



LAKE COUNTY, FL
STATE
LEGISLATIVE
POSITIONS
2019

CONTENTS

Chairman’s Letter I
Where We Are III
Small Town Charm IV
Parks & Recreation V

TOP LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

County Road 437 Realignment 1
County Road 466A - Phase III 2
Sorrento Avenue Complete Streets 3
State Road 50 Realignment 4
East Lake Community Park Central Sewer Connection 5
Ferndale Preserve 6
Helena Run Preserve Site Improvements 7
South Lake Regional Park’s Central Wastewater,
Potable, and Reclaimed Water Connection 8
State Aid to Libraries Operating Grant 9
Affordable Housing SHIP Funding 10
Legislation Regarding Contamination of Recycled Materials 11
Hydrilla Treatment 12

CHAIRMAN'S LETTER



On behalf of the Lake County Board of County Commissioners, I would like to request your consideration and support of several initiatives in our county for this upcoming legislative budget process.

Enclosed are details regarding 12 priorities that relate directly to the immediate and future needs of Lake County residents, with a focus on major roadway projects, parks infrastructure and utility needs, to name a few.

We would like to thank the Florida Legislature for its continued support, and respectfully ask our esteemed delegation for consideration of these matters which are essential to improving the quality of life for our citizens.

If you would like to discuss these priorities in more detail, please feel free to reach out to me or contact County Manager Jeff Cole at 352-343-9888.

Sincerely,



Leslie Campione, Chairman
Lake County Board of Commissioners

WHERE WE ARE

Lake County is located almost directly in the center of the Florida peninsula, and just 35 minutes from downtown Orlando. The county has more than 1,400 named lakes, numerous hiking trails and the Ocala National Forest is situated in the northern part of the county. Perched atop the Lake Wales Ridge, Lake County is known for its rolling hills and elevation changes – as well as its many water bodies and nature preserves.



SMALL TOWN CHARM

Lake County is home to 14 municipalities featuring charming shops, art centers, community theaters and historic areas.



PARKS & RECREATION

With nearly 100 parks in the area, including one national forest, one state forest, one state preserve and three state parks, Lake County boasts many natural resources for rest and relaxation. A vast trail network of paved, rural and waterway trails accommodate outdoor enthusiasts that travel by foot, boat or horseback.





LAKE COUNTY'S
TOP
LEGISLATIVE
PRIORITIES

ROAD INFRASTRUCTURE

COUNTY ROAD 437 REALIGNMENT

REQUEST

\$7 MILLION

for right-of-way acquisition and construction of the realignment of County Road 437, a Complete Streets project.

ANALYSIS SUMMARY

The Wekiva Parkway expansion will impact traffic on local roadways including County Road 437 and Round Lake Road.

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The realignment of County Road 437, along with corridor improvements, will address vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian traffic in the Mount Plymouth/ Sorrento communities.

BACKGROUND

The County Road 437 Realignment Project will help improve the local road network and spur economic activity for the Mount Plymouth and Sorrento communities with the opening of the Wekiva Parkway.

These communities will be redeveloped destination locations and enhance the existing features of the schools, parks, and trails of the area.

New commercial and retail locations with designated street parking, and the ability to bike and walk, will bring others to the community for business and tourism.

CONTACT

Fred Schneider, County Engineer

Lake County Public Works Department

352-253-6040 • FSchneider@lakecountyfl.gov



ROAD INFRASTRUCTURE

COUNTY ROAD 466A - PHASE III

REQUEST

\$7.5 MILLION

for construction of Phase III of County Road 466A.

ANALYSIS SUMMARY

This would complete the four-lane project from U.S. Highway 27/441 west in Lake County to U.S. Highway 301 in Sumter County.

BACKGROUND

County Road 466A is within the City of Fruitland Park and unincorporated Lake County, and provides regional traffic connectivity from U.S. Highway 301 in Sumter County to U.S. Highway 27/441 in Lake County.

