



2023 STATE LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM

FLAGLER COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS



Putting Flagler F.I.R.S.T...Making a Difference

This document represents Flagler County's legislative program for the 2023 Session. While these priorities are intended to guide the County's advocacy efforts in Tallahassee, the list is not exhaustive, and issues may arise or evolve that will require Board attention.

Flagler County is truly appreciative of the great working relationship we enjoy with our state legislative delegation and are thankful for their continued attention to the needs and interests of our residents and businesses. This year, Flagler County will continue intentionally improving our public health and safety, behavioral health, infrastructure, and community resiliency. We have collaborated with our municipal partners to provide a unified agenda to represent the needs of all Flagler County citizens and we welcome your partnership in our vision for 2023.

As such, we offer this legislative agenda for your consideration, with the full knowledge that the 2023 session will have many fiscal challenges in setting priorities while fulfilling State obligations.

Flagler County Board of County Commissioners



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Flagler County Board of County Commissioners



Left to right: Commissioner **Andy Dance**, District 1; Commissioner **Gregory Hansen**, District 2; Commissioner **David Sullivan**, District 3; Commissioner **Leann Pennington**, District 4; and Commissioner **Donald O'Brien**, District 5

VISION

To make Flagler County a vibrant and prosperous community with a focus on exceptional quality of life.

MISSION

The mission of Flagler County is to provide high-quality services through a responsive workforce committed to excellence, integrity, in collaboration with the cities and to act as a fiscally responsible steward.

County Administration

Heidi Petito, County Administrator
Jorge Salinas, Deputy County Administrator
Holly Albanese, Chief of Special Projects/ Library Director

Memberships in Legislative Alliances



Flagler County's Guiding Principles

PRIORITIES

SUPPORT funding requests for critical recovery actions as a result of Hurricane Ian and Hurricane Nicole impacts.

SUPPORT funding in areas of high priority to Include Effective Government, Economic Vitality, Growth and Infrastructure and Public Health & Safety.

FOSTER AND SUPPORT those elements of the community that contribute to an enhanced "Way of Life" that is unique to Flagler County. This includes outdoor recreation and other leisure activities, educational attainment, land, water and wildlife conservation, beach renourishment, and protection of the coastal wetlands and our farming industry.

SUPPORT economic vitality including the use of creative policies and marketing efforts to ensure Flagler County remains a world-class community for residents, visitors and businesses. These approaches will maintain the viability of employment corridors, encourage smart growth and diversify the tax base.

OPPOSE unexpected financial directives issued by legislators that can have a negative impact on local governments. Unfunded mandates often take money away from programs intended to support or improve the quality of life of our citizens.

SUPPORT effective government through transparency and collaboration. Good governance requires that decisions are made and implemented using legitimate (legal), transparent, participatory, responsive and equitable processes to achieve effective policies that will protect Flagler County.

OBJECTIVES

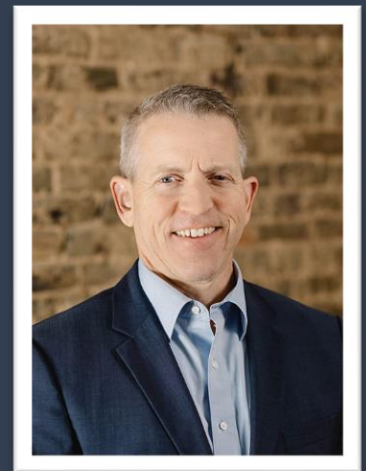
Focus on issues that will have the highest impact and foster collaborative relationships with local municipalities and private partners in promoting legislative support.

Work in collaboration with Florida Association of Counties (FAC), Florida City and County Management Association (FCMMA), Northeast Florida Regional Council (NEFRC), Small County Coalition (SCC) and the Florida Shore and Beach Preservation Association (FSBPA).

Flagler County's State Delegation



Senator
Travis Hutson
District 7



Speaker
Paul Renner
District 24

Flagler County's Guiding Principles

The ability to maintain home rule and avoid unfunded mandates are central to Flagler County's federal and state legislative priorities and advocacy needs, as outlined below. These ideals are championed by Flagler County, its municipalities, the Florida Association of Counties (FAC) and the Florida City and County Management Association (FCCMA). Each year Flagler County works alongside FAC and the FCCMA during the State Legislative Session to help support all legislative policy statements.

HOME RULE

Home rule power is conferred to Florida counties and cities by Article VIII, Section 1(f) and 1(g) of the Florida Constitution (1968), and by section 125.01, Florida Statutes. The Flagler County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) and its municipalities are dedicated to the preservation of this Florida constitutional principle whereby a local government can exercise powers to protect the health, safety and welfare of its citizens. Flagler County and our municipalities **SUPPORTS** maintaining the integrity of home rule power, both administrative and fiscal, which allows counties/cities to develop and implement community-based solutions to local problems and **OPPOSES** any effort to preempt locally elected officials from making fiscal and public policy decisions on behalf of the citizens they represent. Basically, home rule means let the people closest to the issues decide the best solutions.



UNFUNDED MANDATES

While some mandates are justified because they achieve agreed upon policy goals, many are imposed without the consensus of local governments or without providing the resources needed for implementation. Mandates drain the financial lifeblood from local governments and impede their ability to adequately deliver fundamental services required by law.

The County and our municipalities **SUPPORT** the establishment of a deliberative process whereby elected officials evaluate the appropriate funding and the best options for the delivery of services by local, state or the federal government.

Flagler County Municipal Partners



CITY OF PALM COAST

Mayor David Alfin
Denise Bevan, City Manager



CITY OF FLAGLER BEACH

Mayor Suzie Johnston
William R. Whitson, City Manager



CITY OF BUNNELL

Mayor Catherine Robinson
Dr. Alvin B. Jackson, Jr., City Manager



TOWN OF BEVERLY BEACH

Mayor Stephen Emmett
Jim Ardell, Town Clerk



TOWN OF MARINELAND

Mayor Angela TenBroeck
Suzanne Dixon, Town Manager



Report and Discussion

LEGISLATIVE AGENDA DEVELOPMENT

Each year, the BOCC and staff evaluate the trends and issues affecting all County programs and services to identify potential policy or substantive legislative issues. This year we have collaborated with our local municipalities to ensure we provide a unified agenda that will support all residents and transcend all boundaries. Included herein are the substantive priorities and general issues to be pursued and supported during the 2023 State Legislative session.

LOBBYING CONTRACTS

All local governments utilize contract lobbying services at the State level to further our unified legislative goals and to secure vital appropriations. Flagler County and the City of Bunnell currently contracts with *The Fiorentino Group*. The City of Palm Coast has a contract with *The Southern Group* and the City of Flagler Beach has a contract with *Anfield Consulting Group*. These firms provide a daily presence in Tallahassee and advocates for the county and cities legislative priorities. County and City staff coordinates regularly with the State lobbying team by phone and e-mail to strategize on key State policy, regulatory, and budget issues. In addition to calls during session, and issues tracking, lobbyists also submit monthly reports.

