



2025
MANATEE COUNTY
YEAR IN REVIEW





TABLE OF CONTENTS

Letter From County Administrator Page 3

Manatee by the Numbers Pages 4 to 7

Community Investment Highlights..... Pages 8 & 9

Timeline Pages 10 & 11

Team Members in Action..... Page 12

Highlights Summary Continued Pages 13 to 18

Board of County Commissioners Page 19



Manatee County Government respectfully dedicates this annual report to the memory of Commissioner Carol Ann Billberry Felts whose unwavering commitment, integrity and service strengthened our community and inspired all who had the privilege to work alongside her.

2025 Team Awards & Accreditations From Outside Organizations

BOCC Future Region Award in the Natural Resources & The Environment category for the Anna Maria Island Hurricane Storm Recovery for the Department of Natural Resources

“Mission: Lifeline EMS” Gold achievement award for commitment to offering rapid, high-quality, research-based care to people experiencing the most severe form of heart attacks and strokes

Herman W. Goldner Award for Regional Leadership to Director of Natural Resources Charlie Hunsicker

2025 Team Member of the Year

Angie Sciarrone (pictured right), Outreach Case Manager, Public Safety’s Community Health Division



ROOTED IN COMMUNITY

On behalf of Manatee County Government, our dedicated employees and our Board of County Commissioners, thank you for your ongoing support. This 2025 annual report provides an opportunity to reflect on the progress we've made, the challenges we've overcome and the opportunities that lie ahead for our wonderful community.

Manatee County is committed to growing a sustainable future. From the parks where our children learn teamwork to the infrastructure that moves our economy, every project we undertake is an investment in the quality of life that makes our region a premier destination to live, work and play.

Our 2025 investments focus on the following:

- Maintaining public safety
- Preserving our legacy
- Modernizing infrastructure
- Enhancing community space and recreation
- Making government more accessible and efficient

For each project, we must demonstrate that funding is secured before construction begins. Our fiscal discipline is one of the key reasons why we maintain a triple A (AAA) bond rating—the highest possible. This rating allows us to borrow at lower interest rates, and our bonds consistently sell at a premium, meaning investors are willing to pay more for Manatee County's bonds than for others. That confidence is a direct reflection of our financial strength and prudent planning.

To maintain a unified vision going into 2026, we implemented a Countywide strategic plan. This roadmap will help ensure fiscal responsibility and drive measurable progress across each department in the years ahead. Every conversation, every partnership and every investment helps us improve real lives, strengthen real families and shape real futures.

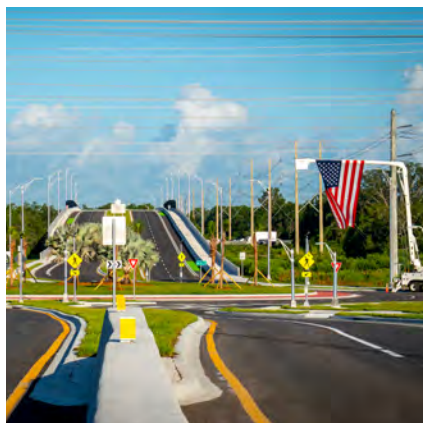
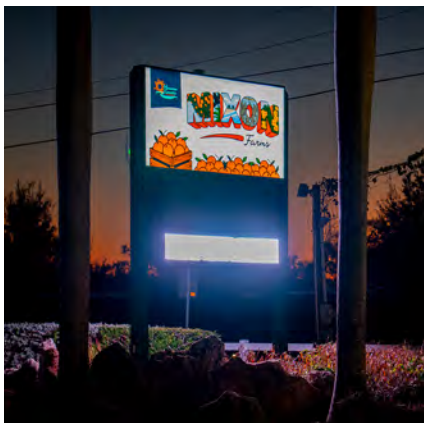
At the end of the day, this isn't just about projects or policies; it's about people. It's about the child who feels safer, the veteran who feels supported and connected, the family who finds stability and the community that knows their local government is showing up for them. Together, we are building a Manatee County that empowers and endures.

