



# **2026 STATE LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM**

## **FLAGLER COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**



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### **CONTINUE SUPPORT For:**

State of Florida Transportation Disadvantaged Program.  
Affordable Housing Program.  
Enhancement of Local Government Cybersecurity.  
Beach Nourishment programs to restore and stabilize the coastline.  
Increased funding for local water infrastructure projects.  
SCRAP and SCOP Grant Programs for paving small roads.

**REVIEW and ADJUST** Population Parameters for Rural Designation as a Result of Florida’s Rapid Growth.

### **MAINTAIN:**

Short Term Vacation Rental Legislation Status Quo.  
Current permissible uses of Tourist Development Taxes for expenditures related to tourism promotion.

**ADVOCATE** for Home Rule Authority.

**INCLUDE** 911 telecommunicators in Special Risk Class for retirement benefits.

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

This document represents Flagler County's legislative program for the 2026 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 focus on public safety, agriculture, community resiliency and trails. We will continue to collaborate with our municipal partners to provide a unified agenda representing all the needs of all Flagler County citizens, and we welcome your partnership in our vision for 2026.

As such, we offer this legislative agenda for your consideration, with the full knowledge that the 2026 session will have limited funding for local projects as the legislature continues fulfilling State obligations.

*Flagler County Board of County Commissioners*



# Flagler County Board of County Commissioners



Left to right: Commissioner **Andy Dance**, District 1; Commissioner **Gregory Hansen**, District 2; Commissioner **Kim Carney**, District 3; Commissioner **Leann Pennington**, District 4; and Commissioner **Pam Richardson**, 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

## Memberships in Legislative Alliances



# About Us

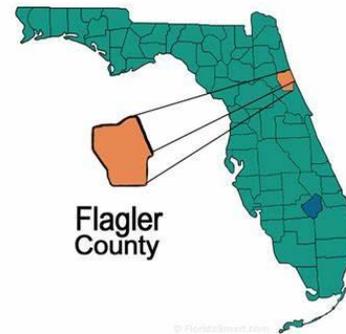
**Known for its "Old Florida" feel, Flagler County welcomes and is pleased to serve its travelers, visitors, residents, and businesses.**

Flagler County, Florida is located on the state's northeast coast, south of nearby St. Augustine and north of Daytona Beach. The County was incorporated in 1917 and named after American industrialist Henry Flagler.

The population is 136,310 (2024 - Office of Economic and Demographic Research Data) distributed among Flagler County's unincorporated areas (15% of its residents, 52% of its area) and five incorporated municipalities (85% of its residents, 48% of its area).

The five municipalities within Flagler County are:

- **The Town of Beverly Beach**
- **The City of Bunnell (largest by area)**
- **The City of Flagler Beach**
- **The Town of Marineland**
- **The City of Palm Coast (largest by population)**



Covering 570 square miles, Flagler County is characterized by a maritime, subtropical climate and is known for its miles of uncrowded coquina beaches, extensive forested acreage, freshwater lakes and ecologically important swamps.

The Intracoastal Waterway bisects the eastern portion of Flagler County, creating the barrier island which runs the length of Flagler County's 18-miles of Atlantic coastline.

Flagler County is home to more than 40 parks and preserves – used by beachgoers, campers, boaters, history and nature-lovers – as well as 90+ miles of trails for hiking, biking, and paddling.

Important travel ways include I-95, US Route 1, and Florida State Route A1A. The portion of A1A serving Flagler County is designated a Scenic and Historic Coastal Byway and an All-American Road (one of just 15 in the continental US) by the Federal Highway Administration. Portions of the 100-year-Old Brick Road, the original 'Dixie Highway', also traverse the county. The Flagler Executive Airport is conveniently located off of State Road 100.

Top economic sectors in Flagler County include Tourism, Retail, Healthcare, Administrative, Construction, and Educational Services, with roughly 50,000 county residents in the workforce. Agriculture, silviculture, and cattle farming also contribute significantly to the gross regional product, as they have since the early 1800's.

# History And Demographics

Flagler County is named after American industrialist Henry Flagler and was created from portions of neighboring Volusia and St. Johns counties in 1917. Prior to the arrival of the Spanish in Florida in the 16th century, this region was inhabited by several Indian tribes, including the Timucuan and the Seminoles.

By the early 1800s, the area now known as Flagler County was home to an increasing number of large plantations growing cash crops such as sugar cane and corn. The largest sugar plantation on the east coast of Florida was in Flagler County, and the plantation's grounds and ruins today comprise Florida's Bulow Plantation Ruins Historic State Park. In Flagler County's infancy, cultivation of the Irish potato contributed to its financial success. The county seal acknowledges this contribution by prominently featuring a potato.

	Flagler County	Florida	United States
<b>Population</b>			
Population estimates	136,310	22,610,726	334,914,895
<b>Age</b>			
Persons under 5 years	3.60%	5.00%	5.60%
Persons under 18 years	1.60%	19.30%	21.70%
Persons 65 years and over	31.40%	21.60%	17.30%
<b>Income &amp; Poverty</b>			
Median household income (in 2022 dollars), 2018-2022 \$69,251 \$67,917 \$75,149	\$ 69,251.00	\$ 67,917.00	\$ 75,149.00
Per capita income in past 12 months	\$ 40,463.00	\$ 38,850.00	\$ 41,261.00
Persons in poverty	9.10%	12.70%	11.50%

# Budget In Brief 2024-25

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<b>Revenues</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Property Taxes	\$ 128,903,145.00
Other Taxes	\$ 10,105,871.00
Licenses & Permits	\$ 2,654,850.00
Intergovernmental Revenue	\$ 33,097,620.00
Charges for Services	\$ 14,933,089.00
Fines & Forfeitures	\$ 793,550.00
Miscellaneous Revenues	\$ 13,782,687.00
Interfund Transfers	\$ 7,112,099.00
Other Sources	\$ 1,563,767.00
Cash Carry Forward	\$ 94,808,997.00
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>\$ 307,755,675.00</b>

