

COUNTY MANAGER'S ANNUAL REPORT 2019



SEMINOLE COUNTY
FLORIDA'S NATURAL CHOICE

LETTER FROM THE COUNTY MANAGER

Ladies and Gentlemen of Seminole County,

This past year has demonstrated and embraced the ongoing evolution of Seminole County and the services it provides. It was a year dedicated to expanding our impact and innovating our role within every corner of our community.

Today, the world communicates regardless of physical location and information changes hands faster than ever. Our population is living longer, households are getting smaller, and our businesses and residents desire easier access to and greater transparency from their county government. As new technologies emerge, society has reacted to capitalize on these innovations and Seminole County Government is no different. We are led by what our residents need and expect, and as the experiences and demographics of our citizens evolve, the County must embrace advanced ideas and new technologies to meet their expectations.

Within the last 12 months, as evidenced in the forthcoming pages, the initiatives of Seminole County Government have made a meaningful impact. This report highlights program innovations, inspiring successes, service enhancements, and plans for the future.

Last year was indeed a year of expansion and transformation. Seminole County successfully launched *Enterprise CAD/Mobile*, a pacesetter emergency dispatch technology that represents the highest level of development in its industry. Our state-of-the-art Boombah Sports Complex had a record-breaking year, driving the highest Tourist Development Tax collections in County history and buoying economic prosperity throughout the county. The Development Services Department embraced several new technologies and processes to more efficiently serve our customers, and your voter-approved One Cent Sales Tax continues to be an effective non-ad valorem tool to provide critical infrastructure within our county.

I recognize and appreciate the commitment of the Board of County Commissioners, who are the catalysts towards transformation, as well as the efforts of our outstanding team members. All of our work - past, present, and future - is made possible thanks to the more than 1,350 employees who serve to create the incredible quality of life we all enjoy.

Respectfully,



Nicole Guillet
County Manager





INNOVATION AT THE HIGHEST LEVEL

A new era of public safety operations commenced in 2019 when Seminole County successfully launched a new, state-of-the-art computer-aided dispatch system, *Enterprise CAD/Mobile*. This \$3.2 million system serves as the principal instrument connecting 9-1-1, radio, mapping, and mobile computing devices for Seminole County's public safety network, connecting and coordinating all of the County's fire and emergency services.

Under the leadership of the Board of County Commissioners, project research and development began in July of 2017. Through effective advocacy, the County received a \$2 million appropriation from the Florida Legislature to underwrite the cost of the overall system. This partnership with the state allowed Seminole County to implement the project in record time.

Enterprise CAD/Mobile is currently the most sophisticated emergency dispatching platform and, not only a more effective means of getting emergency service to the public quickly, but also provides for a multitude of cost-effective outcomes, including improved operations, streamlined communications, and reduction of operational risks. Most importantly, the system enables the closest fire rescue unit to respond, which will result in lives saved and property preserved.

To further the Board of County Commissioner's commitment to creating a healthy and civically engaged community, Seminole County initiated PulsePoint, a free-to-download mobile application that strengthens the chain of survival for victims of cardiac arrest. Using GIS technology, PulsePoint alerts those who have indicated they are trained in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) when a cardiac event occurs within their immediate proximity to respond to the emergency in real-time. It also directs potential rescuers to the exact location of the closest Automated External Defibrillator providing a time-saving lifeline until trained emergency personnel arrive.

ENHANCING PUBLIC SAFETY SAVES CRITICAL SECONDS

After opening Station 29 in 2018, the County initiated land acquisition and design of Fire Station 39, serving the expanding needs of northwest Seminole County;

In partnership with the City of Altamonte Springs, plans commenced to relocate and upgrade Fire Station 11. This joint venture is the first of its kind in Seminole County history;

The Addressing program launched a new technology that improves the speed of address verification, allowing the County's E-911 Administration to verify addresses and develop layouts for first responders, further improving emergency response times;

Two Advanced Life Support Rescue units were purchased, totaling \$533,000; and

As Hurricane Dorian threatened, the County Emergency Management team utilized a text alert system that generated storm-related notifications throughout the event for the more than 22,000 individuals that registered.

BUILDING MOMENTUM

For the first time in more than a decade, the Board of County Commissioners and senior staff convened for three leadership retreats to identify the challenges and opportunities that face Seminole County. Discussion priorities included transforming customer service, enhancing community relations, and investing in the human capital that is the backbone of County services.

The provision of excellent customer service is a guiding principle for Seminole County Government. Over the course of the retreats, the Board approved the creation of a dedicated customer call center and new technology investments. Continuing this momentum, citizens will see several initiatives centered on enhanced customer service in the coming year.