Sincerely,



Charlie Bishop
Manatee County Administrator

Stay up to date with Manatee County's progress throughout 2026: Sign up for NewsFlash



2025 BY THE NUMBERS

Utilities

Drinking Water <small>GALLONS</small>	18.1 BILLION	Reclaimed Water <small>GALLONS</small>	10.7 BILLION
Big Bin Deliveries	148,875	Landfill Tons Collected	499,306
		Recycled Tons Collected	65,257

Public Works

Monthly MCAT Ridership AVERAGE

Paratransit	6,803	Trolley	32,824	Bus	134,744
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<h3>Traffic Operations</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Signs Repaired 4,961 Traffic Signals Repaired 193 	<h3>Field Maintenance</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Roadside Shoulders Repaired <small>LINEAR FEET</small> 93,613 Sidewalks Repaired <small>SQUARE FEET</small> 65,721 Road Reshelling <small>LINEAR FEET</small> 18,503 Potholes Patched <small>EACH</small> 12,998 Road-Surface Grading <small>MILES</small> 1,595
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Stormwater Operations

Roadside Ditch Cleaning & Reshaping <small>LINEAR FEET</small>	164,819	Pipe Cleaning & Clearing <small>LINEAR FEET</small>	129,427	Canals Cleaned & Reshaped <small>LINEAR FEET</small>	76,522.4	Mechanical Trimming <small>LINEAR FEET</small>	25,670
Brush Trimming <small>LINEAR FEET</small>	18,576	TV Pipe Inspections <small>LINEAR FEET</small>	8,462	Right-of-Way (ROW) Mowing <small>ACRES</small>	6,931.3	Inlet Catch Basins Cleaned	1,741
Canals Mowed <small>ACRES</small>	813.9	Wash Outs Stabilized	364	Canals Maintained <small>MILES</small>	252.2	Litter Removal <small>TONS</small>	148.5
Trees Removed	108	Contracted Right-of-Way Trees Trimmed <small>MILES</small>	53				

Tourist Development Tax	\$62,753,483
Impact Fees	\$32,596,685

Recreation

Athletic Programming Registrations **550,000**

Signature Park Event Attendees **12,500**

Pool Attendance **60,346**

Field Reservations **22,000**

Number of Events Permitted **335**

Athletic Fields With LED Lighting

Converted **65**

New **15**

New Recreation Installations

Volleyball Courts **4**

Playgrounds **4**

Amenities With Shaded Structures

Repaired **75**

New **14**

Beach Attendance

Cortez Beach **547,000**

Coquina Beach **1,622,100**

Manatee Beach **1,638,000**

Library Materials

Material Usage **7,821,751**

Use of Online Resources **2,336,314**

Physical Item Circulation **1,699,266**

Community Services

Veterans Services

Phone Calls & Emails **35,893**

Veterans Appointments **4,210**

Manatee Moves Rides **2,205**

Probation Work Offender Program

Participant Payments **\$124,910**

Jail Cost Savings **\$474,689.83**

Contracted Cost Savings **\$384,991.64**

Non-Profit Funding

Approved Funding for Children's Services **\$17,441,982**

Approved Funding for Adult Services **\$663,196**

Funded Programs for Children's Services **55**

Animal Welfare

Intakes **4,872**

Adoptions **1,928**

Public Safety

911 Calls 253,613	EMS Dispatch to Arrival 00:08:10 MIN	Transports 37,886	Community Health Visits 7,311
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Calls Involving Cardiac Arrests **633**

Development Services

Building Permits

Applications Submitted	64,947	Standard Permits Issued	30,175	Express Permits	25,744
New Residential Permits	8,348	New Commercial Permits	408	New Multi-Family Permits	216

Government Relations

Customer Experience/311 Calls	308,284	Public Records Requests	8,591	FEMA Grants	\$53,284,750	CDBG-DR Grants	\$252,711,000
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New Website Views

(March 15 - December 31, 2025)

Homepage	786,951	Pay Utility Bill Page	436,558	Resident Information Tool Page	235,794
Total Views	7,082,423	Total Unique Views	1,589,609		
Event Count	20,000,000	Average Engagement Time	00:01:35 MIN	Engaged Sessions Per Active User	1.4

Mapping Applications

ArcGIS Mapping Online	172	ArcGIS Web Experiences	37	ArcGIS Dashboards	71
GIS Web Mapping	178	GIS Web Experiences	39	GIS Dashboards	65

Natural Resources

Resource Management



Prescribed Burns <small>ACRES</small>	10,120	Invasive Plants Treated <small>ACRES</small>	5,445
Feral Hogs Removed	155	Trails Maintained <small>MILES</small>	51.5
		Resurfaced Trails <small>MILES</small>	10.2

Environmental Protection



Water Atlas Page Views	19,218	Laboratory Analyses	8,737	Water Well Permits Issued	441	Illicit Discharge Inspections	55
Landscape BMP Certifications		462	Hazardous Waste Facilities Inspected		492		
Active Stream & Estuarine Monitoring Stations			110	Cumulative Total Tortoises Relocated			209

