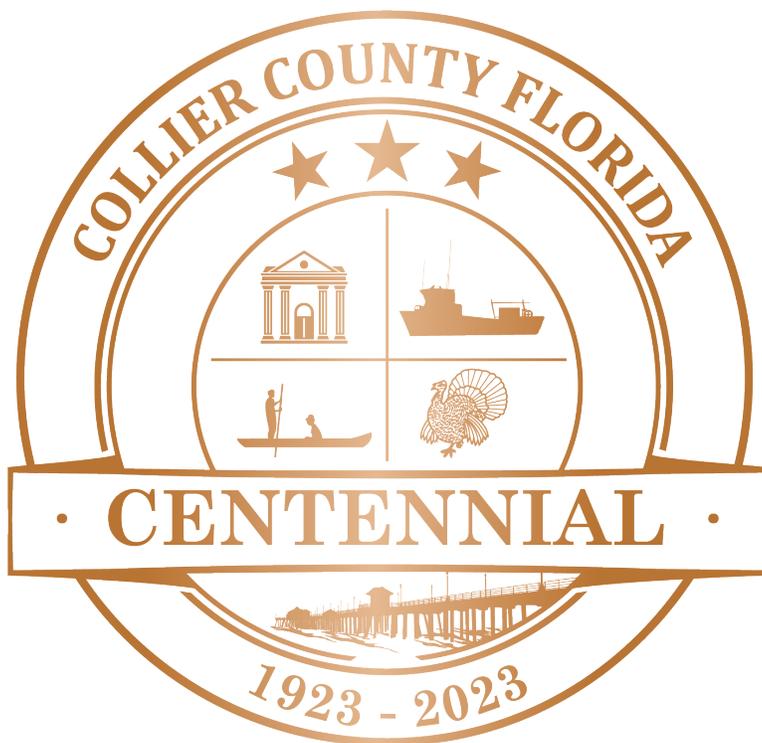


2023

State and Federal
Legislative and Administrative
Priorities



John Mullins

Director

Division of Communications,
Government & Public Affairs

INTRODUCTION

This document was produced based on prior Board direction, legislative and project needs identified by County staff in support of Board-approved programs and projects, ongoing or unresolved legislative and administrative issues from 2022, and legislative priorities shared with the [Florida Association of Counties](#) (FAC) and the [National Association of Counties](#) (NACo).

Our state and federal contract lobbyists provide valuable input throughout this process and work very hard to continually identify and monitor legislative trends, issues, administrative activity, and funding opportunities throughout the year.

Once reviewed and approved by the Board of County Commissioners, the County's legislative and administrative priorities guide all advocacy efforts in Tallahassee, FL, and Washington, DC, for the upcoming year.

For more information, please contact John Mullins at john.mullins@colliercountyfl.gov