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<b>Expenditures</b>	<b>Amount</b>
General Government	\$ 33,888,370.00
Debt Service	\$ 8,539,670.00
Public Safety	\$ 43,600,500.00
Physical Environment	\$ 18,081,949.00
Transportation	\$ 13,459,743.00
Economic Environment	\$ 3,945,631.00
Human Services	\$ 5,925,075.00
Cultural/Recreation	\$ 7,680,098.00
Court Related	\$ 1,737,206.00
Other Uses	\$ 10,523,659.00
Interfund Transfers	\$ 7,112,099.00
Transfer to Constitutional Officers	\$ 55,600,853.00
Reserves	\$ 97,660,822.00
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$ 307,755,675.00</b>

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# Economic Summary

\*Flagler County February 2025 Employment Stats

## EMPLOYMENT



## UNEMPLOYMENT RATE



Data Source: Florida Department of Commerce (Not Seasonally Adjusted)

## SINGLE-FAMILY HOME DATA



## TOWNHOUSE & CONDO DATA



Data Source: Flagler County Association of Realtors

## PERMITS ISSUED BY BUILDING DEPARTMENT

Permits this Month / CY Year-To-Date

**Flagler County**  
285/609

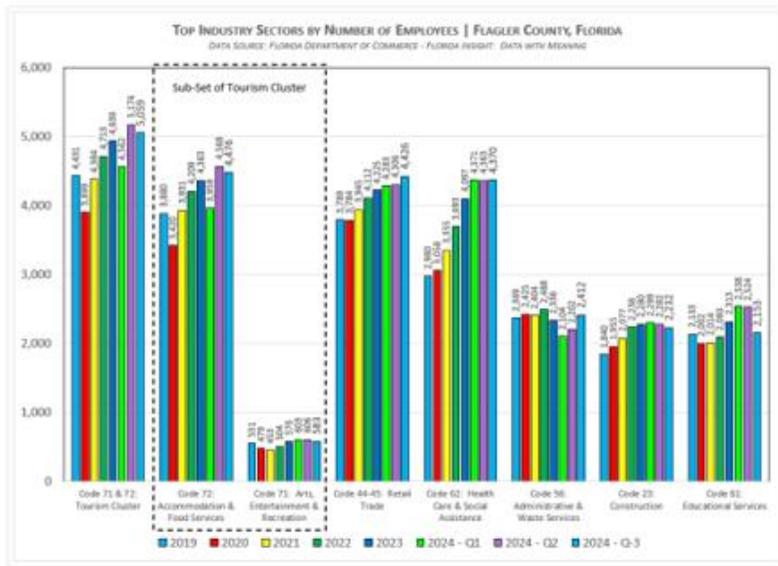
**Bunnell**  
27/52

**Flagler Beach**  
139/287

**Palm Coast**  
1,391/2,677

Data Source: County and Municipal Building Departments

Note: Includes permits for new builds, remodels, roofs, water heaters, fences, etc.



Flagler County's Top Industry Sectors by Number of Employees

- Tourism
- Retail Trade
- Health Care
- Administration
- Construction
- Education

Data Source: Florida Department of Commerce



# Our Municipal Partners



## Municipality Statistics

	<i>Population</i>	<i>Area</i>	<i>Percent of Land</i>
FLAGLER COUNTY	<b>136,310</b>	<b>571 mi<sup>2</sup></b>	
Beverly Beach	<b>503</b>	<b>247 acres</b>	<b>0.067 %</b>
Bunnell	<b>4,149</b>	<b>139.9 mi<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>24.5 %</b>
Flagler Beach	<b>5,550</b>	<b>4.09 mi<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>0.71 %</b>
Marineland	<b>12</b>	<b>284 acres</b>	<b>0.077 %</b>
Palm Coast	<b>106,193</b>	<b>96.57 mi<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>16.9 %</b>
Unincorporated	<b>19,903</b>	<b>329.37 mi<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>57.7 %</b>

*\*2024 Population Estimates - Office of Economic and Demographic Research*

# Flagler County Municipal Partners



## **CITY OF PALM COAST**

Mayor Mike Norris

Lauren Johnston, Acting City Manager



## **CITY OF FLAGLER BEACH**

Mayor Patti King

Dale Martin, 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 Douglas "Dewey" Dew

Suzanne Dixon, Town Manager



# Flagler County School District

## OUR DISTRICT

Flagler Schools serves over 13,000 students across ten schools. With over 2,000 employees, our school district is the county's largest employer and plays a significant role in the community. Flagler Schools is a model for other districts in Florida and has been recognized for its technology-infused learning spaces and innovative student programs.



## MISSION

Our Mission is to ensure educational success through high expectations and innovative thinking in a safe learning environment to empower students to reach their full potential as responsible, ethical, and productive citizens in a diverse and changing world.



**Will Furry**  
School Board Chair  
District 2



**Christy Chong**  
School Board Vice-Chair  
District 4



**Janie Ruddy**  
School Board Member  
District 3



**Lauren Ramirez**  
School Board Member  
District 5



**Derek Barrs**  
School Board Member  
District 1



**LaShakia Moore**  
Superintendent

# FLAGLER COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

## **PROGRAMS OF STUDY**

Our students have the opportunity to take Dual Enrollment courses with partner colleges and universities. This, combined with our Advanced High School Programs like International Baccalaureate (IB) and Advanced International Certificate of Education (AICE), challenge our students to excel.

Career and Technical Education programs are available to all students at our middle and high schools. These programs prepare our youth for life after graduation, whether it's continuing their education through college, university or trade school, or entering the workforce with the tools they need to succeed.

## **ACCREDITATION**

District and school accreditation is a certification by an external authority that the minimum standards of quality are being met as required by the Florida Department of Education. Accreditation means that our schools meet leadership capacity, learning capacity, and resource capacity performance standards.

Flagler Schools is accredited through Cognia (formerly AdvancED). Their Accreditation Engagement Review Reports are produced after visiting our schools, examining district documents, and interviewing stakeholders.

