

Regular Workshop – October 17, 2016  
Agenda Item 13

Agenda Item: Discussion Regarding 2017 Legislative Priorities

Presenter: Town Manager

Summary: Each year the Town establishes legislative priorities for submittal to the Sarasota County Legislative Delegation, Manatee County Legislative Delegation, and the ManaSota League of Cities. The Town Manager will seek Commission direction regarding issues to be brought forward for consideration during this legislative session.

Attachments: 10-11-16 Memo, Manager to Commission;  
Proposed 2017 Town of Longboat Key Legislative Priorities;  
2016 Town of Longboat Key Legislative Priorities  
Sarasota County 2017 State Legislative Priorities;  
2016 Manatee County Legislative Funding Requests;  
Proposed ManaSota League of Cities 2017 Major Legislative  
Priorities.

Recommended  
Action: Pending discussion, forward the 2017 Legislative Priorities to the November 7, 2016 Regular Meeting Consent Agenda for formal action.

## M E M O R A N D U M

Date: October 11, 2016

**TO:** Town Commission  
**FROM:** Dave Bullock, Town Manager  
**SUBJECT:** Discussion Regarding 2017 Legislative Priorities

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Each year the Town Commission considers legislative priorities for the upcoming legislative session and for presentation at the Manatee and Sarasota County Legislative Delegation meetings.

Attached is a copy of the proposed 2017 Town of Longboat Key Legislative Priorities, and the Town's 2016 Adopted Legislative Priorities

Also included are the Sarasota County 2017 State Legislative Priorities; 2016 Manatee County Legislative Funding Requests (2017 priorities are not available yet); and Proposed ManaSota League of Cities 2017 Major Legislative Priorities.

In addition, the President of the ManaSota League of Cities has requested a presentation be heard at their November 10, 2016 Meeting regarding sound regulations for vessels in the intracoastal waterway, which is an established concern to Longboat Key. The ManaSota League may decide to add that issue pending discussion and consensus at their meeting.

The Town Manager will be seeking Commission direction regarding the Town's legislative priorities for 2017 Legislative Session. The legislative priorities will be placed on the November 7, 2016 Regular Meeting for Town Commission consideration and formal action.

Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.



## Proposed 2017 Legislative Priorities

1. Support legislation to provide for local enforcement of sound regulations for vessels in the intracoastal waterway.
2. Support changes to existing State Law relating to vacation rentals that permit grandfathered local governments to modify existing short term vacation rental regulations.
3. Support the maintenance of local business tax, communications services tax, and tax exempt municipal bonds.
4. Support legislation that provides opportunities for increased and alternative revenue sources for municipal transportation infrastructure projects.
5. Support State funding for beach nourishment.
6. Support legislation that recognizes and addresses sea level rise concerns.
7. Support legislation that encourages water quality preservation and enhancement.
8. Oppose legislation that pre-empts local government home rule authority relating to impact fees.
9. Support legislation that allows governments to advertise public meetings exclusively through websites.
10. Support State funding for the purchase of lands for conservation (Florida Forever) and recreation (Florida Communities Trust).



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# Sarasota County

2017 STATE LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES



2017

world  
rowing®  
championships



Sarasota-Bradenton  
Florida, USA

*Sarasota County supports economic development, job creation, fiscal responsibility, policies to protect the environment and public health and safety through the priorities listed on the reverse side of this booklet.*

## SARASOTA COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

CAROLYN J. MASON – DISTRICT 1

PAUL CARAGIULO – DISTRICT 2

CHRISTINE ROBINSON – DISTRICT 3

ALAN MAIO – DISTRICT 4

CHARLES D. HINES – DISTRICT 5

THOMAS A. HARMER  
COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

ROBERT R. LEWIS  
COMMUNITY/INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS

*Thank you for preserving  
Sarasota County's home rule!*

*Thank you Governor and State Legislature  
for your partnership!*

**LEGISLATIVE APPROPRIATIONS REQUESTS INCLUDE:**

- › RIVER ROAD REGIONAL INTERSTATE CONNECTOR
- › THE LEGACY TRAIL EXTENSION
- › SOUTH SIESTA BEACH RESTORATION PROJECT
- › DONA BAY WATERSHED RESTORATION
- › SEPTIC TO SEWER PROGRAM
- › LIBRARIES
- › SPORTS TOURISM

**1. HOME RULE:**

- **OPPOSE** cost shifts, unfunded mandates or preemptions.
- **OPPOSE** any efforts to erode Charter County Authority.

**2. FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY:**

- **SUPPORT** efforts that ensure the availability of adequate resources to meet expected and unexpected demands placed upon county; keep tax, assessment/fee rates stable.

