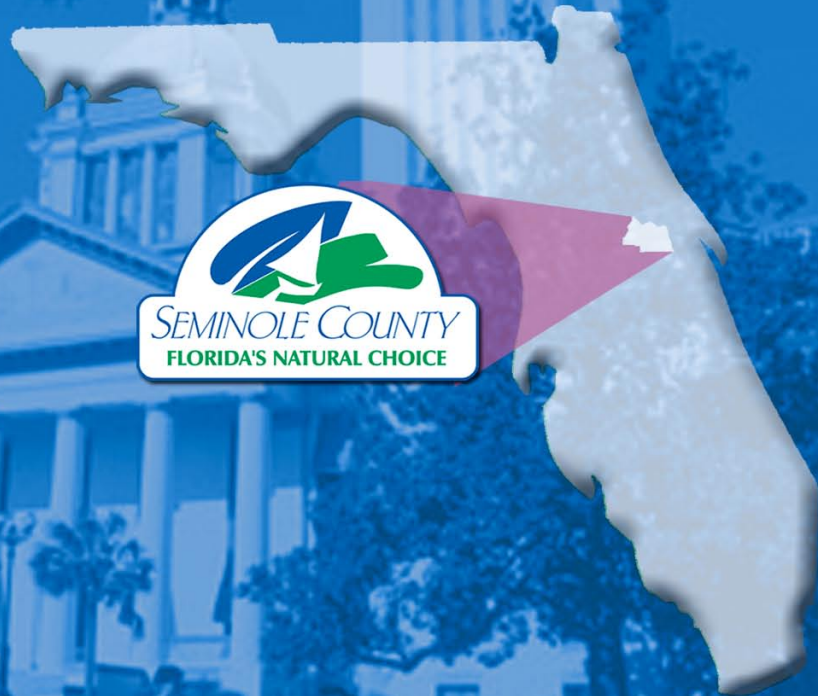


STATE LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES FOR
SEMINOLE COUNTY, FLORIDA



December 2006

**SEMINOLE COUNTY GOVERNMENT
STATE LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES**



BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

CARLTON HENLEY

COUNTY COMMISSION CHAIRMAN

DISTRICT 4

BRENDA CAREY

VICE CHAIRMAN

DISTRICT 5

MICHAEL MCLEAN

DISTRICT 2

DICK VAN DER WEIDE

DISTRICT 3

BOB DALLARI

DISTRICT 1

APPOINTED OFFICIALS

CYNTHIA A. COTO

COUNTY MANAGER

ROBERT A. McMILLAN

COUNTY ATTORNEY

State - Top Legislative Priorities

Local

- SUPPORT funding for driver education programs for young adults.
- SUPPORT legislation giving counties the authority to implement a Local Option Rental Car Surcharge Tax for transportation related improvements.
- SUPPORT legislation that gives all charter counties the authority to implement the Charter County Transit System Surtax. SUPPORT current statutory authority giving counties the discretion to distribute these revenues to municipalities pursuant to an interlocal agreement under F.S. Chapter 163.

FAC

- OPPOSE efforts to diminish or eliminate county home rule authority on items such as impact fees, protection of rural and environmentally sensitive lands, growth management, annexations, etc.
- OPPOSE any shifting of costs for government services and programs from the state to counties, unless state and county elected officials deliberatively evaluate the appropriate funding and delivery of intergovernmental service responsibility.
- SUPPORT retaining the full amount of dedicated documentary tax revenues towards state and local affordable housing programs and SUPPORT state funding to advance workforce housing.
- OPPOSE legislation that undermines existing Florida water law which states that a county in which water is withdrawn shall not be deprived directly or indirectly of the prior right to reasonable and beneficial use of water which is required to supply the needs of that county's natural systems or any of the inhabitants or property owners therein. SUPPORT continuation of state law on local sources first.
- SUPPORT legislation that enhances regional and local financial capacity to address water resource and water supply development.
- SUPPORT a holistic approach to property tax reform that looks to modify the tax structure in an effort to rebalance the property tax system for all property owners, avoiding solutions that will only address the issues affecting the current homesteader with "Save Our Homes". OPPOSE expenditure and revenue caps.
- SUPPORT modification of the rolled back rate calculation to include an adjustment for changes to the price level.
- SUPPORT revisions that address issues related to Article V legislation.
- SUPPORT a 'glitch' bill" to HB 1015 (agricultural enclaves) to remove the right to have the proposed land use amendment automatically transmitted to the DCA.