## **Guiding Principles**

Children First

Trust and Respect for All

Empower Others

Teamwork

Excellence, Quality, and Consistency

Commitment to Individual Needs

Get to "Yes"

# Flagler County's Guiding Principles

## PRIORITIES

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

**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.

**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.

**SUPPORT** 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.

**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.

**OPPOSE** 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.

## 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  
Thomas Leek  
*District 7*



Representative  
Sam Greco  
*District 19*

# 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 2026 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 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 advocate for county and city 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 issue 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 Ave.  
Suite 100  
Tallahassee, FL 32301  
(866) 960-5939

## KEY SESSION DATES

<b>August 1, 2025:</b>	Deadline for filing claim bills
<b>January 13, 2026:</b>	Regular Session convenes
<b>February 28, 2026:</b>	Motion to reconsider made and considered the same day. All bills are immediately certified
<b>March 3, 2026:</b>	50th day – Last day for regularly scheduled committee meetings
<b>March 13, 2026:</b>	60th day – Last day of Regular Session

# Appropriations and Funding Requests



# Appropriations and Funding Requests



## PUBLIC HEALTH & SAFETY



### Disaster Resilience Staging Sites (Priority #3 for Flagler County)

**Background:** Flagler County's rural communities do not have existing hardened surface areas that can serve as sites to support the provision of critical emergency and post-disaster (hurricanes, wildfires, floods, etc.) services. This project would provide for the creation of 2 Disaster Resilience Staging Sites in the rural communities of western Flagler County.

Our rural communities, which do not have ready access to grocery stores or municipal water services, frequently see greater impacts to basic needs following disasters, such as hurricanes or wildfires. While our local emergency management team has been able to develop functional temporary solutions following recent disasters; the creation of pre-designated sites will allow for the more effective and efficient provision of emergency services.

These sites would be created by elevating and paving areas on existing County properties, adjacent to existing paved roads, to create Disaster Resilience Staging Sites that will allow for the provision of emergency services, such as:

- Staging and distribution of emergency supplies (food, water, tarps, etc.)
- Staging and deployment of emergency and infrastructure repair vehicles
- Staging and operations of sanitary stations (showers, restrooms, laundry, etc.)

Once developed, these sites would be maintained by Flagler County and be available for local and state emergency use. In Kind services provide by Flagler County General Services to include:

Mobilization, site work, and surveying at a cost of \$126,000 per location.

**Requested Action:** Provide the funding needed to create two Disaster Resilience Staging Sites for rural communities of western Flagler County.

**Effect:** These sites would provide the basic needs following disasters for the rural part of Flagler County and allow for effective and efficient provision of emergency services.

# Appropriations and Funding Requests

## PUBLIC HEALTH & SAFETY



### Collaboration with Flagler County Animal Shelter

**Background:** Palm Coast’s collaboration with the Flagler County Animal Shelter represents an important investment in community well-being, quality of life, and the city’s pet-friendly character. As Palm Coast continues to grow, so does the demand for animal care services. The existing shelter has reached capacity challenges, reflecting both the rising number of residents and the strong presence of pets as part of daily life in our community. Palm Coast residents deeply value the safety and well-being of their animals.

The shelter serves as more than just a temporary housing facility. It is a critical piece of community infrastructure. It provides essential services such as adoption, reunification of lost pets, spay/neuter programs, and emergency sheltering during disasters. As growth continues, expanded capacity and improved facilities are necessary to meet increasing demand, ensure animal welfare, and support public health and safety.

A modern, well-resourced animal shelter also enhances quality of life for residents by sustaining Palm Coast’s pet-friendly environment. Parks, trails, and neighborhoods thrive when paired with supportive animal care services. Investment in this partnership reflects the City’s commitment to fostering a compassionate community where both people and pets can flourish.

Resiliency is another key benefit. During hurricanes or other emergencies, the shelter plays a vital role in protecting animals and supporting residents who need a safe place for their pets. Enhancing this facility ensures Palm Coast and Flagler County remain prepared for future challenges while safeguarding what makes the community special.

**Requested Action:** Support collaboration with Flagler County to expand capacity and enhance the animal shelter facilities serving Palm Coast residents.

**Effect:** This project is both an infrastructure and quality-of-life priority. By strengthening shelter capacity, Palm Coast will meet the needs of a growing, pet-friendly community, ensure the humane care of animals, and preserve its reputation as a compassionate, resilient city.

# Appropriations and Funding Requests

## HISTORIC PRESERVATION, CULTURE & RECREATION



### Preserve Historic Fire Station 22



**Background:** Preserving Historic Fire Station 22 in Palm Coast is essential to maintaining the city's unique identity and honoring its rich history. This historic landmark serves as a tangible link to the past, offering residents and visitors a glimpse into the early days of the community's development. By preserving this iconic structure, Palm Coast can ensure that future generations continue to appreciate the historical context and evolution of firefighting services, fostering a sense of pride and connection to the local heritage. Moreover, repurposing the building for community use, such as a museum or cultural center, would provide a valuable space for educational programs and events, promoting a deeper understanding of the area's history. In embracing its past, Palm Coast can create a legacy that enhances both its sense of place and its sense of community. This request is for state funding to accomplish required building code updates to repurpose the building for an assembly use.

**Requested Action:** Support funding to preserve historic Station 22 for future generations to enjoy as a cultural center.

**Effect:** This funding will ensure future generations continue to appreciate the historical context and evolution of firefighting services.

# Appropriations and Funding Requests

## HISTORIC PRESERVATION, CULTURE & RECREATION



### 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 1930's 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 such as weddings, wedding receptions, graduations and baby showers. In 2021, the City had to close the building for use due to deteriorating conditions of the building and safety concerns regarding continued use. In 2022, remediation of the building was completed at costs exceeding \$100,000.00. Since 2023, the City has been seeking funding to complete all the required restoration that will not only meet the requirements of the National Registry of Historic Places but also create a facility that will better serve as a true community center that can easily be converted based on a wide variety of possible uses. The City has received two awards to assist with the restoration of the facility; however, current construction costs have limited the impact of the awards and the issues that could be addressed using the funding provided. The number of structural needs in the building and other aspects of the building requiring work plus the requirements of historical preservation, require additional funding to restore the facility to a safe and full use.

**Requested Action:** Provide local levels of funding in the amount of \$2,000,000.00 to continue and finish the reconstruction of 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 needed to complete this project and reopen a facility vital to the community. This facility's central location and ease of access for citizens allow for the cultural, educational and enrichment of the citizens of Flagler County and adjacent counties as well. It also assists with maintaining the heritage of the community and connection to our past as the building is restored following the guidelines and restrictions required by Federal and State historical restoration requirements.