Rick LoCastro – District 1



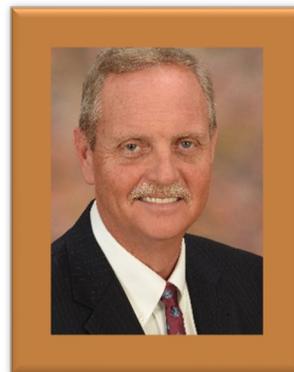
Andy Solis – District 2



Burt Saunders – District 3



Penny Taylor – District 4



William McDaniel, Jr. – District 5

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PRIORITIES: LEGISLATIVE & ADMINISTRATIVE	5
Affordable Housing	5
American Infrastructure Bonds Act & Advance Refunding of Municipal Bonds	5
County Funding Streams.....	6
FEMA Remapping.....	6
Hurricane Preparedness & Recovery	6
Hurricane Relief Reimbursement	7
Long-Term, Transparent National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) Reauthorization	7
Property Insurance Market Stabilization	7
Septic-to-Sewer Grant Program Flexibility.....	8
State Veterans’ Nursing Home	8
Water Quality and Quantity Management	9
STATE APPROPRIATIONS PROJECT REQUESTS	10
Palm River Area 4 – Septic-to-Sewer Conversion (23 Residential Properties).....	10
Sugden Regional Park – Docks & Piers Renovation	10
Countywide Court Resurfacing.....	10
N. Collier Regional Park – Softball Pavilion Renovation.....	10
Four-Point Roundabout	10
Aquatic Plant Mechanical Harvesting Equipment	10
Golden Gate City Stormwater Outfall Replacements (15).....	10
Logan Boulevard/Treeline Drive Intersection Roundabout.....	10
Everglades Boulevard/43rd Avenue Intersection Improvements.....	10
16th Avenue SW Paved Shoulder Improvements.....	10
White Boulevard Shoulder Improvements	10
Oil Well Road Shoulder Improvements – Segment 3	10
Oil Well Road Shoulder Improvements – Segment 4	10
ISSUES TO MONITOR	11
Autonomous Vehicles.....	11
Big Cypress Basin.....	11
Clerk of the Circuit Court Funding	11
Community Redevelopment Agencies.....	11

Economic Development Administration (EDA) Project Funding – Immokalee Airport Cold Storage/Freight.....11

FAA Air Traffic Control Privatization.....11

Harmful Algal Blooms.....11

Hazardous Waste Disposal Funding / Collection Bills12

Home Rule12

I-75 Interchanges12

Inland Oil Drilling & High-Pressure Well Stimulation (Fracking).....12

Lake Okeechobee and Everglades Restoration.....12

Licensing & Permitting.....12

Medical Marijuana Dispensaries12

Mental Health & Substance Abuse.....13

Millage Rates13

Offshore Drilling.....13

School Resource Officer / Guardian Program Funding.....13

Short Term Rentals.....13

Southwest Florida Promise Zone / Opportunity Zones.....13

Workers Compensation Reform.....14

May 8, 1923

*Collier County was created on **May 8, 1923**, when Florida Governor, Cary A. Hardee, signed Senate Bill 149, officially creating Florida’s 62nd county.*



PRIORITIES: LEGISLATIVE & ADMINISTRATIVE

Affordable Housing

Summary: Support an increase in funding and provide for statutory relief for the Home Investment Partnerships (HOME) Program. This program serves as the largest federal block grant to state and local jurisdictions for the development and preservation of housing that is affordable for persons with low and moderate incomes, including veterans, seniors, individuals with disabilities/special needs, and persons experiencing homelessness. Support proposals, tax incentives, and funding which would increase home ownership and rental housing opportunities for low- and moderate-income individuals and families, and work with state and federal partners on policies that would seek to increase the supply of such housing. The impact of Hurricane Ian compounded this issue by reducing housing availability options and causing both temporary and permanent relocation of many with significantly damaged or destroyed housing.

Action: (STATE/FEDERAL) – Work with President Passidomo (*expected lead on this issue*) and the state and federal delegations, to broadly address supply and demand issues for housing that is affordable in Southwest Florida. Support specific requests that affect HOME administrators nationally, but have particular effect in Southwest Florida as outlined in a HOME Coalition letter to HUD Secretary Marcia Fudge dated August 25, 2022.

American Infrastructure Bonds Act & Advance Refunding of Municipal Bonds

Summary: Build America Bonds (BABs) were taxable municipal bonds that featured federal tax credits or subsidies for bondholders or state and local government bond issuers and were introduced in 2009 as part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act to create jobs and stimulate the economy. The Build America Bonds program expired in 2010.

A bipartisan group of Senators reintroduced the American Infrastructure Bonds Act of 2021 (S. 1308; HR 2634 is the House companion measure) that would create similar securities called American Infrastructure Bonds. Recently, the revival of this lending tool has been discussed in the context of economic stimulus and infrastructure legislation and enjoys the vocal support of House Ways and Means Chair and Senate Finance Committee Chair.

Additionally, the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017 eliminated issuers' ability to advance refund debt with tax-exempt bonds. On the House side, the Investing in Our Communities Act (HR2288 filed in 2021), would reverse this and again allow municipalities to use advance refunding to lower borrowing costs and to take advantage of lower interest rates.