The proposed improvement completes the construction of four lanes of this important roadway. This project will improve traffic flow and will support regionally significant employment centers in The Villages of Fruitland Park, the City of Fruitland Park, the Town of Lady Lake and Sumter County.

Phase I from U.S. Highway 27/441 to Century Avenue was completed by Lake County in 2016. Phase II from the Sumter County line to Timber Top Lane was completed by The Villages in 2015. The Phase IIIA segment from Poinsettia Avenue to Century Avenue is currently under construction and scheduled to be completed in 2019. Lake County, The Villages, and FDOT have invested \$21 million into the \$28.5 million project. Design has been completed; right of way acquisition will be completed prior to construction.

CONTACT

Fred Schneider, County Engineer

Lake County Public Works Department

352-253-6040 • FSchneider@lakecountyfl.gov



ROAD INFRASTRUCTURE

SORRENTO AVENUE COMPLETE STREETS

REQUEST

\$2 MILLION

for design and engineering of Sorrento Avenue, a Complete Streets project.

ANALYSIS SUMMARY

The Mount Plymouth/Sorrento Community Redevelopment Agency and Board of County Commissioners have completed and approved a corridor planning study for the area.

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The plan for the road improvements include roundabouts, sidewalks, crosswalks, a trail, on-street parking, curb and gutter, drainage improvements and turn lanes.

BACKGROUND

Sorrento Avenue (State Road 46) is anticipated to be transferred to Lake County as part of the Wekiva Parkway project. Sorrento Complete Streets will provide improved access for motorists, bicyclists and pedestrians in the area between Orange Avenue east through Sorrento and Mount Plymouth to CR 46A. The project will also meet the needs of local businesses by providing street parking and wayfinding signs. A corridor planning study has been completed and approved by the Sorrento Community Redevelopment Agency and Lake County Board of County Commissioners.

CONTACT

Fred Schneider, County Engineer

Lake County Public Works Department

352-253-6040 • FSchneider@lakecountyfl.gov



ROAD INFRASTRUCTURE

STATE ROAD 50 REALIGNMENT

REQUEST

Prioritize and identify funding options for the State Road 50 realignment project in Groveland.

ANALYSIS SUMMARY

SR 50 through Lake, Sumter and Hernando counties, is recognized as a strategic intermodal system of the state of Florida. Improvements must be made to allow this major roadway to continue to provide regional transportation activity and economic vitality for Florida. SR 50 through this area of Groveland is a major transportation and trucking route, delivering goods and services statewide. A realignment and improvement of SR 50 in this location will provide a more efficient transportation network, benefiting commerce throughout Florida. Lake County supports the Florida Department of Transportation's efforts in the current planning and design of this important highway improvement project.

BACKGROUND

SR 50 is a significant corridor of statewide importance as it provides a strategic east-west connection serving as an incident management route in evacuations, interregional connectivity, intermodal opportunities and economic development. These improvements are necessary to meet current and projected travel demand in this area.

CONTACT

Fred Schneider, County Engineer

Lake County Public Works Department

352-253-6040 • FSchneider@lakecountyfl.gov



QUALITY OF LIFE

EAST LAKE COMMUNITY PARK CENTRAL SEWER CONNECTION

REQUEST

\$1 MILLION

to fund the connection of the East Lake Community Park in Sorrento to the municipal wastewater system provided by the City of Eustis.

ANALYSIS SUMMARY

The East Lake Community Park is located within the Wekiva River Basin Watershed.

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Connection to a central sewer system will help address current and future needs at the site, which could include a new fire station and public library.

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This is a shovel-ready project and would be a one-time capital expense.