State Funding Requests

Pedestrian Overpass (Howell Branch Road & SR 426)	\$	7,000,000
Cross Florida Greenways Trail (Seminole County/Winter Springs)	\$	3,500,000
State Road 46 - Regional Evacuation Route (SR 415 to US1)	\$	8,000,000
Sweetwater Cove - Tributary to the Wekiva River	\$	200,000
Museum of Seminole – Education Multi-Purpose Program Building	\$	500,000
Regional Alternative Water Supply Program	\$	2,000,000

A. Pedestrian Overpass (Howell Branch Road & SR 426) - \$7 Million

Request - \$7.0 million to construct a pedestrian overpass at the intersection of Howell Branch Road and State Road 426. The project serves as a regional trail/pedestrian link between Seminole and Orange Counties. It was approved by the Metro Plan Orlando Board in 2004 as part of the Long Range Plan 2025.

Recently, the County has completed the south link of the Cross Seminole Trail, which terminates at the Orange County Line. Orange County will be tying into this section of the trail which will provide a connection to the downtown Orlando Area. The trail serves both recreational and commuter users. In Seminole County it intersects with SR 426 and Howell Branch Road. Approximately 50,000 cars a day pass through this intersection. The pedestrian overpass will enhance the safety at this intersection. The total cost of the project is \$7.0 million for design, right-of-way and construction. Neither the County nor the State has funds at this time.

B. Cross FI Greenways Trail – Seminole County/Winter Springs - \$3.5 Million

Request - \$3.5 million to build the Cross Florida Greenways Trail in Seminole County/Winter Springs. The Cross Florida Greenways Trail is part of a planned connection to Orange County and a regional trail system connection to the Seminole County trail system and eventually part of the Florida National Scenic Trail System. The section of the trail in which the County is seeking funds is in Winter Springs between Layer Elementary School and Old Sanford/Oviedo Road. The project was approved by the Metro Plan Orlando Board in 2004 as part of the Long Range Plan 2025.

The trail serves work, recreational and school access purposes. It also is a “mission link” for a multi-county trail and; therefore, is significant in terms of need and importance. The total cost of the project is \$3.5 million. The County can contribute \$500,000 to this project.

C. State Road 46 – Regional Evacuation Route (SR 415 to US 1) - \$8 Million

Request - \$8.0 million to upgrade state Road 46 from SR 415 to US Highway 1. The funds sought would cover the project development and environment phase of this project, which expands State Road 46 to 4-lanes from SR 415 to US Highway 1 in Brevard County. Widening State Road 46 would significantly improve travel on a regional basis and provide an upgraded hurricane evacuation route. The total cost of the project is \$120.0 million. The project in Seminole County was approved and adopted by the Metro Plan Orlando Board in 2004 as part of the Long Range Plan 2025.

The County expects the funds to be provided by the Florida Department of Transportation which would be the agency to implement the project since it is a State roadway and serves traffic on a regional basis. As an evacuation route, it directly serves Orange, Seminole, Volusia and Brevard Counties. Indirectly, it would serve as a primary or secondary route for other coastal Counties along the east coast of Florida.

D. Sweetwater Cove – Tributary to the Wekiva River- \$200,000

Request - \$200,000 for hydraulic dredging to remove 55,000 cubic yards of sediment and provide stormwater treatment that will reduce nutrients in Sweetwater Cove, and which discharges into the Wekiva River. Nutrient reductions from this project will include a 34% reduction of nitrogen and 50% reduction of phosphorus. These treatment removal rates are in line with the draft Wekiva River and Rock Springs Run pollutant load reduction goals, August 2006, developed by the St. Johns River Water Management District. The project has been identified in the Restoration Plan for Sweetwater Cove.

Sweetwater Cove is a tributary which discharges directly into the Wekiva River, just downstream from Wekiwa Springs State Park. Sweetwater Cove is a 23 acre interconnected lake system. It has a watershed of 1,150 acres, which has minimal stormwater management facilities in a heavily urbanized area. This project will supplement the Sweetwater Creek and Tributary Erosion Control Project constructed in the fall of 2005, which installed weirs, wetland plantings and a sedimentation basin upstream of Sweetwater Cove.

E. Museum of Seminole County History – Education Multi-Purpose Program Building - \$500,000

Request - \$500,000 in grant funding through the Florida Department of State, Florida Arts Council, Cultural Facilities Grant Program to provide support in funding the renovation, construction, or acquisition of cultural facilities. Seminole County Government has submitted an application for the construction of the Museum of Seminole County History – Education Multi-Purpose Building in the amount of \$500,000 with county support of the project at \$1.5 million for a total project cost of \$2.0 million.