**3. ECONOMIC VITALITY AND SUSTAINABILITY:**

- **SUPPORT** policies/strategies and incentives to help communities sustain healthy economies; and partner with local governments in economic development initiatives, investment in infrastructure, job creation, local revenue flexibility and fair tax structure.
- **SUPPORT** broadening Qualified Targeted Industry Tax Refund (QTI) incentive program to include capital investment and new job creation for expansions/relocations.

**4. TOURISM AND TOURIST DEVELOPMENT TAX:**

- **SUPPORT** state partnering to attract and build sports tourism.
- **SUPPORT** state partnership in world-class rowing facility at Nathan Benderson Park; significant economic engine for the community and state.



- **SUPPORT** policies that provide flexibility in expenditure of Tourist Development Tax revenues resulting in enhanced benefits to tourism.
- **OPPOSE** pre-emption of county authority to regulate vacation rentals.

**5. TAX REFORM:**

- **SUPPORT** a system that improves equity and fairness among classes of taxpayers and individual taxpayers.
- **SUPPORT** retention of local/community authority for setting thresholds and implementing local taxes, including communications services tax (CST) and local business tax.
- **SUPPORT** expansion of state’s General Fund revenue base by reducing state sales tax exemptions, ensuring exemptions are granted only for essential public purposes.
- **SUPPORT** collecting taxes on full retail cost of online travel purchases.

## 6. NO REVENUE EXPENDITURE CAPS:

- **SUPPORT** retention of local/community control for local revenues and budgets. Ensure local government bond ratings are not jeopardized by caps on non-homestead properties.

## 7. TAX INCREMENT FINANCING:

- **SUPPORT** preservation of home rule authority to administer tax increment financing.

## 8. CONSULTANT'S COMPETITIVE NEGOTIATION ACT (CCNA):

- **SUPPORT** revision of CCNA to allow local and state agencies option to procure professional services on a "best value basis" in addition to qualification-based selection.

## 9. FLORIDA RETIREMENT SYSTEM (FRS):

- **OPPOSE** any efforts that increase cost of pensions.

## 10. LIBRARIES, ARTS, CULTURAL, AND HISTORIC:

- **SUPPORT** state funding of libraries at levels recommended by State Library of Florida and advocated by Florida State Library Association.
- **SUPPORT** efforts to restore historic preservation state program grant appropriations.



- **SUPPORT** additional state funding for Sarasota County Technical College (North Port) media center/public library.
- **SUPPORT** state funding for new Venice Public Library.
- **SUPPORT** changes to F.S. Section 257.261 related to Florida's confidentiality of public records law to include all personally identifiable information that a library possesses as exempt and confidential.

## 11. INVESTMENT IN INFRASTRUCTURE:

### a. State Transportation Funding:

- **SUPPORT** state partnering for funding improvements to River Road regional interstate connector.
- **OPPOSE** diverting funds from State Transportation Trust Fund.
- **SUPPORT** leveraging state dollars by partnering with local governments to fund local construction projects.
- **SUPPORT** state policies that direct state funding to arterial roads and state highways in Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) work program.
- **SUPPORT** enhanced state transportation funding priorities for local governments and regions that maximize use of local option revenue sources for transportation.
- **SUPPORT** prioritizing state program funds for intermodal system to counties with adopted local option transportation funding sources.

### b. Local Transportation Funding:

- **OPPOSE** efforts to diminish or eliminate county ability to impose and regulate impact fees.
- **SUPPORT** provision of clear legislative authority for local governments to waive impact fees for affordable housing and economic development.
- **SUPPORT** local authority and flexibility to provide adequate funding for mobility improvements and alternatives.

### c. Statewide Transit Strategy:

- **SUPPORT** statewide transit policy to guide major regional projects and ensure equity in allocation of resources and ability to achieve regional goals.

### d. Acquisition Costs for Right-of-Way/Easements:

- **SUPPORT** reduction of right of way acquisition costs to include capping attorney and witness fees in eminent domain.
- **OPPOSE** legislation mandating further costs of relocation of utilities in public rights of way to local government.

## 12. GROWTH PLANNING:

### a. Growth Management:

- **SUPPORT** sustainable growth and maintain local control of long-range planning, development and natural resource protection.
- **SUPPORT** policies that encourage cooperative planning relationships between adjacent jurisdictions.



- **SUPPORT** state role in protecting significant state resources, resolving conflicts over extra-jurisdictional development impacts and providing technical assistance to local governments.