Ecological and Marine Resources



Restored Oyster Habitats <small>SQUARE FEET</small>	14,868	Native Plants Installed <small>RESTORATION PROGRAM</small>	9,785	Artificial Reef Modules <small>TONS</small>	140
Buoys Installed	51	Recycled Oyster Shells <small>TONS</small>	46	Channel Markers Installed	46
				Abandoned Vessels Removed	10

Environmental Mitigation



Individual Native Plants Added to Wetland Sites	58,329
Mitigation Monitoring Events	26
New Wetland Mitigation Sites <small>ACRES</small>	9.94
Sites Released From Monitoring <small>ACRES</small>	4.53
Wildlife Crossings Constructed	4

Education & Volunteers



Dollar Value of Volunteer Hours	\$118,371
Program Attendees	25,337
Preserve Volunteer Hours	3,587
Preserve Volunteers	1,054
Education Programs	520

UF/IFAS Extension Office



Dollar Value of Volunteer Hours	\$1,176,387	Dollar Value of Certifications Provided	\$1,738,452
Gallons of Water Saved		9,425,037	
Educational Program Attendance		66,293	
Total Volunteer Hours		36,839	
Client Consultations		19,672	
Diagnostic Evaluations		4,165	

COMMON GROUND

As our community continues to evolve, community spaces become even more essential. Parks are where our children take their first steps toward teamwork and confidence—where they play their first games, make new friends, and begin to see themselves as part of something bigger. And beyond their beauty and recreation, well-maintained parks help strengthen neighborhoods, attract investment and sustain property values.

Approximately 10 parks and recreation projects are in various stages of design, construction or completion—each representing an opportunity to support our workforce, boost tourism and reinforce why Manatee County is such a great place to live, work play and do business.

One of our most exciting community investments underway is the new Premier Athletics and Aquatics Center at Premier Sports Campus North. This 44,000-square-foot facility is more than a pool; it's a regional asset that will serve families, athletes and visitors. For the first time, local swim teams will have access to a 50-meter Olympic-style competition pool right here at home. The center will also feature a therapy pool, walking trails and 24 pickleball courts, creating a space for recreation and wellness for all ages. When it opens in fall 2026, our new Aquatics Center will build new opportunities for our community and bring tournaments that draw visitors

and economic impact to the region. This, along with our planned second floor buildout of the nearby Lakewood Ranch library and eventual addition of the Manatee County Sheriff's office substation, serve as a signal to families and businesses that Manatee County isn't just innovating—we're elevating.



John Marble Recreation Center: Revitalized, Reimagined & Ready for More

From the first phases of new parks to the continued enhancement of existing parks, Manatee County is committed to turning “great” into “game changing.” The John Marble Recreation Center is a perfect



example. Renovated and reopened in March, it now features a double gymnasium, modern fitness center, multipurpose rooms, flexible indoor programming space and upgraded restroom facilities. Construction is now underway on the new aquatic area, which will feature an eight-lane, 25-meter competition pool replacing the old six-lane pool. The upgrades will also include a larger pool deck, a 4,000-square-foot splash pad, and a new picnic pavilion—creating a vibrant space for recreation, fitness and family fun.

Tom Bennett Park: A Regional Destination

With a generous contribution from Kiwanis, our fully ADA-accessible playground has truly become a destination not just in the community but in the region. On any given night, families can be seen gathering, children of all abilities playing side by side and a community brought together by joy and inclusion. It's the kind of energy that reminds us why these investments matter.

To honor that, we're proud of our soon-to-be opened splash pad that will add another layer of fun and accessibility. Designed with inclusive play in mind, the new splash pad will feature zero-entry access, interactive water elements and shaded areas so families can stay and play longer. It's another example of how we're creating spaces that bring people together, celebrate community and make Manatee County a place where everyone belongs.

Mixon Farms: A Legacy Preserved

While building what we need and improving what we have is important, preserving where we come from is even more vital. The places and stories that helped shape who we are as a community. Few places capture that spirit better than Mixon Farms—a landmark woven into the fabric of Manatee County for generations. Now, thanks to the heartfelt support of our community, it will be forever preserved. That same forward thinking extends to how our facilities evolve right alongside the needs of our community.



