



# 2017 COUNTY MANAGER'S ANNUAL REPORT



# MESSAGE FROM THE COUNTY MANAGER

Ladies and Gentlemen of Seminole County:

It is again my honor to share with you our activities and accomplishments of the past year.

Several events in 2017 tested the mettle of not only your County government, but also the community as a whole. From hurricanes, to wildfires, to life's everyday challenges, the people of Seminole County consistently rose to the occasion and showed that we are a community that is greater than the sum of its parts.

In 2017, the defining moment for Seminole County was its reaction to the challenges presented by Hurricane Irma. On September 10, 2017, Florida was hit by a Category 4 storm that uprooted trees, flooded roads, damaged properties, and left 158,000 Seminole County homes and businesses without power. Irma required an "all hands on deck" response, and the men and women of Seminole County Government worked around the clock to provide emergency services to our citizens when they needed support the most. Seminole County's 1,300 employees logged more than 50,000 staff-hours in storm preparation and restoration efforts. In certain areas of the county, this work continues today. Of course, Seminole County employees were not alone in these efforts; partnerships with the Sheriff's Office, our municipalities, Seminole County Public Schools, private utilities, and countless service organizations and community groups ensured that our county made it through the storm safely.

Hurricane Irma, while the most significant, was certainly not the only circumstance that demonstrated the power of partnership and collaboration in our community. Joint efforts with our economic development partners led to a 10-year high in growth and development. On-going assistance from the State and the Seminole County Health Department allowed us to continue to stem the tide on the Zika virus, and the ingenuity of our business community significantly advanced our fight to reduce homelessness. With the assistance of neighboring fire departments, and the support of local residents and businesses, we were able to persevere through the worst brush fire season in 20 years without loss of a single home or life. These are just a few examples which prove the strength in our numbers.

A mere offer of thanks barely seems adequate to express my sincere appreciation and admiration for the spirit of community demonstrated by the citizens of Seminole County and all our civic partners. This year has shown that together we can accomplish anything.

Nicole Guillet, County Manager

To read a more comprehensive account of Seminole County's accomplishments visit: [www.SeminoleAnnualReport.com](http://www.SeminoleAnnualReport.com).



## CONTACT INFORMATION

### BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

District 1, Bob Dallari .....(407) 665-7215  
District 2, John Horan.....(407) 665-7205  
District 3, Lee Constantine.....(407) 665-7207

District 4, Carlton Henley .....(407) 665-7201  
District 5, Brenda Carey.....(407) 665-7209

### SEMINOLE COUNTY GOVERNMENT

(407) 665-0311 • [www.SeminoleCountyFL.gov](http://www.SeminoleCountyFL.gov) • 1101 East First St., Sanford, FL 32771

### WATCH SGTV

For County meetings, programs, and information, watch Seminole Government Television (SGTV) on Spectrum channel 498, AT&T U-Verse channel 99, or CenturyLink Prism channel 84. Or, visit [www.SeminoleCountyFL.gov](http://www.SeminoleCountyFL.gov) to watch SGTV streaming live, 24/7.

### CONNECT WITH US ON:



## **PARTNERSHIPS = PROSPERITY**

Seminole County experienced a 10-year high in growth and development in 2017, and the lowest unemployment rate in 12 years. Effective partnerships are a key component to economic development. Collaborations with the Seminole State Small Business Development Center; the UCF-Winter Springs Incubator; and Prospera, an organization specializing in Hispanic entrepreneurship, resulted in more than 300 local business start-ups last year. Additionally, through cooperative efforts with the Orlando Economic Partnership, Enterprise Florida, and our seven cities, seven economic development projects were approved, producing 1,000 new jobs and \$25 million in capital investment.

## **PROTECTING FLORIDA'S NATURAL CHOICE**

Seminole County was the first in the state to work with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) to implement new refuse collection procedures designed to mitigate human-to-bear encounters. Through its partnership with FWC, the County distributed nearly 900 bear resistant containers in 2017. As a result, human-to-bear encounters decreased by more than 20%.

Working with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, citizen activist groups, and commercial interests, the County adopted an ordinance to protect our waterways through management of fertilizer, helping to ensure all residents will enjoy the county's lakes and rivers for decades to come.