### b. Energy-Efficient Land Use:

- **SUPPORT** policies to cultivate sustainable communities and developments that integrate all modes of transportation to include walking, bicycles and public transit.
- **SUPPORT** measures or incentives to help local governments discourage sprawl and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

### c. Concurrency Requirements:

- **SUPPORT** provisions to ensure infrastructure facilities, water supply and schools are in place prior to or concurrent with impacts of new development; and that infrastructure is consistent with overall infrastructure master planning.
- **SUPPORT** home rule authority/laws authorizing counties to establish transportation concurrency and mobility fee systems by local ordinance.

**d. Rezoning:**

- **SUPPORT** legislation that retains local authority over rezone decisions.

**e. Regional Planning:**

- **SUPPORT** providing county with authority to opt out from mandatory membership in regional planning council.
- **SUPPORT** regional transportation strategies that include participation of local government officials, are consistent with local comprehensive plans and do not divert or compete with funding for local government transportation priorities.

**f. Special Districts:**

- **SUPPORT** development and enforcement of interlocal agreements among affected local governments to address infrastructure needs and coordination prior to any expansions of existing or creation of new, special districts.

**g. Affordable Housing:**

- **SUPPORT** allocating full amount of dedicated documentary tax revenues for state and local affordable housing programs.
- **SUPPORT** investing in affordable housing to create jobs in home repair, hardening homes, retrofitting and constructing affordable rental units; and lowering energy costs to make housing more affordable.

**13. ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY:****a. Water Quality:**

- **SUPPORT** state funding of local septic system replacement.
- **SUPPORT** state funding for Dona Bay Restoration Project.

**b. Red Tide:**

- **SUPPORT** efforts to reduce or eliminate red tide algae blooms, such as monitoring/research conducted by Mote Marine and the Fish and Wildlife Research Institute.

**c. Oil and Gas Extraction/Hydraulic Fracturing:**

- **SUPPORT** ban on offshore oil/gas exploration and drilling in the Outer Continental Shelf of the Gulf of Mexico.



- **OPPOSE** offshore oil/gas exploration drilling in Florida waters.
- **SUPPORT** authorizing counties to adopt or establish regulations pertaining to oil/gas exploration and extraction/hydraulic fracturing (fracking).

**d. Florida Forever Funding/Public Lands:**

- **SUPPORT** state funding for removal and control of nuisance invasive vegetation on county public lands.
- **SUPPORT** funding of Florida Forever program for its original purposes, including land preservation programs within Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP), water management districts and Florida Recreation Development Assistance Program.

- **OPPOSE** legislation that caps, sets a maximum level, or establishes requirements of publicly held land at a state or county level.

#### **e. Environmental Permitting:**

- **OPPOSE** any legislation limiting county's regulation of:
  - Wetlands and mitigation of impacts to wetlands.
  - Docks/boat lifts and dredge/fill activities.
  - Natural resource protection; including upland habitat protection.
  - Anchoring/mooring and other waterways management issues.
  - Coastal armoring and other coastal construction regulations. (Oppose legislation resulting in increased coastal armoring and associated adverse effects to coastal systems).

#### **f. Phosphate Mining:**

- **OPPOSE** modifications to Florida phosphate mining statutes that would erode protections of water resources within Myakka or Peace River basins.
- **SUPPORT** FDEP initiative to develop single mining and reclamation process for more comprehensive and protective program, including combining the Comprehensive Reclamation Plan and Environmental Resource Permit into a single permit.
- **SUPPORT** FDEP requiring a cumulative impact analysis of phosphate mining on Peace River and Myakka River watershed.

#### **g. Water Quality and Supply:**

- **SUPPORT** full funding of Water Protection and Sustainability Program Trust Fund for alternative water supply projects and improve impaired water bodies under Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) program.
- **SUPPORT** adoption of reasonable water quality standards that are scientifically based and economically feasible.
- **SUPPORT** legislation that strengthens water supply, water quality and flow/habitat protection of water resources.
- **SUPPORT** policies for streamlining consumptive use permitting and development of alternative water supplies.
- **SUPPORT** local control of water resources.
- **SUPPORT** integration of watershed restoration principles that enhance health of watersheds, address flooding concerns, manage risk, minimize flood loss and protect natural and beneficial functions of the county's floodplain.
- **SUPPORT** alternative water supply projects that restore aquifers and provide irrigation water supply that offsets potable water demands.
- **SUPPORT** retention of septic tank program under county health departments.
- **OPPOSE** preventing counties from requiring mandatory connection to central sewer.

#### **h. Stormwater Assessments/Agricultural Lands:**

- **SUPPORT** stormwater assessments that credit agricultural lands for use of best management practices (BMPs), onsite storage and nutrient-reduction programs.

**i. Vessel Management:**

- **SUPPORT** allowing counties to increase local vessel registration fees to up to 100 percent of the applicable state fee, to be shared as appropriate with municipalities to support inland waterway management program and to expand use of vessel fees for navigational waterway management feasibility studies.