Above: Bennett Park's accessible playground



Above & Below: Mixon Farms Passing of the Key event (November 7)



2025 Timeline

- \$252,711,000 HUD grant for CDBG-DR program awarded
- Manatee Moves (Free Ride Service for Veterans) launches
- BOCC approves \$200K child drowning prevention program donation
- \$2.3 Million Catalytic Loan approved for CASL project
- Premier Sports Campus Athletics & Aquatics Center Groundbreaking

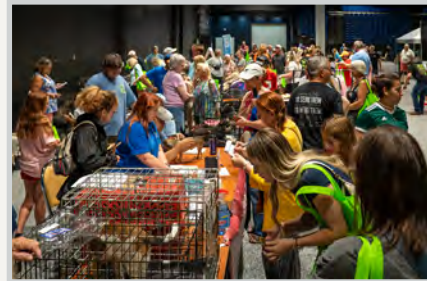


- BOCC renames U.S. 19 (Palm View & Terra Ceia Roads) in honor of Nicholas Panipinto
- Port Authority awarded \$2M (Florida Job Growth Grant Fund)



- Parrish Community Park opens
- New County website launched
- "Vision 41" public input initiative begins
- Fire Watch begins training to recognize veterans-in-crisis
- Manatee Music Series second season returns
- BOCC funds \$2M for canal clearing

- Buckeye Road (from US 41 to I-75) designated as "Gold Star Families Memorial Highway"
- 9000 Town Center PKWY (East campus) approved
- Herman W. Goldner Award for Regional Leadership presented to Charlie Hunsicker
- Library launches new mobile app
- 23 cats aboard a boat anchored near the King Fish Boat Ramp rescued
- Adopt-A-Palooza results in the adoption of 11 dogs and 16 cats at MCAW



- Operation Sandbag Support
- Free Bay Area Legal Services clinics for veterans begin
- Cortez Boat Ramp public input period starts
- Multi-year agreement to host Premier SuperCopa and SuperCopa+ championships
- Over 200 cats rescued from residence

- Phase Two of ArcherFRS and Tampa General Hospital launches
- Mosaic Company Commits \$350K to Under One Roof Gateway South kitchen
- First ADApt + Play Expo held



- Moccasin Wallow EMS Station No. 22 opens
- Mixon Farms opens
- Development Services relocates to 9000 Town Center
- Another burn ban enacted
- Emergency Vehicle Preemption system expands to 95 additional intersections
- New Veterans' Park renamed Valor Commons
- IWLCA Presidents Cup Returns to Premier Sports Campus

JAN

FEB

MAR

APR

MAY

JUN

JUL

AUG

SEPT

OCT

NOV

DEC

- Interactive Gold Star Families memorial kiosk installed
- John H. Marble Recreation Center Reopening



- Responsible pet breeding practices/standards ordinance enacted
- Public Safety Hosts First Coffee & Questions Series Meeting

- WaterWise Manatee meter installation begins
- BOCC earmarks \$5.6 Million to help develop 156 affordable housing units in Bradenton
- BOCC approves purchase of a 93-acre property along Golf Course Road & Gamble Creek for stormwater improvement
- \$3.1 Million in federal funding awarded to restore Coquina Beach
- Countywide burn van enacted
- Big Bin Advantage announced
- Sloth Claw found by Utilities crew

Hear more about Utilities' amazing find!



- Two Future Region Awards received: AMI Hurricane Storm Recovery and Turning Point's Operation Smile partnership
- First Gov Efficiency Liaison Committee members selected
- EMS receives Mission: Lifeline® EMS Gold Achievement Award

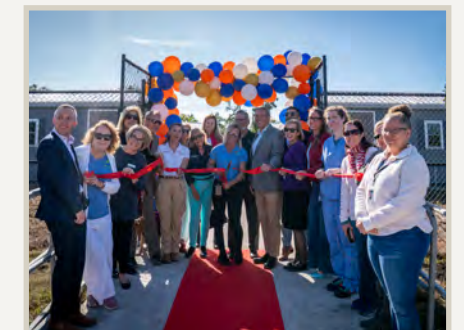


- Sixth-phased 44th Avenue East Extension project completed
- Opioid Impact \$1 Million grant received
- Library Summer Learning Program results in 3,137 participants



- Under One Roof "Gateway South" Shelter Grand Opening
- Manatee Moves Veterans program reaches 1,120 free rides
- Cortez Chatbot launches
- Utilities partners with Johnson Controls to convert landfill gas into clean, marketable energy

- County's first organization-wide Strategic Plan approved by BOCC
- Bishop kennel expansion completed



Learn more about Under One Roof

MANATEE COUNTY IN ACTION



9000 Town Center: A More Accessible Government

In May, our Board unanimously approved the purchase of a building in Lakewood Ranch at 9000 Town Center Parkway. With an all-in cost of \$34.8 million, this 101,000-square-foot facility will serve as an additional campus for Manatee County Government in the fastest-growing part of the county. For the first time in our history, departments that naturally align—such as Public Works and Development Services—will be located together, fostering greater service for our community. The purchase of 9000 Town Center Parkway demonstrates our Board's commitment to fiscal responsibility—acquiring the facility at a fraction of the cost it would take to build new.