THE SOUTHERN GROUP

123 S Adams St.
Tallahassee, FL 32301
(850) 671-4401

THE FIORENTINO GROUP

1301 Riverplace Blvd.
Suite 1300
Jacksonville, FL 32207
(904) 358-2757

ANFIELD CONSULTING GROUP

201 W Park Avenue
Suite 100
Tallahassee, FL 32301
(866) 960-5939

KEY SESSION DATES

AUGUST 1, 2022:	Deadline for filing claim bills
MARCH 7, 2023:	Regular Session convenes
APRIL 22, 2023:	Motion to reconsider made and considered the same day. All bills are immediately certified.
APRIL 25, 2023:	50th day – last day for regularly scheduled committee meetings
MAY 5, 2023:	60th day – last day of Regular Session

Appropriations and Funding Requests



2023 Flagler County



Appropriations and Funding Requests



PUBLIC HEALTH & SAFETY



Relocation and Construction of a Combined Fire Administration and Fire Station

Background: The Flagler County Fire Rescue Department provides quality emergency services within the county as well as fulfilling requests for mutual aid assistance. To increase efficiencies while decreasing response times to emergencies, Flagler County Fire Rescue career staff delivers fire, rescue and emergency medical services out of a total of ten fire stations, six county fire stations and four city fire stations. Fire Administration is operated out of the Emergency Operations Center, with fire logistics being handled from several different locations that include the EOC and several other fire stations.

The station that is identified for relocation is approximately 4,000 sq. ft. and located in an area where there is overlapping coverage, gender disparity in spaces and poses a health and safety risk to fire personnel as they are directly exposed to carcinogens through exhaust fumes. The station is also 32 years old and was repurposed from another governmental service building. As a building that was not originally designed as a fire station, the current limitations have proven to be challenging relative to creating a safe and effective environment to operate emergency services. The Fire Administration staff is in the Emergency Operations Center sharing offices and other space with multiple departments. The current Administration occupies eight offices and has no separate training room or conference space. Subsequently, as the community grows so does the need for more fire personnel and stations that meet all life safety fire codes.

Requested Action: Provide funding to relocate, construct and combine a fire station with fire administration to improve the health and safety conditions for fire personnel and increase efficiencies while minimizing response times.

Effect: This funding will ensure an effective emergency medical services response facility providing paramedic level response/transport to an increased number of people within an 8- minute travel time and firefighting capabilities within a 5-mile driving distance to reduce loss of life and property.

Appropriations and Funding Requests



PUBLIC HEALTH & SAFETY

Replacement of Fire Flight, a 1998 American Euro copter AStar AS350B3 Helicopter

Background: The Flight Operations Division provides 12-hour immediate response and recovery public safety services for all of Flagler County. For the other 12 hours, on call staff is prepared to respond, if needed, for aerial support. Fire Flight has three missions prioritized with wildfire mitigation as its highest priority, medical transport as its second priority, and law enforcement as its third priority.

Fire Flight is an imperative part of mitigation and response for containment of wildfires starting in remote and difficult to access areas of Flagler County. Fire Flight can reach any area of the County in under fifteen minutes with a 210-gallon water bucket to quickly suppress and slow a fire before it can potentially build into an out-of-control wildfire.

Fire Flight is also a State Certified Air Ambulance and responds directly to trauma related accident scenes with a Flight Paramedic. Patients are quickly loaded into the helicopter and flown to the nearest appropriate hospital reducing the transport time by at least half as compared to ground ambulances. Lastly, Flight Operations plans and participates with all local law enforcement agencies to provide aerial surveillance on request. The current helicopter has several issues that need costly upgrades or repairs.

Requested Action: Provide funding to purchase a replacement for our current Fire Flight helicopter and equipment necessary to appropriately protect and serve Flagler County.



Effect: This funding will ensure an effective program with an aircraft that meets and exceeds the needs for continued success of the Flagler County Fire Flight program.

Appropriations and Funding Requests

PUBLIC HEALTH & SAFETY



Improve Public Safety through Replacement of a 45-Year-Old Fire Station #22



Background: Built in 1977, Fire Station 22 has served the community as a volunteer fire station, sheriff's office substation, and since 1997 a 24-hour career fire station. During that time, the station has transitioned from running 55 calls in one year to running over 1600 calls this year. Today, the station has reached the end of its productive life. In addition to maintenance issues such as beam rot, roof damage, and plumbing problems, the design of Station 22 does not meet the needs of the modern-day fire service. The size of the station's bay requires a customized fire truck that holds less equipment but still costs more than a typical Palm Coast pumper. Health and safety initiatives intended to address firefighter wellness and cancer prevention are modified or put on hold for firefighters stationed at 22. Additionally, four full-time staff (men and women) share a common bunk area with little to no privacy and both city and county units are unable to utilize the station for firefighter development due to space issues. City Council has funded land acquisition and design for the new station.

Requested Action: Provide funding to relocate and construct a fire station to improve the health and safety conditions for fire personnel and increase efficiencies while minimizing response times.

Effect: This funding will ensure an effective response facility with improved firefighting capabilities that meets all modern-day fire service needs.

Appropriations and Funding Requests



BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

Expand Behavioral Health Services in Flagler County by Constructing an Integrated Stabilization Unit and a Men’s Residential Treatment Facility

Background: In 2017, Flagler County had the highest suicide rate in the State of Florida and while our numbers started dropping over the next two years, in 2020 because of the pandemic, there was a rise in depression and suicide. Currently, the suicide rate in Flagler County is rising, along with domestic violence and substance abuse, all resulting from serious mental health illnesses. The County is still ranked in the top ten for suicide rates and has more than 400 residents diagnosed with a serious mental illness. Along with a high suicide rate, Flagler County also has a high rate of deaths from opioid or other drug related uses. In 2021, according to the Florida Department of Health, there were more than 80 deaths and more than 400 emergency medical responses to an overdose from opioid or other drug use within Flagler County.

As a result, Flagler County partnered with SMA Healthcare, Inc. (SMA) to create an Access Center and received funding from the State of Florida during the 2021 legislative session to assist with start-up costs. This center provides mental health and substance abuse crisis service needs including care coordination and walk-in screenings. SMA also has a women’s residential treatment center in Flagler County, known as WARM, which offers two levels of care for women who are exhibiting symptoms of a substance use disorder and other co-occurring mental health issues. What is still missing in Flagler County to ensure we are providing wrap-around mental health and substance abuse treatment is an Integrated Stabilization Unit and a men’s residential treatment facility.