On the first level, the Museum of Seminole County History – Education Multi-Purpose Program Building will feature large pieces of farm equipment; space for receiving and processing new artifacts; and a holding space for traveling exhibits until they are assembled and displayed. The second level will be used for research and lecture spaces. All research and reference materials (i.e. books, micro-film reader and cabinet, maps and cabinet, computers, conference room tables and chairs) will be relocated to the new building, increasing available exhibit space in the original building. Also on the second floor will be meeting and lecture space for educational programs. At a 100-person capacity, this space will accommodate programs such as summer camp presentations for students, cultural and historical lectures, and other educational programs for both students and adults.

F. Regional Alternative Water Supply Program - \$2.0 Million

Request - \$2.0 Million to assist in the design of the Yankee Lake Regional Surface Water Facility for augmentation of the reclaimed water system to offset potable ground water demands. The project will serve the Northwest/Northeast Service Areas of the County as well as provide resources to the Seminole, Lake Mary, and Sanford Tri-Party Re-claim System. St. Johns River Water Management District (SJRWMD) has determined, through studies conducted since the mid-1990's that the withdrawals from the Upper Floridian aquifer may result in adverse environmental impact. This project will help us meet the St. Johns River Water Management District regulatory controls along with possible grant funding from SJRWMD up to a maximum \$12.0 million for construction

2007 Legislative Session Issues by Department

County Attorney's Office/County Manager's Office.....Susan Dietrich

Protecting Charter County Home Rule Authority

Seminole County Government has worked diligently to preserve the democratic principles, specifically the notion that the government closest to the people is the proper authority to serve the needs and requirements of the community. Home rule is the right of the people to determine and implement a public purpose at the grassroots level. Home rule power is authorized under F.S. Chapter 125.01 and Article VIII of the Florida Constitution. Preserving this fundamental democratic concept is essential to the operation of county governments.

Recommendation: OPPOSE efforts to diminish or eliminate county home rule authority on items such as impact fees, protection of rural and environmentally sensitive lands, growth management, annexations, etc.

State Cost Shifts of Government Services and Programs

It is considered an unfunded mandate when county governments, by state directive, are required to provide a service, program or benefit without receiving the necessary funding. It is recognized that some state mandates are justified because they achieve agreed upon statewide policy goals. However, many mandates on counties are imposed without the consensus of local governments or the necessary resources for implementation. Mandates drain financial resources from the County, as well as limit our ability to adequately deliver the fundamental services required by law. Mandates also compromise the County's ability to provide discretionary services requested by the local community.

Recommendation: OPPOSE any state or federal actions that limit the ability of the Board of County Commissioners to make fiscal and public policy decisions for Seminole County. OPPOSE any shifting of costs for government services and programs from the state to counties, unless state and county elected officials deliberatively evaluate the appropriate funding and delivery of intergovernmental service responsibility. SUPPORT responsible state action to address budget shortfalls and impacts due to new constitutional requirements. Responsible state action does not include reducing funding for local services or shifting more responsibility to provide services at the local level. OPPOSE state efforts to rely on local property taxes to fund state programs; efforts to solve revenue shortfalls or meet new funding requirements at the state level should not result in increased spending or taxing pressure at the local level.

Driver Education Programs

On October 28, 2003, the Board imposed a \$3 assessment on civil traffic penalties to fund driver education programs under the Dori Slosberg Driver Education Safety Act. On October 25, 2005, the Board added Drivers Education Programs to its list of top priorities for Seminole County. On September 12, 2006, the Board approved an ordinance to increase the civil traffic penalty for driver education from \$3 to the new statutory maximum assessment of \$5. The program is still under funded and limits the number of students that can be served. Seminole County teenage drivers are 7% of our population, with 20% of those drivers being involved in crashes and 15% of the fatalities in Seminole County involving teen drivers. Several County agencies are actively addressing driving safety for young adults. The Board has supported a proposed pilot program with a cost of \$2M in year one \$1.3M in year two; that would serve 240 students per year.

Recommendation: SUPPORT funding for driver education programs for young adults.

Chapter 119 issues (Sunshine Laws)

F.S. Chapter 119 deals with public records, which is defined as “all documents, papers, letters, maps, books, tapes, photographs, films, sound recordings, data processing software or other material, regardless of the physical form, characteristics, or means of transmission,” created or received in connection with government business. All such records are available for inspection unless specifically exempt by the Legislature.