BACKGROUND

Design, build and connect a 4-inch diameter force main and lift station wastewater system inside the 75-acre East Lake Sports and Community Complex to the City of Eustis' existing Central Wastewater System. The capital improvement will provide a permanent solution to sanitary facilities for the park's diverse patrons, planned fire station and library in an underserved community adjacent to school facilities and provide improved protection of the water quantity and quality in the watershed of the Wekiva River Basin. The Lake County Needs Assessment and the adopted countywide Parks, Recreation & Trails Master Plans will be used to measure performance data.

CONTACT

Bobby Bonilla, Director

Lake County Office of Parks & Trails

352-253-4950 • rbonilla@lakecountyfl.gov



QUALITY OF LIFE

FERNDALE PRESERVE

REQUEST

\$1.5 MILLION

to design and construct a one-mile trail at Ferndale Preserve to connect the park entrance to amenities being built on the western shore of Lake Apopka.

ANALYSIS SUMMARY

A multi-purpose trail is needed to connect the park entrance and the lakefront so future amenities will be accessible.

BACKGROUND

Lake Apopka is a prime location for regional ecotourism-based recreational activities. Ferndale Preserve is a 196-acre conservation and restoration property on the western shore of Lake Apopka. Project design, engineering, construction bid documents, permitting, construction, administrative and operational costs of a 1-mile, multi-purpose trail are needed to provide low-impact, ecotourism-based public access.

Until a multi-purpose trail can be constructed to connect the park entrance and the lakefront, future amenities will only be accessible from Lake Apopka. Funding in the amount of \$1.5 million is needed to provide access to the lake from the entrance parking area.

CONTACT

Bobby Bonilla, Director

Lake County Office of Parks & Trails

352-253-4950 • rbonilla@lakecountyfl.gov



QUALITY OF LIFE

HELENA RUN PRESERVE SITE IMPROVEMENTS

REQUEST

\$900,000

for design, engineering and construction related costs
for low-impact public access and park amenities.

ANALYSIS SUMMARY

Helena Run Preserve is an 18.6-acre conservation and restoration property south of Leesburg.

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The project includes design and construction of low-impact amenities.
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Site improvements include a parking area, restroom, pavilion, boardwalk, overlook platform, fishing pier and canoe/kayak launch.

BACKGROUND

Helena Run Preserve is an 18.6-acre conservation and restoration property south of Leesburg in west Lake County. The preserve forms the northeast shoreline of Helena Run, a meandering stream that starts at Lake Denham and empties into Lake Harris.

The funding is needed to design and build low-impact public access and park amenities inside the Helena Run Preserve. Capital improvements includes a parking area, restroom, pavilion, boardwalk with overlook platform, fishing pier and a canoe/kayak launch.

Improvements to the preserve will provide increased opportunities for regional ecotourism-based recreation in the area, as well as provide an educational component addressing the conservation and restoration of the area.

CONTACT

Bobby Bonilla, Director

Lake County Office of Parks & Trails

352-253-4950 • rbonilla@lakecountyfl.gov



QUALITY OF LIFE

SOUTH LAKE REGIONAL PARK'S CENTRAL WASTEWATER, POTABLE, AND RECLAIMED WATER CONNECTION

REQUEST

\$2.5 MILLION

to design, build and connect a wastewater, potable water and reclaimed water system at the South Lake Regional Park to the City of Groveland's existing water systems.

ANALYSIS SUMMARY

Provides for the park's sanitary, potable and reclaimed water needs.

.....

Provides improved protection of the water quality in the Green Swamp Area.

BACKGROUND

The 141-acre South Lake Regional Park does not currently connect to a water system. This project will provide design, engineering, permitting and construction for wastewater, potable and reclaim water systems inside the park to connect to the City of Groveland's existing water systems.

This capital improvement project will provide a permanent solution to parks sanitary, potable water and reclaimed water facilities and provide improved protection of the water quantity and quality in the Green Swamp Area of Critical State Concern.