## **WORKING TOGETHER TO PROTECT PUBLIC HEALTH**

In 2017, Seminole County continued to battle a public health crisis presented by the Zika virus. Through its partnership with the Department of Health-Seminole County, the County invested \$1.2 million in additional equipment and staff to combat this threat. Consequently, more than 9,139 miles and 369,909 acres were fogged. In June, aerial services treated 22,000 acres in the eastern rural area of the county. Following Hurricane Irma, the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services assisted with another aerial service mission treating 49,000 acres. Overall, Mosquito Control responded to 2,984 residential service requests and applied 7,177 larvicide treatments. As a result, no locally acquired mosquito-borne illnesses were documented in Seminole County.

The County also works with the Department of Health-Seminole (DOH-Seminole) to ensure healthcare reaches those most in need. As a funding partner in DOH-Seminole's Mobile Health Services, the County helped to provide health screenings, family planning, referrals, education and other services to the homeless, uninsured and underinsured throughout the County. Over the course of 209

site visits and community outreach events, nearly 1,500 residents were served by Mobile Health Services last year.

## **SERVING THOSE WHO HAVE SERVED OUR COUNTRY**

Seminole County Veterans' Services assisted more than 3,500 veterans at more than 100 outreach events last year. A multitude of local and state organizations combined resources with Seminole County, providing legal assistance, housing support, healthcare services, and counseling. Our community partners who help us serve our local heroes include: Supportive Services to Veterans and Families, Florida Veterans Foundation, Camaraderie Foundation, Homeless Services Network, UCF Restores and Incubator programs, VITAS, Seminole Heart, Recovery House, Just Other Soldiers Helpers, Honor Flight, and the Legal Aid Society of Seminole County.

## **WILDFIRE WARRIORS**

Last year, Seminole County experienced the most severe brush fire season in 20 years. An executive order enacting a burn ban remained in place for 70 consecutive days, the longest burn ban in recent history. In March, the Seminole County Fire Department (SCFD) responded to an 80-acre brush fire, protecting eight residences from direct threat of fire. Then in April, the 165-acre Live Oak Reserve brush fire resulted in the evacuation of multiple homes and 100 adults from Mah-Kah-Wee Girl Scout Camp. Several agencies joined SCFD in the response, including Orange and Brevard Counties; the Cities of Maitland, Orlando, Oviedo, Winter Park and Winter Springs; Florida Highway Patrol; Seminole County Sheriff's Office; and Florida Fish and Wildlife. Emergency Management coordinated with the VFW and local churches to open shelters, while Publix and members of the community provided resources for multi-day operations. As a result of swift and shared action, no homes or lives were lost during either incident.

## **USING CREATIVITY TO BUILD STRONGER COMMUNITIES**

The elimination of homelessness remains a top-priority in Seminole County. Recognizing that traditional models were not working, the County enlisted the expertise of the business community to craft a results-oriented approach to tackle this concern. The Seminole Action Board, a group of 26 business leaders, developed an action strategy to reduce homelessness within the County. In its first full year, this strategy helped to house 142 families and 117 individuals; that equates to 500 mothers, fathers, and children who are no longer homeless. Additionally, by leveraging State and federal funds, Seminole County supported more than 725 households with rental and utility assistance, maintaining safe and stable housing for hundreds of families.

# WEATHERING THE STORMS TOGETHER

## HURRICANE IRMA

Hurricane Irma roared into Seminole County early Monday, September 11, making an unexpected turn towards Central Florida late-Sunday. The 400-mile wide storm delivered maximum wind gusts of 85 mph. Emergency Management began tracking the storm 10 days prior to impact, and the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) established full activation status three days prior to the storm, requiring all County employees with storm assignments to report for duty. Pre-storm preparation activities included securing facilities and clearing ditches and canals of loose debris. Public Works staff distributed nearly 340,000 sandbags to residents, and nine shelters were opened for both residents and evacuees. An executive order was issued enacting a curfew for all residents for 24 hours pre-and-post storm. Governor Scott activated the National Guard and issued a disaster declaration for the state.

During full activation, the EOC housed more than 125 representatives at any given time including: County government leadership and support services; Seminole County's seven cities; the Florida National Guard; public school and state college systems; electric and water utility providers; local and state law enforcement; health and human services; business and animal services; chambers of commerce; area non-profits; numerous state and federal agencies; and air and road transportation providers. Hurricane Irma resulted in 19 consecutive days of EOC activation.

Post-hurricane recovery efforts were extensive. The County did not return to business-as-usual for months following the storm. Low-lying areas of the county remained flooded for almost 90 days due to the swelling of the St. Johns River and the Little Wekiva River, both of which were in major flood stage. Over 150 County residents filed flood claims with FEMA.

