

MEMORANDUM

AGENDA ITEM # 12

DATE: FEBRUARY 17, 2023

TO: COUNCIL MEMBERS

FROM: STAFF

SUBJECT: SFRPC/TCRPC Legislative Priorities Conversation

Background:

Since October of 2017, the Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council (TCRPC) and South Florida Regional Planning Council (SFRPC) have met as a joint board at least once per year to learn about, discuss, and reach consensus on issues of shared concern for both regions. Typically, the outcome of the meetings has been joint resolutions expressing support for, or opposition to, certain actions contemplated by governments within the regions as well as the Florida Legislature and the Federal government. Beginning in 2020 (interrupted by the Coronavirus Pandemic), the Councils sought to meet twice per year. Two virtual meetings were held in 2021 and two in-person meetings were held in 2022.

The South Florida and Treasure Coast Regional Planning Councils' seven-county geographical area consists of Broward, Indian River, Martin, Miami-Dade, Monroe, Palm Beach, and St. Lucie counties and 122 municipalities, which contain over 6.8 million residents or nearly one-third of the State's population, responsible for generating over one-third of the State's gross domestic product. With coordinated planning and prioritization of issues, these two RPCs have a strong voice in Tallahassee.

Analysis

A review of adopted legislative priorities for each of the seven counties reveals the following list of common legislative priorities within the seven-county TCRPC & SFRPC region:

Home Rule and Unfunded Mandates

- Oppose preemption of local governments' ability to:
 - regulate vacation rentals
 - Issue occupational licenses
 - Keep existing living wage ordinances (Palm Beach, Broward, and Monroe)
- Support increase in technology recording fees distributed to counties
- Oppose the use of local revenue sources to fund the state's judicial responsibilities
- Oppose any state legislation that would preempt or prevent local governments from accomplishing growth management and planning objectives

Economic Development

- Support efforts and investment in:
 - Visit Florida
 - Enterprise Florida
 - Florida Job Growth Grant Fund
 - Department of State's Arts and Cultural Grants
 - Qualified Targeted Industries Tax Refund Program
 - Film, Television, and Digital Media Program
- Oppose policies that mandate local tourist development funds be diverted away from local communities, or impair a County's use of the funds for local tourist development

Environment and Natural Resources

- Support investments that protect and further natural resources, including the Indian River Lagoon, St. Lucie River, Loxahatchee River, Lake Worth Lagoon, Biscayne Bay, Florida's Coral Reef and etc.
- Encourage legislation that protects inlets and promotes beach restoration and renourishment
- Encourage continued State funding for Everglades Restoration projects under the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP)
- Support resilience initiatives against the impacts of sea level rise and flooding, and natural disasters (e.g., hurricanes, wind storms)
- Support programs for septic to sewer conversions
- Encourage funding and planning for the operations and maintenance of stormwater systems
- Support the creation of a statewide coordinated planning and prioritization approach for water resource investments
- Support the removal of derelict vessels and anchorage restriction on overnight vessels

Public Infrastructure

- Support public infrastructure projects and programs including:
 - Florida's Transportation Five-Year Work Plan
 - Programs for the Transportation Disadvantaged
 - Expansion and funding of broadband
 - Expansion of public access trail networks (greenways and blueways, parks and recreation)
- Support public safety investments for:
 - School safety and school resource officers
 - Emergency Operations Centers/County Bases
- Support funding for mental health and substance abuse treatment
- Support initiatives for homelessness the provision of increased affordable housing opportunities, such as:
 - Allow increased flexibility in spending of State Housing Initiative Partnership (SHIP) program funds by local government in addressing affordable housing needs
 - Increase funding to the State Apartment Incentive Loan (SAIL) program
 - Oppose diversion of Sadowski Trust Fund for purposes unrelated to affordable housing projects
- Support funding for public libraries
- Support the local agriculture industry

An item of note from Palm Beach County that directly speaks to regional planning councils is the County will: “support full funding of regional planning councils. Palm Beach County **OPPOSES** legislation prohibiting or restricting the ability of a regional planning council to provide planning and technical service to its local governments.”

Recommendation:

Council members are invited to share their thoughts and discuss potential legislative priorities that can be supported by both Councils.