questions answered and mind eased, Vice Mayor Mike McCabe moved to approve the new design, finding that it's for the better, with less density and impact on the city.

Councilman Terry Hutchison seconded the motion, agreeing that it's a favorable improvement.

The amendment involves a 5.2-acre tract, just north of the developer's new

See BEACH CLUB, Page 6A

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