The Board's top communication priorities remain the delivery of timely and transparent information to residents and visitors. In an effort to foster citizen engagement, the community relations program has launched a citizen's academy, a speaker's bureau, and enhanced social media and digital outreach to ensure residents are connected with local government.

Seminole County continues to face the ongoing challenge of an increasingly competitive marketplace with respect to professional talent. In order to develop and retain the County workforce, the Board directed staff to execute an independent compensation study, which offered recommendations as to how the County can maintain its talented workforce. As a result, the Board approved a 4% increase to the salary budget and associated benefits to bring positions identified in the study into the market. An employee outreach position was also added to the Human Resources division, a recommendation that was largely influenced by employees.

A multitude of initiatives developed from these retreats, all of which are complete or in-progress. Collaborative opportunities of this nature provide the Board and staff the occasion to create and plan collectively, ultimately benefitting the citizens.

REACHING OUT TO THE COMMUNITY

Seminole County and the City of Sanford honored the more than 35,000 local veterans with a unique memorial last November. The Vietnam Traveling Memorial Wall was displayed at Fort Mellon Park from November 8 – 11, 2019. The wall, a 3/5 scale replica of the Vietnam Memorial in Washington, D.C., includes more than 58,000 names and was exhibited as a free event for the public.

The County's Veterans Services program hosted more than 100 community outreach events, supporting over 9,000 veterans. The "Veterans Stand Down" is an annual event designed to connect homeless and precariously housed veterans with a multitude of services provided by various partners, including the Florida Department of Health, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, the City of Sanford, Pathways to Care, the Legal Aid Society, Advent Health, LYNX, and the American Red Cross.

Seminole County's Community Services Department is here to address the needs of our neighbors who may be challenged by changing times and economic conditions. This department administers numerous programs ranging from rental and housing assistance, to dental and emergency care, and funding support for mobile health and transportation services. Last year:

- *364 homeless individuals secured or maintained housing through homelessness prevention programs;*
- *Nearly 500 households received financial assistance for rent or mortgage payments; utility fees; burial costs; and dental or indigent medical care; and*
- *\$4.3 million in new federal and state grants supported the purchase of affordable housing units; rental and rehousing assistance; dental and mental health programs; and senior services.*

ELEVATING EXPECTATIONS FOR ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

In recognition of advanced water treatment innovations at the Country Club Water Treatment Facility, Seminole County Environmental Services was recognized by the American Water Works Association for “Best Tasting Water” out of the ten utilities in Region Three.

The County’s commitment to the comfort and safety of its citizens is evidenced by several innovative and enhanced services:

- *Mosquito Control implemented FieldSeeker, a cutting-edge GIS system that allows for integrated mosquito management including surveillance, larviciding, source reduction, site inspection, and treatment;*
- *Cellular modems were upgraded at all of the County’s 333 lift stations and 13 permanent generators were installed at key wastewater collection lift stations, ensuring reliable wastewater service is delivered to County utility customers despite a potential power outage;*
- *In 2018, Seminole County implemented one of Florida’s most protective fertilizer ordinances. As a result, the County was one of the first in Florida to receive grant funding from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection for a Fertilizer Education Campaign;*
- *In an effort to mitigate the escape of landfill gas into the atmosphere, the Solid Waste Division generated 19,325,000 kilowatt-hours of energy from landfill gas-to-energy conversion, ultimately reducing costs for County customers; and*
- *As part of the County’s ongoing commitment to minimizing human-to-bear encounters, 1,562 bear-resistant containers were distributed to residents within the Urban Bear Management Area.*

SETTING THE STANDARD FOR QUALITY OF LIFE

Throughout 2019, the Seminole County Leisure Services Department received several accolades in recognition of its creative approach to delivering services. The Department was once again awarded accreditation by the Commission for Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA). CAPRA is the only national accreditation available to park and recreation agencies, and is an objective and credible measure of a department’s overall quality of operation, management, and service to the community. Seminole County Leisure Services is one of only eight CAPRA-accredited County departments in Florida.

For the second consecutive year, Seminole County Public Library System received the Betty Davis Miller Youth Services Award for Outstanding Youth Programs from the Florida Library Association. In 2019, the County was recognized for its innovation in establishing the Sensory Library Lab, a library space dedicated to families of children with special needs. The lab, located at the Central Branch in Casselberry, is indicative of the County’s efforts to extend its services to all members of the community.

