

STATE LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM 2006

Sarasota County Government

Board of County Commissioners Legislative Program, Adopted October 26, 2005

Growth Management

Guiding Policy - Growth: Support growth management efforts that improve the quality of life while balancing economic development, preservation/conservation of natural resources, and sound county fiscal policies. Specifically support efforts that control sprawl; provide diverse, affordable and safe neighborhoods; and increase the quantity and quality of open space.

Guiding Policy - Mobility. Support efforts that meet the mobility needs of the people of our County and the region while respecting and enhancing the character of our diverse communities and protecting our natural resources. Specifically support efforts that enhance and fund multimodal facilities that strive to preserve the natural systems.

1. **Growth Management:** OPPOSE any modifications to the Florida statutes which erode county authority to regulate developments within the County including any modifications to the statutory sections pertaining to the Developments of Regional Impact (DRI), Community Redevelopment Agencies (CRA), and Tax Increment Financing (TIF); SUPPORT efforts to require inter-local agreements with affected Counties and Cities before establishing or modifying the boundaries of a CRA or TIF plan
2. **Land Use Regulations:** OPPOSE efforts to modify the existing jurisdictional processes to challenge local land use decisions.
3. **State Funding of Infrastructure:** SUPPORT efforts to identify additional continuing state revenue sources for funding Infrastructure. SUPPORT modifying the TRIP program to reduce local match for those counties that use all available local revenue sources for roads.
 - 3.1 **Strategic Intermodal System:** SUPPORT redirecting any state program funds to the Strategic Intermodal System for counties that have adopted the ELMS gas tax and other local transportation funding sources; SUPPORT efforts to amend the criteria for the system so that segments of US 41 would be included.
 - 3.2 **Venice 41 Bypass Funding:** SUPPORT efforts to fund the Venice 41 Bypass. highway. \$\$
4. **Local Funding of Infrastructure:**
 - 4.1. **Impact Fees:** OPPOSE efforts to diminish or eliminate county ability to impose impact fees.
 - 4.2. **Local Option Gas Taxes:** SUPPORT legislation providing counties with the authority to index their local option gas taxes.
- 5 **Developer proportionate share:** SUPPORT efforts to require a study of the effect of an ordinance establishing a proportionate share formula on state and local transportation systems, existing concurrency requirements at the state and local level, emergency response and evacuation systems, and local development before requiring adoption of a proportionate share ordinance;

5.1. Concurrency requirements: SUPPORT requirements that infrastructure facilities, water supply and schools be in place concurrent with the impacts of new development: SUPPORT efforts to ensure that concurrency is not weakened through additional exemptions and waivers or pay and go provisions.

5.2. Pay and go provisions: OPPOSE reducing the authority of local governments to manage and plan for growth and enforce concurrency requirements by allowing developers, without county approval, to pay an estimated amount for infrastructure needed to support growth and go forward with construction, thereby causing demands on existing infrastructure in addition to violating the intent of concurrency.

6. Red light cameras: SUPPORT legislation authorizing a county to install “red light cameras” to be used for traffic enforcement.

7. Property Rights: SUPPORT the existing Florida constitutional, judicial and statutory safeguards that already require that a county's exercise of eminent domain be for a public purpose, be reasonably necessary for that purpose, and to pay full compensation to the property owner; OPPOSE legislation that would limit county power to exercise their discretion in making decisions regarding eminent domain.

7.1 Modifications to eminent domain valuation process: Modify eminent domain statutes to establish a non-adversarial method of valuing property that provides full, complete and fair compensation for property taken for a valid public purpose, e.g., providing that each party select an appraiser and the two appraisers select a third whose valuation is binding.

7.2 Setting hearing date for abandonment or vacation hearing of county controlled roads: Modify the statutory procedural requirement for setting a hearing on the closing, abandonment or vacation of county controlled roads to eliminate requirements that the hearing be set by a resolution of the County Commission, thereby allowing staff to set the date of the hearing and publish the notice of public hearing in the newspaper which will reduce time and staff effort in such proceedings.

Sustainability.

Guiding Policy - Sustainability: Support efforts that ensure the availability of resources to meet expected and unexpected demands placed upon the County. Specifically support efforts that result in the adoption or continuation of sound County fiscal practices; withstand local regional and state economic disruptions; meet the demand of natural demographic growth, decline and change; and keep tax, assessment and fee rates stable.