In response, Flagler County as part of a public-private partnership with SMA is proposing to build a facility on county land near the current women’s facility. It will be approximately 10,000 square feet with a 20-bed integrated stabilization unit (ISU) and men’s substance abuse residential beds.



Requested Action: Provide funding to construct an Integrated stabilization unit and a men’s residential treatment program in Flagler County.

Effect: Through the public-private partnership of the State of Florida, Flagler County and SMA Healthcare, the cost of constructing these services can be provided. The provision of these services will contribute to reductions in per capita rates of suicide, overdose, untreated substance dependence and untreated serious mental illness among county residents.

Appropriations and Funding Requests

INFRASTRUCTURE



Transportation Access to the West

Background: The FEC Railroad bisects Palm Coast running north/south just west of US1. There are approximately 12,000 acres of land within the Palm Coast municipal boundaries west of the railroad tracks with limited access. Currently, there are only two, at grade, railroad crossings within the city limits. The City is actively evaluating options for three additional westbound corridors at Matanzas Woods Parkway, Palm Coast Parkway, and Whiteview Parkway. Judicious transportation investments lower the costs of moving people and goods increasing economic productivity. Because productivity is a central component of economic growth, it should be a strong consideration when assessing the value of transportation expenditures. Opening these corridors will promote economic opportunities in Palm Coast and Flagler County.

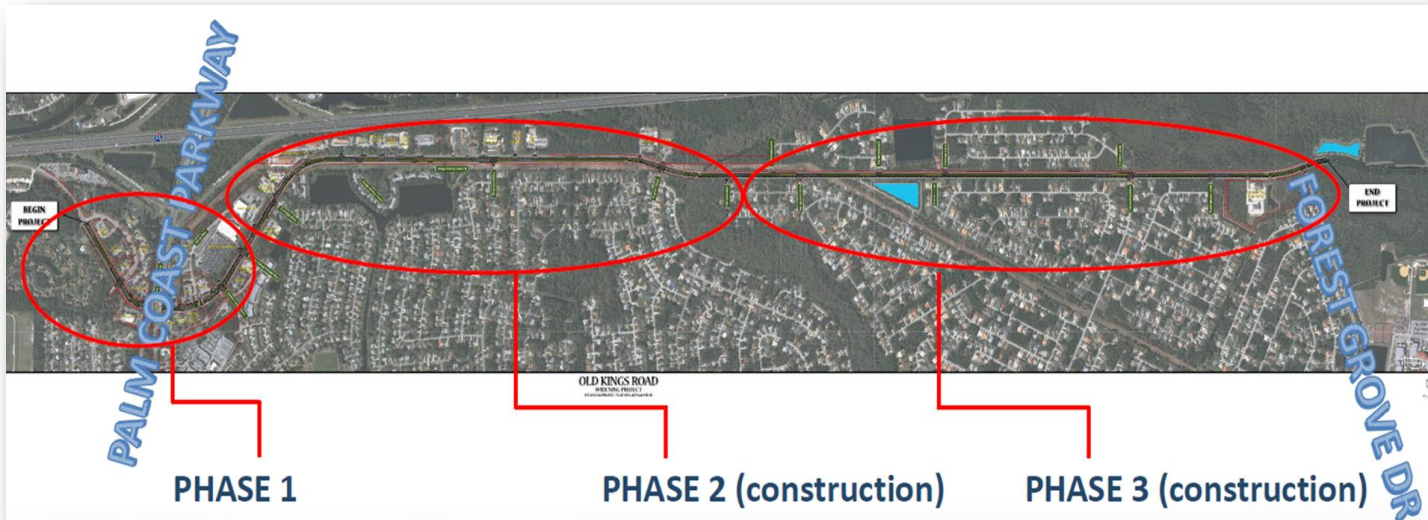
Request Action: Provide funding or legislative support for transportation projects that will improve access to large land tracts on the west side of Palm Coast.

Effect: Improved access to the west will provide opportunities for regional economic advancement.



Appropriations and Funding Requests

INFRASTRUCTURE



Old Kings Road Construction Phase 2 and Phase 3



Background: The City of Palm Coast doubled in population from 2000 to 2010, and by 2035 our population is expected to double again. Local funding challenges already make keeping pace with the rapid growth and maintenance of our network of over 1,200 lane miles difficult. Recognizing that the revenue generated by fuel tax has only increased by 15% over the last ten years, there is concern that funding will continue to be deficient and increasingly strained by vehicle efficiencies and other pressures. These challenges are most evident in the City's top priority transportation project, Old Kings Road widening, which began with FDOT in 2009. It serves as an alternate route to I-95 during closures and a primary connection to the Palm Coast Parkway commercial corridor. Phase 1, funded by FDOT in 2019, is currently under construction; however, the City had to postpone two FDOT funded projects to ensure sufficient funding for Phase 1 to occur. The Phase 2 and 3 construction funding request has been submitted to FDOT for consideration; however, both are not in the 5-year Work Plan. The River to Sea TPO Ranks the project as #3 of Prioritized Regionally Significant Non-SIS Projects. This critical project will further expand evacuation zone capacity, add pedestrian paths on both sides, provide street lighting, accommodate alternate traffic patterns, and mitigate growth demands.

Request Action: Provide funding or legislative support for District 5 FDOT to include Old Kings Road Phase 2 and 3 construction in 5-year Work Plan.

Effect: Build traffic capacity and directly aid alternate traffic patterns and evacuations.

Appropriations and Funding Requests

INFRASTRUCTURE



Town Center Boulevard, Old Kings Road, and Royal Palms Parkway Intersection Improvement(s) Study

Background: As one of the limited options for an east-west trip across I-95 in the City of Palm Coast, the intersection of Town Center Boulevard and Old Kings Road, has become a congested intersection as the City continues to grow and develop.

Any physical improvement to address the need for additional capacity and safety at this location is challenging due to the physical constraints of the existing infrastructure located in the vicinity of this intersection. These challenges include the following:

- The presence of the I-95 overpass and the supporting pilings for the overpass restricts the expansion of the number on Town Center Boulevard.
- The presence of the Lehigh Canal (a major stormwater conveyance for the City) also restricts the City's ability to expand the number of lanes on Town Center Boulevard.
- A bridge crossing over the Lehigh Canal on Old Kings Rd. which has limited width and capacity for expansion creates a physical challenge for expanding Old Kings Road.

Finally, all improvements need to recognize the presence of the Lehigh Trail at this intersection. This Trail is the crown jewel of Flagler County's trail system as well as being one of the busiest trails of the network.

Although the number of constraints presents a series of engineering challenges, there are opportunities for developing creative alternatives to overcome the infrastructure and safety issues and which results in an intersection that serves the present and future needs of the City and I-95 infrastructure.

