



MEMORANDUM

AGENDA ITEM #IV.F

DATE: JANUARY 24, 2022

TO: COUNCIL MEMBERS

FROM: STAFF

SUBJECT: RESOLUTION # 22-01 – STATEWIDE WATER RESOURCES PLANNING

At joint meetings between the South Florida and Treasure Coast Regional Planning Councils held in 2018, 2019, 2020, and just recently on November 5, 2021, the Councils heard about the significant challenges Florida faces in meeting drinking water needs while also treating our sewage and protecting the environment. The Florida Association of Counties Water and Environmental Sustainability Committee has recently adopted a policy position calling for improved water project planning including a multi-year work plan to address these challenges.

The South Florida members of the Florida Association of Counties' Water and Environmental Sustainability Committee are Councilmember Michelle Coldiron (Co-Chair), Monroe County Commissioner Holly Raschein, and Miami-Dade County Commissioner Eileen Higgins. The Treasure Coast Members are Indian River County Commissioners Susan Adams, Peter O'Bryan, and Joseph Earman; Martin County Commissioner Doug Smith, and Palm Beach County Commissioner Gregg Weiss.

Analysis

One of the significant roadblocks to effectively addressing the various water challenges facing Florida is the "Siloed" nature of how water is considered. Regional flood protection and raw water supply is handled by the water management districts; local flood protection by numerous drainage districts of varying size and capability; potable water supply and distribution by local utilities; sewage collection and treatment by local utilities; disposal of sewage treatment byproducts by local utilities, land owners, and others; and protection of the water environment by various state agencies, county departments, parks, the federal government, local boards, etc.

Each of these agencies and bodies has various and sometimes overlapping funding sources and responsibilities. At the state level, funding and focus are more a function of shifting legislative priorities and local perspectives rather than a coordinated strategic approach, which leads to wild swings in funding and implementation over time. This is inefficient and has led to a growing backlog of needed infrastructure.



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The enclosed legislative policy adopted by the Florida Association of Counties' Water and Environmental Sustainability Committee seeks to address this coordination problem by modeling the Florida Transportation Commission approach for planning, prioritization, stable predictable multi-year capital construction programs, and oversight which effectively delivers transportation improvements and creating a similar structure for the use of State resources on water projects.

Recommendation

Approve Resolution #22-01 supporting improved statewide water resources planning.



DRAFT RESOLUTION #22-01

A RESOLUTION OF THE SOUTH FLORIDA REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL SUPPORTING CREATION OF A STATEWIDE COORDINATED PLANNING AND PRIORITIZATION APPROACH FOR WATER RESOURCE INVESTMENTS MODELLED ON THE FLORIDA TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION; PROVIDING FOR TRANSMITTAL; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

WHEREAS, the South Florida Regional Planning Council is a multi-purpose regional governmental entity with policy responsibility in the areas of affordable housing, economic development, emergency preparedness, energy, health, natural resources, and regional transportation; and

WHEREAS, the South Florida Regional Planning Council's geographical area is comprised of Monroe, Miami-Dade, and Broward counties and the 70 municipalities contained therein and home to over 4.7 million people; and

WHEREAS, at joint meetings between the South Florida and Treasure Coast Regional Planning Councils held in 2018, 2019, 2020, and 2021 the Councils heard about the significant challenges Florida faces in meeting the need for drinking water while also treating our sewage and protecting the environment; and

WHEREAS, a significant roadblock to effectively addressing the water challenges facing Florida is the fractured nature of responsibility for water and the uncoordinated investment of funds to meet our needs; and

WHEREAS, funding at the state level has been subject to shifting legislative priorities and local perspectives rather than a strategic approach, leading to inefficiencies and a growing backlog of needed infrastructure; and

WHEREAS, recognizing this situation, the Water and Environmental Sustainability Committee of the Florida Association of Counties recently proposed modeling state water resource investment on the Florida Transportation Commission and Florida Transportation Plan approach for planning, prioritization, a predictable multi-year capital construction program, and oversight which reliably delivers transportation improvements; and

WHEREAS, coordinated and efficient investment of sufficient state funding for regional systems in concert with local funding of local systems is needed in order to meet water needs and protect water resources and the environment now and into the future.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SOUTH FLORIDA REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL THAT:

Section 1. The above recitals are declared to be true and correct and are hereby made a part of this Resolution.

Section 2. The Council expresses its support for statutory changes that will lead to coordinated and strategic investment of state funds for water resources using a structure modelled on the Florida Transportation Commission and Florida Transportation Plan.

Section 3. A copy of this Resolution shall be transmitted to the Governor, the President of the Florida Senate, the Speaker of the Florida House of Representatives, the Florida Association of Counties, the Florida League of Cities, and all Regional Planning Councils in Florida.

Section 4. This Resolution shall be effective upon adoption.

DULY ADOPTED by the South Florida Regional Planning Council this 24th day of January 2022.

Senator Steve Geller
Chair

Isabel Cosio Carballo
Executive Director



WES-PP-07: STATEWIDE WATER RESOURCES PLANNING

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: Adopt

PROPOSED POLICY: SUPPORT state policies to improve coordination of water project planning on a recurring five-year work plan and a statewide strategic plan for all things water

BACKGROUND:

Florida needs a more effective comprehensive framework for coordinating and prioritizing funding for local water projects to address challenges such as but not limited to: algal blooms, water conservation, marine resources/habitat/coral reef protection, water quality protection, minimum flows and levels, stormwater management, and climate change adaptation and resiliency. Local governments need a framework for improving coordination and prioritization of funding for local and regional water projects similar to the organizational structure of the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), which has proven successful for transportation planning. FDOT includes a Transportation Commission that's mission is to provide leadership in meeting Florida's transportation needs through policy guidance on issues of statewide importance and by maintaining oversight, public accountability to the department, and other statutorily specified transportation authorities. The Florida Transportation Commission was created in 1987, under Section 20.23, Florida Statutes, to serve as a citizen's oversight board for FDOT. The Commission is assigned to the Department for administrative and fiscal purposes; otherwise, it functions independently of the control and direction of the Department. Additionally, the Florida Transportation Plan, under Section 339.155, Florida Statutes, provides the framework for the development of the state's long-range transportation goals and objectives to be updated every five years.

Florida's water infrastructure planning process should be modeled in state statute of similar structure to the Florida Transportation Commission. This would allow independent insight and expertise into the planning and prioritization process for Florida's water quality projects. This structure creates stability amongst stakeholders while streamlining and optimizing efficiency of limited state resources.

ANALYSIS: Improve coordination of local water projects planning and funding. Proposed framework would supplement regional water management district and state water planning efforts.

FISCAL IMPACT: Indeterminate

SUBMITTING COUNTIES: Martin; Alachua

ASSIGNED COMMITTEE: WES

BOARD SUPPORT: Yes



UNFUNDED MANDATE: No

PROTECTIVE OF HOME RULE: Yes