This transition opens valuable downtown space for current and future needs—making room for the Guardian ad Litem, Probation, and anticipated growth from the State Attorney's Office, Public Defender and 12th Circuit Court—while ensuring Board meetings continue downtown and citizens receive the same quality service they expect. A phased approach of department moves began in October, starting with Property Management and Development Services.

This new East Campus is a great example of how we're creating spaces that make government more accessible, efficient and responsive to the people we serve. This extends beyond our offices and into the places where our local and national community comes together.



9000 Town Center Parkway

Convention Center: Expanding Opportunities

With the recently completed expansion, the Bradenton Area Convention Center is on track to become a premier Gulf Coast destination for meetings, conventions and large-scale events. The \$54 million expansion project added 95,000 square feet of new conference space and modern upgrades throughout the complex. Within its first year of operation, the expanded facility is projected to generate \$30 to \$40 million in annual economic impact, driven by increased convention business and leisure travel—where attendees extend their stays to enjoy the area. As the only convention center of this scale between St. Petersburg and Naples, the Bradenton Area Convention Center is uniquely





Bradenton Area Convention Center conference space



Above: Cortez Marina Open House at The Bridge Church; Below: Moccasin Wallow Road



positioned to attract new events, elevate the region's visibility and strengthen our local economy. As the Convention Center expands opportunities for commerce, tourism and connections on the north end of the county, we're also charting a new course along our coastline.

Cortez Marina: A Community Reimagined

Just a few miles southwest, Manatee County began with a blank slate to design a vibrant public boat launch and waterfront destination at The Cortez Boat Ramp—and we couldn't have come this far without tremendous community engagement. Over the course of a month, we hosted five open-house events, gathering feedback on what residents would like to see. More than 650 responses were collected and used to identify common trends and emerging themes that will help shape this important community asset. Compared to other counties of a similar size, Manatee County has relatively few public boat ramps—making access to the water a critical part of our quality of life and local identity. The Cortez project represents a major step toward improving that access, while honoring the heritage of one of our most historic working waterfronts.

The next steps include briefing our Board on the compiled community feedback and incorporating it into the final design to ensure this becomes a true community asset shaped by many voices. Updates can be found at mymanatee.org/boatramp.

Transportation & Road Projects

None of these projects stand alone. They're all connected by the infrastructure that keeps our county moving. From the roads that link our neighborhoods to the networks that drive our economy, every investment depends on strong planning and coordination. Every intersection we improve, every mile we resurface and every corridor we plan strengthens the bonds between our neighborhoods and the prosperity of our entire county. Because when our roads work better, our community works better.

Moccasin Wallow Road

All of our major capital improvement road projects are important components of our transportation strategy, including the multi-segment Moccasin Wallow Road project. With Segments 1 and 4 already complete, Manatee County is now in the home stretch of this massive, years-long effort which strengthens the backbone of our transportation network. When finished, it will connect U.S. 301, I-75 and U.S. 41, linking SeaPort Manatee directly to the state highway system. This connection not only supports commerce and freight movement across the region but also enhances mobility for residents, reduces traffic pinch points and provides a safer, more reliable hurricane evacuation route for North County. It's a project that balances safety, economic opportunity and long-term planning.

75th Street West

This major project will transform 75th Street West into a safer, more efficient and more connected corridor—adding lanes, sidewalks, bike paths and upgraded lighting to better serve the residents and businesses who rely on it every day. By modernizing aging infrastructure, improving traffic flow and enhancing safety for drivers, pedestrians and cyclists, this project strengthens mobility in the heart of our community while ensuring that established neighborhoods keep pace with Manatee County's continued momentum.

Upper Manatee River Road

While 75th Street West represents reinvestment in an established area, the Upper Manatee River Road Expansion is a major effort to relieve congestion and improve safety along this critical corridor, widening roughly 2.2 miles from north of State Road 64 to the Fort Hamer Bridge.

The project transforms the existing two-lane road into a four-lane divided roadway with sidewalks, buffered bike lanes, a shared-use path and improved lighting. Beyond mobility, it connects new neighborhoods to jobs, schools and essential services.

By investing now, Manatee County is ensuring that infrastructure keeps pace with population, strengthening both quality of life and regional connectivity for years to come.