Requested Action: Provide funding or legislative support for a Project Development and Environment (PD&E) study for the Town Center Boulevard, Old Kings Road, and Royal Palms intersection area.

Effect: This study will assist the City to plan for transportation and stormwater capacity infrastructure improvements within the constrained area between Old Kings Road and Royal Palms Parkway along Town Center Boulevard.

Appropriations and Funding Requests

INFRASTRUCTURE



Remediation and Restoration of the Historic Bunnell City Hall also known as the Bunnell Coquina City Hall



Background: Bunnell City Hall is in the heart of the oldest city in Flagler County. The Bunnell City Hall is a unique one-story public building constructed of locally quarried coquina stone. The building was constructed during the Depression Era of the 1930s under the auspices of the Works Progress Administration (WPA), a New Deal agency organized to alleviate unemployment. The building was placed on the National Registry of Historic Places in 2019. Some of the uses of this site are elections, board and other organizational meetings, cultural events, community outreach, summer programs for children and a place for private family events. In 2021, the City had to close the building for use due to deteriorating conditions of the building and safety concerns for occupants as validated by a building inspector. In 2022, remediation of the building was completed at costs exceeding \$100,000.00. Additional funding is needed to reconstruct and make necessary changes to the building to prevent the building from experiencing additional environmental issues and to restore the facility to a safe, functional building.

Requested Action: Provide local levels of funding to reconstruct the National Registered Historic Bunnell City Hall also known as the Bunnell Coquina City Hall.

Effect: This funding will assist the City offset a large capital outlay so that a facility vital to the community for its central location and ease of access for citizens can safely be reopened to allow for the cultural, educational and enrichment of the citizens of Flagler County and adjacent counties as well.

Appropriations and Funding Requests

COMMUNITY RESILIENCY

Provide Funding for Emergency Repairs for Dune and Beach Erosion as a Result of Hurricane Ian and Hurricane Nicole.



Background: In the last decade, Flagler County has suffered significant beach erosion with a loss of sand and dunes as a result of storms and sea level rise. After Hurricane Matthew and Hurricane Irma, Flagler County spent nearly \$18 million dollars on one million tons of sand to repair 11.4 miles of shore north of Flagler Beach and the Florida Department of Transportation completed a Sea Wall project. While those repairs were in process, Flagler County in conjunction with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers made plans to repair another 2.6 miles of beach south of the Flagler Beach pier.

Flagler County's 18.1 miles of the Atlantic Ocean shorelines were severely impacted by two major back-to-back events, Hurricane Ian on September 29, 2022, and Hurricane Nicole on November 10, 2022. The storm tides coupled with the high wave energy resulted in a critically eroded dune system throughout the county. The dune ridge along the northern Flagler County coast is relatively low where the storm surge and waves overtopped the dunes in several areas, and in some locations, dunes were totally removed causing storm tide flooding and sand over wash. Additionally, over wash and breaching occurred in several areas from Washington Oaks State Park to the St. Johns County line, including sections of SR A1A. These back-to-back storms also inflicted severe erosion along the coast in the Painters Hill area which is now threatening the single-family dwellings on the beach. Hurricane Nicole destroyed or damaged multiple sections of SR A1A in the City of Flagler Beach where the dune system and revetment wall adjacent to the road failed and was totally eroded.

Beach and dune erosion is now at a critical level and based upon initial damage assessments, a rough order of magnitude beach and dune sand volume losses associated with the passage of Hurricane Ian and Hurricane Nicole for the 18.1 miles of Flagler County shoreline is estimated to be 4.8 million cubic yards. Using a combination of truck-haul and dredge the cost is estimated at 200 million needed to restore the full 18.1 miles of shoreline ravaged by the two back-to-back major storms.

Requested Action: Provide funding for shovel ready projects to restore beach and dune that will protect the upland infrastructure including SR A1A; enhance and protect the environmental habitat; and restore and maintain the recreational access and use of the beach, an important economic resource for the County along the eighteen miles of shoreline suffering from beach and dune erosion as a result of Hurricane Ian.

Effect: This funding will help provide the boost Flagler County needs to move already identified projects forward and make any emergency repairs necessitated by the recent storms. This includes rebuilding of the dunes, adding sand along the eighteen miles of coastline and repairing shoreline infrastructure.



Appropriations and Funding Requests

COMMUNITY RESILIENCY



Reduce the Risk of Flooding - Support Funding Blare Drive and Colbert Lane Flood Mitigation and Flood Map Study and Revision



Background: This project consists of increasing the stormwater conveyance capacity of three culvert crossings: (1) at Blare Drive and (2) at Colbert Lane. The improvement of the drainage system will allow for a faster recovery during and following storm events while providing additional flood protection/resiliency to the surrounding residential neighborhoods. Since the stormwater modeling is being performed with more sophisticated software and data of that used during the effective model, the project provides an opportunity to revise the existing flood maps to more accurately define the limits of the floodplain once the construction has taken place. The potential flood map revision should have a beneficial effect to flood insurance premiums to those homeowners whose homes end up outside of the revised floodplain. It would also alert others of the proximity of the revised floodplain in areas that do not currently show the floodplain.

Requested Action: Provide funding to construct three culvert crossings and perform flood map revisions.

Effect: Construction of this project will allow for faster recovery post-storm to the low-laying Woodlands subdivision and provide additional flood protection. The map revision may eliminate flood premiums for some residents.

COMMUNITY RESILIENCY



Reduce the Risk of Flooding - Stormwater Capacity Improvements - London Waterway



Background: This project consists of the construction of a stormwater pond that will act as an attenuation basin for the London Waterway. The proposed pond is designed to be hydraulically connected to the waterway in such a manner that during rain events, runoff that would have normally been stored within the canal gets routed through the pond. The stormwater flow through the proposed pond shall be routed downstream of weir control structure LO-1 (the original destination). The drainage improvement will add capacity to the canal and provide additional flood protection to the neighborhood. The construction plans also propose the construction of (2) look-out decks with boardwalk access to serve as a passive park to the immediate neighborhood. Finally, the pond's side banks shall be planted with aquatic vegetation and two large "islands" will remain natural to provide buffering and screening of the existing adjacent homes.

Requested Action: Provide funding to construct an attenuation basin for the London Waterway.

Effect: Construction of this drainage improvement will add capacity to the canal and provide additional flood protection to the neighborhood. The project will also improve the quality of life as a passive park.