Recommendation: MONITOR potential legislation that deals with F.S. Chapter 119.

Community Information.....Steve Olson

Cable and Television Programming, Video programming over Internet-using cable and Digital Subscriber Line (DSL).

Recently, one of the main areas that has been affected by telecom reform is cable video franchising. Historically, franchise agreements have been established at a local level. Local governments would work with the cable provider to develop an agreement, which would allow them to offer cable services. A major concern is retaining local control of public right of way and protecting the revenue received from cable services.

There are also unknown impacts associated with the growing market for video programming over the internet using cable and DSL.

Recommendation: SUPPORT the existing cable television franchising authority of the County. OPPOSE efforts to diminish or eliminate local cable franchise authority. MONITOR any potential legislation that deals with video programming over the internet using cable and DSL.

Community Services.....David Medley

Affordable Housing

The current increase in home costs within Seminole County has eroded affordable housing stock. Funding made possible by the State and Local Housing Trust Fund (the "Trust Fund") enables many citizens to experience the satisfaction of homeownership. The revenue for the Trust Fund is derived from doc stamps that are paid by citizens of Seminole County and the other 66 counties in the state of Florida. The Trust Fund was created as a result of the Sadowski Act to assist very low income, low income and moderate income Floridians to become homeowners.

Recommendation: SUPPORT retaining the full amount of dedicated documentary tax revenues towards state and local affordable housing programs.

Nursing Home Billing (Certificate of Residency)

In March of 2005, the Agency for Health Care Administration released a report that was researched and compiled by the State Medicaid County Billing Workgroup. This report addressed problems with Medicaid Nursing Home County Billing, also known as Certificate of Residency (COR). To date no action has been taken to implement the recommendations made in that report.

The County is required to pay a portion of the monthly Medicaid Hospital and Nursing Home bill based on the number of CORs indicating Seminole County as primary residence. When the County receives the bill, staff verifies that a COR has been received for each client listed. If not, the client is deleted from the bill and that information is provided to the Office of Health Care Administration. Like Seminole, some counties, have routinely reviewed the bills for accuracy, while other have simply paid the amount billed. There have been discussions for several years regarding elimination of the entire process and billing each county a "pro rata" share of the total state nursing home costs. Suggested methodology's for determining each county's share have included (1) each county's share of total nursing home beds in the state, or (2) use of a two or three year historical average reviewed periodically and updated. The potential liability is the loss of assurance that the County is actually paying for its residents and no defined way of appealing the bill.

Recommendation: MONITOR any proposed changes to determine the impact on Seminole County.

Economic Development.....Bill McDermott

Workforce Housing

Seminole County Government has a very successful business recruitment and retention program. However, the rising cost of housing is increasingly a bottom-line concern. Like transportation and education, the availability of affordable workforce housing affects directly the ability to attract and retain an adequate, stable and skilled labor pool at competitive wages. Although the approaches to workforce housing issues are from different perspectives, businesses and

housing advocates have many goals in common. Workforce housing should be aimed at helping workers such as teachers, firefighters, nurses, and county employees, who are increasingly being priced out of the housing market.

On a broader level, the issue should not be limited solely based on the need of the workforce for affordable housing, but also how much workforce housing is produced, where it is produced, as well as how to address the challenges of producing it where it is needed.

Recommendation: SUPPORT state funding to advance workforce housing.

Community Redevelopment /Brownfield Redevelopment

Brownfield and voluntary cleanup programs began in the late 1980's in response to the realization that public funding was not sufficient to address the complexities of contaminated site cleanups. Upon completion of the cleanup, the property receives documentation that provides some degree of environmental closure and clarity of any possible future liability obligations. Seminole County is committed to the redevelopment of Hwy 17-92 and redevelopment of lands that can be developed throughout the county.

Recommendation: SUPPORT/MONITOR any state incentives associated with brownfield redevelopment.

Economic Development Innovation Incentive

Seminole County Government's economic prosperity rests on the stability of community leadership and the tools that are made available. State incentives of concern include, but are not limited to, Funding of Enterprise Florida's budget, Transportation Incentive Fund and the Qualified Targeted Incentive Fund. These programs are monitored to ensure that funding levels are adequate and efforts are not being made to rewrite the rules. Any new legislation which would reduce the cost of doing business in the state is closely watched. An example of this from the 2006 session was the elimination of sales tax on new equipment for manufacturers.