Action: (FEDERAL) – Advocate for passage of the American Infrastructure Bonds Act and the Investing in Our Communities Act and/or any language incorporated in other legislation that enacts the same.

County Funding Streams

Summary: Full funding of grants and continued appropriations for programs or funds applicable to Collier County, including but not limited to Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT), Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), Home Investment Partnerships Program (HOME), Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), Airport Improvement Program (AIP), Emergency Management Performance Grants (EMPG), Stafford Act, Fire Management Assistance Grant Program (FMAGP), FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP), FEMA Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) program, Rainy Day Fund, Local Housing Trust Fund, Sadowski Act-funded programs including the State Housing Initiatives Partnership (SHIP) and State Apartment Incentive Loan (SAIL) Program, the Land Acquisition Trust Fund (LATF), and the Rural Development Grant Program.

Action: (STATE/FEDERAL) – Advocate for full funding of grants and continued appropriations for programs or funds applicable to Collier County and oppose state or federal actions that would utilize moneys for other purposes than originally intended.

FEMA Remapping

Summary: Expedited approval is needed for the Collier County flood remapping process which is seven years behind schedule. Two-thirds of Collier County’s population is represented by outdated maps. The two Physical Map Revisions (PMR) are in the final stages of mapping production. FEMA Region IV expects to release the preliminary maps for PMR-1 and PMR-2 in July of 2023. The preliminary maps for the Southwest Florida Coastal Study that were released by FEMA on December 31, 2019, are expected to be finalized in the first quarter of 2023. PMR-1 and PMR-2 will then be *merged* with the Coastal Study to produce the *final* map product. County staff is awaiting notification from FEMA as to Hurricane Ian’s effect on the flood study.

Action: (FEDERAL) – Continue to support increases in funding for the Flood Hazard Mapping and Risk Analysis Program that support this process. During the 2023 cycle, engage agency officials and the congressional delegation to prompt expedited FEMA approval of the County’s final flood remapping product.

Hurricane Preparedness & Recovery

Summary: Following Hurricane Irma in 2017, the Florida House of Representatives appointed a 21-member Select Committee on Hurricane Response and Preparedness which made 78 recommendations for hurricane preparedness and response ranging from nursing home safety to evacuation route improvements and shelter planning. Where a few of these recommendations were implemented by the full Legislature, including the nursing home generator requirement and money for farm repairs, many failed to win support. It is anticipated that another Select Committee will be convened in the aftermath of Ian and Representative Melo *may* be an appointed member.

Action: (STATE/FEDERAL) – In collaboration with our Emergency Services Director, any Select Committee appointed by the House and/or Senate, state and federal delegation members, FDEM, FEMA, and other emergency preparedness organizations, work to improve upon the lessons learned from both Hurricanes Irma and Ian and to address lingering issues involving fuel availability and shipment, strengthening of requirements for emergency generators for commercial fuel stations near the interstate, and addressing the absence of hardening of business and residential, wired and wireless, critical internet connectivity.

Hurricane Relief Reimbursement

Summary: Support expedited funding relief efforts to individuals and businesses affected by Hurricane Ian. With the support of the congressional delegation, prompt FEMA and SBA to work collaboratively with local applicants in the reimbursement process, ensure realistic timeframes for gathering documentation, advocate for an appropriate level of cost-sharing, and provide for an efficient communication model for any disagreements or disputes.

Action: (STATE/FEDERAL) – Work with our state and federal delegations, FDEM, SBA, and FEMA to provide expeditious relief to Collier County residents and businesses in the aftermath of Hurricane Ian.

Long-Term, Transparent National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) Reauthorization

Summary: To seek the long-term reauthorization of the NFIP to provide housing market stability while ensuring transparency and fairness in rate setting. Currently, NFIP authorization is set to expire on December 16, 2022. Given current response efforts to Hurricane Ian, Senator Rubio is filing legislation that calls for both supplemental appropriations and supplemental authorization requests, including reauthorization of NFIP through September 30, 2023. Where this reauthorization is a *must* given current circumstances, future market stability calls for a longer reauthorization of at least five years.

