A bill to be entitled
An act relating to local government public
construction works; amending s. 255.20, F.S.;
requiring the governing board of a local government to
consider estimated costs of certain projects using
generally accepted cost-accounting principles that
account for specified costs when making a specified
determination; requiring a local government that
performs a project using its own services, employees,
and equipment to disclose the actual costs of the
project after completion to the Auditor General;
requiring the Auditor General to review such
disclosures as part of his or her routine audits of
local governments; amending s. 336.41, F.S.; requiring
estimated total construction project costs for certain
projects to include specified costs; providing an
effective date.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

Section 1. Paragraph (c) of subsection (1) of section
255.20, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:
255.20 Local bids and contracts for public construction
works; specification of state-produced lumber.—
(1) A county, municipality, special district as defined in
chapter 189, or other political subdivision of the state seeking to construct or improve a public building, structure, or other public construction works must competitively award to an appropriately licensed contractor each project that is estimated in accordance with generally accepted cost-accounting principles to cost more than $300,000. For electrical work, the local government must competitively award to an appropriately licensed contractor each project that is estimated in accordance with generally accepted cost-accounting principles to cost more than $75,000. As used in this section, the term "competitively award" means to award contracts based on the submission of sealed bids, proposals submitted in response to a request for proposal, proposals submitted in response to a request for qualifications, or proposals submitted for competitive negotiation. This subsection expressly allows contracts for construction management services, design/build contracts, continuation contracts based on unit prices, and any other contract arrangement with a private sector contractor permitted by any applicable municipal or county ordinance, by district resolution, or by state law. For purposes of this section, cost includes the cost of all labor, except inmate labor, and the cost of equipment and materials to be used in the construction of the project. Subject to the provisions of subsection (3), the county, municipality, special district, or other political subdivision may establish, by municipal or county ordinance or
special district resolution, procedures for conducting the
bidding process.

(c) The provisions of this subsection do not apply:

1. If the project is undertaken to replace, reconstruct,
or repair an existing public building, structure, or other
public construction works damaged or destroyed by a sudden
unexpected turn of events such as an act of God, riot, fire,
flood, accident, or other urgent circumstances, and such damage
or destruction creates:

   a. An immediate danger to the public health or safety;
   b. Other loss to public or private property which requires
      emergency government action; or
   c. An interruption of an essential governmental service.

2. If, after notice by publication in accordance with the
applicable ordinance or resolution, the governmental entity does
not receive any responsive bids or proposals.

3. To construction, remodeling, repair, or improvement to
a public electric or gas utility system if such work on the
public utility system is performed by personnel of the system.

4. To construction, remodeling, repair, or improvement by
a utility commission whose major contracts are to construct and
operate a public electric utility system.

5. If the project is undertaken as repair or maintenance
of an existing public facility. For the purposes of this
paragraph, the term "repair" means a corrective action to
restore an existing public facility to a safe and functional condition and the term "maintenance" means a preventive or corrective action to maintain an existing public facility in an operational state or to preserve the facility from failure or decline. Repair or maintenance includes activities that are necessarily incidental to repairing or maintaining the facility. Repair or maintenance does not include the construction of any new building, structure, or other public construction works or any substantial addition, extension, or upgrade to an existing public facility. Such additions, extensions, or upgrades shall be considered substantial if the estimated cost of the additions, extensions, or upgrades included as part of the repair or maintenance project exceeds the threshold amount in subsection (1) and exceeds 20 percent of the estimated total cost of the repair or maintenance project using generally accepted cost-accounting principles that fully account for all costs associated with performing and completing the work, including employee compensation and benefits, equipment cost and maintenance, insurance costs, and materials. An addition, extension, or upgrade shall not be considered substantial if it is undertaken pursuant to the conditions specified in subparagraph 1. Repair and maintenance projects and any related additions, extensions, or upgrades may not be divided into multiple projects for the purpose of evading the requirements of this subparagraph.
6. If the project is undertaken exclusively as part of a public educational program.

7. If the funding source of the project will be diminished or lost because the time required to competitively award the project after the funds become available exceeds the time within which the funding source must be spent.

8. If the local government competitively awarded a project to a private sector contractor and the contractor abandoned the project before completion or the local government terminated the contract.