**j. Environmental Trust Funds:**

- **SUPPORT** continuation of state documentary stamp-funded trust accounts; specifically Florida Erosion Control Trust Fund (TF), Ecosystem Management and Restoration TF, Inland Protection TF and Air TF.

**k. Beach Management:**

- **SUPPORT** increased funding for Gulf beach nourishment and erosion control projects; regional coastal planning, including preservation of public right of access along beach shorelines; South Siesta Beach Restoration Project.
- **SUPPORT** full funding of the RESTORE Act.
- **OPPOSE** pre-emption of local control of RESTORE Act funds and administrative processes.
- **OPPOSE** policy dictating that monies assigned to local governments be diverted to state initiatives or administrative oversight.

**l. Post-disaster Planning:**

- **SUPPORT** legislation that seeks to develop comprehensive post-disaster planning for state of Florida.

**m. Recycling and Disposal:**

- **SUPPORT** establishment of statewide recycling and disposal system for electronic products and creation of funding source to support program (manufacturer responsibility or advanced disposal fee).
- **SUPPORT** state urging the federal government to legalize disposal of controlled substances through an authorized local government hazardous waste program.
- **SUPPORT** mechanisms to assist local governments in meeting state recycling goals; including state assistance in developing and sustaining new markets for recycled waste products not part of traditional recycling waste stream.
- **SUPPORT** state program to collect, recycle and market recycled paint in Florida.

**n. Fertilizer Management:**

- **OPPOSE** pre-empting counties from adopting regulations on fertilizer use or licensing of professionals who apply fertilizer that may be more stringent than statewide standards.
- **SUPPORT** funding Florida Friendly Landscaping Program.

#### o. Air Quality:

- **SUPPORT** legislation that proposes to optimize air quality, including: promoting alternatives to fossil fuels, such as biodiesel fuels and electric vehicles; allowing states to create lower emissions rates for small and off-road engines;



development of alternative energy sources and initiatives focused on reducing emissions to improve ambient air quality; aiding in attaining national ambient air quality standards; and land use planning and growth practices that promote walkable communities and use of public transit.

#### p. Alternative Energy/Sustainable Practices:

- **SUPPORT** aiding local governments to achieve job creation and economic development in green business, sustainable agriculture, renewable energy and clean technology.
- **SUPPORT** initiatives and incentives for green industry, sustainable agriculture, green construction and clean technology businesses.
- **SUPPORT** ensuring that protections and incentives for renewable energy and energy efficiency, including net metering, are not reduced or eliminated.
- **SUPPORT** renewable energy and energy-efficiency policy and associated rules that enhance economic development opportunities within framework of energy independence and domestic production.
- **SUPPORT** allowing cost recovery for renewable energy generation that includes generation at all scales and other incentives that advance renewable/green energy.
- **SUPPORT** focus on reducing emissions from fossil fuel energy generating plants and promoting development/use of alternative fuel sources.
- **SUPPORT** higher energy efficiency goals and additional residential/commercial demand-side management (DSM) programs to enable energy conservation for investor-owned utilities.
- **SUPPORT** incentives and planning for charging infrastructure to expand electric transportation at state and local levels; and incentives and tax credits for electric vehicles and neighborhood electric vehicles.
- **SUPPORT** policies to help communities implement “buy local food” programs.

#### q. Petroleum Cleanup and Storage Tank Compliance Programs:

- **SUPPORT** legislation to increase funding to local programs for management of petroleum cleanups and storage system inspections throughout state.

## 14. HUMAN SERVICES:

### a. Homelessness:

- **SUPPORT** state partnering in support of local homelessness programs.
- **SUPPORT** increased funding of State Housing Initiative Partnership (SHIP) program.
- **SUPPORT** continued recurring funding of Lead Agencies Staffing grants.
- **SUPPORT** distribution of Sudowski funds for local homeless priorities.
- **SUPPORT** continuation of Challenge grants to allow funds to be based on local priorities.



### b. Federal Qualified Health Center (FQHC):

- **SUPPORT** legislation allowing county health department to contract, or sub-contract with county or nonprofit entity for provision of primary health care services.

### c. Medicaid Reform:

- **OPPOSE** any modifications to current Medicaid system that would shift more costs to county or have negative impact on provision of Medicaid services in the county.
- **OPPOSE** any increase to county contribution for Medicaid nursing home services.
- **OPPOSE** expanding the Medicaid HMO Dental pilot program.
- **SUPPORT** full expansion of Medicaid eligibility based on Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA) criteria or similar criteria developed by the legislature.
- **SUPPORT** legislation to address Medicaid fraud draining limited financial resources much needed for health care.
- **SUPPORT** revisions to state law to ensure accurate billing methodology for assessing Medicaid expenditures for each county's share of cost for nursing home and hospital services.