Appropriations and Funding Requests

COMMUNITY RESILIENCY



Protect Water Supply - Construct Regional Rapid Infiltration Basin (RIB) Site

Background: A study has been completed for a Resiliency Plan for the Rapid Infiltration Basin (RIB) site. The study revealed that converting the spray irrigation to rapid infiltration basins is feasible and will increase the much-needed effluent capacity along with storage. The RIB treats the wastewater as it infiltrates through the soil and at the same time replenishes the aquifer. The process can treat a much larger volume of wastewater on a small land area than aboveground high-volume irrigation.

Requested Action: Provide funding for land acquisition and construction of a regional RIB site.

Effect: Construction of this Rapid Infiltration Basin (RIB) will improve water quality and produce a higher rate of aquifer recharge than achieved through above-ground high-volume irrigation.



Appropriations and Funding Requests

COMMUNITY RESILIENCY

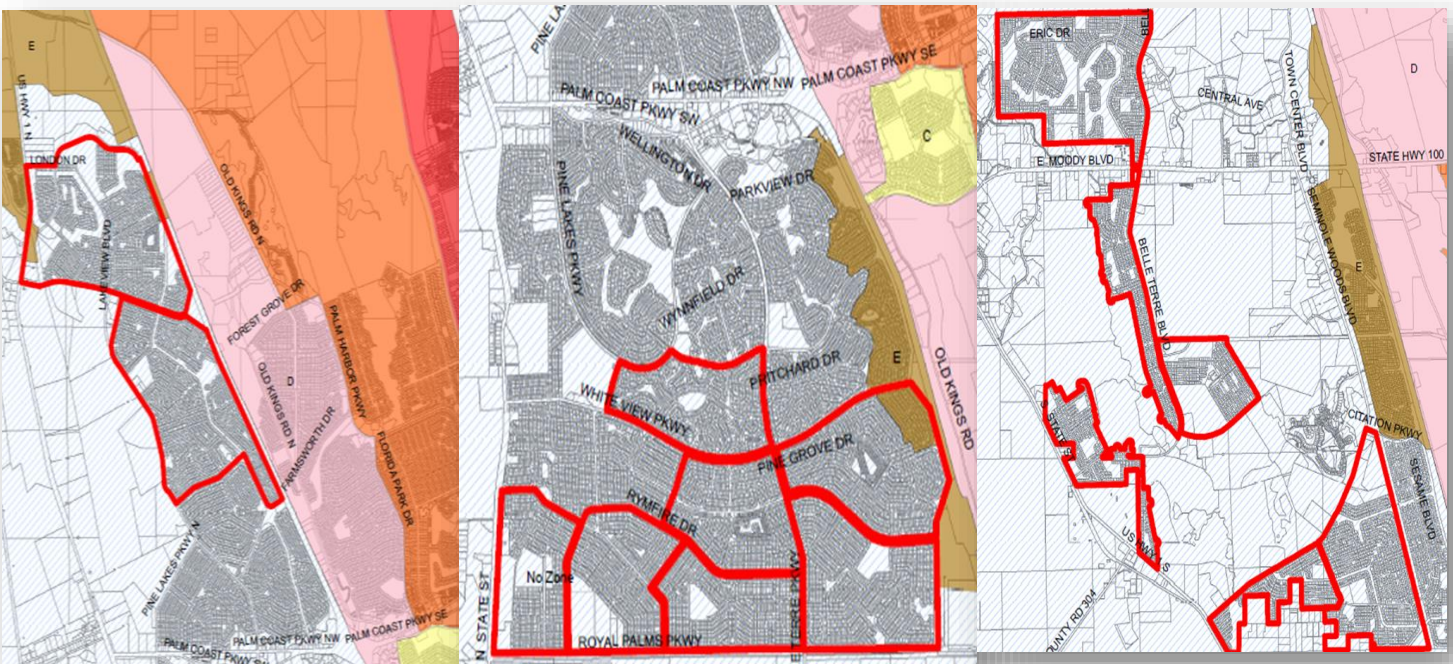


Protect Water Quality - Pretreatment Effluent Pumping (PEP) Asset Management Inventory and Analysis

Background: The Pretreatment Effluent Pumping (PEP) system consists of roughly 21,750 potential installations. To date, 15,939 are installed and operating which leaves 5,811 additional installations units with a 2.3 persons per unit estimate this equates to a population of roughly 36,600 city residents being served by the city PEP system. The need for asset management software has been identified by City staff to support many activities conducted by all Departments and divisions including the requirements for maintaining the PEP systems. The Asset Management software can electronically initiate, assign, dispatch, and track electronic work orders requested for an asset and track from inception through completion with a flexible, easily managed workflow process. Functionality includes access to the GIS generated maps, completing work orders, entering resources, creation of assets, editing of assets including location and attributes, and creating work orders.

Requested Action: Provide funding or grant support for asset management software for the Pretreatment Effluent Pumping system.

Effect: Acquisition of asset management software will improve efficiencies in the maintenance and repair of the PEP system and protect residents from sewer backups and ground intrusion of raw sewage.



Appropriations and Funding Requests

COMMUNITY RESILIENCY



Protect Water Quality - Saltwater Canal Health and Stewardship

Background: There is a network of 27 miles of saltwater canals that host a wealth of recreational opportunities, aesthetic value, and habitat for marine fauna. Through three canal cuts, vessels have access from the Intracoastal Waterway into the network of canals. By nature of the design and tidally influenced environment, foreign debris, sediment, organic materials, and other discharges that may accumulate over time. The saltwater canals are also recognized as a habitat harbor for manatees and young. Water quality is a critical element to supporting marine fauna. City Council has approved a local priority that focuses on the dredging of the canals to remove unsuitable materials and to restore depth. As part of the first phase, preliminary bathymetric survey along with grab samples are being conducted to evaluate conditions. In the event recognized environmental conditions exist, city staff will be targeting environmental grants to assist with recovery.

Requested Action: Provide funding or grant support to dredge the saltwater canals.

Effect: Dredging the saltwater canals to remove unsuitable materials and restore depth will provide an economic benefit by maintaining aesthetic value and recreational access to the Intracoastal. Removing foreign debris and organic matter will improve water quality for manatees and other marine fauna.



Appropriations and Funding Requests

COMMUNITY RESILIENCY



Coastal Erosion and Pier Restoration

Background: Flagler Beach has a tourist-dependent economy. In 2002, House Resolution 2676 provided for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) to conduct a Feasibility Study of Flagler County's coastline for Beach Renourishment. The recommendation from that study was to provide shoreline protection to 2.6 miles in Flagler Beach to extend the dune 10 feet and protect SR A1A. A partnership agreement between Flagler County and FDOT was to provide monies for the design and construction phases. On June 23, 2019, an agreement was finally signed with the Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) for that 2.6-mile project to move forward once the reconstruction of SR A1A was completed. However, Flagler County has plans for a beach renourishment project for multiple miles of Flagler Beach coastline beyond that being addressed by the ACOE. Additional funding is being sought from FDOT, FDEP, and the Tourist Development Fund. Project initiation is anticipated to start in 2023. The city has recently proposed the creation of an emergency mitigation plan to provide a "stop gap measure" to hold the line against the impacts of coastal erosion on City and State facilities such as State Road A1A and public access structures (i.e., dune walkovers) Additional funding is needed to address emergency conditions that are urgent.