# Appropriations and Funding Requests

## INFRASTRUCTURE

### CR 304 Resurfacing and Multiple Bridge Improvement Project (Priority #1 for Flagler County)



**Background:** Flagler County is seeking funding to improve CR 304, a key asphalt-paved roadway that serves as a vital connector and evacuation route. CR 304 links US-1 to SR 11, and through CR 305, it provides access to US-17 and SR 100. Due to projected population growth and its role in emergency evacuations, the road is expected to see a significant increase in traffic. The county has shovel-ready plans for a two-segment project to address the road's deteriorating condition and replace several aging structures.

#### Segment 1: CR 304 from CR 305 to SR 11 (2.5 miles)

Roadway Resurfacing: The design plans call for full-depth reclamation resurfacing and the addition of roadway shoulders. Flagler County has already secured \$2.8 million in funding from the FDOT for FY25/26.

- **Box Culvert Replacement:** This project involves replacing a three-barrel, 12-foot by 8-foot box culvert.

#### Segment 2: CR 304 from SR 11 to US-1 (7.75 miles)

Roadway Improvements: This work includes milling and resurfacing the existing two-lane roadway and widening the 10 feet lanes to 12 feet, plus adding roadway shoulders.

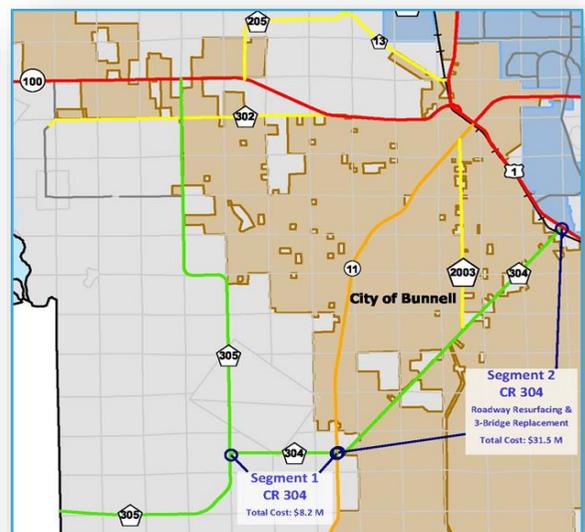
Bridge Replacements or Improvements: The existing design plans are for replacing three bridges but to reduce cost Flagler County's alternative plan is to improve these bridges to expand their lifespan another 20 years.

- **Sweet Water Creek Bridge:** A 160-foot bridge with four 40-foot spans.
- **Middle Haw Creek Bridge:** A 270-foot bridge with nine 30-foot spans.
- **Parker Canal Bridge:** A 120-foot bridge with three 40-foot spans.

Over time, each of these bridges have become inadequate to pass flood volumes generated by severe storm events without overtopping. When this occurs, the associated roadway becomes impassable, severely hampering regular traffic and critical evacuation and emergency service operations. In addition, continued deck exposure to the forces of storm surge reduces their useful life expectancies and drives up annual bridge and road maintenance costs. Replacing these obsolete bridges and resurfacing CR 304 remedies these circumstances and will result in a reliable roadway system for this area of the county.

**Request Action:** Provide funding for the CR 304 Project with a match from Flagler County. This project will help to complete a major portion of this resurfacing and bridge improvement project.

**Effect:** Improving these bridges and resurfacing CR 304 promotes and facilitates a structured approach to resilience planning by strengthening existing arterial roadway networks for residents and allows businesses to operate with fewer interruptions and increased reliability.



# Appropriations and Funding Requests

## INFRASTRUCTURE



### I-95 Parallel Facility Widening of Old Kings Road (Priority #2 for City of Palm Coast)

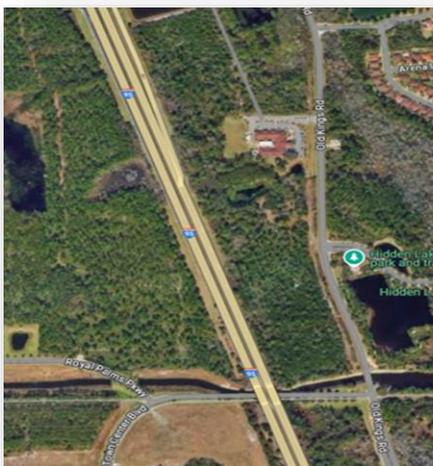
**Background:** In the past three years alone, I-95 in Flagler County has been completely shut down 63 times due to severe accidents, with the number of closures increasing each year. These frequent shutdowns place a significant strain on our city's road infrastructure and hinder our ability to provide critical emergency services. During these closures, Old Kings Road, which runs parallel to I-95 throughout the county, absorbs the diverted traffic nearly twice a month, creating substantial challenges.

To address these issues, we urgently request state funding for three essential initiatives: the widening of Old Kings Road to effectively handle increased traffic and serve as a reliable alternate route during I-95 closures, enhancements to evacuation routes to strengthen community preparedness, and public safety improvements to ensure the road's functionality and residents' safety during emergencies.

Phase 2A of this effort includes critical components such as the intersections at Town Center Boulevard, a narrow I-95 overpass, a section of the state trail system, and a major stormwater conveyance canal, all of which will be integrated into the construction plan.

**Requested Action:** Provide funding to add capacity to Old Kings Road north of SR 100 an I-95 parallel facility and vital evacuation route.

**Effect:** This project will enhance Old Kings Road's capacity as a vital alternate route for I-95, improve evacuation readiness, and bolster public safety during emergencies. Phase 2A incorporates essential upgrades, including intersections, an I-95 overpass, stormwater infrastructure, and trail connections, ensuring a comprehensive solution that addresses traffic flow, safety, and community resilience.



# Appropriations and Funding Requests

## INFRASTRUCTURE



### Old Kings Road North Construction Phase 3

**Background:** The widening of Old Kings Road north in Palm Coast represents a strategic investment in regional mobility, safety, and economic development. The project, a Volusia-Flagler TPO priority project since 2009, underscores its long-term importance. Phase I, completed in 2022 with FDOT funding set the foundation for expanded capacity and improved functionality. With Phase II construction scheduled for 2025, the project continues to gain momentum, reflecting strong regional and state support. The Volusia-Flagler TPO ranks Old Kings Road as the third-highest priority among Regionally Significant Non-Statewide Infrastructure System (SIS) Projects, further demonstrating its critical role in the transportation network.

