



2024 Federal PROGRAM



Guiding Principles

St. Lucie County opposes unfunded mandates and efforts to reduce local government revenue sources or limit flexibility in how they are spent.

The County opposes legislation that shifts costs from traditionally federal responsibilities, circumvents local oversight, limits local control, or impacts our ability to provide effective local services to our constituents. We also support legislation that creates additional financial flexibility, enhances local control of policies and procedures, and allows our County to – with the utmost responsiveness – meet the needs of the community.

St. Lucie County supports robust investment in public infrastructure that supports both planned and potential growth, strengthens transportation and communication networks, and provides greater mobility and accessibility for our residents.

The County supports maintaining funding from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) and the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) to enhance investment in our roads, railroad safety, bridges, transit, the Port of Fort Pierce, beaches and coastal amenities, environment, and the Strategic Intermodal System. We also support funding from those and other bills to support the expansion of broadband, increasing broadband affordability, and other investments that enhance the quality of life for St. Lucie County residents.

St. Lucie County supports key federal investments into projects and programs that protect Florida's environment, strengthens resilience against the impacts of storm and climate change, and addresses the health of our waterways, including but not limited to the Indian River Lagoon, lakes, rivers, streams, beaches, and oceans.

The County supports funding and authorization necessary for St. Lucie County's two federal Army Corps of Engineers beach nourishment projects: Fort Pierce and St. Lucie County, comprehensive Everglades restoration – including completion of the entire Indian River Lagoon-South project – completion of a Lake Okeechobee System Operating Manual that benefits our local waters, protection of offshore sand sources for the County's future use, opposition to the expansion of offshore fossil fuel energy development near Florida, and continued investments into the health and sustainability of the Indian River Lagoon.

St. Lucie County supports federal engagement to address the nation's mental health and opioid crises and invest in services to help with aging services and research.

The County supports expanded treatment options for the mentally ill, the preservation of Medicare and Medicaid, supports funding for programs that address the opioid epidemic, federal funding for Alzheimer's and dementia research at the National Institute on Aging, and annual funding for Older Americans Act programs that support critical social service programs serving elder persons in St. Lucie County.

St. Lucie County supports ongoing investments in community development and homelessness assistance programs to support our most vulnerable populations as well as efforts to increase access to affordable housing.

The County supports programs such as the HOME Investment Partnerships, Community Development Block Grant, Community Services Block Grant, and the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program, among others. This also includes Homeless Assistance Grants, particularly for the Continuum of Care Program from which the County benefits. Further, the County supports adjusting area median income (AMI) calculations developed by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to include more location-specific data rather than larger Metropolitan Statistical Areas determined by the Census Bureau. This precise data would allow for more accurate AMI calculations to be used for lower income individuals to whom HUD assistance should be targeted and increase affordable housing access for those most in need.

St. Lucie County supports federal legislation that ensures detained individuals and inmates have adequate medical care and maintain access to federal benefits.

The County supports addressing federal policies that contribute to the national behavioral and mental health crisis and seeks to reduce rates of recidivism in our local jails. The County takes a holistic approach to protect public wellbeing and make our community a healthier and safer place for our residents and visitors.



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ST. LUCIE
COUNTY
FLORIDA



Priorities: Appropriations and Policies

1. Explore all opportunities during the Fiscal Year 2025 appropriations process to secure federal funding for key St. Lucie County priorities. These include:
 - ▶ Necessary funding to initiate the Preconstruction Engineering and Design phase of the next iteration of the Fort Pierce Beach project via the Army Corps of Engineers.
 - ▶ Support funding to implement the Army Corps of Engineers Section 219 environmental infrastructure authorization included in the Water Resources Development Act of 2022 for St. Lucie, Martin, and Palm Beach counties.
2. Support St. Lucie County's efforts to extend the runway at the Treasure Coast International Airport with appropriate federal agencies now that the county has secured appropriated funds in the FY23 Federal Omnibus bill for the project to extend the primary runway at the airport by 1,008 feet, for a total length of 7,500 feet. This extension will assist the airport in accommodating commercial aircraft most heavily utilized by carriers likely to provide service to the Airport.
3. Support the County in its efforts to secure the Part 139 Certification at the Treasure Coast International Airport. Part 139 will create jobs and encourage economic development.
4. St. Lucie County supports appropriate federal funding to help respond to the impacts of hurricanes and other disasters, including from Hurricanes Ian and Nicole, particularly relating to Army Corps of Engineers funding to restore the County's two federal shore protection projects to their pre-storm conditions.
5. St. Lucie County supports the prudent implementation of the Army Corps of Engineers' policy regarding perpetual construction easements. Reasonable engineering discretion is required to determine how "integral" specific real estate is to the performance of a federal beach project. The Corps should allow for Jacksonville District discretion in determining how unacquired easements impact project performance. The County supports legislative action that ensures that shore protection projects with minimal real estate challenges can proceed without delay, as originally authorized by Congress.
6. St. Lucie County supports the ongoing federal Fort Pierce Beach Section 203/403 Conditional Authorization effort, which includes a new 50-year beach project life/agreement with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and the addition of T-groin structures to better manage regional sands. St. Lucie County and the Port of Fort Pierce support maritime requests which will assist in the economic development of the port, most importantly in policy and funding initiatives.
7. St. Lucie County supports the expansion of an existing Opportunity Zone to include the Port of Fort Pierce and Harbour Point to enhance economic development opportunities.
8. Support St. Lucie County applications for competitive federal grant programs, including but not limited to, opportunities created by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) and the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA).
9. St. Lucie County supports a statute of limitations be approved regarding future claw backs of state and local funding from the American Rescue Plan Act.