FEMA funds have been allocated to replace and extend the fishing pier in Flagler Beach. The Pier, which has sustained a great deal of damage from storms over the years, along with other threatened structures, and is now much shorter than it originally was, draws thousands of visitors a year to the area and provides recreational access for the public to view and experience the Atlantic Ocean firsthand. Maintaining this access well into the future is a critical part of the tourism and visitor draw for the community and FEMA will no longer fund repairs to the current structure due to the recurring damages.

Requested Action: That the State of Florida provide funding for beach renourishment programs through partnerships with state agencies and local governments. That the State of Florida work to assist the City as soon as possible with matching FEMA funds to restore and rebuild the Flagler Beach Fishing Pier to new standards by the City Centennial in 2025.

Effect: The preservation of a vital recreational resource and a section of Scenic Highway State Road A1A that, through local, national and international tourism, has a high-impact, positive effect on the City's and County's economies. Improvement of the Pier heavily damaged by Hurricane Matthew and now Hurricane Ian, is essential to economic recovery of the beach and business entrepreneurs post COVID-19 and hurricanes.

Appropriations and Funding Requests

COMMUNITY RESILIENCY



Recycling

Background: Over the last several years, the recycling cost with local vendors has increased over 90%. Vendors have stated that the market requires these increases for single stream. Local agencies have struggled with passing this cost on to the citizens to meet state requirements. This will require increases above and beyond expectations on local sanitation fees. Mitigation of the impacts of growing population and the demands on solid waste removal can be mitigated by encouraging more recycling efforts such as those initiated by Flagler Beach.

Requested Action: Legislation in 2023 to address the heavy budget impacts and unfunded mandates this represents on citizens.

Effect: Without guidance, emphasis and additional funding assistance from Legislation the cost will be passed to citizens.



Pictured left: Big Blue, Flagler Beach's new glass recycling machine

Appropriations and Funding Requests

COMMUNITY RESILIENCY



Comprehensive Vulnerability Assessment

Background: The City of Flagler Beach and the Town of Beverly Beach were recently awarded a Resilient Florida Grant of \$100,000 from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection. The grant will fund an engineering firm to prepare a complete comprehensive Vulnerability Assessment and Adaptation Action Plan to address sea level rise, resiliency, the inflow and infiltration due to the impacts of storm surge and tidal flooding within the two entities. It will also address any potential threats to vulnerable infrastructure. Both communities will coordinate with Flagler County, the City of Bunnell, and the City of Palm Coast on the study. The GIS data base of the final report results would be created and shared with all jurisdictions. This effort follows the previously completed Flagler County county-wide approach to Resilience Planning completed by the Northeast Florida Regional Council in 2021.

Requested Action: Provide additional legislation and funding to support local governments in implementing the protective measures that are identified and recommended in their Vulnerability Assessments and Adaptation Action Plans to mitigate the effects of flooding and sea level rise.

Effect: Local government will be better equipped to manage and to protect critical assets and the health and safety of coastal communities from the effects of flooding, sea level rise, and other environmental factors.

Appropriations and Funding Requests

COMMUNITY RESILIENCY



Water Treatment Plant and Distribution System Projects

Background: The City of Bunnell's Master Utility Plan identifies several projects to address needs and deficiencies in the City's water treatment plant and distribution system. Among the next projects to be completed as established in the Master Utility Plan are projects that address the following: brackish water RO (reverse osmosis) and other pretreatment systems; pipe upsizing, material upgrading and watermain looping for fire protection.

The City's raw water issues are two-fold. The first dilemma is that there is an inadequate supply of reliable potable water due to the limited number, age, and condition of the existing wells. Further, the City's well capacity does not allow for flexibility of operations or redundancy in the event of a well malfunctioning. The second is that the brackish water blends pose a water quality issue for the City's Wastewater Facility due to permit restrictions because of the elevated chloride levels. As a result, the process to allow full operation and use of brackish water wells, as well as produce a higher quality of water and increased capacity for future growth is needed.

The second issue is the need to increase the size and/or upgrade the material of various pipe segments throughout the system to improve water quality, pressure levels, and fire flow protection capabilities. Finally, in order to convey the increased flow from the upsized pumps, the 4-inch force main will need to be upsized to an 8-inch force main.

Requested Action: Provide local levels of funding to complete water treatment and distribution upgrades as identified in adopted Master Utility Plans.

Effect: This funding and the completing of these projects would provide for improvement of water quality, pressure levels, fire flow protection capabilities and increased capacity for the City Water Distribution system.

Appropriations and Funding Requests

CONSERVATION AND OPEN SPACE



Support Acquisition of Conservation Lands

Background: Currently Flagler County has identified 5 properties that have potential to provide protection for drinking water quality, wildlife habitat, and floodplain management for local citizens. All five are identified within the Florida Wildlife Corridor “Opportunity Area”. Often protection of these properties will intersect with protection of the County’s local way of life. As development pressure increases our county’s wildlands have decreased. Since 1988, we have lost 48,964 acres of wildlands in the County. Pringle Forest in the northeast of the County is an 8,000-acre tract of land that surrounds the City of Palm Coast’s well fields and is the location of the headwaters for Pellicer Creek is already showing elevated bacterial counts from human impacts. Protection of Pringle Forest is a high priority for the County and the City of Palm Coast. The property is currently listed as a low priority on the Florida Forever Board of Trustees (BOT) project list. The Townsend-Lake Disston tract is a 2,400-acre tract that provides a significant wetland buffer to Lake Disston. Lake Disston is in the flow-way of the St. Johns River and provides significant clean-water input as the river meanders north. Protection of this lake will protect water quality for Flagler County citizens and out neighbors to the north through Putnam, St. Johns, and Duval counties. Townsend-Haw Creek tract is a connector piece between the State’s Haw Creek Preserve and the County’s Haw Creek Preserve. Townsend Dead-Lake tract would provide a conservation and floodplain buffer and connect the County’s Haw Creek Preserve to the lakes benthic edge. Finally, the 900+ acre Melvin Tract would provide protection to a mile’s length of Middle Haw Creek in central Flagler County.

Requested Action: Provide local levels of funding to acquire these tracts that are within the wildlife corridor and are low priority projects on the Florida Forever list. The County intends to pursue less-than-fee acquisitions such as conservation easements, when possible, as well as other local, state, and federal funding partnerships.