Upper Manatee River Road

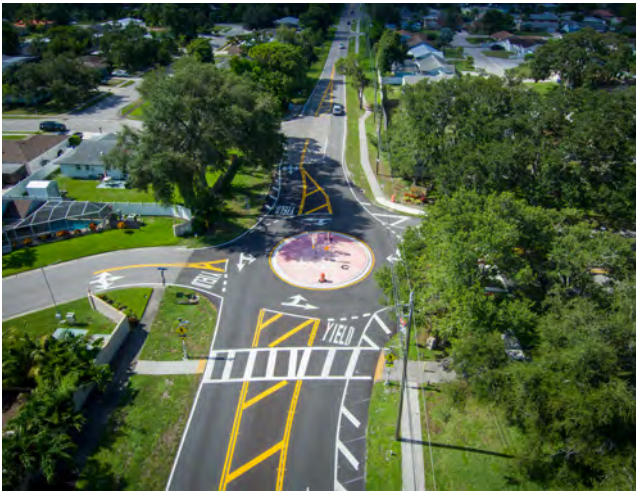
Fort Hamer Bridge

Manatee County is grateful to Congressman Vern Buchanan for his ongoing advocacy toward the future expansion of the Fort Hamer Bridge, an improvement that will further strengthen the vital north-south link in our transportation network.

Targeted Intersection Improvements

From roads and infrastructure to the daily services that touch people's lives, everything we do is connected. Projects like Upper Manatee River Road are essential for keeping up with increased demand,





75th Street



Above: Under One Roof ribbon cutting;
Below: Under One Roof tour



Below: Future home of Fresh Start



but they don't solve every challenge. The places where those roads meet—our intersections—are just as critical to safety, mobility and efficiency. That's why we continue to invest in targeted intersection improvements across our community. These projects may be smaller in scale, but their impact is immediate, reducing congestion, improving travel times and enhancing safety for everyone. These additional projects strengthen our overall transportation network, making it easier and safer for you to get where you need to go.

Under One Roof

At the beginning of October, we cut the ribbon on a journey that began back in 2022. By leveraging a nonprofit partnership with a national leader dedicated to transforming the lives of those facing homelessness and addiction, we've already helped more than 100 Manatee County residents do the same. Through collaboration between our Community Health team and Helping Up Mission out of Baltimore, we made a lasting difference for those individuals, their families and our community. But our board knew we could do more. After identifying a gap in services for women in Manatee County facing similar struggles, we transformed a former Sheriff's Office building into a center of profound healing.

With a facility dedicated to women and with the day-to-day operations run by Helping Up Mission, we are expanding our regional capacity and strengthening the positive impact of our recovery corridor. With partners like The Salvation Army, which continues to focus on families; Fresh Start Manatee, which will support men and women in recovery; and organizations like Turning Points and Centerstone, Under One Roof now provides the missing link in this vital ecosystem of support.

Fresh Start

This initiative is so important to us that it's one of our State legislative priorities and a key appropriation request. With our move from 26th Avenue East to the new East County campus at 9000 Town Center, the former Public Works building is getting a second life, one that reflects our community's compassion and forward thinking.

At the heart of that vision is Fresh Start, an initiative that strengthens our partnership with the Manatee County Sheriff's Office to create a permanent facility offering emergency shelter and wraparound services for individuals experiencing homelessness, with space planned for a future EMS station. The renovated facility will initially serve around 66 people for up to 90 days, providing on-site access to substance-abuse treatment, mental health care, employment support and financial counseling. More importantly, this effort represents a compassionate, service-first response to new State requirements under House Bill 1365, focusing not just on compliance, but on creating lasting, life-changing outcomes for vulnerable residents.

Valor Commons

That same sense of service carries through to a very special part of our Manatee County family: The over 40,000 veterans that have served us and call Manatee County home. At the 5200 block of Buckeye Road in Palmetto, Manatee County is developing a regional veterans center called Valor Commons. At the heart of this project is the 12,000-square-foot Veterans Connection Hub, designed to bring together workforce reintegration, mental health services, education and peer support.

By bringing these vital programs together, we're helping to remove the barriers that too often stand between veterans and the support they've earned. Surrounding the center, a 24-acre memorial park will honor the legacy of military service through quiet trails, reflection spaces and monuments that remind us of the courage and sacrifice behind every uniform.