Recommendation: OPPOSE/MONITOR any proposed changes that would limit the County's ability to attract and retain jobs to our community.

Environmental Services.....David Gregory

Water Transfer

OPPOSE legislation that undermines existing Florida water law which states that a county in which water is withdrawn shall not be deprived directly or indirectly of the prior right to reasonable and beneficial use of water which is required to supply the needs of that county's natural systems or any of the inhabitants or property owners therein. SUPPORT continuation of state law on local sources first.

Water Supply Funding

SUPPORT legislation that enhances regional and local financial capacity to address water resource and water supply development. SUPPORT legislation that enhances the flexibility of expenditures from the state, regional, and local funding sources to address water resource and supply development. OPPOSE any legislation to expand the existing limitations on the use of Florida Forever funding for water resource development. SUPPORT the Water Protection and Sustainability Program within the Department of Environmental Protection and continuation of statutory levels of state funding of alternative water supply development

Water Governance

SUPPORT the existing framework of regional water management while working to improve coordination between water management districts and local governments.

Fiscal Services.....Lisa Spriggs

Property Taxation Reform

The 2006 legislative session included multiple proposals regarding property tax reform that, if approved in the future, could have a material impact on the ability of local governments to respond to essential service demands. Bills introduced included authorization for homeowners to apply “Save Our Homes” equity to a newly purchased home, application of a cap on increases to all types of real property, an expenditure cap for local governments, and a proposed increase in the homestead exemption to \$50,000.

In 1992, Florida voters approved an amendment to the Florida Constitution, popularly known as “Save Our Homes,” which limits the increase in assessed value for properties qualifying for the homestead exemption to no more than 3% or the increase in the consumer price index (CPI). “Save Our Homes” does not cover new construction, nor does it apply when the qualified property is sold. The new owner’s property is assessed at market value, or the equivalent selling price. Several resolutions have been introduced in the State Legislature that would seek to amend Section 4, Article VII of the State Constitution by allowing residents to maintain their “Save Our Homes” limitation when moving to another homestead property.

Portability of the “Save Our Homes” property taxes would allow current homeowners to pay reduced property taxes when moving by taking the “Save Our Homes” equity and transferring it to another home. In general this means that for a house purchased in 1989 as a primary residency (qualifies for homestead exemption) for \$70,000, that now has a just value of \$260,000 and a taxable value of \$90,000, the first \$260,000 of the assessed value of a newly purchased home would be taxed at a valuation of \$90,000. So if the newly purchased home is valued at \$300,000, the taxable value of the home would be \$130,000 (\$90,000 plus \$40,000, the difference between the old home's taxable value and the new home's just value).

The “Save Our Homes” provision has had the unintended consequence of creating an unbalanced system of taxation where neighboring homes with the same value can pay significantly disproportionate taxes, leaving the tax burden on commercial, seasonal and newly acquired homesteaded properties. Portability of taxes alone will only address the issues affecting current homesteaders with “Save Our Homes” equity such as empty nesters seeking to downsize and owners of homestead properties seeking to move; and will not address the broader issues of businesses and other non-homesteaded properties that are subject to market based assessment increases, first time homebuyers, and renters and owners of affordable housing.

Recommendation:

OPPOSE revisions of Homestead Exemption that diminish the fiscal capacity of the County or that substantially shift the property tax burden. SUPPORT avoiding solutions that have substantial impacts to the existing tax base in favor of proposals that would impact future growth. OPPOSE revisions that further increase the inequities in taxable valuations for similar properties. OPPOSE expenditure and revenue caps. SUPPORT only those “Save Our Homes” portability proposals that limit the portability to within the same County, and are not restricted to homesteaders who are downsizing. SUPPORT a holistic approach to property tax reform that looks to modify the tax structure in an effort to rebalance the property tax system for all property owners, avoiding solutions that will only address the issues affecting the current homesteader with “Save Our Homes” equity such as empty nesters seeking to downsize and owners of homestead properties seeking to move; and will not address the broader issues of businesses and other non-homesteaded properties that are subject to market based assessment increases, first time homebuyers, and renters and owners of affordable housing. MONITOR proposed changes for fiscal impact to the County.

Truth in Millage Process Reform

There are several entities looking at the property tax structure and process. A part of that will be a review of the truth in millage (TRIM) process. Several issues exist regarding the calculation of the rollback rate and the presentation and usability of the TRIM notice.).