Effect: Flagler County will be able to continue to provide high quality drinking water to its citizens from local sources and high-quality conservation-based experiences that our community relies on for its health and well-being. The focus is to achieve the goals of land and water conservation, conservation of local native plants and animal habitat, and floodplain protections in critical areas.



Appropriations and Funding Requests

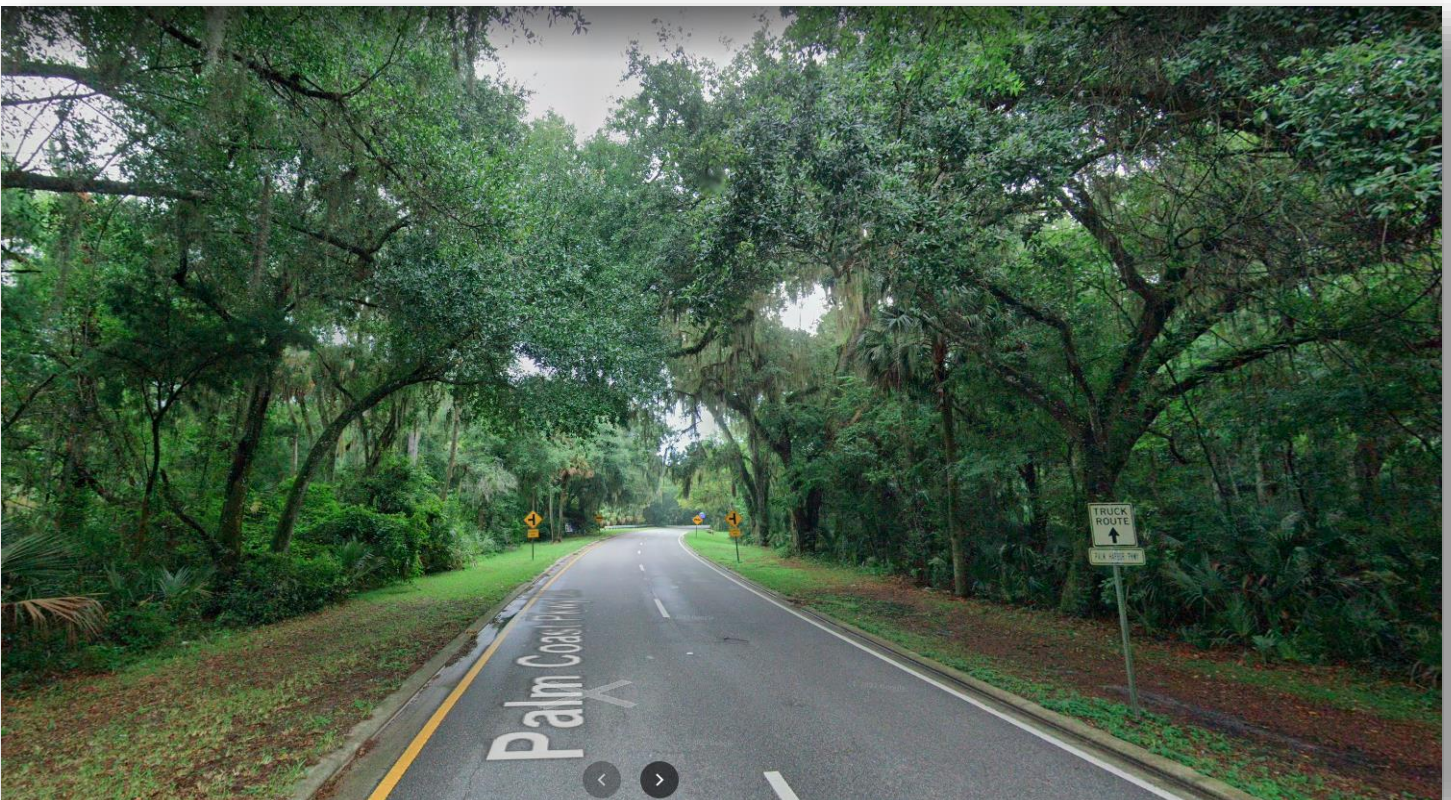
CONSERVATION AND OPEN SPACE

Protect Environmentally Sensitive Areas - Protect Palm Coast Parkway's Unique Hard Wood Tree Canopy



Background: The “Tree Tunnel” as it is known runs from the intersection of Palm Coast Parkway and Old Kings Road all the way to the Palm Harbor Parkway intersection. This area showcases the beautiful native trees that are present here in Palm Coast and gives a glimpse of the beginnings of Graham Swamp. The property at Palm Coast Parkway and Colbert Lane includes trees over 70” in diameter, important habitat for native wildlife, and flood water storage as part of the swamp. Being able to preserve the northern most part of Graham Swamp would both preserve the character of the “Tree Tunnel” and keep the swamp as a large connected system that allows water storage and water treatment for the city.

Requested Action: Support funding and inclusion in the Flagler County Environmentally Sensitive Lands Program and Florida Forever funding.