Action: (FEDERAL) – Support Senator Rubio’s legislation that extends NFIP for one year while also supporting subsequent legislation that provides for a minimum five-year reauthorization, and focuses on affordability, efficiency, fairness, accountability, and sustainability of the program. The legislation should also invest in mitigation, modernize flood mapping and flood risk accuracy, and increase consumer protections in the NFIP and private insurance markets.

Property Insurance Market Stabilization

Summary: On May 26, 2022, Governor DeSantis signed Senate Bill 2-D passed by the Legislature in Special Session. The bill took aim at the roofing scams and related lawsuits borne of Hurricane Irma in 2017, and tried to address insolvency issues plaguing the property insurance market while reducing premiums on homeowners and curbing the rate of policy non-renewals. Before these reforms ever had a chance of taking hold, Hurricane Ian plowed through Southwest

Florida and is projected to be the most expensive storm in state history with privately insured losses nearing \$60 billion. This may compound existing reinsurance issues that could lead to more property insurance writers becoming insolvent. The State’s insurer of last resort, Citizens Property Insurance Corporation, wrote its one-millionth Florida homeowners’ policy in August.

Action: (STATE/FEDERAL) – Advocate for continued reforms to stabilize the property insurance market, prevent further insolvencies, add growth in market competition, fair and transparent premiums for policy holders, and reduce dependency on the State’s insurer of last resort.

Septic-to-Sewer Grant Program Flexibility

Summary: Aging septic tank systems and their leaching of effluent are a threat to waterways, the habitats they sustain, and our drinking water quality. Even when conducted in phases, sanitary sewer construction and connection projects are expensive whether it be a densely populated area or a small and/or rural community with fiscal limitations. Residents often incur costly assessments to cover transition to a sanitary sewer system. The Clean Waterways Act of 2020 created a septic-to-sewer grant program that *requires a 50% local match* that may be waived by DEP *only* for rural areas of opportunity. More flexibility is needed including a low-or-no local match septic-to-sewer conversion option to expeditiously connect residents to sanitary sewer systems and facilitate proper abandonment of the septic tank.

Action: (STATE) – Advocacy for expansion of the existing septic-to-sewer grant program applicable to *planning, design, construction, and connection costs* providing more flexibility for small and/or rural communities.

State Veterans’ Nursing Home

Summary: Though Collier County was ranked at the top of a needs-based study for the construction of a new State Veterans’ Nursing Home, at the conclusion of the 2014 site evaluation process, St. Lucie County was ultimately awarded the new facility. The Florida Department of Veterans’ Affairs (FDVA) has commented to the Legislature that the State is still a few years from accumulation of funds necessary for the 35% mandated state construction match to qualify for federal consideration to be the next new State Veterans’ Nursing Home.

During the last three legislative sessions, commissioners have met with FDVA to keep them apprised of the County’s progress in raising the 35% construction match and acquisition of the Golden Gate Golf Course property as a potential location for the facility. In October 2021, FDVA conducted a site visit to evaluate the property and to provide feedback on next steps. On July 13, 2022, FDVA *recommended* Collier County to the Governor/Cabinet as the next site selected.

Action: (STATE/FEDERAL) – Using a portion of the temporary one-cent sales tax revenues as a funding stream for the local construction match, and with the Golden Gate Golf Course property serving as a *potential* location, staff will continue to work with the Florida Department of Veterans’ Affairs on next steps for securing a State Veterans’ Nursing Home for Collier County.

Water Quality and Quantity Management

Summary: Local water, wastewater, and stormwater system water quality improvement projects support the protection of our drinking water supply as well as our natural environment and fragile ecosystem. Counties and communities often have budgetary constraints that prevent them from covering the total costs for many needed improvements to aging water, wastewater, and stormwater system infrastructure.

Action: (STATE/FEDERAL) – Support water quality and quantity management programs, including tiered funding opportunities for water and public utility infrastructure (including fire hydrant systems), funding and incentives for stormwater system rehabilitation and measurable water quality enhancement, funding for technical and scientific studies to support water quality improvements, and continued funding of opportunities that reduce resident cost in moving from well water to potable water systems.