The widened road will accommodate increased traffic volumes, address current congestion issues and prepare for projected growth. As a parallel route to I-95, Old Kings Road is a crucial alternative during highway closures, which have become increasingly frequent. Improving this road ensures smoother traffic flow and minimizes disruptions for commuters and emergency responders alike.

A more efficient transportation network attracts businesses, facilitates commerce, and improves access to employment centers. The enhanced capacity and functionality of Old Kings Road will support economic development in Palm Coast by connecting key commercial and residential areas, creating opportunities for investment and job creation.

The project will incorporate safety enhancements such as better intersections, signage, and pedestrian pathways. These features will reduce accident risks and improve safety for all users, including drivers, cyclists, and pedestrians.

**Request Action:** Provide funding for construction of Old Kings Road north widening Phase III.

**Effect:** This project is not only a local priority but also a regional necessity. The ranking by the Volusia-Flagler TPO as a top-tier Regionally Significant Non-SIS project highlights its impact on mobility, safety, and preparedness across the region. By completing this vital initiative, Palm Coast can meet current demands, prepare for future growth, and ensure the city remains a safe, accessible, and thriving community.

# Appropriations and Funding Requests

## INFRASTRUCTURE



### Road and Transportation Funding for Local Roads

**Background:** The City owns and maintains almost 27 miles of local roads. Some roads have remained unpaved since the City's incorporation in 1913. Aging roads and continued use of the existing paved roads have created road ratings which require more than just mill and pave work. Based on the current condition of the local roads, the mill and pave option is a short-term solution that will only be effective for a few months to a year before additional work is needed; this is not a fiscally responsible use of taxpayer monies. An estimated 25.5 miles of City owned roads require at least total depth reclamation work to be completed to restore them and some roads will require total reconstruction from sub-base, to base to total paving. With no new General Fund Revenues available due to a lack of growth or stalled growth, the City needs additional sources of funding to dedicate toward work on all local roads.

**Requested Action:** Provide local levels of funding in the amount of \$20,000,000.00 to assist with restoring an estimated 25.5 miles of local roads to a condition that will have a lifespan of several years which can then be extended with milling and paving.

**Effect:** This funding will improve the quality of life and safety for all City residents, business owners, visitors to the City and anyone who drives on City owned roads. Damaged local roads can contribute to an increase in road accidents, possible increased property damage and possible damage to other infrastructure such as utility lines including water, sewer, power, cable and internet as people veer and steer off-road to avoid damaged areas of roadway. Additional impacts range from assisting with driving times, reducing household vehicles, commercial vehicles, government fleet vehicles and emergency response vehicle repair costs brought on by possible damage caused by local road conditions which could include tires, shocks, struts, etc. and improvement in stormwater drainage. Improved roadways can also increase and encourage physical activity such as walking and cycling which promote mobility and safety.

# Appropriations and Funding Requests

## COMMUNITY RESILIENCY

### Construction of the Black Branch North Drainage System.

**(Priority #2 for Flagler County)**

**Background:** Old Haw Creek Road is an approximately 4.9-mile roadway, located in Bunnell, Florida, and is owned and maintained by Flagler County. The roadway historically floods and regularly overtops at an existing cross drain located approximately 2,300 feet south of W. Moody Blvd. During roadway overtopping and flooding events, surrounding residential properties are also flooded.

The proposed project scope will primarily include the construction of a wet detention facility on County property with a bypass weir in the main drainage channel to direct water into the pond for detention and treatment. After detention treatment, a control structure would discharge stormwater back into the existing canal at a controlled rate. Ancillary related improvement elements could also include regrading of roadside swales and ditches, upsizing of cross drain culverts, pond siting, pond construction, and acquiring contiguous easements to access existing drainage facilities for maintenance.

The proposed drainage improvements would help to alleviate flooding locally and improve water quality to the area along Old Haw Creek Road which includes the future site of the Florida State Guard Training Facility.

**Requested Action:** Provide funding for construction. Flagler County will dedicate funding for design, permitting and any easements needed for this project.

**Effect:** This stormwater improvement project is required to restore consistent conveyance in the existing drainage systems, improve infrastructure, improve water quality and increase flood storage capacity in the canals to reduce flooding frequency. This project will support and protect the area along Old Haw Creek Road including the site of the future home of the Florida State Guard Training Facility.



# Appropriations and Funding Requests

## COMMUNITY RESILIENCY



### Fire Station 23 / Burroughs Dr. Stormwater Park Design and Construction (Priority # 1 for City of Palm Coast)

**Background:** Expanding stormwater capacity in the B-section of Palm Coast, specifically on the 28.7-acre parcel owned by the City on Burrows Drive, offers numerous community benefits. This land, located next to Fire Station 23 and linked by a ditch to Bird of Paradise Lake, can play a critical role in mitigating flooding issues. During periods of heavy rainfall, the lake frequently overflows, flooding surrounding streets and disrupting daily life for residents.

A well-designed stormwater capacity project on this site would alleviate these issues by managing rainwater more effectively and preventing the lake from spilling over. By using innovative approaches like those seen in London Waterway Stormwater Park, the project could create dual-purpose infrastructure and a functional stormwater system that also serves as a recreational area.

Increasing stormwater capacity will reduce flooding risks, particularly during extreme weather events. Improved drainage will protect nearby homes, streets, and other infrastructure, reducing property damage and enhancing public safety.

Incorporating a passive neighborhood park into the project would create a valuable community space. Features like walking trails, benches, and open green areas could enhance quality of life by providing a place for residents to exercise, relax, and enjoy nature.

By turning this 28.7-acre parcel into a stormwater retention area with added recreational amenities, the City of Palm Coast can solve a persistent flooding issue while simultaneously enhancing the neighborhood's livability and resilience.

**Requested Action:** Provide funding for design and permitting for the Fire Station 23 / Burroughs Dr. Stormwater Park project.