Guiding Policy - Economic Development. Support efforts to create a business climate that promotes a diversified, growing economy consistent with established growth management plans and enhances the quality of life of our citizens. Specifically support efforts that increase the commercial/industrial tax base and decrease reliance on residential taxes; create additional jobs at or above the national average wage; and expand and attract desirable businesses and industries.

8. Cost Shifts: OPPOSE any attempts to shift the costs of Government services and programs from the state to the county.

9. Libraries, Arts and Cultural, and Historic Preservation Funding: SUPPORT state funding of libraries at \$41,800,000 for general library aid; \$2,100,000 for Library Cooperatives Aid; SUPPORT efforts to restore arts, cultural, and historic preservation state-program-grant appropriations in FY 2006-2007 to the minimum FY 2002-2003 levels – especially for the Program Grant line items.

10. Flexibility in the use of Tourist Development Tax Funds: Amend the Florida statutes to provide flexibility in the expenditure of Tourist Development Tax revenues for purposes resulting in enhanced benefits to tourism.

11. Environmental Trust Funds and Affordable Housing Funding: SUPPORT the continuation of state documentary stamp funded trust accounts that have previously been established by the Legislature; specifically, SUPPORT full funding of the Florida Erosion control Trust Fund for coastal erosion control projects; OPPOSE any attempt to divert any money from the Ecosystem Management and Restoration Trust Fund, the Inland Protection Trust fund or the Air Trust Fund; SUPPORT retaining the SHIP Program (a/k/a the Sadowski Fund) as originally conceived, leaving the full amount of dedicated documentary tax revenues to be allocated toward state and local affordable housing programs.

12. State Tax Reform: SUPPORT expanding the state's General Fund revenue base by repealing state sales tax exemptions; SUPPORT the state's movement to join the interstate simplified sales tax consortium in order to place the state in a position of imposing a sales tax on internet sales transactions; OPPOSE state efforts which result in forcing counties to increase ad valorem (property) taxes to pay for (former) state programs and/or services - in particular those which focus on using local property taxes to fund state programs.

13. Homestead Exemptions: OPPOSE efforts to include a portable Save our Homes provision Constitutional Amendment.

14. Hydrogen Energy Technology Act: SUPPORT efforts to advance the market for hydrogen energy technologies in the state, specifically SUPPORT legislation that establishes grants for demonstration and commercialization projects and for research and development relating to hydrogen technologies.

15. University of Florida Institute for Food and Agricultural Sciences (IFAS): SUPPORT efforts that maintain or enhance the operation of county IFAS Extension services.

Public Safety.

16. Hurricane Shelter Construction and Retrofit Funding – Use of Infrastructure Surtax: Modify infrastructure surtax statutes by changing the definition of “public facility” to allow for use of the surtax to harden private buildings for use as public shelters or staging areas during a declared emergency.

17. **Mandatory Seat Belt Law:** SUPPORT efforts to expand the existing seat belt law as needed to access available federal funding.

18. **Disaster Preparedness:** SUPPORT efforts to seek and develop comprehensive post-disaster planning for the state of Florida.

Water Resource Management.

Guiding Policy - Water Resource Management: Support efforts to ensure the quality and quantity of water resources when and where they are needed, and to provide a safe and reliable water supply and flood protection system. Specifically support efforts to enhance the water quality of our bays, rivers, creeks and natural systems; create adequate water supplies to meet projected land use demand; and reduce damage due to flooding to a minimum.

19. **Red Tide:** SUPPORT efforts aimed at reducing or eliminating frequent red tide algae blooms in the Gulf of Mexico, specifically support funding research efforts that correlate environmental factors.

20. **Offshore Oil and Gas Extraction:** SUPPORT efforts to keep offshore oil drilling out of the Gulf of Mexico, specifically maintain existing buffer and lease conditions to offshore exploration and drilling in the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS).

21. **Phillippi Creek Septic System Replacement Program Funding:** SECURE up to \$2,000,000 of additional state funding for this program.

22. **Florida Forever Funding:** SUPPORT the continued funding of Florida Forever, and for using the fund for the purpose for which it was originally dedicated, full funding for land preservation programs within the DEP and DCA budgets; OPPOSE use of Florida Forever funds for Everglades restoration project funding.