Seminole County was faced with 60 times more debris than experienced with Hurricane Matthew. Efficient debris collection required a county-wide, coordinated plan that included numerous internal and external contributors. Collection crews, made up of County staff and regional haulers, logged more than 46,000 hours in the 13 weeks following the storm, covering 1,368 road miles. Seminole County worked with the seven cities to ensure collection efforts were clearly communicated to impacted communities. Four residential drop-off sites were

established by our Solid Waste team, and a flat-rate disposal fee at the County's Landfill and Transfer Station was instituted to alleviate long lines. As a result, 872,114 cubic yards of storm debris were collected over 13 weeks, a 92% increase over a typical 13-week period of waste pick-up. The Solid Waste Customer Service Team added temporary staff to assist with the nearly 20,000 customer inquiries during the debris collection period.

Following Hurricane Irma, dozens of public and private partners supported the Emergency Management team's response to the unmet needs of our community. At its November 14, 2017 meeting, the Board of County Commissioners recognized more than 25 organizations for their efforts to provide resources that supported storm recovery.

## HURRICANE MARIA

While still wrestling with the after-effects of Irma, Seminole County engaged to respond to another storm impacting our neighbors to the south. In the wake of Hurricane Maria, the County's Emergency Management team partnered with Seminole County Public Schools, Seminole County Department of Health, Seminole State College, and the Orlando Sanford International Airport to establish an information center for Puerto Rican evacuees. Representatives worked with more than 2,500 individuals on housing and employment opportunities and FEMA funding. Three-hundred households officially reported a change in address from Puerto Rico to Seminole County, and 400 new students enrolled in SCPS.

## HURRICANE HARVEY

Seminole County Fire Department led Central Florida's Urban Search & Rescue Task Force 4, a 22-member team of fire-rescue personnel from five local agencies, during a two-week deployment to Beaumont and Port Arthur, Texas in response to Hurricane Harvey flooding. This Task Force received intensive training on structural collapse, swift water rescue, wide area search and hazardous materials. Task Force 4 performed approximately 900 rescues during their deployment, including individuals from nursing homes and residences. In addition, over 50 domestic animals and livestock were saved.

# HURRICANE IRMA RESPONSE STATISTICS

## COUNTY SHELTERS

- Three special needs shelters established
- Six general population shelters established, two of which were pet-friendly
- 1,633 People & 216 pets sheltered
- 14,326 Meals provided to shelter evacuees
- 340 County staff ran the shelters



## DISTRIBUTION

- 335,626 Sandbags distributed countywide
- 11 Sandbag Distribution Sites (County & cities)
- Additional 250,000 sandbags ordered during the storm
- 27,600 Bottles of water distributed
- 7,200 Ready-to-eat meals distributed
- Over 4,400 tarps distributed



## FIRE DEPARTMENT RESPONSE

- \$1,554,592-Value of property saved
- 3,378 Number of calls for service in 7 days
- 11 Storm related fires
- 51 Carbon Monoxide calls
- 11 Full-term pregnant patients were transported
- 38 Flood-related service calls for SCFD's 6x6 all-terrain trucks



## PUBLIC WORKS RESPONSE

- All County roads passable three and a half days after storm
- Three days: South Lane wash-out completely repaired
- Four days: Curryville Road wash-out completely repaired
- Five days: Airport Blvd wash-out completely repaired
- 259 Traffic signs repaired
- 77 Damaged traffic signals repaired
- 161 Generators placed into operation
- 25 Pumps deployed during the storm



## DEBRIS COLLECTION

- 870,000 Cubic yards of debris collected countywide
- Four free residential drop-off points established
- 5,746 Drop-offs at residential sites (9/13 to 10/5/17)
- Estimated 5,000 cubic yards of debris collected in the first five days of storm debris collection
- Collected enough debris to fill Epcot's Spaceship Earth 11 times



## COMMUNITY/STAFF INVOLVEMENT

- 50,000+ Staff hours logged during height of the storm
- 1,966 Volunteer hours donated
- Eight FEMA Disaster Survivor Assistance employees in Seminole County
- 335 Unmet needs fulfilled