### d. Adequate Aging Services:

- **SUPPORT** enhancing state funding for elder and long-term care services and funding for community-based care programs, such as Community Care for Elderly, Home Care for the Elderly, Medicaid Waiver, Alzheimer's Disease Initiative and senior centers.
- **SUPPORT** funding of needed comprehensive and quality services for senior recipients.
- **SUPPORT** quality assurance monitoring and measures holding managed care and HMOs, other plans and providers accountable for appropriate care.

### e. Behavioral Health Services:

- **SUPPORT** current funding for behavioral health services.
- **SUPPORT** state increase funding for mental health beds.

## 15. PUBLIC SAFETY:

### a. Emergency Services:

- **SUPPORT** Emergency Management Preparedness Trust Fund (EMPA).
- **OPPOSE** diverting EMPA surcharge to general revenue.

### b. Certificate of Public (COPCN):

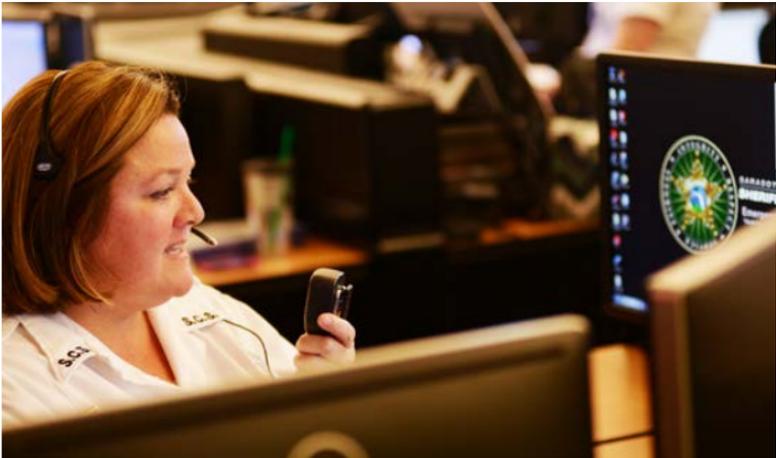
- **OPPOSE** legislation mandating counties to include recommendations of specified districts when developing standards for certificates of public convenience and necessity (COPCN) for life support or air ambulance services.

### c. Public Safety Communications:

- **SUPPORT** state partnering with local governments to fund installation of public safety digital 800-MHz radio systems.

### d. Medication Shortages:

- **SUPPORT** any state efforts to address national shortage of medications needed by emergency medical services to treat critically ill or injured patients.



### e. Prescription Drug Monitoring Programs:

- **SUPPORT** local authority to implement pain management clinic ordinances, including requiring physicians and pharmacists to check online database of the Prescription Drug Monitoring Program prior to prescribing pain management medications.
- **SUPPORT** revising state HIPAA law to provide clear exception for physicians to report medical crimes that occur on their premises.
- **SUPPORT** expanding schedule/list of synthetic controlled substances.

### f. Health Care Practitioner:

- **OPPOSE** expansion of definition of health care practitioner to include emergency medical technicians (EMTs) and paramedics.

### g. Secondary Metal Recycling:

- **SUPPORT** protection of local ordinances addressing secondary metal recycling.

### h. Jail Overcrowding:

- **SUPPORT** review of mandatory sentencing requirements to allow more judicial discretion in determining whether offenders would be better placed in community treatment for rehabilitation rather than incarcerated.
- **SUPPORT** protection of small courts and **OPPOSE** any shifting of state prisoners.
- **SUPPORT** state funding of jail diversion.

### i. Juvenile Justice:

- **SUPPORT** restoration of full funding for juvenile assessment centers (JACs) and changing funding for JACs from non-recurring to recurring funds.
- **SUPPORT** efforts to reduce juvenile detention and focus resources on prevention and intervention programs.

### j. Pretrial Release:

- **SUPPORT** retaining local control and oppose restrictions on local pretrial release programs.

### k. Inmate Medical Costs:

- **SUPPORT** reducing jail expenses by setting standardized statewide reimbursement amount paid by counties to medical providers for healthcare services provided to inmates and arrestees at established Medicaid rate or less.

### l. Court System:

- **SUPPORT** adequate state funding to handle caseloads and improve judicial system efficiency and management.

### m. Article V Funding:

- **SUPPORT** suspension and/or elimination of mandated 1.5 percent annual maintenance increase paid by counties for designated programs.

## 16. GOVERNMENT:

### a. Regulation of Smoking:

- **SUPPORT** legislation to allow local governments to regulate outdoor smoking on public property.