Appropriations and Funding Requests

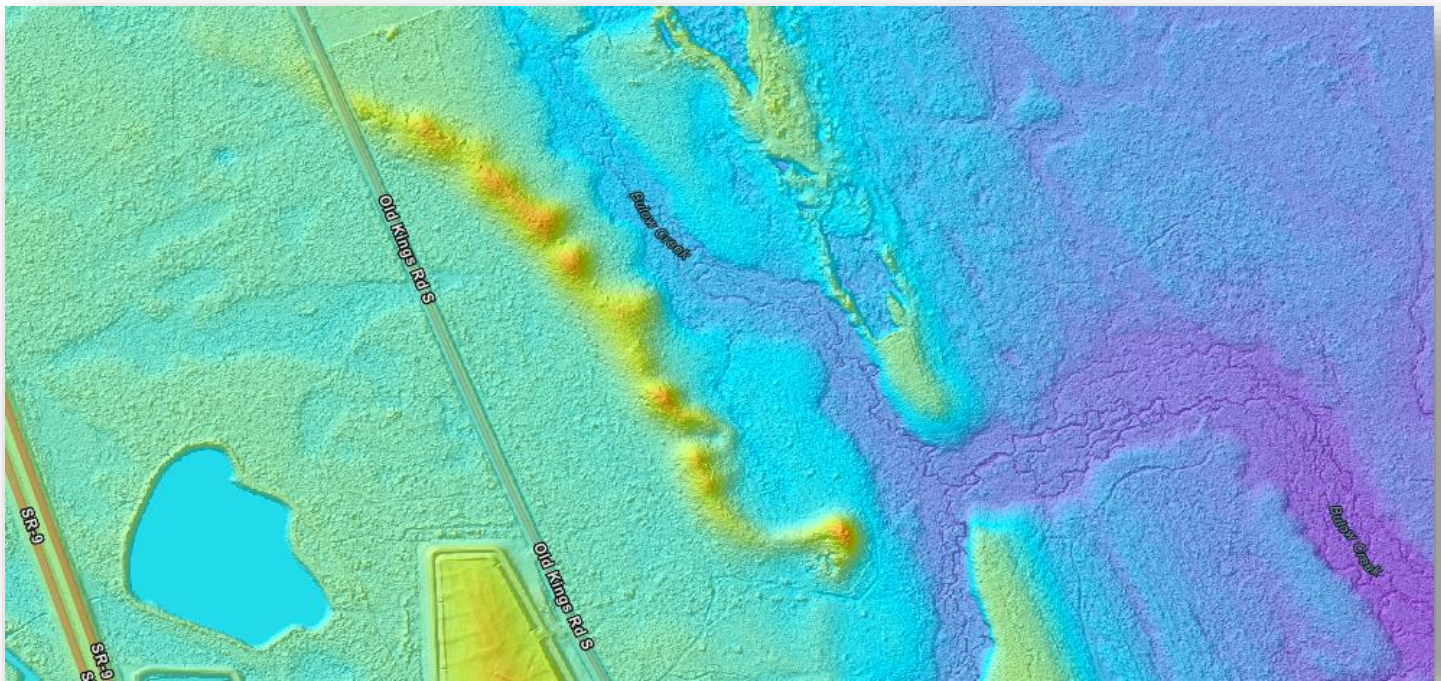
CONSERVATION AND OPEN SPACE



Protect Environmentally Sensitive Areas - Acquire Bulow Creek Relic Dune and Burial Mounds

Background: The relic dune or Sandridge, as termed by city staff, is a unique topographical area for Palm Coast. At its highest point, the ridge reaches an elevation of 42' above sea level which is very rare for the area. This ridge buffers Bulow Creek, an Outstanding Florida Waterway, from Old Kings Road S to provide the creek with added protection from pollution. Bulow Creek is very important for floodplain management, the creek itself is a regulatory floodway where high velocity flood waters flow south until they reach the Intracoastal Waterway. At the terminus of the ridge, there is a Native American burial mound; the mound no longer contains any remains or artifacts, but it is still a significant cultural site. The combination of the Sandridge, wetlands, and Bulow Creek provide unique variations in habitat for a multitude of species and plants that only increase the importance of protecting the area. Pursuant to Comprehensive Plan Policy 1.1.9.18 - *The City shall coordinate with land acquisition entities and public agencies to acquire environmentally and culturally significant lands in the Planning Area east of Old Kings Road.*

Requested Action: Support funding and inclusion in the Flagler County Environmentally Sensitive Lands Program and Florida Forever funding.



Policy Priorities & Support Issues



2023 Flagler County



2023 POLICY PRIORITIES



SUPPORT the Legislature Appropriation funding for the Public Library Construction Grant Program.

Encourage the Legislature to appropriate the funding for the Public Library Construction Grant Program in which Flagler County is ranked #1 for the 6th year in a row. This will allow the County to construct a sizeable library to fill a much-needed gap in the underserved southern part of our community.

PROTECT AND INCREASE Funding for the State of Florida Transportation Disadvantaged Program.

Urge the Legislature to protect the Transportation Disadvantaged program and increase funding to support the unmet trip requests.



SUPPORT AND PROTECT Florida's Housing Trust Funds

Urge the Florida Legislature to use ALL of Florida's housing trust fund monies for Florida's housing programs.



2023 POLICY PRIORITIES



SUPPORT Affordable and Reliable High-Speed Internet throughout Florida.

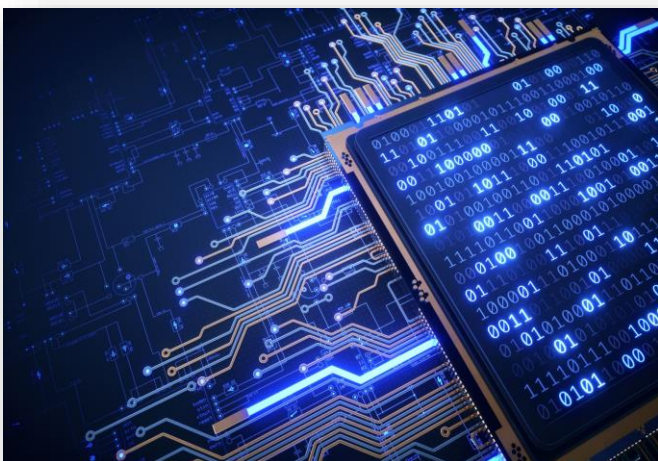
Continue to support a coordinated and collaborative effort to advance and expand internet access in all areas of Florida through creation of a comprehensive plan and a grant program for service providers to increase and improve access in rural Florida.

SUPPORT an Amendment to Florida Statute 934.50 to Extend the Deadline for Discontinuing Non-Approved Drones.

Extend the deadline for discontinuing non-approved drones.



SUPPORT AND DEDICATE state resources for the development and enhancement of county and municipal cybersecurity by providing funding for technical assistance, threat assessments, employee training, infrastructure improvements and data protection.



2023 POLICY PRIORITIES

CONTINUE FINANCIAL SUPPORT of the SCRAP and SCOP Grant Programs to Assist Small Counties in Paving Farm to Market Roads.

Continue the current level of financial support to FDOT for the Small County Road Assistance (SCRAP) and Outreach Programs (SCOP).



SUPPORT Community Resiliency Grant Programs for Wastewater, Water Quality, Beach Renourishment, Flood and Sea Level Rise Mitigation and Septic to Sewer Conversion Projects.

Urge the Legislature to increase available grant programs through the State of Florida Department of Environmental Protection.

SUPPORT Funding Intended for any Legislative Appropriation Projects for Land Acquisition within Flagler County.

Urge the Legislature to approve funding for conservation and to protect water resources, drinking water sources, land and water quality through Article X, Section 28 of the Florida Statutes for the Land Acquisition Trust Fund.



2023 POLICY PRIORITIES



MAINTAIN Short Term Vacation Rental Legislation Status Quo.

Maintain the status quo regarding local government regulations for Short Term Vacation Rental legislation

SUPPORT AND CONTINUE TO ADVOCATE for Home Rule Authority.

Continue to advocate for home rule authority by actively opposing further preemption legislation or other legislation that restricts local government in acting in the best interest of their citizens.



PROVIDE Timely Reimbursement from the State of Florida for FEMA Obligated Projects.

The County and its municipalities are spending their reserves to fund necessary repairs as a result of declared emergencies. Urge the Department of Emergency Management (DEM) to assist the county and its cities to receive funding in advance of an approved or obligated project.



Flagler County 2023 Legislative Program



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