**Effect:** Expanding stormwater capacity on the 28.7-acre City-owned parcel on Burrows Drive will address persistent flooding issues in the B-section of Palm Coast, protecting homes, streets, and infrastructure from damage during heavy rainfall. This project will enhance public safety, reduce property risks, and improve the community's resilience to extreme weather. By integrating features like walking trails and green spaces, the initiative will also provide a recreational hub, enhancing residents' quality of life. This dual-purpose approach ensures long-term stormwater management while fostering a vibrant, livable neighborhood.



# Appropriations and Funding Requests

## COMMUNITY RESILIENCY



### Woodland's Subdivision Stormwater Capacity Project Design and Permitting

**(Priority #3 for City of Palm Coast)**

**Background:** The City of Palm Coast seeks legislative funding to address critical drainage issues in the Woodlands and Wild Oaks Subdivisions, residential communities prone to flooding after heavy rainfall. The area's proximity to a restricted outfall exacerbates water retention, leaving parts of the subdivisions inundated for extended periods during significant rain events.

Following Hurricane Milton, many Woodlands residents were stranded in their homes as floodwaters rendered streets impassable to personal vehicles. It took several days for the water to recede, significantly disrupting daily life and posing potential risks to health and safety. Recent trends of more intense storms have worsened these conditions, raising concerns about repetitive loss and ongoing threats to the community's well-being.

To alleviate flooding and improve stormwater management, the city plans to utilize publicly owned parcels to develop retention areas. These retention ponds will provide critical stormwater storage along upstream upland areas, reducing the burden on the restricted outfall and allowing floodwaters to drain more effectively.

The city is committed to being a partner in this solution. It will contribute the land needed for stormwater retention as an in-kind match, demonstrating local investment in the project. Additionally, recent stormwater studies/designs/plans resulting in ongoing upgrades to stormwater infrastructure within this affected area, including replacing old pipes with larger ones to enhance flow capacity, are part of the City's proactive efforts to improve conditions in the Woodlands.

This project addresses an immediate need to mitigate the impact of increasingly frequent and severe rain events. Legislative funding is essential to expedite the necessary improvements and ensure the safety, accessibility, and quality of life for Woodland's residents. This request represents an opportunity for the state to invest in resilience infrastructure, reducing long-term costs associated with repetitive flood loss.

**Requested Action:** Provide funding for design and permitting for the Woodland's Subdivision Stormwater Capacity Project.

**Effect:** This project will improve drainage in the Woodlands and Wild Oaks subdivisions and protect residents from recurring flooding, enhancing safety, accessibility, and quality of life. By creating retention ponds on public-owned land and upgrading stormwater infrastructure, this project will mitigate the impact of severe rain events, prevent repetitive flood loss, and reduce long-term recovery costs.

# Appropriations and Funding Requests

## COMMUNITY RESILIENCY



### Seminole Woods Dry Lake Weir Lowering Project

**Background:** The City-Wide Stormwater Master Plan, finalized in November 2019, highlights flood risk areas along Seminole Woods Boulevard and several nearby residential streets tied to the Little Canal system.

The City owns a 46-acre vacant property known as Dry Lake, which currently acts as overflow floodplain storage for the Little Canal. A study was conducted to explore ways to maximize Dry Lake's potential for flood storage and better integrate it with the surrounding canal systems.

The primary goal of this proposed project is to improve flood protection by increasing storage capacity in southern Palm Coast, helping reduce flooding in nearby areas. In addition, the lake will enhance stormwater treatment and improve the quality of water discharged into the environment.

As part of this project, a fixed weir will be constructed just west of the Little Canal and Seminole Woods Boulevard. This will maintain upstream water levels at elevation 21.5, which is the current control elevation for the L-1 basin. The L-1 control elevation near I-95 can then be lowered by two feet to 19.5 via a weir replacement/retrofit, expanding Dry Lake's flood storage capacity. Combined, the lake excavation and weir adjustment project to create 124 acre-feet (over 722,000 gallons) of additional flood storage between the 100-year peak stage and the new control elevation.

**Requested Action:** Provide funding for design, permitting, and construction for Seminole Woods Dry Lake Weir lowering project.

**Effect:** The Dry Lake flood storage and weir adjustment project will significantly enhance flood protection in southern Palm Coast by providing an additional 124 acre-feet of flood storage capacity. This improvement will reduce flooding risks for nearby residential areas and key roadways, including Seminole Woods Boulevard. These efforts contribute to a more resilient stormwater infrastructure, safeguarding the community and supporting sustainable environmental stewardship.

# Appropriations and Funding Requests



## COMMUNITY RESILIENCY

### Dredging Saltwater Canals

**Background:** The dredging of Palm Coast’s saltwater canal system represents a vital investment in water quality, habitat management, and long-term community resiliency. Constructed in the 1970s as part of the city’s original development, the canals have naturally accumulated sediment over time, which reduces tidal flow, diminishes water clarity, and impacts aquatic habitats. Regular maintenance is essential to protect the ecological health of the waterways while also sustaining Palm Coast’s identity as a premier waterfront community.

The project focuses on restoring depths throughout the city’s 26 miles of saltwater canals, enhancing tidal exchange that supports marine life and improves overall water quality. By removing accumulated sediment, dredging helps prevent harmful algal blooms, promotes oxygen circulation, and provides healthier conditions for fish, manatees, and other species. Maintaining navigable and ecologically balanced canals also safeguards waterfront property values and supports recreation and tourism, both of which contribute to Palm Coast’s economy.

Resiliency is a central benefit of this project. Healthy canal systems absorb tidal changes more effectively, mitigating the impacts of heavy rain events and storm surge. The work aligns with broader city infrastructure goals by ensuring this unique waterborne network remains sustainable, functional, and an asset for generations to come.

**Requested Action:** Provide funding for dredging of Palm Coast’s saltwater canals.

**Effect:** This project is both an environmental and infrastructure priority. Dredging will restore water quality, improve marine habitats, enhance resiliency against future storm events, and protect Palm Coast’s unique canal system. By investing in this initiative, Palm Coast can strengthen ecological health, preserve its waterfront identity, and ensure its waterways remain a safe, accessible, and thriving part of the community.