### b. Parks and Recreation:

- **OPPOSE** legislation mandating state licensing of summer camp programs and certification of camp counselors.
- **SUPPORT** continued funding for Community Development Block Grants (CDBG).

### c. Utilities:

- **OPPOSE** mandating any further cost of relocation of utilities in public rights of way to local government.

### d. Trails:

- **SUPPORT** funding for The Legacy Trail extension.



- **SUPPORT** funding for the “River-to-River Trail,” which connects the Myakka River to the Peace River.
- **SUPPORT** funding for the Southwest Coast Connector Trail connecting Hillsborough, Manatee, Sarasota, Charlotte, Lee, Collier and Hendry counties.

### e. Human Resources:

- **OPPOSE** unfunded increases in workers’ compensation.

## 17. GENERAL:

- **SUPPORT** the Sarasota County Agricultural Fair Association’s request for state funding for construction of a new agricultural facility.

# SARASOTA COUNTY TOP LEGISLATIVE ISSUES INCLUDE:

## Respect Sarasota County Home Rule - No Pre-emption of Sarasota County's:

- Smoking restrictions on county properties/parks.
- Pain clinic ordinance.
- Fertilizer ordinance.
- Secondary metals ordinance.

## Support Sarasota County's Transportation:

- Reconstruction of River Road.
- The Legacy Trail Extension.

## Support Sarasota County's Job Creation and Economic Development:

- Nathan Benderson Park/Rowing – Support continued state partnering in world-class rowing facility.
- Broadening the tax refund incentive programs, including capital investment and new job creation for expansions and relocations.

## Support Sarasota County's Environment:

- Beach renourishment.

## Support Local Government Fiscal Responsibility:

- Local business taxes – Preserve county authority to implement economic development initiatives.
- Communications services taxes – Ensure any revisions are revenue-neutral and allow for growth.

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**Support the Florida Association of Counties (FAC) - 2017 Legislative Program and Guiding Principles unless specific issues conflict with Sarasota County Commission positions.**

**Support the 2017 Legislative priorities of municipalities within the county unless specific issues conflict with positions of Sarasota County.**



For information on these or other county legislative issues, contact Sarasota County Intergovernmental Relations at 941-861-5000.



# MANATEE COUNTY COMMISSION 2016 FUNDING REQUESTS

Manatee and Sarasota County governments are creating the **Suncoast Regional Communication System (P25 Radio)**, a regional public safety radio network that has potential to serve a five-county area. The new radio will cover 1,300 square miles and enable seamless communication between two counties across 67 local agencies. The two counties are requesting a total of **\$4 million** (\$2 million for each county) to offset the total project cost of \$28.4 million.

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Manatee County requests \$225,000 in state funds for FY 2016-17 for the **Longboat Pass Jetty Reconstruction** design and permitting phases and \$175,000 for the **Passage Key Inlet Management Plan**. Additionally, Manatee County and the Town of Longboat Key request \$3,328,587 in state funds through a joint funding application for **Longboat Pass Inlet Management**.

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**Transportation** Manatee County SUPPORTS the restoration and protection of the State Transportation Trust Fund to allow its full funding to be used for transportation-related projects only. Manatee also SUPPORTS the Sarasota-Manatee MPO's Complete Street initiative to reconstruct 15th Street East/301 Blvd. from Tallevast Road to U.S. 41. The project is a key driver in improving the overall economic health and vitality of one of Manatee's urban corridors.

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The **Lake Manatee water supply and water quality project** will increase the stream flow to Lake Manatee, improving water quality in the reservoir and the Manatee River by retaining surface water by re-establishing overland flow in the landscape. The project will reduce nutrient concentrations in the Lake and improve fish and wildlife habitats. Manatee County requests \$276,000 in state funding to start Phase II of the project.



# MANATEE COUNTY COMMISSION 2016 POSITION STATEMENTS

**UTILITY LINE RELOCATION** Utilities reside within governmentally acquired rights of way. Manatee County has serious concerns about legislation that would require local governments to use local taxpayer dollars to pay for the relocation costs of private utilities located within county-owned right-of-way when they must be moved to accommodate a county project.

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**DANGEROUS DOG STATUTE** In order to allow a more humane interpretation of state statutes that govern dog bites, Manatee County SUPPORTS H.B. 91 that would amend F.S. 767.12 to allow a reviewing judicial officer to consider a dog's motive in inflicting severe injury (but not death) upon a human.

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**TAX REFORM** Manatee County SUPPORTS tax reform measures that simplify administration and provide an economic boost to Florida's taxpayers while considering and minimizing the collective and cumulative negative impact on local revenues, including state shared and local discretionary revenue sources that are critical to local governments in providing community services.