23. **Florida Forever Title Issues:** SUPPORT legislation clarifying statutory provisions regarding title to conservation lands jointly acquired under the Florida Forever Program, and requiring DEP to develop rules providing for the granting of title interests consistent with the local government's contribution.

24. **Waterway Access:** SUPPORT efforts to expand, protect and facilitate affordable and environmentally sustainable public access to Florida's waterways; SUPPORT effort to fund enforcement of marine protection laws, including speed and manatee zones.

25. **Permitting, Mitigation and Restoration:** SUPPORT legislation requiring effective functional mitigation as close as possible to where wetland impacts occur; OPPOSE legislation eliminating the wetlands cumulative impact consideration; OPPOSE legislation that facilitates the transfer of mitigation outside county boundaries or makes it more difficult to retain mitigation within a County when adequate mitigation opportunities are available within the County; OPPOSE efforts to further restrict off-site regional mitigation areas (ROMAs); SUPPORT efforts to fund environmental restoration, land management, and exotic plant removal and control from state general funds. \$\$

25. Air and Water Quality Protection: SUPPORT efforts that optimize air quality through alternative and sustainable growth concepts, including the promotion of low sulfur diesel fuel use and approved alternative fuels such as biodiesel, and allowing lower emission rates for off road and small engines and encourage coal and oil fired power plants to increase use of natural gas and employ reburn technology; SUPPORT legislation that strengthens water quality, flow and habitat protection for Florida's 600 freshwater springs.

26. Phosphate Mining Impacts: SUPPORT any modifications to Florida phosphate mining statutes that would result in greater protection of the water resources within Sarasota County.

27. Water Reservations: OPPOSE any changes to Florida water reservation statutes that would have a negative impact on water resources in Sarasota County.

Environmental Resource Management.

28. Increase Vessel Registration Fee to Fund Waterway Management Program: Enable counties – at county option – to increase local vessel registration fees to up to 100% of the applicable state fee, to be shared as appropriate with municipalities. The resulting revenue increase will be used in support of the inland waterway management program.

29. Beach Re-nourishment: OPPOSE modification to legislation that would reduce funding for Gulf beach nourishment and erosion control projects; SUPPORT efforts to increase funding for beach re-nourishment projects and promotes regional coastal planning.

30. Recycling and Disposal of Electronic Products: Establish a recycling and disposal system for electronic products containing cathode ray tubes or mercury containing lamps.

Human Services.

Guiding Policy - Human Services: Support efforts to facilitate partnerships which set priorities, establish coordinating structures, and secure funding sources to plan and implement integrated human services which meet the needs of the community. Specifically support efforts to coordinate the provision of human services; efficiently utilize social services staff resources; and transform the grant in aid program to serve as an instrument of the policy and priorities of the County.

31. Medicaid Reform: OPPOSE any modifications to the current Medicaid system that would shift more costs to Sarasota County or have a negative impact on the provision of Medicaid services in the County.

32. Juvenile Justice: OPPOSE any state cost shifts of DJJ to counties generally, and OPPOSE any buyout of the DJJ detention cost shift that does not consider factors of equity and fairness among counties.

33. Adequate Aging Services: SUPPORT enhancing the state funding for elder and long-term care services and direct existing funding from institutional care to community-based care programs such as Community Care for the Elderly, Home Care for the Elderly, Medicaid Waiver, Alzheimer's Disease Initiative and Senior Centers; SUPPORT funding of a complete array of needed comprehensive and quality services for senior recipients; SUPPORT effective

community based systems that ensure elders receive the level and intensity of services that meet their needs and promote their wellness; SUPPORT quality assurance monitoring and measures that hold Managed Care and Health Maintenance Organizations and other Plans and Providers accountable for appropriate care.

Human Resources.

34. **FRS Changes.** SUPPORT efforts to extend FRS "DROP" program for existing participants another five years.

35. **Charter County Authority:** OPPOSE any efforts to erode Charter County Authority.

Florida Association of Counties (FAC)

Support the Florida Association of Counties (FAC) 2005 Legislative Program and Guiding Principles unless specific issues conflict with the Board of County Commission positions.

Community Alliance of Sarasota County

Support the 2005 Legislative Program of the Community Alliance unless specific issues conflict with the Board of County Commission positions.

Southwest Florida Legislative Consortium

Support the 2006 Legislative Program of the Southwest Florida Legislative Consortium unless specific issues conflict with the Board of County Commission positions.