The current law does not make sense in that it assumes the cost of serving the existing tax base is never going to increase; when in fact annually the cost of services provided is increased with normal cost escalation. Consideration of an adjustment in price level would allow for more realistic and useful information for communication to the public.

The average tax payer does not understand the current rollback calculation, so confusion exists as to what it really means when there is an increase over the rolled back rate. The current law does not facilitate providing the taxpayer with good information to make an informed decision and puts unreasonable pressure on political officials to make tax cuts that can jeopardize vital public service delivery.

The entire TRIM process needs to be revisited to more accurately reflect the reality of the tax increase. Consideration should be given to whether a rolled back rate is necessary for comparison or whether reflecting the % and \$ increase or decrease from year to year is enough. The reality is that a larger increase may make sense for a jurisdiction that is behind in current funding of service delivery, where a jurisdiction that is more than offsetting cost of service delivery could be adopting the same increase providing unnecessary surplus. The current process makes local government agencies short sighted because of the political pressures it places on elected officials when setting the millage rates. Decisions to reduce are often made in spite of the needs for funding vital and necessary service delivery to the tax payer. The process deters local government agencies from long-range financial planning and operating from a business perspective. The process as it stands does not assist the taxpayers.

Recommendation: SUPPORT modification of the rolled back rate calculation to include an adjustment for changes to the price level (i.e. a change in Consumer Price Index or the change in the state and local government price deflator for purchases of goods and services. MONITOR any proposed changes to the TRIM notice process.

911 Fees

There is a proposal to merge the landline and wireless 911 fees into one fee that similarly administered and collected by the state, similar to the Communications Service Tax. Under the proposal, the local option rate authority that currently exists at the local level would be replaced with a set statewide fee.

Recommendation: SUPPORT increased administrative enforcement of the wireless 911 fee, including provisions for audit and reporting penalties. OPPOSE any diversions of the 911 fees to non-911 related purposes. MONITOR proposed legislation to evaluate the fiscal impact to Seminole County.

Communications Service Tax

The Communications Services Tax Simplification Law was enacted to restructure taxes on telecommunication, cable, direct-to-home satellite and related services that existed prior to October 1, 2001. The Simplification of the CST was a major accomplishment that required extensive cooperation and negotiation on the part of all interested parties. However, each year certain communications providers attempt to gain a competitive advantage by seeking exemptions to the tax. Also, due to changing technology, telephone based communication is likely to diminish and be replaced by newer media. The intent of the original CST simplification was that the taxing mechanism would follow the migrating technology to the new media, and the tax base would be preserved. However, there is increasing pressure from the industry to exclude Voice Over Internet Protocol from the CST, and there has also been discussion of a reduction of CST rates. Actions such as these would diminish the reliability of the CST as an important source of non ad valorem revenue for local governments.

Recommendation: SUPPORT legislation that preserves the application of the CST on the current scope of communication services and at current rates. As technology migrates to new media such as Voice Over Internet Protocol the CST should follow the service so that the tax base grows with the local communities and is not diminished.

Indexing Motor Fuel Rates

Since all local government fuel taxes are established as a fixed amount per gallon, as the cost of providing transportation related services increased due to inflation, the corresponding funding source, fuel taxes, remains flat. While state imposed fuel taxes are indexed to the CPI, local option gas taxes are not indexed. The ability to index local option fuel tax rates to the CPI is needed to generate additional revenues to keep up with the increased costs of providing the services for which the tax was originally levied.

Recommendation: SUPPORT legislation to provide for indexing local option fuel taxes levied per gallon based on changes in the CPI.

Article V / Revision 7

The Florida Legislature as mandated by the voters enacted Article V legislation that was implemented in 2004. The Legislature also enacted glitch bills to address some of the issues and concerns which were raised as a result of the legislation. Several matters remain unresolved, such as concerns regarding allocation methodology used in the distribution of fines and fees, arbitrary requirements that require counties to spend progressively more money each year on court activities regardless of whether those activities will actually cost more money or not, and duplicative reporting requirements that are not consistent with uniform financial reporting requirements of the state. Additionally, counties continue to be responsible to provide for services that are unfunded mandates.

Recommendation: SUPPORT revisions that address issues related to Article V legislation. SUPPORT the elimination of county responsibility for funding subpoena services, auxiliary aids, courier services, and phone services and other line or communication services changes, as communication requirements under F.S. Chapter 29.008. SUPPORT limiting county responsibility for information technology needs of the courts to the infrastructure necessary for the communication of computer terminals. SUPPORT the capping of county funding responsibilities for technology needs to the amount of revenue that is generated with the \$2 recording fee.

