



The Florida Senate

Local Funding Initiative Request

Fiscal Year 2026-2027

LFIR # 1171

1. Project Title Lakewood Ranch Medical Center – Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU)

2. Senate Sponsor Joe Gruters

3. Date of Request 11/3/2025

4. Project/Program Description

Lakewood Ranch Medical Center (LWRMC) is experiencing significant growth in obstetric deliveries, reflecting the rapid expansion of the Manatee and Sarasota County region. To meet the increasing demand for advanced neonatal services, LWRMC seeks state support to establish a Level II, 6-bed Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU).

5. State Agency to receive requested funds Department of Health

State Agency contacted? No

6. Amount of the Nonrecurring Request for Fiscal Year 2026-2027

Type of Funding	Amount
Operating	1,200,000
Fixed Capital Outlay	5,000,000
Total State Funds Requested	6,200,000

7. Total Project Cost for Fiscal Year 2026-2027 (including matching funds available for this project)

Type of Funding	Amount	Percentage
Total State Funds Requested (from question #6)	6,200,000	100%
Matching Funds		
Federal	0	0%
State (excluding the amount of this request)	0	0%
Local	0	0%
Other	0	0%
Total Project Costs for Fiscal Year 2026-2027	6,200,000	100%

8. Has this project previously received state funding? No

If yes, provide the most recent instance:

Fiscal Year (yyyy-yy)	Amount		Specific Appropriation #	Vetoed
	Recurring	Nonrecurring		

9. Is future-year funding likely to be requested? No

a. If yes, indicate nonrecurring amount per year.

b. Describe the source of funding that can be used in lieu of state funding.

Complete questions 10 and 11 for Fixed Capital Outlay Projects



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10. Status of Construction

a. What is the current phase of the project?

☐ Planning ☒ Design ☐ Construction ☐ N/A

b. Is the project "shovel ready" (i.e permitted)?

No

c. What is the estimated start date of construction?

02/01/2026

d. What is the estimated completion date of construction?

11/01/2026

e. What funding stream will be used for ongoing operations and maintenance of the project?

Lakewood Ranch Medical Center Operating Budget

11. List the owners of the facility to receive, directly or indirectly, any fixed capital outlay funding. Include the relationship between the owners of the facility and the entity.

Lakewood Ranch Medical Center

12. Details on how the requested state funds will be expended

Spending Category	Description	Amount
Administrative Costs:		
Executive Director/Project Head Salary and Benefits		0
Other Salary and Benefits		0
Expense/Equipment/Travel/Supplies/Other		0
Consultants/Contracted Services/Study		0
Operational Costs		
Salary and Benefits	Provider expense for unit care and coverage (e.g. Neonatologist, ANP)	800,000
Expense/Equipment/Travel/Supplies/Other	Provider expense for unit care and coverage (e.g. Neonatologist, ANP)	400,000
Consultants/Contracted Services/Study		0
Fixed Capital Construction/Major Renovation:		
Construction/Renovation/Land/Planning Engineering	Construction of new project; design, buildout, structure etc. to meet building requirements for a NICU.	5,000,000
Total State Funds Requested (must equal total from question #6)		6,200,000

13. Program Performance

a. What specific purpose or goal will be achieved by the funds requested?

The goal is to provide expert neonatal services to the local community and Sarasota and Manatee Counties. Establishment of a Level II, 6-bed Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) to meet the increasing demand for advanced neonatal services. The new NICU will double the number of neonatal intensive care beds in the County. The new NICU will allow families to remain intact, closer to home, by not having to seek care or be transferred outside of the area for maternal care.

b. What activities and services will be provided to meet the intended purpose of these funds?



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Lakewood Ranch Medical Center and The Women's Center will provide specialty care and services for:

- Women with high-risk pregnancies
- Intensive care services to premature babies or critical newborns
- Care for neonates requiring close monitoring and specialized support
- Specialty care for infants recovering from serious health conditions

c. What direct services will be provided to citizens by the appropriation project?

Neonatal Intensive Care Units offer and provide life-saving care for infants and premature babies. The specialized unit will provide:

- Advanced monitoring and treatment for premature and high-risk infants
- Immediate access to neonatal specialists for emergency and ongoing care
- Support for high-risk pregnancies and complex deliveries
- Family-centered care, minimizing separation between parents and infants

d. Who is the target population served by this project? How many individuals are expected to be served?

The target population are high-risk mothers and their families. This is an extremely vulnerable population in the growing community of Lakewood Ranch and the surrounding region. It is estimated the new NICU will care for approximately 120 NICU patients and their families annually for the initial 2 years and increase to over 135 each year thereafter. We project the specialty service will increase the growing number of births being delivered at Lakewood Ranch by over 500 per year.

e. What is the expected benefit or outcome of this project? What is the methodology by which this outcome will be measured?

We expect the primary and overall benefit to the community in the increase in high-risk, specialized care for the neonatal population. These benefits include, but are not limited, to:

- Improved neonatal outcomes: Timely, advanced care provided in a safe and specialized setting
- Family impact: Keeping families together, reducing travel and financial burdens
- Community health: Expanding access to critical neonatal services within a growing population center
- Regional benefit: Positioning Lakewood Ranch and surrounding counties with the infrastructure to support continued growth and healthcare needs

f. What are the suggested penalties that the contracting agency may consider in addition to its standard penalties for failing to meet deliverables or performance measures provided for in the contract?

Corrective action plan and/or financial consequences will be required for nonperformance, or failure to achieve the minimum level of performance and deliverables outlined in the contract.

14. Is this project related to mitigation, response, or recovery from a natural disaster?

a. If Yes, what phase best describes the project?

- ☐ Mitigation (reducing or eliminating potential loss of life or property)
- ☐ Response (addressing the immediate and short-term effects of a natural disaster)
- ☐ Recovery (assisting communities return to normal operations, including rebuilding damaged infrastructure)

b. Name of the natural disaster (or Executive Order # for events not under a federal declaration):

15. Has the entity applied for or received federal assistance for this project?

- ☐ Yes, Applied
- ☐ Yes, Received
- ☐ No



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☐ No, but intends to apply

a. If yes, provide the FEMA project worksheet ID#:

b. Provide the total project cost listed on the FEMA project worksheet:

16. Has the entity applied for or received state assistance for this project (other than this request)?

☐ Yes, Applied

☐ Yes, Received

☐ No

☐ No, but intends to apply

a. If yes, specify the program and state agency (ex. Local Government Emergency Bridge Loan, Department of Commerce):

17. Requester Contact Information

a. First Name Last Name

b. Organization

c. E-mail Address

d. Phone Number Ext.

18. Recipient Contact Information

a. Organization

b. Municipality and County

c. Organization Type

☒ For Profit Entity

☐ Non Profit 501(c)(3)

☐ Non Profit 501(c)(4)

☐ Local Entity

☐ University or College

☐ Other (please specify)

d. First Name Last Name



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e. E-mail Address

f. Phone Number Ext.

19. Lobbyist Contact Information

a. Name

b. Firm Name

c. E-mail Address

d. Phone Number

The information provided will be posted to the Florida Senate website for public viewing if sponsored by a Senator.