But this project is about more than remembrance, it's about renewal. It bridges the gap between federal programs and local care, offering opportunities for job training, business mentorship, family wellness, and civic education. Through strong public-private partnerships, we're not just building a facility, we're building a promise. A promise that in Manatee County, no veteran stands alone, and every one of them has a place to find support, connection, and purpose long after their service ends. Thanks to Veronica and the Manatee Community Foundation, we're able to connect interested donors with the vehicle to support this effort, and thanks to our Board, this initiative is now part of our state legislative priorities and stands as one of the appropriations requests we're most proud of. And while Valor Commons and the Fresh Start initiative remain some of our key appropriation requests, they are far from the only ones.

Below: Valor Commons front entrance concept



State Legislative Priorities

This year's state legislative agenda reflects a balanced investment in people, infrastructure, and places. We're seeking \$2.5 million to complete the Fresh Start facility and expand homelessness recovery services, \$1.5 million to replace the Singletary Road Bridge—a critical connection over the Myakka River, and another \$3 million to advance the Veteran Resource Hub and Memorial Park in Palmetto.

We've also requested \$3 million to extend 51st Street West to El Conquistador Parkway—creating the new Charlie Kirk Memorial Parkway to support mobility and economic growth in the southwest corridor. Each of these projects represents more than an investment in infrastructure; they are investments in resilience, recovery, and the long-term quality of life for everyone in Manatee County.

As the next chapter of our county is written, the need for strategically placed public safety infrastructure is more important than ever.

Manatee County EMS Station 22

One of our most exciting capital projects this year is the recently completed Manatee County EMS Station 22 along Moccasin Wallow Road in north Palmetto. This state-of-the-art facility expands our emergency coverage, cuts response times and ensures residents have critical care when seconds matter most. Designed with efficiency and resiliency, the new 4,500-square-foot station is a tangible example of how we're investing in both people and preparedness. From concept to construction, Station 22 reflects our commitment to safety and ensures we're supporting our EMS professionals on the front lines every day.

Below: EMS Station 22



Bishop Animal Shelter: Uniting Services, Strengthening Care

Manatee County is expanding the Bishop Animal Shelter to enhance services for both the animals in our care and the community we serve, and the first phase of that work is now complete—celebrating with a grand opening on December 17. Phase 1 delivered new prefabricated kennels, enhanced fenced play yards, improved sitework and parking, and a temporary staff trailer to keep adoptions moving. This marks a major transition from the aging Palmetto shelter to the newly modernized Bishop campus in Bradenton—a shift toward a community-integrated system focused exclusively on high-quality animal care.

Phase 2 is now underway and includes the development of a brand-new administration and adoption building designed to elevate the visitor experience and provide an upgraded workspace for staff and volunteers. As this multi-phase project progresses, Manatee County Animal Welfare will continue its full range of services, including adoptions, cruelty investigations, public outreach, mobile clinics and pet licensing.

Adoption Resource Center

Manatee County Animal Welfare's broader mission centers on keeping pets in homes and out of shelters. The forthcoming Adoption Resource Center (ARC) will offer counseling, training referrals, licensing and microchipping services to reduce surrenders and improve outcomes for pets and families. The Friends of Manatee County Animal Welfare supports this mission through funding specialized medical care, heartworm treatments and emergency surgeries, while our Pet Food Pantry ensures families facing financial hardship can still feed their pets, providing free food to eligible households. The Manatee Community Foundation (MCF) further strengthened these efforts with a \$50,000 donation to outfit the Bishop campus with new medical technology, an investment that expands the county's capacity to deliver advanced care to pets in need.

Manatee County Day

As we continue investing in initiatives that strengthen our community and improve quality of life, it is equally important to align those efforts with strong state-level advocacy with our business community through Manatee County Day.

Manatee County Day is a valuable opportunity for community stakeholders to speak directly with the state legislators whose decisions affect the organizations in our region—everything from workforce development to economic growth and regulatory policy. The collaboration between government and the private sector sends a powerful message that Manatee County is unified, proactive and serious about shaping the policies that drive long-term prosperity for the entire region.

Strategic Plan

Moving into 2026, Manatee County will have a new Countywide strategic plan, serving as a clear, unified roadmap, aligning every department and every initiative with the shared vision, goals and priorities of the Board of County Commissioners. This plan establishes focused priorities, accountability and measurable direction, ensuring that our investments and policies move forward with purpose, consistency and long-term stability.



Above: Government Relations Director Stephanie Garrison facilitating strategic plan workshop

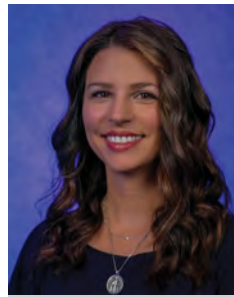


2025 MANATEE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Manatee Board of County Commission meetings are live streamed on Facebook and YouTube. Please visit mymanatee.org for a list of meetings and agendas.