Other Fiscal Issues

- OPPOSE any further reduction, redistribution, or cap in growth of state revenues shared with counties.
- OPPOSE any FRS benefit changes that result in an increase in the FRS contribution rates.
- SUPPORT maintaining state general revenue funding for county health departments and OPPOSE any state reductions to the county health department trust funds.

Human Resources.....Andy McNeil

Deferred Compensation

Deferred compensation has been a major priority for the County for several years. The proposed changes needed to allow local government employees to be members of the state deferred compensation plan include removal of the restrictions in statute that limit the deferred compensation plan established by the Chief Financial Officer state employees, and the addition of language authorizing participation in the program by employees of local governmental entities.

Recommendation: SUPPORT advancement of necessary language to allow local governments to participate in the State’s Deferred Compensation Program.

Information Technology.....Colleen Rotella

Technology Programs

Over the past decade, phenomenal technological advancements have occurred. The challenge has been to determine its impact on service delivery. Technology initiatives, telecommunications services, frequency/spectrum (FCC) and domestic/regional homeland security are all programs that require monitoring.

Recommendation: MONITOR any proposed changes to the technology programs to determine any impacts on county government.

Library & Leisure Services.....Suzy Goldman

Funding Programs

As the need for services expands, so does the need for state funding. The County supports maintaining or enhancing funding levels for the following programs:

State Aid to Libraries Grant Program – This is an incentive program designed to encourage counties and municipalities to provide library service to their residents and to provide funding to SUPPORT library services. The program is intended to provide funding up to 25 cents on each dollar of local funds expended for library operation and maintenance. In fiscal year 2005/06 the actual grant award was for 5.4 cents on each dollar of local funds expended. ,

Recommendation: SUPPORT full funding of State Aid to Libraries based on the current statutory formula that provides counties 25 cents for every local dollar spent. MONITOR to ensure programs are fully funded.

Florida Recreation Assistance Development Program (FRDAP) – This program provides assistance for the acquisitions and development of land for outdoor recreation use or to construct recreational trails. The 2006 legislature fully funded the program at \$30 million. Efforts have been made to increase grant application maximum amounts from \$200,000 to \$500,000.

Recommendation: SUPPORT legislative appropriation to allow for greater number of projects to be funded. SUPPORT increase in maximum grant award amount.

Cultural Facilities Grant Program - The Florida Department of State, Florida Arts Council offers the Program to provide SUPPORT in funding renovations, construction, or acquisition of cultural facilities. Seminole County has submitted an application for the construction of the Museum of Seminole County History – Education Multi-Purpose Building in the amount of \$500,000. The Division of Cultural Affairs will evaluate the applications and provide funding recommendations during November 2006, for review by the legislature in 2007.

Recommendation: SUPPORT full funding of grant application for the Museum of Seminole County History – Education Multi-Purpose Program Building.

Planning & Development.....April Boswell

Growth Management Annexation, Interlocal Service Boundaries and Land Use

Growth Management continues to evolve each year as legislation is being proposed. The county supports a comprehensive planning framework with state oversight, along with regional coordination. However, there must be a realization that many local land use decisions result in minimum to no impact on state interest. Seminole County should retain maximum flexibility to address local concerns and conditions. The state should yield to local decision makers and encourage regional coordination.

Recommendation: MONITOR growth management related legislation and determine the potential impacts on the county.

Rezoning of Mobile Home Parks

In response to an increasing number of mobile home parks being converted to other uses throughout the state, a bill was filed in 2006 that would have required local governments to provide direct financial assistance to any mobile home resident that was displaced as a result of a local rezoning action. Specifically, HB 835 and SB 934 would have required a local government that approves a rezoning request of a mobile home park to provide financial assistance to any displaced resident to: (1) assist the owner with the cost of relocating his/her home; (2) assist the owner in purchasing a new mobile home; and (3) assist the owner in relocating to any other adequate and suitable housing. Although the bills died on the legislative calendar, FAC anticipate they will be filed in 2007.

Recommendation: OPPOSE/MONITOR these two bills.

Comprehensive Plan Amendments

An Evaluation and Appraisal Report (EAR) must be adopted as part of one round of comprehensive plan amendments. The impact of this requirement will now be felt by local governments that will have to hire consultants to complete all of the amendments they might want to pursue, based on their EAR findings.

