



CITY OF FORT PIERCE

2025

STATE LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES



Left to right: Commissioner Arnold Gaines, District 1; Commissioner James Taylor, District 2; Mayor Linda Hudson; Commissioner Curtis Johnson, District 1 and Commissioner Michael Broderick, District 2.

The Fort Pierce Commission's legislative priorities guide advocacy efforts in Tallahassee. While these priorities may evolve as new issues arise, Commissioners, staff, and lobbyists will pursue all approved policies, emphasizing issues as opportunities arise during the legislative process. The Mayor and Commissioners affirm maintaining home rule authority and opposing cost shifts or unfunded mandates.

HIGHEST PRIORITY ISSUES

MUNICIPAL WATER OR SEWER UTILITY RATES, FEES AND CHARGES



CS/CS/HB 1277 and SB 1510 impose restrictions on using municipal water, wastewater, gas, or electric utility revenues for general government services and on imposing water and wastewater extraterritorial surcharges.

The City of Fort Pierce **SUPPORTS** maintaining municipal utility operational flexibility and financial stability by preserving the ability of those utilities to fund essential services and maintain and expand existing infrastructure. The city joins multiple entities, including the Florida League of Cities, in opposing such efforts. Previous efforts to restrict municipal utility revenues would negatively impact services provided by these utilities and interfere with debt obligations attached to operation and maintenance of facilities and assets. Small municipalities rely on utility returns to fund essential government services due to weak property tax bases. Additionally, the requirement for written interlocal agreements and annual public meetings could create bureaucratic hurdles, making it more challenging for municipalities to provide efficient utility services. The City is concerned that these restrictions could lead to increased costs for municipalities and limit their ability to respond to the needs of their communities effectively.

RESOURCES FOR THE HOMELESS



Families across the nation have faced devastation due to foreclosures, unemployment, and rising costs for basic necessities. This has led to a surge in homelessness, complicating matters for communities coping with large numbers of people lacking sustainable living conditions.

The City of Fort Pierce **SUPPORTS** funding for local homelessness programs, housing for homeless veterans, and operating capital for aid groups and statewide agencies serving this population. The City also continues to support legislation addressing homelessness and enhancing equitable access to housing. This includes measures that strengthen and enforce statewide renter protections, and incentives and support for local efforts to increase housing development, including affordable housing.

MENTAL HEALTH



Untreated mental health conditions have led to an escalation of serious issues for communities throughout the state. Without adequate support for individuals with mental illness, municipalities face increasing homelessness, strained emergency services, public safety challenges, and economic impacts.

The City of Fort Pierce **SUPPORTS** legislation to improve funding for mental health initiatives. This includes increased access to affordable, accessible, patient-centered mental health services; funding for community-based care and mental health crisis intervention aimed at diverting individuals from the criminal justice system and support for training law enforcement and mental health caseworkers in crisis response, and providing alternatives to hospitalization and incarceration.

YOUTH DEVELOPMENT



Recognizing the pivotal role that young people play in building a brighter future for themselves and the community makes it clear that enhancing opportunities for education, career readiness, mental health, recreational activities, and community involvement are fundamental to creating a sustainable future.

The City of Fort Pierce **SUPPORTS** legislation that enhances funding and resources for youth development programs, with a focus on increasing after-school programs, vocational training, and career counseling; expanding access to mental health services and wellness programs; enhancing recreational facilities, sports programs, and cultural activities and offering community service projects and leadership development initiatives to foster civic engagement and responsibility.

SERVICES FOR SENIORS



As our population continues to age, the number of seniors and individuals with disabilities in our community is rising proportionately. This demographic shift necessitates legislative action to ensure all community members can participate fully and independently in society.

The City **SUPPORTS** legislation that increases funding and resources for programs and services that address the unique needs of seniors, including: expanding access to healthcare services, wellness programs, and preventive care ; providing resources and support for caregivers, including respite care, training, and financial assistance; improve transportation options for seniors to ensure they can access essential services, social activities, and remain connected to the community and enhancing recreational facilities and programs that promote social interaction, physical activity, and mental well-being among seniors.

HUTCHINSON ISLAND WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT RELOCATION



The City of Fort Pierce continues to **SUPPORT** the Fort Pierce Utilities Authority (FPUA) in its commendable efforts to secure grants and appropriations from both the legislature and state agencies. These funds are vital for the successful relocation of the wastewater treatment facility. The City of Fort Pierce urges the legislative bodies to recognize the importance of this project and to provide the necessary financial support to make it a reality.

PARTNER PRIORITIES



The City of Fort Pierce **SUPPORTS** legislative initiatives by our community partners including the Florida League of Cities, St. Lucie County Board of Commissioners, St. Lucie County Schools, Indian River State College, and the Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council designed to enhance our region's economic, educational, cultural, transportation and infrastructure resources. These initiatives include: advocating for increased funding and programs that enrich educational opportunities for all ages; promoting and funding efforts that support the arts, heritage preservation, and cultural events and supporting projects and legislation that improve transportation, utilities, public spaces, and other critical infrastructure to ensure sustainable growth and development.

2025 APPROPRIATIONS REQUEST

**City of Fort Pierce Roadway Improvements
13th Street Reconstruction Phase 2**



The City of Fort Pierce seeks funding to enhance roadway infrastructure through drainage replacement and comprehensive reconstruction of roads and sidewalks along 13th Street, between Georgia and Orange avenues. This 0.5-mile project aims to improve intersection capacity for smoother traffic flow and safer crossings. Additionally, pedestrian enhancements will upgrade signage, traffic signals, pavement markings,

street lighting, and landscaping, creating a more accessible and safe environment for all.

Action Required: Approval of funding for this critical infrastructure project to ensure safer, more efficient roadways and pedestrian pathways in Fort Pierce.

Proposed Project Funding:
Total Project Cost: \$5,793,220
Requested Amount: \$500,000
City Match: \$5,293,220

**Fort Pierce Police Department
Investigative Infrastructure Improvements**

The Fort Pierce Police Department urgently seeks funding to upgrade critical infrastructure in response to evolving public safety demands and operational inefficiencies. Key areas requiring immediate attention include Interview Room Cameras, Evidence Unit Computers and Software, Criminal Investigations Laptops, and Crime Suppression Unit Vehicles.

- **Interview Room Cameras:** Replacement of outdated and failing cameras to ensure proper preservation of recorded interviews, vital for criminal investigations and prosecutions.
- **Evidence Unit Computers and Software:** Implementation of the Evidence IQ software to enhance evidence management, prevent errors, and avoid legal issues.
- **Criminal Investigations Laptops:** Provision of laptops to detectives to facilitate access to essential databases in the field, improving investigation and crime-solving capabilities.
- **Crime Suppression Unit Vehicles:** Acquisition of properly equipped vehicles for both overt and covert operations to maintain officer safety and effectively combat criminal activities.

Action Required: Approval of funding for these dire infrastructure upgrades to ensure the Fort Pierce Police Department can meet current safety standards and effectively serve the community.

Proposed Project Funding:
Total Project Cost: \$482,846
Requested Appropriation: \$241,423
City Match: \$241,423



Mission Statement

To provide community leadership, quality public service, and a safe environment for all citizens, by an empowered team of employees motivated by pride in themselves and their work.