# Appropriations and Funding Requests

## COMMUNITY RESILIENCY



### Design/Construction of Reverse Osmosis Treatment System (Priority #1 for City of Flagler Beach)

**Background:** The City's first priority project is related to the City's Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP). For the City to be compliant with State regulations (specifically the provisions of SB 64 [2021]), significant improvements must be made to the City's WWTP (originally constructed in 1987; current capacity 1.5 million gallons/day). The summary of SB 64 (as presented on the Florida Senate website) states:

Reclaimed Water; Requiring certain domestic wastewater utilities to submit to the Department of Environmental Protection by a specified date a plan for eliminating nonbeneficial surface water discharge within a specified timeframe; requiring domestic wastewater utilities applying for permits for new or expanded surface water discharges to prepare a specified plan for eliminating nonbeneficial discharges as part of its permit application; providing that potable reuse is an alternative water supply and that projects relating to such reuse are eligible for alternative water supply funding; requiring counties, municipalities, and special districts to authorize graywater technologies under certain circumstances and to provide certain incentives for the implementation of such technologies, etc.

The City has historically (and in full compliance) discharged the treated effluent from the WWTP to the Atlantic Ocean Intracoastal Waterway (also referred to as the Matanzas River). As indicated in the SB 64 language, said discharge will no longer be permitted (specifically, after December 31, 2031). The City will discharge the treated effluent into a "re-use" system that will provide property owners a secondary source for irrigation purposes. The reuse water must comply with State-mandated standards (as did the effluent discharged to surface waters). The City's current discharge would not comply with the standards that will eventually go into effect (primarily due to high salinity content).

The City's formally adopted Reuse Master Plan (2024) illustrates the City's proposed efforts to comply with the provisions of SB 64. The proposed Reverse Osmosis Treatment System will reduce the salinity content to the compliance standards for re-use purposes and is identified as a FY 2025/2026 design effort and a FY 2026/207 construction effort (accompanied by the associated Transfer Pump Station). The estimated design and construction cost of the Reverse Osmosis Treatment System and the Transfer Pump Station is \$3,000,000.

**Requested Action:** The City's leading legislative request to support the design and construction of a Reverse Osmosis Treatment System is for \$1,500,000, matched by identical local funding, for the estimated \$3,000,000 cost. The proposed schedule for the project would have design completed in one year and construction completed the following year (City FY 2026/2027).

**Effect:** These two components are key facets of the City's conversion from its antiquated 1987 treatment and disposal process to Advanced Wastewater Treatment. The City has solicited proposals for the proposed conversion, and the preliminary estimates are \$50,000,000. The funding for the conversion will be a combination of loans, grants, and local funds. Previous efforts to secure additional grant funding have been submitted by have not been awarded. State funding for Alternative Water Supply was limited to approximately \$35,000,000 in the current fiscal year (an amount that likely is a mere fraction of the costs facing communities across the State to comply with SB 64).



# Appropriations and Funding Requests

## COMMUNITY RESILIENCY



### Resiliency Improvement

**Background:** The City of Flagler Beach is located on a barrier island, with elevations from three feet to eighteen feet above sea level. Several critical City facilities are located on S. Flagler Avenue: Police Department, Fire Department, Maintenance Department, and Streets/Stormwater Department. To the rear (west) of these facilities is the Atlantic Ocean Intracoastal Waterway (Matanzas River) and associated marshlands. All four of these facilities are susceptible to flooding during storms, high tides, and significant rain. When flooded, the City’s ability to respond to public safety and maintenance needs is limited and equipment and supplies are vulnerable. A further review of the area topography reveals that this area is one of the lowest areas in the City, forming a bowl that collects stormwater from beyond the immediate area.

To address this vulnerability (as documented in the City’s formal Vulnerability Assessment and Adaptation Action Plan; 2023), the City pursued and was awarded a grant (FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant Program 4486-016-R; November 2022) to design a berm to be constructed behind the vulnerable City facilities, greatly reducing the likelihood of flood inundation. That project design has been completed and is awaiting FEMA approval of the design. Earlier this year, FEMA officials indicated that the grant expiration date is February 1, 2028, and that no extension to that date is possible. City staff is not confident that the construction portion of the project can be completed under the auspices of FEMA due to the time required for review, approval, and construction.

In light of that concern, the City has applied for a Resilient Florida grant for the construction phase. The grant project is titled “Flagler Beach South Flagler (SR100 to South Seventh Street) Stormwater and Resiliency Upgrades” and identified as Application RAN-01416. The requested amount in the grant application is \$1,575,000, representing a fifty percent contribution to the construction project cost. The City is waiting for notice of the grant award (or rejection), recognizing that Resilient Florida grants are highly competitive. The project is deemed to be critical enough to warrant the pursuit of alternative funding from the State.

**Requested Action:** The City’s alternative legislative request to support the construction of the stormwater and resiliency berm is for \$1,500,000, matched by identical local funding, for an estimated \$3,000,000 cost. The proposed schedule for the project would see completion during the City’s FY 2026/2027



**Effect:** In conclusion, as with communities throughout the State, aging infrastructure and enhanced environmental regulations require significant, and costly, modernization efforts. The City will continue to pursue all available funding opportunities to assist with these projects, including grants, loans, bonds, and additional local funding. Given that the City’s utility infrastructure capital plan projects a cost of over \$100 million in the next five years (annual operational revenues and costs are approximately \$50,000,000), the ability to address these needs is daunting.

# Appropriations and Funding Requests

## School District Priorities



### Rural Renaissance

**Background:** During the 2025 Regular Session, Legislation was considered to create and fund a “Rural Renaissance” in Florida. Provisions covered many different areas of life including education, health care, agriculture, transportation, infrastructure and more. Focusing on the education portions, significant recurring funding was planned for all districts that were actively involved in sharing services through the State established Educational Service Consortia. Flagler has long been a member of the Northeast Florida Educational Consortium. The bill, as proposed in 2025, would have also fixed regulatory concerns about the Consortia that would have threatened future growth, added additional incentives to share services to increase effectiveness or cost efficiency and provided grant funding through the Consortia to their member districts to focus on a number of traditional difficulties that small and rural districts have had in best serving their students. Flagler Schools would receive an estimated \$1.5 million to \$2.25 million if Rural Renaissance is passed in 2026, as proposed in 2025, to address these concerns.

**Requested Action:** Pass the Rural Renaissance Bill in the 2026 Session as the education portion of that proposal appeared during the 2025 Session (SB 110).