1944

Naples pier after a hurricane in 1944.



1935

The Collier County Court House in Everglades, FL, after the Great Labor Day Hurricane in September of 1935.

STATE APPROPRIATIONS PROJECT REQUESTS

Palm River Area 4 – Septic-to-Sewer Conversion (23 Residential Properties): \$3 million

- *Septic-to-sewer conversion for 23 residential properties abutting the Cocohatchee River system.*

Sugden Regional Park – Docks & Piers Renovation: \$300,000

- *Design engineering for renovations to 7 lakeside docks and piers.*

Countywide Court Resurfacing: \$750,000 (\$50,000 in local funding)

- *Resurfacing of approximately 50 Parks and Recreation athletic courts.*

N. Collier Regional Park – Softball Pavilion Renovation: \$750,000 (\$70,000 in local funding)

- *Construction improvements to the pavilion and walkways.*

Four-Point Roundabout: \$1.25 million (\$250,000 in local funding)

- *Realignment of Camp Keais Road and installation of a roundabout within the project limits.*

Aquatic Plant Mechanical Harvesting Equipment: \$110,000

- *Purchase of a Weedo/Truxor workboat for mechanical aquatic plant removal in lieu of chemical spraying. Enhancement of stormwater flow and improvement to water quality.*

Golden Gate City Stormwater Outfall Replacements (15): \$4.015 million

- *For design and construction of 15 outfall pipes improving stormwater drainage, and reducing the potential for roadway, residential, and sidewalk flooding.*

Logan Boulevard/Treeline Drive Intersection Roundabout: \$1.5 million

- *Conversion of the existing intersection into a roundabout to for safety and efficiency.*

Everglades Boulevard/43rd Avenue Intersection Improvements: \$3.6 million

- *Widening of traffic lanes, providing turn lanes, sidewalks at each corner, paved shoulders.*

16th Avenue SW Paved Shoulder Improvements: \$2.8 million

White Boulevard Shoulder Improvements: \$2.2 million

Oil Well Road Shoulder Improvements – Segment 3: \$1.6 million

Oil Well Road Shoulder Improvements – Segment 4: \$1.45 million

- *Each of these projects include the widening of traffic lanes, paved bike lanes and/or shoulders, and drainage improvements.*

ISSUES TO MONITOR

Autonomous Vehicles

Any proposed legislation that would impact local regulation of safety standards for autonomous vehicles and related technology. **(STATE/FEDERAL)**

Big Cypress Basin

Any proposed legislation that would change the administrative boundaries of the Big Cypress Basin within the South Florida Water Management District. **(STATE)**

Clerk of the Circuit Court Funding

Any proposed legislation that will provide a sustainable, full funding solution for the Clerk of the Circuit Courts and provide for execution of their extensive statutory and constitutional duties. **(STATE)**

Community Redevelopment Agencies

Any legislation that restricts home rule authority to create, operate, or sunset county CRAs. Legislation was passed during the 2019 session that implemented limited reforms and enhanced ethical training and accountability. Onerous provisions such as requiring a county-wide vote to create a CRA were removed from the bill during consideration. **(STATE)**

Economic Development Administration (EDA) Project Funding – Immokalee Airport Cold Storage/Freight

Monitor resources that can be leveraged to enhance development of this potential economic engine. **(FEDERAL)**

FAA Air Traffic Control Privatization

Any introduced legislation in the upcoming 118th Congress that would privatize air traffic control services to airports. **(FEDERAL)**

Harmful Algal Blooms

Any proposed legislation, appropriation, or administrative action related to research,

prevention, and mitigation of harmful algal blooms (HABs), including red tide. **(STATE/FEDERAL)**

Hazardous Waste Disposal Funding / Collection Bills

Any proposed legislation that limits collecting appropriate fees for services. **(STATE)**