**\$474** MILLION IN ECONOMIC  
IMPACT TO  
SEMINOLE COUNTY  
BROUGHT BY  
VISITORS

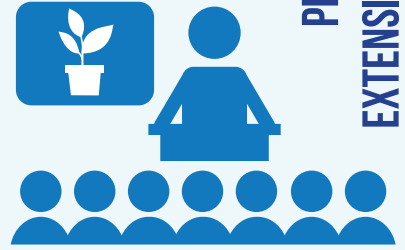


WORKED WITH  
ORLANDO  
ECONOMIC  
PARTNERSHIP



TO BRING  
**\$25 MILLION**  
IN CAPITAL INVESTMENT

**369**  
CLASSES & PROGRAMS  
PRESENTED BY  
EXTENSION SERVICES



**\$600,000**  
GRANT  
FROM WATER  
MANAGEMENT  
DISTRICT FOR  
WATER CONSERVATION



**50+** LOCAL  
ORGANIZATIONS  
SUPPORT  
LIBRARIES, PARKS AND  
EXTENSION SERVICES



**22,447**  
BUILDING  
PERMITS ISSUED



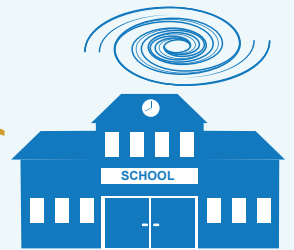
RECEIVED FROM  
FLORIDA DEP FOR  
FERTILIZER EDUCATION  
**\$100,000** GRANT



**3,650** PETS  
ADOPTED, REUNITED,  
OR RETURNED TO OWNERS

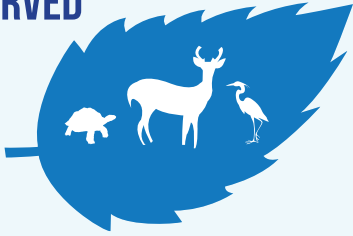


RECEIVED  
**\$440,000**  
IN GRANT FUNDS  
FROM THE STATE TO RETROFIT  
SCHOOL SHELTERS



**6,634 ACRES**

OF NATURAL LANDS  
PRESERVED



NEW COMMERCIAL  
DEVELOPMENT APPROVED

**541,881 SF**



**1,928,057**

LIBRARY VISITORS

**4.3 MILLION**



VISITS TO  
[SEMINOLECOUNTYFL.GOV](http://SEMINOLECOUNTYFL.GOV)

**\$2 MILLION**

FDOT FUNDING  
FOR TWO TRAIL  
PROJECTS



**148,223 SF**

OF SIDEWALK  
REMOVED AND  
REPLACED



**1,400+**  
SMOKE ALARMS



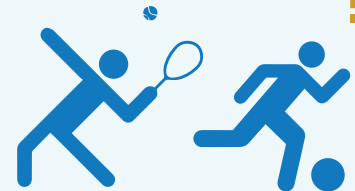
INSTALLED  
IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE  
AMERICAN RED CROSS

OVER  
**3,500**



VETERANS SUPPORTED  
THROUGH VETERANS'  
SERVICES

**150,000**  
PARTICIPATED IN  
LEISURE PROGRAMS  
INDIVIDUALS



# FISCALLY STRONGER TOGETHER

## BUDGET

- The FY 2017/18 Adopted Budget totals \$755.3 million inclusive of \$499.9 million in operating funds; \$219.9 million in reserves; and \$35.5 million in interfund transfers.
- Taxable values increased countywide for the fifth consecutive year, averaging 6% growth over the past four years.
- The property tax rate established by the Board of County Commissioners, 7.7507 mills (countywide, roads, fire) is still the lowest in the region.
- The property tax bill for an unincorporated homesteaded residence with an average assessed value of \$193,000 is \$2,251 (\$1,108 in BCC taxes and \$1,143 in School and Water Management District taxes).



## GETTING THE MOST FROM YOUR TAX DOLLARS

- \$22 million was acquired in federal, State and local grants.
- The competitive bid process resulted in \$6.2 million in savings last fiscal year.
- Over \$251,655 was returned to the County from the Sales Tax Recovery Program, and \$138,784 returned in purchasing card rebates.



## FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY

- To maximize fiscal growth opportunities, Seminole County Government implemented a new investment policy and contracted an established, private-sector investment group, yielding a \$3 million income increase in 2017.
- This income increase directly benefited taxpayers in several ways, including a 50% reduction in the proposed water and wastewater utility rate increase.



## YOUR PENNY IMPROVING YOUR INFRASTRUCTURE

The voter-approved One Cent Sales Tax allowed the County to leverage property taxes and provide an additional \$44 million in projects last year, improving infrastructure throughout the County, including:

- Intersection improvements at State Road 434 and Central Florida Parkway;
- West Lake Mary Boulevard pavement rehabilitation;
- County Road 419 (East Broadway Street) resurfacing and pipelining; and
- Phase four of the Tuskawilla Road project.