**Commissioner
Carol Ann Felts
District 1**



**Commissioner
Amanda Ballard
District 2**



**Commissioner
Tal Siddique
District 3**



**Commissioner
Mike Rahn
District 4**



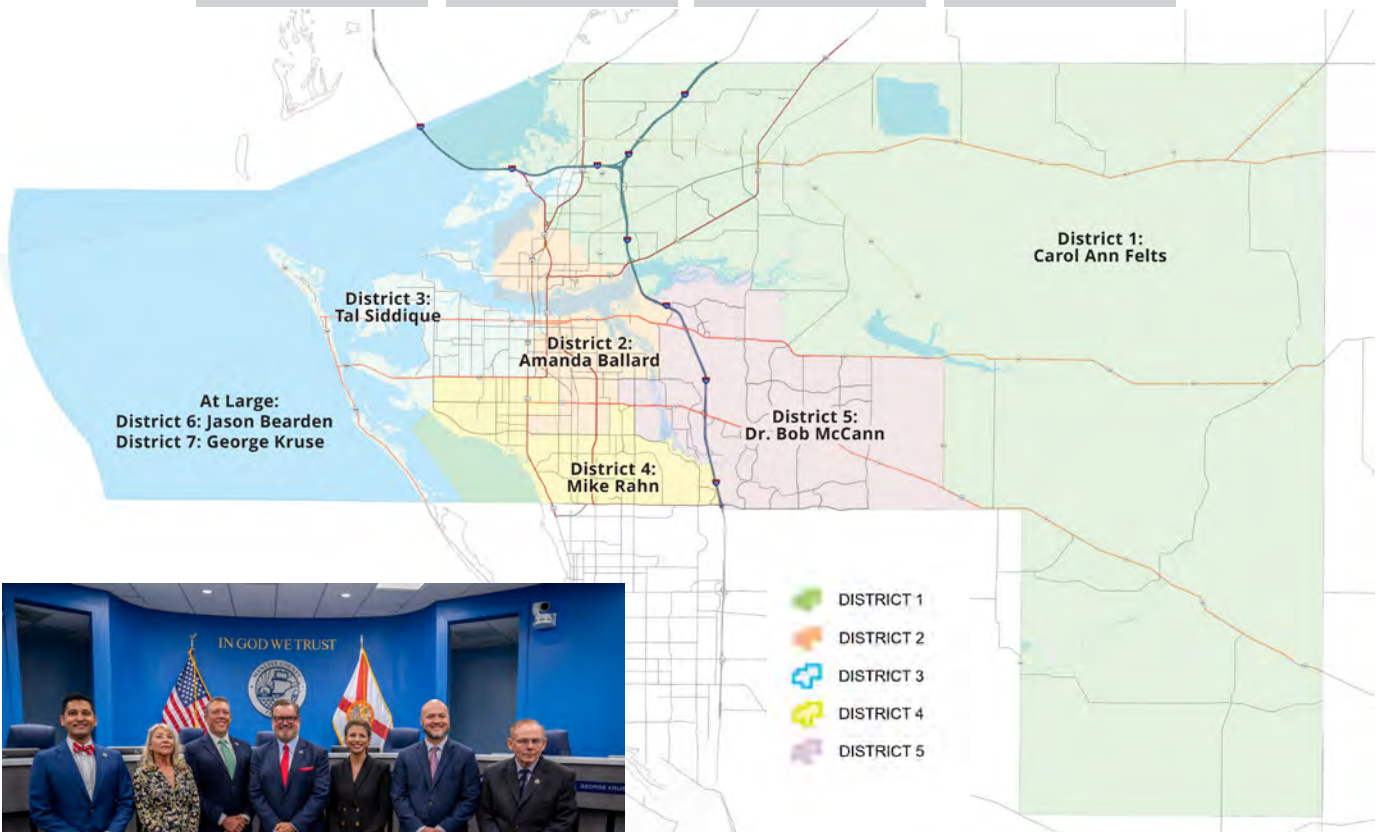
**Commissioner
Dr. Bob McCann
District 5**



**Commissioner
Jason Bearden
District 6 - At Large**



**Commissioner
George Kruse
District 7 - At Large**



Left to Right: Commissioners Tal Siddique (District 3), Carol Ann Felts (District 1), George Kruse (District 7 - At Large), Mike Rahn (District 4), Amanda Ballard (District 2) Jason Bearden (District 6 - At Large) and Dr. Bob McCann (District 5).

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