Home Rule

Any proposed legislation that seeks to preempt or undermine local governmental authority, impose state preemption, creates unfunded mandates, or adversely impacts local funding streams. **(STATE/FEDERAL)**

I-75 Interchanges

Funding opportunities to improve all I-75 interchanges in Collier County, improving traffic flow and safety for motorists. **(STATE/FEDERAL)**

Inland Oil Drilling & High-Pressure Well Stimulation (Fracking)

Any proposed legislation that changes the status of inland oil drilling and high-pressure well stimulation. Currently, high-pressure well stimulation remains essentially unregulated and permissible. **(STATE)**

Lake Okeechobee and Everglades Restoration

Any proposed legislation or administrative action that impacts water storage, treatment, and reservoir conveyance; Everglades restoration and preservation via the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP). **(STATE/FEDERAL)**

Licensing & Permitting

Any proposed legislation or administrative action that impacts county licensing and permitting and may impact cost and/or time in obtaining. **(STATE/FEDERAL)**

Medical Marijuana Dispensaries

Any proposed legislation that might provide more local discretion in dispensary location. **(STATE)**

Mental Health & Substance Abuse

Any proposed legislation, appropriation, grant, or program that could enhance Collier County's mental health and substance abuse programs, including the expansion of authority of county court judges to refer defendants for treatment. **(STATE/FEDERAL)**

Millage Rates

Any proposed legislation that undermines local government discretion in establishing millage rates. **(STATE)**

Offshore Drilling

Any proposed legislation or future Executive action regarding the moratorium on offshore oil and gas drilling within 125 miles of Florida's Gulf Coast. On September 8, 2020, President Trump signed an Executive Memorandum effectively extending the moratorium until June 30, 2032. The Memorandum also expanded protected areas to include the Atlantic coast of Florida, and the coasts of Georgia and South Carolina. During the 2019 session, the Florida Legislature passed resolutions calling for an *indefinite* extension to the moratorium. In September of 2019, the U.S. House of Representatives passed Congressman Rooney's bipartisan legislation, HR 205, to *permanently* extend the moratorium on oil and gas drilling in the Gulf by a vote of 248-180. With the White House threatening a veto, the Senate did not take up the bill. **(FEDERAL)**

School Resource Officer / Guardian Program Funding

Any proposed legislation or administrative action regarding funding of the School Resource Officer (SRO) and/or Guardian Program. **(STATE)**

Short Term Rentals

Any proposed legislation that preempts or otherwise restricts local laws, ordinances, or regulation regarding vacation rental frequency or duration. **(STATE)**

Southwest Florida Promise Zone / Opportunity Zones

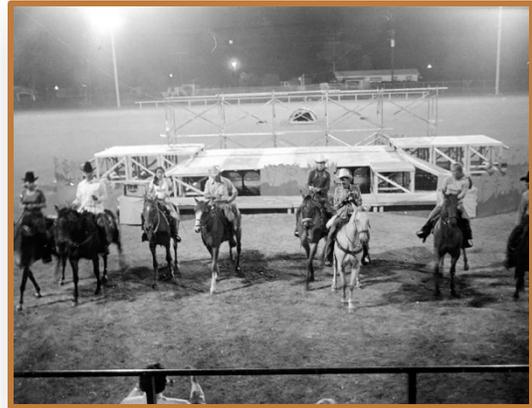
Any proposed legislation or initiative that supports the ten-year economic development mission of the Southwest Florida Promise Zone (SFPZ), originally designated in 2016, or that is helpful in attracting private capital investments to recently established Opportunity Zones. **(FEDERAL)**

Workers Compensation Reform

Any proposed legislation or administrative action that mitigates unfunded liabilities. Reform bills from 2017 through the 2020 Regular Session failed to advance beyond their respective committee assignments. **(STATE)**

1973

*Immokalee Horsemen's Association
rehearsing for the Collier County Jubilee pageant in
Immokalee.*



1944

*William Baumann standing on
the wing of a Bell P-39 Airacobra at the
Naples Army Airfield.*

1960

*Aerial view of Marco Island
in 1960.*