**Effect:** If the school portion of the proposal is adopted, Flagler Schools would receive between \$1.5 million and \$2.25 million in additional recurring grant funding to address the traditional concerns of small and rural school districts in serving their students and communities. Additionally, the Northeast Florida Education Consortium would receive an additional \$1.4 million over current state funding to improve and increase the use of shared services between districts. Finally, current regulatory structures for the Consortia Organizations, largely designed in the 1980s and 1990s, would be updated to reflect best practices and allow for better future growth for the benefit of Florida’s rural citizens and communities.



# Appropriations and Funding Requests

## School District Priorities



### All Students Served Should be Recognized within Capital Outlay Funding Formulas.

**Background:** Most funding for the needs of Flagler Schools facilities comes from a local property tax committed to this function. Additional funds come from impact fees and a voter-approved supplemental sales tax. State law requires the school district to share funding from both the local property tax and the supplemental sales tax with charter schools as though these funds were to be equally split between only the Kindergarten through Grade 12 students. However, the school district also serves hundreds of Pre- Kindergarten and Adult Career Education students in our facilities. Like any program using these facilities, Pre-Kindergarten students and Adult Education students require facilities to be maintained and new facilities provided when capacity is exceeded. Historically, the state has provided significant capital outlay funds through a program called PECO that has recently only supported the capital outlay needs of charter schools with no funding available for traditional public schools.



**Requested Action:** For the legislature to recognize all students served by school districts, not just K-12 students, in the various capital outlay funding formulas.

**Effect:** If adopted, these changes would increase the amounts retained by the school district by a meaningful percentage of funds currently required to be shared with charter schools. This change would more fairly reflect the district's needs to serve all Pre-Kindergarten through Adult Career Education students in high-quality facilities.



**Policy Priorities & Support Issues**

# 2026 POLICY PRIORITIES

- **Policy Position on 2025 SB 180** – Request Modifications to SB 180 to Amend the Following:
  - Narrow the scope of the preemption of land use regulations, in both Sections 18 and 28, to properties with structures actually damaged by storms that cause federal disaster declarations.
  - Shorten the duration of the preemption in Section 28 from October 2027 to October 2026.
  - Eliminate Section 2, which prohibits the County from enforcing Floodplain Management Regulations imposing a 5-year lookback period for substantial improvements.
  
- **Policy Position on 2025 SB 1622** – Request Modifications to SB 1622 Beaches to Amend the Following:
  - Modify Section 2, which indicates that this bill only applies to counties adjacent to the Gulf of America. Change it to “this bill applies to counties adjacent to the Atlantic Ocean, the Gulf of America, or the Straits of Florida, and the bays, lagoons, and other tidal reaches thereof, and the upland properties adjacent thereto.
  
- **Policy Position on FL. Statute 125.0104 (3)(m):** - Request Modifications:
  - Consideration for allowing the High Tourism Impact 5th Penny of the Tourist Development Tax (TDT) to be expanded to include the authorized use:
    - ✓ Finance beach park facilities or beach, channel, estuary or lagoon improvement, maintenance, renourishment, restoration and erosion control.
  - The 5th Penny would no longer be tied to the existing criteria to be levied but rather by a supermajority vote and by ordinance to include the tourist development plan.

# 2026 POLICY PRIORITIES

**CONTINUE SUPPORT** 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.



**CONTINUE SUPPORT** for Affordable Housing Programs and Increase or Eliminate the Caps on Rental and Manufactured Housing.

Urge the Florida Legislature to use ALL of Florida's housing trust fund monies for Florida's housing programs and modify caps on rental and manufactured housing.

**CONTINUE SUPPORT** Community Resiliency Grant Programs for Wastewater, Water Quality and Conversion Projects.

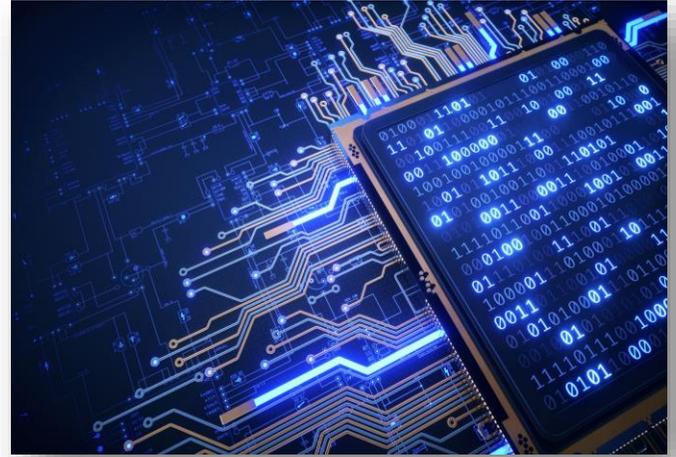
Urge the Legislature to provide increased funding for grant programs in support of water projects.



# 2026 POLICY PRIORITIES

## **CONTINUE SUPPORT** for the Enhancement of Local Government Cybersecurity.

Support legislation dedicating state resources for the development and enhancement of municipal cybersecurity by providing funding for technical assistance, threat assessments, employee training, infrastructure improvements and data protection.



## **CONTINUE 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).

## **CONTINUE SUPPORT** Beach Restoration, Flood and Sea Level Rise Mitigation Projects.

Urge the Legislature to continue financial support for the coastal community's beach nourishment programs.



## 2026 POLICY PRIORITIES



**AMEND** Florida Statute 288.0656 (2) (e) to Increase the Population Levels of a Defined Rural Community.

Urge the Legislature to Amend this Statute to Increase the Population Levels that Define a Rural Community. The population levels for a county has not been modified since 2001 and the levels for a contiguous county has not been modified since 2009.



**MAINTAIN** Short Term Vacation Rental Legislation Status Quo.

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

**MAINTAIN** Current Permissible Uses of Tourist Development Taxes for Expenditures Related to Tourism Promotion.

Maintain the current established permissible uses and oppose any proposed legislation to expand uses.



# 2026 POLICY PRIORITIES

## **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.



**INCLUDE** 911 telecommunicators in Special Risk Class for retirement benefits.

Revise the criteria in the Special Risk Class of the Florida Retirement System to include members employed as 911 public safety telecommunicators.



# Flagler County 2026 Legislative Program



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