The UF/IFAS Seminole County Extension Services Division was recognized by the National Association of Extension 4-H Agents for Excellence in Animal Science Programming, as well as Internet Education Technology. Additionally, Extension Services team members offered hydroponics training to inmates at the John E. Polk Correctional Facility. Last year, 44 individuals successfully completed this unique program, which has demonstrated success for future employment.



MEANINGFUL CUSTOMER SERVICE

Seminole County's fiscal strength and quality of life are dependent on an effective, responsible approach to growth management. Last year, as a result of citizen and customer outreach and engagement, several innovative programs were identified and implemented to transform the customer's experience and County staff's ability to provide effective review of development and construction activities, including:

- *"Fast Track" Permitting, same-day permit approval for residential fences;*
- *"EZ" Permitting, a service that accommodates the issuance of specific residential building permits provided via email;*
- *An automated queue minder has been incorporated on the Building Division website, providing customers with immediate wait time updates to better plan their visits;*
- *ePlan training classes are now offered to the public;*
- *A customer service kiosk now improves the Building Division's customer experience via smart automation; and*
- *A master file process for single-family residential home applications was implemented to expedite plan review and ultimately expedite permit delivery.*

ADVANCING OUR INFRASTRUCTURE

The voter-approved One Cent Sales Tax allowed the County to provide \$32M in projects last year, transforming infrastructure throughout the County. Projects include:

- *Howell Creek erosion control project;*
- *Bear Lake drainage project;*
- *Markham Woods gravity wall rehabilitation;*
- *State Road 46 widening to four lanes;*
- *Osecola Road and Seminola Blvd. resurfacing;*
- *Snow Hill Road drainage and resurfacing;*
- *Rinehart Road pavement rehabilitation;*
- *Lake Mary Boulevard turn lane improvements;*
- *57 design phase and stormwater projects completed;*
- *Countywide resurfacing of roadways – 101 lane miles;*
- *Countywide stormwater pipelining – 4,035 feet; and*
- *Countywide sidewalk replaced - 23,000 LF.*



CONTACT INFORMATION:

(407) 665-0000 | www.seminolecountyfl.gov

Address: 1101 E. 1ST Street
Sanford, FL 32771



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BY THE NUMBERS IN 2019

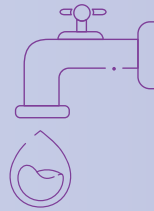
2,259



Citizens Trained in Hands-Only CPR

5.6 Billion Gallons

Potable Water Treated



25,015 Building Permits Issued

72,022 Inspections Completed



15,775

ePlan Permit Applications

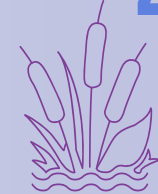


620,568



Water Meters Read

430 Acres



Invasive Lake Vegetation Treated

123,321



Guests Visited Seminole County Natural Lands, a 17% Increase

In Community Services



4,331 Walk-In Customers Assisted

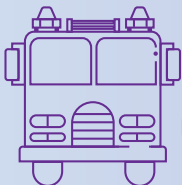
1,321 Online Applications

\$5.8 Million Collected in Tourist Development Taxes



EMS/Fire/Rescue responded to

41,711



Calls for Service

13.7 Million E-Mails



Received by the County, a 44% Increase from 2018

A Record \$42 Million

in Sports Tourism Economic Impact Generated



THE COUNTY'S BUDGET

SUSTAINING THE FUTURE

Innovation and enhancement of service delivery often comes at a price. The Board of County Commissioners consistently seeks ways to capitalize on every opportunity to ensure tax dollars are managed as efficiently as possible. In 2019, the County completed a \$62.1 million water and sewer bond "refunding," resulting in a net present value savings of \$8.7 million. Seminole County's Water and Sewer System was upgraded to Standard and Poor's second-highest rating of AA+.

- Vital Public Safety, Water, Sewer, and Solid Waste Services account for 61% of the operating budget;
- The FY 2019/20 Adopted Budget totals \$838 million inclusive of \$567.6 million in operating funds; \$226 million in reserves; and \$44.4 million in interfund transfers;
- The County maintained a General Fund "Reserve" equivalent to 20% of revenues to ensure its ability to cover unanticipated expenses without impacting funding levels;
- Property values increased County-wide for the seventh consecutive year, averaging 6.6% annual growth over the past six years;
- The Unincorporated County millage rate of 14.1251 is one of the lowest unincorporated rates in the region; and
- Investment policy improvements implemented in 2017 resulted in \$13.3 million in interest income last year, a 73% increase over 2018.

\$30 Million



**in Federal,
State, and
Local
Grants
Received**

\$2,442

**Average Unincorporated
Homesteaded Residence
Ad Valorem Tax Bill**