**Port Manatee** Manatee County SUPPORTS the legislative priorities of Port Manatee, particularly the request for Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) grant funding for dock and berth rehabilitation/repair and Port infrastructure improvements to office and warehouse facilities that will enable Port Manatee to better serve existing and potential tenants and maintain its competitiveness in the Gulf market.

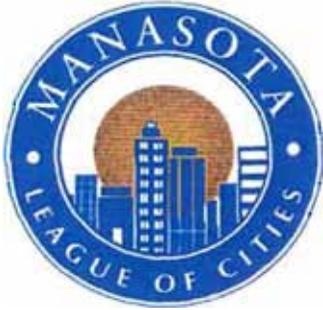
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**AQUACULTURE** Manatee County SUPPORTS aquaculture initiatives that would help provide information, research and support for Manatee County's aquaculture industry to include hatchery facilities at Port Manatee. Manatee County also supports legislation that would support environmental improvements to Port-owned submerged lands through the introduction of seed shellfish.

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**Mental Health Services** Manatee County SUPPORTS efforts to increase supportive housing, employment and education initiatives for people with mental health or substance abuse issues.

*Manatee County supports the leadership role the Florida Association of Counties takes representing the position of Florida's 67 counties on statewide issues. Manatee's 2016 legislative priorities align with those of the Florida Association of Counties, unless otherwise noted. These are the top legislative items of the Manatee County Commission.*



# Manasota League of Cities, Inc.

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*Anna Maria • Bradenton • Bradenton Beach • Holmes Beach  
Longboat Key • North Port • Palmetto • Sarasota • Venice*

## **2017 MAJOR LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES**

### **VACATION RENTALS**

SUPPORT legislation that repeals the state preemption of the regulation of vacation rental properties to allow local governments to regulate such properties to protect the health and welfare of residents, visitors and businesses. SUPPORT changes to existing State law relating to vacation rentals that permit grandfathered local governments to modify existing short term vacation rental regulations.

### **WATER QUALITY & QUANTITY AND SEA LEVEL RISE**

SUPPORT legislation that provides a recurring funding source for programs and projects for water quality preservation and enhancement.

SUPPORT legislation that encourages vulnerability assessments, coordinates resources and supports efforts of local governments to mitigate and adapt to the impact of sea level rise.

### **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

SUPPORT increased funding for the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program which funds local community development activities such as affordable housing, anti-poverty programs and infrastructure development.

### **LOCAL GOVERNMENT REVENUE**

OPPOSE legislation that restricts or eliminates municipal revenues generated under the Communication Services Tax and the Local Business Tax. SUPPORT the preservation of the Communication Services Tax and Local Business Tax.

### **MENTAL HEALTH INITIATIVES AND SOBER HOMES**

SUPPORT legislation that plans and adequately funds basic mental health facilities and programs in Florida including additional psychiatric beds **and managed extended care for recovery upon release.**

SUPPORT legislation that defines and establishes minimum regulatory standards for Sober Home facilities and allows for more stringent local regulations of these facilities.

### **PUBLIC PENSIONS**

SUPPORT the codification of the Florida Department of Retirement's interpretation of minimum benefits under Florida Statutes Chapter 175 and 185 Firefighter and Police Officers' municipal pension plans that was issued in 2012 and that provides local governments with flexibility in the use of insurance premium tax revenues.

### **PUBLIC RECORDS/ATTORNEY FEES**

**SUPPORT legislation that allows a judge to determine in a public records lawsuit whether or not attorney fees should be awarded to a complainant in specific situations. Requires complainants provide written notice to the agency's custodian of records at least five business days before filing a civil action in order to be eligible to receive attorney fees in a public records lawsuit.**

### **TOURIST DEVELOPMENT TAX**

**SUPPORT legislation that will expand allocation of Tourist Development Tax revenues to additional coastal counties to assist in funding law enforcement services, emergency medical services, and infrastructure needs caused by an increase in tourism.**

MANASOTA LEAGUE OF CITIES  
2017 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES  
(Details)

**VACATION RENTALS**

Vacation rentals are expanding throughout communities in Manatee and Sarasota Counties and the State. Legislation is needed to provide local governments with more flexibility in dealing with problematic vacation rentals and that will set minimum stay requirements for these properties. Additionally, legislation is needed that will clarify “grandfathered” local governments and will permit the amending of their vacation rental ordinances without penalty.

**WATER QUALITY & QUANTITY AND SEA LEVEL RISE**

Local government programs and projects are needed that protects local water resources; improves water quality and quantity; mitigates pollution from onsite waste water systems; expands the use of alternative water resources, recognizes that reclaimed water is an asset paid for by utilities’ rate payers; and requires all infrastructure users to pay the cost of operation and maintenance of such utilities.