CONTACT

Bobby Bonilla, Director

Lake County Office of Parks & Trails

352-253-4950 • rbonilla@lakecountyfl.gov



QUALITY OF LIFE

STATE AID TO LIBRARIES OPERATING GRANT

REQUEST

Restore full funding of State Aid to Libraries based on the current statutory formula that provides counties 25 cents for every local dollar spent on library operations and maintenance.

ANALYSIS SUMMARY

The State Aid to Libraries Operating Grant provides financial support for all 67 counties to provide freely accessible public library services.

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In FY 17/18, State Aid increased to \$23 million and Lake County received \$211,947. FY 18/19 shows a decrease to \$20.5 million, which is an 11.5% cut in State Aid.

BACKGROUND

The State Aid Grants provide financial encouragement for all 67 counties to provide freely accessible public library services.

In Lake County, the State Aid to Libraries Grant funds are used to support system-wide technology infrastructure, including public access computers, subscriptions to online reference databases for public use, and countywide literacy programs. This funding also supports education and reading for school-aged children. Public libraries also use this grant for economic development resources to small businesses and job seekers.

CONTACT

George Taylor, Director

Lake County Office of Library Services

352-253-6168 • gtaylor@mylakelibrary.org



QUALITY OF LIFE

AFFORDABLE HOUSING SHIP FUNDING

REQUEST

\$2.8 MILLION

which would be Lake County's full allocation.

ANALYSIS SUMMARY

The State Housing Initiative Program (SHIP) was designed to use documentary stamp tax revenues to provide local governments a funding source to address affordable housing.

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If the SHIP program was fully funded, Lake County could assist up to 200 families annually and give an economic boost to the construction industry.

BACKGROUND

SHIP is a state funded affordable housing trust fund, designed to provide support to local jurisdictions in an overall effort to create and sustain affordable housing through the collection of Florida documentary stamp tax revenues.

In recent years, a substantial portion of these funds were redirected to help balance the state's budget. During this funding year, the state provided SHIP funds at 50 percent allocation of the calculated formula.

Lake County requests full restoration of the SHIP funds to adequately provide for families in need.

CONTACT

Dottie Keedy, Director

Lake County Community Services Department

352-742-6589 • dkeedy@lakecountyfl.gov

OTHER PRIORITIES

LEGISLATION REGARDING CONTAMINATION OF RECYCLED MATERIALS

REQUEST

Lake County is opposed to legislation that will increase the cost of recycling.

ANALYSIS SUMMARY

Lake County is opposed to legislation that would transfer collection control of recycled materials to private haulers.

BACKGROUND

Legislation expected to be proposed in 2019 would remove control of the collection of recycled materials from local government, increasing costs to the citizens.

CONTACT

Mary Hamilton, Environmental Services Manager

Lake County's Department of Public Works, Environmental Services Division
352-253-6006 • mhamilton@lakecountyfl.gov



OTHER PRIORITIES

HYDRILLA TREATMENT

REQUEST

Lake County asks that the state support the Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) with funding to fully treat Lake County lakes, particularly Lake Harris, to eradicate hydrilla.

ANALYSIS SUMMARY

FWC treated 640 acres on Little Lake Harris for invasive hydrilla in 2018.

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This lake is part of the Harris Chain of Lakes and is a major tourism destination for anglers from throughout the United States competing in bass fishing tournaments. However, the lake continues to face an overgrowth of hydrilla, as do other lakes in the county.

BACKGROUND

Hydrilla is an exotic aquatic plant spread easily by boats throughout the state's lakes and rivers. It clogs waterways, making recreational activities difficult or impossible, and it chokes out beneficial native plants. Managing and treating it is necessary for the health of Florida's waters and to enable continued recreational boating and other aquatic activities.

CONTACT

Mary Hamilton, Environmental Services Manager

Lake County's Department of Public Works, Environmental Services Division

352-253-6006 • mhamilton@lakecountyfl.gov





LAKE COUNTY
FLORIDA

315 W. Main St., Tavares, Florida 32778

www.lakecountyfl.gov