Recommendation: SUPPORT of a bill to eliminate this costly requirement.

Agricultural Enclaves

HB 1015 passed in 2006 grants the owner of land meeting the definition of an agricultural enclave the right to have a proposed land use amendment transmitted to the State Department of Community Affairs (DCA). This automatically occurs after 180 days of negotiating with the local government to reach a consensus on land uses and intensities of use. Further, this occurs regardless of the local government's opposition to the land use amendment even if the local government determines that the proposed amendment is not compatible with surrounding land uses.

Recommendation: SUPPORT a ‘glitch’ bill” to change HB 1015 to remove the right to have the proposed land use amendment automatically transmitted to the DCA.

Annexation Issues

There has been no preliminary information to indicate that legislation is under consideration that affects annexation issues, particularly issues involving Interlocal service delivery that may alter or interfere with existing arrangements.

Recommendation: SUPPORT reform of municipal annexation for the dual purposes of supporting acceptable growth management principles and promoting cost-effective and efficient local government service delivery. OPPOSE revisions that lesson county oversight and participation in the annexation process, including weakening the power of charter provisions to control voluntary annexation methods. MONITOR legislation that is proposed to address annexation and municipal service delivery issues.

Public Safety.....Ken Roberts

EMS/Fire/Rescue–Operations, Training/Logistics, Planning/Administration, Special Operations, Hazardous Materials, WMD’s, Urban Search & Rescue (USAR)

Protecting the health, safety and welfare of the citizenry is of paramount importance to Seminole County Government. Historically, county governments have ensured public safety and security through operating county emergency management by providing fire and rescue services. It is imperative for state policy to maintain county government control of Emergency Management systems during emergencies and threats. It is also important that, as the population continues to grow, the state provide enhanced and/or dedicated funding sources to assist with a number of these services.

Recommendation: MONITOR any proposed changes to ensure local control is not diminished or eliminated or that would limit the County’s ability to receive funding or any programmatic changes.

Public Works.....Jerry McCollum

Local Option Rental Car Surcharge

Florida provides for a statewide rental car surcharge of \$2 per day. Revenues from the surcharge are distributed 80% toward statewide transportation efforts, 15.75% toward the state’s tourism promotion and marketing efforts, and 4.25% toward the state’s international trade efforts.

The County would benefit from the ability to impose a Local Option Rental Car Surcharge of \$2 per day to be utilized for transportation-related improvements. The surcharge would apply to motor vehicles licensed for hire and designed to carry fewer than nine passengers, regardless of whether the motor vehicle is licensed in this state. The surcharge would apply to the first 30 days of each lease or rental and would not apply to a lease or rental of a motor vehicle being used while an owner’s vehicle is undergoing maintenance or repair. The surcharge would require voter approval in a countywide referendum

Recommendation: SUPPORT legislation giving counties the authority to implement a Local Option Rental Car Surcharge Tax for transportation related improvements.

Charter County Transit System Surtax

The Charter County Transit System Surtax may be levied at a rate of up to 1 percent by those charter counties that adopted a charter prior to January 1, 1984 (seven counties are eligible), as well as by those county governments that have consolidated with one or more municipalities. The tax levy is subject to voter approval. Generally, the use of the proceeds is for the development, construction, operation, and maintenance of fixed guideway rapid transit systems, bus systems, roads and bridges.

Recommendation: SUPPORT legislation that gives all charter counties the authority to implement the Charter County Transit System Surtax. SUPPORT current statutory authority giving counties the discretion to distribute these revenues to municipalities pursuant to an interlocal agreement under F.S. Chapter 163.

Tourism Development.....Suzan Bunn

Special Use of Tourist Development Tax Funds

Seminole County Government Tourist Development Council was formed in 1988 as part of the legislation establishing the Tourist Development Tax (TDT). The County’s mission is to promote activities that will bring a significant number of new or repeat visitors and create a positive economic impact. The TDT, also known as "Bed Tax" or "Resort Tax", is a 2% tax on rentals or transient lodging of (6) months or less. There has been discussion within the industry to look at special uses with TDT funds dealing with the following issues:

1. Beach Renovation and Erosion
2. Disaster Re-Building
3. Infrastructure – Roads around tourism entities, i.e., convention centers
4. Building, Operating and Maintenance of Facilities currently not covered by the Statue
5. Lobbying against oil and gas rigs on the Coast
6. Raising incentives given to Film Producers

Recommendation: MONITOR any proposed changes to the use of TDT funds.