Recognition must be given to the impact sustained by coastal cities statewide related to sea-level rise, changing precipitation patterns and increasing storm severity. The coastal communities will be the first to feel the effect of sea level rise. Portions of our island cities are very low and even extremely high tides can flood roads and homes. State participation is needed to provide a leadership role in planning practices in anticipation of sea level rise.

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

SUPPORT increased funding for the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program which funds local community development activities such as affordable housing, anti-poverty programs and infrastructure development. CDBG, like other block grant programs, differs from categorical grants made for specific purposes in that they are subject to less federal oversight and are largely used at the discretion of the state and local governments and their sub grantees.

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT REVENUE**

Communications Services Tax: OPPOSE legislation that modifies, restricts, or eliminates the authority of municipalities to levy, collect, and/or expend the Communication Services Tax. In 2001, the Florida Legislature restructured taxes on telecommunications, cable, direct-to-home satellite, and related services. This change was called the Communication Services Simplification Act and replaced and consolidated seven different state and local taxes and fees into a single tax that is comprised of two parts, the state CTS and the local CST. The CST is one of the main sources of general revenue for municipalities. Local governments collect nearly \$800 million year. These revenues may be used for any public purpose, including pledging the revenues to secure bonds. The loss or reduction of that revenue will be disastrous to the budgets of local government.

Local Business Tax: OPPOSE legislation that modifies, restricts or eliminates the authority of municipalities to levy or collect Local Business Tax. Many local governments in Florida require businesses operating within their jurisdictions to obtain a Local Business Tax Receipt. Revenues collected in this form assist in providing services that contribute to business growth - growth which directly contributes to the economic development of the State. These revenues are used by many local governments to assist in the funding of services critical to businesses. Some local governments use the revenue to help fund economic development programs, representing a direct benefit to businesses through the promotion and marketing of the local area and its resources. Many municipalities use the business tax as general revenue funds and have pledged these revenues to secure debt. The Local Business Tax is one tool that enables local governments to operate efficiently without reducing services to citizens. Additionally, it allows local governments to know what businesses are operating in their community.

## **MENTAL HEALTH INITIATIVES AND PROGRAMS FUNDING**

**SUPPORT:** Legislation that plans and adequately funds basic mental health facilities and programs in Florida, including additional psychiatric beds. While most psychiatric hospitals were closed from the mid 1960's thru the 1990's, adequate funding of replacement community mental health did not occur, with federal and state mental health program funding being dramatically reduced in the 1980's and more recently in the Great Recession. As psychiatric hospitals were being reduced, jail and prison cells were dramatically expanded by over 200%. It is estimated that over 20% of our jails and prisons are serving as de facto psychiatric hospitals (without treatment capabilities) and over 30% of our chronic homeless population is suffering from severe mental health problems including schizophrenia, manic-depressive disorder and severe depression aggravated by substance abuse.

The lack of mental health beds and community mental health program funding has become a critical problem placing costly pressures on our jails, hospitals, police, and EMS departments and our urban centers. As such, the lack of mental health treatment options for individuals, families, hospitals, courts and communities is fiscally and socially irresponsible resulting in an increasing number of well documented human and community tragedies across our country.

## **PUBLIC PENSIONS**

**SUPPORT:** Legislation that protects Home Rule power to set and fund municipal employee benefit levels and specifically provides comprehensive pension reform, disability presumption reform and a mechanism for municipalities to revoke their election to participate in the Florida Retirement System. The ManaSota League of Cities also supports legislation that provides flexibility in the use of insurance premium taxes as currently interpreted by the Department of Management Services.

## **SOBER HOMES**

**SUPPORT:** Legislation that clearly defines Sober Homes, allows for the regulation of these facilities and details the minimum operating standards. "Sober Homes" or "Halfway Houses" provide needed transitional housing opportunities for people who are progressing through treatment for substance abuse problems. Presently there is little or no regulation from government agencies in setting up a Sober Home. Law enforcement officials have seen increases in crime and homelessness in neighborhoods where these Sober Homes have located. Residents of the neighborhoods have reported an increase in burglaries, panhandling and other criminal activity. There is clearly a lack of uniform state standards or regulations for "Sober Homes."

## **PUBLIC RECORDS/ATTORNEY FEES**

**SUPPORT:** Legislation that would allow a judge to review the facts of a public records lawsuit and have the discretion to decide whether or not attorney fees should be awarded to a complainant based on those findings. Additionally, require that complainants provided written notice to the agency's custodian of records at least five business days before filing a civil action in order to be eligible to receive attorney fees in a public records lawsuit.

## **TOURIST DEVELOPMENT TAX – (NEED DETAILS.....)**



**End of Agenda Item**