

THE CONTINENTAL STRATEGY TEAM

Continental Strategy is focused on the unique needs of the City of Eustis and builds a team with the expertise and understanding of your complex issues. Our team is comprised of individuals with a diverse set of experiences that complement one another and understand the importance of collaboration. While the individuals below would serve as the primary team working with you to accomplish your goals, your association would have access to our entire advocacy team.

CARLOS TRUJILLO

PRESIDENT AND FOUNDING PARTNER



Carlos Trujillo is the former Ambassador to the Organization of American States (OAS). Prior to his post at the U.S. Department of State, he served as an elected member of the Florida House of Representatives for eight years, was a founding partner of Trujillo, Vargas, Gonzalez and Hevia LLP, and worked as an assistant state attorney in Florida's 11th Judicial District for four years.

Carlos has a wealth of understanding of U.S. and Latin American politics and business and has strong ties to the Hispanic community, as well as state and national leadership and politics. He is based in Washington, D.C., with offices in Miami.

In 2017, Carlos was appointed by former President Donald J. Trump to serve as the U.S. Permanent Representative to the Organization of American States (OAS) and in this contentious political environment is proud that he was unanimously confirmed by the United States Senate.

Before his appointment at the OAS, Carlos was appointed by President Trump to serve as a Representative of the United States to the 72nd General Assembly of the United Nations under former Ambassador Nikki Haley. In 2020, he was nominated by former President Donald J. Trump to serve as the Assistant Secretary for the Western Hemisphere at the U.S. Department of State.

Prior to his work in Washington, Carlos was elected as State Representative to the 105th District in the Florida House of Representatives, where he served in various capacities, including two years as chair of the Criminal Justice subcommittee and two years as Chairman of the Appropriations Committee.

Carlos is the President of Continental Strategy, founder and President of Demand Democracy Now. He is an active member and manager of multiple real-estate holding companies in Coral Gables, Florida. He previously served on the Florida International University Board of Trustees from 2021 to 2023, as a Board Member of the Public Health Trust of Jackson Memorial Hospital in Miami, Florida from 2015 to 2016, and was a member of the Electoral College in 2016.

Carlos earned a Bachelor in Science in Business Administration from Spring Hill College in Mobile, Alabama and a Juris Doctor from Florida State University College of Law in Tallahassee, Florida. He is an active member of the Florida Bar, and received an AV rating by Martindale-Hubbell.



ASHLEY ELLIS SPICOLA
MANAGING PARTNER, TALLAHASSEE OFFICE

Ashley Spicola is the managing partner at Continental Strategy. Ashley worked for seven years for Governor Rick Scott and is a veteran policy advisor and strategist with insider-level knowledge and understanding of all aspects of the Florida state budget process, from developing a proposed budget to the Governor's signature or veto.

Prior to joining our team, Ashley served as a consultant for the Safety Net Hospital Alliance of Florida. She advised and developed policy and budget proposals for its 14-member hospital systems throughout Florida. She adeptly navigated the complex business and policy environment in which hospital systems operate to administer the most complicated care to the most critical patients, including children.

Throughout her career, Ashley has advised on complex policy and state budget matters. She spent more than 15 years serving in the highest levels of the executive branch of government. During the Rick Scott Administration, Ashley served as the head of the Education Policy and Budget team, where she was the lead advisor on education policy matters for PreK-12, state college system, and the university system, which accounted for \$20 billion in state budget priorities. She spearheaded many reforms to reduce costs and bolster outcomes for Florida students, including working with college presidents and administration officials to create the first-of-its-kind \$10,000 degree.

During the Charlie Crist Administration, Ashley served as Deputy Chief of Staff to Lieutenant Governor Jeff Kottkamp, where she managed the day-to-day functions of the office, including interfacing with the Florida Legislature and other public officials, developing messaging and outreach strategies, and serving as the policy director for the Lt. Governor. As Deputy Chief, Ashley developed recommendations for the HOPE Taskforce to provide housing solutions to families priced out of the market.



TOM DIGIACOMO
DIRECTOR, TRANSPORTATION, AND MUNICIPAL PRACTICE GROUP

Tom DiGiacomo brings to the firm over 20 years of experience working in and with state government, including extensive transportation-specific industry expertise, having served as Legislative Affairs Director and Senior Policy Advisor for FDOT and Florida Turnpike, as well as the Executive Director of the FL Transportation Commission. In addition to decades of government experience, Tom spent the last four years as the Director of Toll Technologies for PayIt, a national enterprise SaaS government solution provider, where he developed strategic go-to-market strategies and sales pursuits.



PAUL HAWKES

VICE PRESIDENT

Paul Hawkes is a former chief judge of the First District Court of Appeal, Florida's largest intermediate appellate court. Appointed to the court in 2003 by Governor Jeb Bush, Paul was twice retained by the citizens in the 31 counties of North Florida. In 2007, Paul became the youngest judge elected by his peers to serve as chief judge.

Since his retirement in January 2012, Paul has maintained a broad litigation practice. He regularly handles litigation matters in trial and appellate courts, including constitutional and regulatory challenges.

Paul left a commercial law firm to become an assistant state attorney in the fifth judicial circuit. He left the state attorney's office to run for the Florida House of Representatives. In his two terms as a state legislator, Paul represented Districts 26 and 43, serving Citrus, Marion, and Hernando Counties. In 1996, when the Republicans won the Majority in the Florida House for the first time since 1874, Paul served as Special Counsel to the first Republican Speaker in 122 years. Paul was instrumental in drafting new Rules for the Florida House, made referral recommendations on all legislation filed in the House, and oversaw special projects. In 2001, Paul had the opportunity to return to the Florida House as Chief of Policy for Speaker Tom Feeney. In this capacity, Paul advised Speaker Feeney on all policy issues and made bill referrals in the Florida House.

Paul received a House Speaker's appointment to the 1997-1998 Florida Constitution Revision Commission, serving as the Chair of the 'Bonding and Investments' Committee.

In 2000, Governor Bush hired Paul as deputy director in his Office of Policy and Budget. Governor Bush also appointed Paul to serve as his "efficiency czar," responsible for identifying efficiencies and outsourcing opportunities requiring Paul to work closely with each of the Governor's agencies.