9. If the governing board of the local government complies with all of the requirements of this subparagraph, conducts a public meeting under s. 286.011 after public notice, and finds by majority vote of the governing board that it is in the public's best interest to perform the project using its own services, employees, and equipment. The public notice must be published at least 21 days before the date of the public meeting at which the governing board takes final action. The notice must identify the project, the components and scope of the work, and the estimated cost of the project using generally accepted cost-accounting principles that fully account for all costs associated with performing and completing the work, including employee compensation and benefits, equipment cost and maintenance, insurance costs, and materials. The notice must specify that the purpose for the public meeting is to consider
whether it is in the public's best interest to perform the project using the local government's own services, employees, and equipment. Upon publication of the public notice and for 21 days thereafter, the local government shall make available for public inspection, during normal business hours and at a location specified in the public notice, a detailed itemization of each component of the estimated cost of the project and documentation explaining the methodology used to arrive at the estimated cost. At the public meeting, any qualified contractor or vendor who could have been awarded the project had the project been competitively bid shall be provided with a reasonable opportunity to present evidence to the governing board regarding the project and the accuracy of the local government's estimated cost of the project. In deciding whether it is in the public's best interest for the local government to perform a project using its own services, employees, and equipment, the governing board must consider the estimated cost of the project using generally accepted cost-accounting principles that fully account for all costs associated with performing and completing the work, including employee compensation and benefits, equipment costs and maintenance, insurance costs, and the cost of materials, and the accuracy of the estimated cost in light of any other information that may be presented at the public meeting and whether the project requires an increase in the number of government employees or an increase
in capital expenditures for public facilities, equipment, or other capital assets. The local government may further consider the impact on local economic development, the impact on small and minority business owners, the impact on state and local tax revenues, whether the private sector contractors provide health insurance and other benefits equivalent to those provided by the local government, and any other factor relevant to what is in the public's best interest. **A local government that performs a project using its own services, employees, and equipment must disclose the actual costs of the project after completion to the Auditor General. The Auditor General shall review such disclosures as part of his or her routine audits of local governments.**

10. If the governing board of the local government determines upon consideration of specific substantive criteria that it is in the best interest of the local government to award the project to an appropriately licensed private sector contractor pursuant to administrative procedures established by and expressly set forth in a charter, ordinance, or resolution of the local government adopted before July 1, 1994. The criteria and procedures must be set out in the charter, ordinance, or resolution and must be applied uniformly by the local government to avoid awarding a project in an arbitrary or capricious manner. This exception applies only if all of the following occur:
a. The governing board of the local government, after public notice, conducts a public meeting under s. 286.011 and finds by a two-thirds vote of the governing board that it is in the public's best interest to award the project according to the criteria and procedures established by charter, ordinance, or resolution. The public notice must be published at least 14 days before the date of the public meeting at which the governing board takes final action. The notice must identify the project, the estimated cost of the project, and specify that the purpose for the public meeting is to consider whether it is in the public's best interest to award the project using the criteria and procedures permitted by the preexisting charter, ordinance, or resolution.

b. The project is to be awarded by any method other than a competitive selection process, and the governing board finds evidence that:

(I) There is one appropriately licensed contractor who is uniquely qualified to undertake the project because that contractor is currently under contract to perform work that is affiliated with the project; or

(II) The time to competitively award the project will jeopardize the funding for the project, materially increase the cost of the project, or create an undue hardship on the public health, safety, or welfare.

c. The project is to be awarded by any method other than a
competitive selection process, and the published notice clearly specifies the ordinance or resolution by which the private sector contractor will be selected and the criteria to be considered.

d. The project is to be awarded by a method other than a competitive selection process, and the architect or engineer of record has provided a written recommendation that the project be awarded to the private sector contractor without competitive selection, and the consideration by, and the justification of, the government body are documented, in writing, in the project file and are presented to the governing board prior to the approval required in this paragraph.

11. To projects subject to chapter 336.

Section 2. Subsection (4) of section 336.41, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

336.41 Counties; employing labor and providing road equipment; accounting; when competitive bidding required.—

(4) All construction and reconstruction of roads and bridges, including resurfacing, full scale mineral seal coating, and major bridge and bridge system repairs, to be performed utilizing the proceeds of the 80-percent portion of the surplus of the constitutional gas tax shall be let to contract to the lowest responsible bidder by competitive bid, except for:

(a) Construction and maintenance in emergency situations;
(b) In addition to emergency work, construction and reconstruction, including resurfacing, mineral seal coating, and bridge repairs, having a total cumulative annual value not to exceed 5 percent of its 80-percent portion of the constitutional gas tax or $400,000, whichever is greater; and

(c) Construction of sidewalks, curbing, accessibility ramps, or appurtenances incidental to roads and bridges if each project is estimated in accordance with generally accepted cost-accounting principles to have total construction project costs of less than $400,000 or as adjusted by the percentage change in the Construction Cost Index from January 1, 2008, for which the county may utilize its own forces. Estimated total construction project costs shall include all costs associated with performing and completing the work, including employee compensation and benefits, equipment cost and maintenance, insurance costs, and materials. However, if, after proper advertising, no bids are received by a county for a specific project, the county may use its own forces to construct the project, notwithstanding the limitation of this subsection. Nothing in this section shall prevent the county from performing routine maintenance as authorized by law.

Section 3. This act shall take effect July 1, 2019.