



Manatee Board of County Commissioners

2025 STATE LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES



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2025 STATE LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

MANATEE COUNTY, FLORIDA



SUPPORT

- Affordable housing initiatives
- Affordable childcare initiatives
- Broadband expansion initiatives
- Increased funding for Public Safety
- Economic development initiatives
- Filling gaps in funding for non-profit organizations
- Housing empowerment initiatives
- Library Advisory Board governance reform
- Safe Children Coalition
- Indexing State and local motor fuel taxes to help offset effects of increased cost of transportation capital projects and operating activities funded with fuel tax revenue.
- Funding transportation-related appropriation requests with sources that do not impact the transportation trust fund (e.g. fund member projects from the general fund).
- Stormwater regulation reform to address design events and quantity and rate of discharge.

OPPOSE

- Local government preemption
- Regulatory burdens
- Increased taxes and fees
- Cuts to local services



MANATEE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS



**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, Chair
District 7 - At Large**

LEGISLATIVE DISTRICTS

House District 70: Representative Michael Owen
House District 71: Representative William Robinson
House District 72: Representative Bill Conerly

MEMBERSHIPS IN LEGISLATIVE ALLIANCES

Florida Association of Counties
National Association of Counties
Sarasota-Manatee Metropolitan
Planning Association

Florida Department of Transportation
Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council
Florida Gulf Consortium
Manasota League of Cities

2025 State Legislative Priorities



Veteran Connections Hub

Manatee County is seeking funding to construct the Veteran Connections Hub, a comprehensive resource center in Manatee County to support veterans and their families. Guided by principles of holistic support, community unity, and veteran empowerment, the Hub will provide services such as career counseling, mental health support, entrepreneurial training, and community engagement. Key offerings include assistance with VA benefits, job support, education and training, health and wellness programs, housing resources and legal aid.

FUNDING REQUEST

■ **\$1 Million appropriation** in Fiscal Year 2026 to construct the Veteran Connections Hub.



Gateway Greenway Trails

Manatee County is seeking funding to complete planning, design, permitting and construction of Gateway Greenway Trail segments connecting Lincoln Park in Palmetto to Parrish along County road rights-of-way, Florida Power & Light utility corridors and railroad track right-of-way. Only 1 in 3 residents in this HUD-designated area have access to an automobile, and this trail investment will help provide safe access to employment, goods and services for the transportation-disadvantaged. This trail segment will allow for an eventual dedicated off-road trail connection between Lincoln Park to Ola Mae Sims Park in Parrish, with connections to Parrish Community High School, State College of Florida - Parrish Campus and the Florida Railroad History Museum.

FUNDING REQUEST

■ **\$1 Million appropriation** in Fiscal Year 2026 to complete planning, design, permitting and construction of Gateway Greenway Trail segments connecting Lincoln Park in Palmetto to Parrish.





Washington Park

Manatee County is seeking funding for the future design and construction of the 88-acre Washington Park, located at the site of the borrow pit the Florida Department of Transportation created in 1957 when dirt was needed to build the U.S. 41 overpass near 29th Street East, north of Palmetto. The socio-economic impact on the community was dramatic. The southeast portion of Washington Park has 12 upland acres which will be home to the park's recreational amenities, such as a central pavilion, a children's play area, and a multi-use field.

FUNDING REQUEST

■ **\$1 Million appropriation** in Fiscal Year 2026 for the design and construction of Washington Park.



Fresh Start Manatee

Manatee County is seeking funding for the construction of a facility to house unhoused people, comprised of intake, offices, housing pods, utilities, storage and miscellaneous areas. The exterior will include a security entrance, outdoor sleeping, recreation area(s), staff parking, visitor parking, bike racks and outdoor storage. Serving as a jail diversion, it will have wrap-around services available to those who need them, including mental health and drug-treatment services. The Manatee County Sheriff's Office will run the day-to-day operations. This facility will be in compliance with House Bill 1365 passed by the Florida Legislature in the 2024 Legislative Session.

FUNDING REQUEST

■ **\$1 Million appropriation** in Fiscal Year 2026 to construct the facility.



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Florida

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