

# 2023 STATE LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

## ISSUES TO SUPPORT

The city of Clearwater supports legislation and programs that benefit municipalities and assists in implementing services to meet the unique needs of our citizens and improve their quality of life including:

### Attainable Housing

- Ensure all Sadowski State and Local Housing Trust Funds are used exclusively to finance affordable and workforce housing programs and rental assistance programs.

### Public Safety

- Amend FS 790.06(12)(a) to include ticketed concert venues as an additional exemption where carrying a concealed weapon with a permit is not authorized, similar to what is already in place for sports venues.

### Local Governance

- Allow municipalities and counties the authority to restrict vessels from anchoring in the intercoastal waterways within 1,000 feet of an area that is primarily residential in nature and that has a residential density of one or more dwelling units per acre, or within 1,000 feet of a bridge or causeway.
- Allow local governments to regulate vacation rental properties to protect the health and welfare of their residents, visitors, and businesses.
- Allow local governments to regulate tree preservation, removals, and replacements to protect the environment and the health and welfare of their residents, businesses, and visitors.

### Sustainability & Resiliency

- Develop a Statewide Climate Resiliency Plan and funding source to assist local communities who have implemented plans to combat sea level rise.
- Increase funding for the Resilient Florida Grants program to assist municipalities with implementing climate-resilient infrastructure.
- Provide intergovernmental coordination that supports sustainability and resiliency efforts at the county and municipal levels, such as clean energy, land conservation, smart growth, a planned transition to 100% renewable energy goals, open space and wetlands preservation, and the impacts of climate change and sea level rise on natural resources and manmade infrastructure.
- Establish a framework for a state water infrastructure and water quality funding program that includes sustainable utility practices and intragovernmental coordination.

### Economic Development

- Support legislation that attracts and incentivizes film and television production in the State of Florida.

### Beach Preservation

- Continue funding the State of Florida's beach renourishment program.

The city will seek funding through grants and other sources to assist in implementing projects to meet the needs of our citizens and improve their quality of life.

### Clearwater Beach Marina Walk - \$4,800,000

Home to the largest tourism-oriented fleet of sightseeing, fishing, dinner cruise, and excursion vessels, on the West Coast of Florida, the Clearwater Beach Marina Walk project will draw visitors through the entire marina, allowing them to experience all of what our eclectic commercial fleet has to offer.

The project will replace the supporting upland utilities and incorporate ADA compliant gangways. The marina walk will extend from the corner of Coronado Drive and South Gulfview Boulevard for over 1,000 linear feet and terminate near the pedestrian footbridge adjacent to SR 60.

### Pinellas County Water Transportation - \$1 million

The city of Clearwater supports Clearwater Ferry's funding request to help establish water transportation as a permanent option for citizens and tourists in Pinellas County.

In 2015, the Clearwater Ferry began offering a water taxi service for citizens and tourists in the Clearwater Beach area as an alternative to vehicular transportation. Since then, growing ridership has proven the concept of using waterways to help alleviate vehicular traffic, relieve demand for parking availability, and improve economic activity among the waterfront merchant community. The requested funds will be used to replace vessels and contribute to current dock renovations to increase departures and days of operation in Clearwater and Dunedin.

## ISSUES TO OPPOSE

We oppose legislation that is detrimental to Clearwater and other municipalities including:

- Erosion of local self-government (Home Rule), a constitutional right Floridians supported in a statewide vote 54 years ago.
- Increased regulation of, or restrictions on, municipal operations and budgeting.
- Preemption of local government's ability to regulate Airbnb rentals, or similar marketplaces, that allow individuals to rent out unused spaces in their homes for lodging.
- Weakening existing laws related to offshore oil drilling in the Gulf of Mexico.
- Restriction or elimination of Community Redevelopment Agencies.
- Imposed consolidation of municipal and county services.
- The open carry of assault rifles.

In addition, the city will support the Florida League of Cities in pursuing its legislative issues. The city will strive to inform residents of legislative initiatives that will impact the city and their quality of life and encourage citizen engagement with state legislators.



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