



Levy County Board of County Commissioners
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To: The Board of County Commissioners
From: Mary-Ellen Harper, County Manager
Date: March 4, 2025
Subject: The Comprehensive Plan and Commissioner Priorities

Priority setting involves deciding which tasks or goals are most important and should be completed first. The process helps an organization's leaders focus staff time and energy on the most important initiatives.

The Board of County Commissioners (BoCC) has some significant projects looming in the near future, including the development of the Fiscal Year 2026 Budget, the Comprehensive Plan Update, and a wide variety of projects that are the priorities of the Commissioners.

Development of the Fiscal Year 2026 Budget

The draft Fiscal Year 2026 Budget Development Schedule will be on the March 18, 2025, BoCC Agenda for consideration by the Board. This schedule proposes that the BoCC conducts eight separate Budget Workshops between April and September.

Comprehensive Plan Schedule

Local governments in Florida are required by law to create, adopt, and maintain a Comprehensive Plan. This plan serves as a blueprint for guiding future land use, development, and resource management within the community. Levy County must update its Comprehensive in 2026. Florida State Statutes 163.3177 (1) provides context for the magnitude of the work associated with updating the comprehensive plan:



Commissioners

Charlie Kennedy, District 1
Rock Meeks, District 2
Desiree Mills, Chair, District 3
Tim Hodge, Vice Chair, District 4
Johnny Hiers, District 5

The comprehensive plan shall provide the principles, guidelines, standards, and strategies for the orderly and balanced future economic, social, physical, environmental, and fiscal development of the area that reflects community commitments to implement the plan and its elements. These principles and strategies shall guide future decisions in a consistent manner and shall contain programs and activities to ensure comprehensive plans are implemented. The sections of the comprehensive plan containing the principles and strategies, generally provided as goals, objectives, and policies, shall describe how the local government’s programs, activities, and land development regulations will be initiated, modified, or continued to implement the comprehensive plan in a consistent manner. It is not the intent of this part to require the inclusion of implementing regulations in the comprehensive plan but rather to require the identification of those programs, activities, and land development regulations that will be part of the strategy for implementing the comprehensive plan and the principles that describe how the programs, activities, and land development regulations will be carried out. The plan shall establish meaningful and predictable standards for the use and development of land and provide meaningful guidelines for the content of more detailed land development and use regulations.

Levy County’s **Comprehensive Plan** is a long-range planning document that outlines the county’s vision, goals, objectives, policies, and strategies for its future development, growth, and preservation.

Levy County’s **Land Development Code**, which includes the ordinance that allows for the removal of unauthorized signs, provides the specific tools to implement those plans.

As the Land Development Code is required by law to be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and not in conflict with state-level comprehensive plans, and because Levy County has a deadline before which the Comprehensive Plan must be updated and approved by the State, it would behoove Levy County to first focus its efforts on updating the Comprehensive Plan. Following the approval of the updated Comprehensive Plan, Levy County could then focus its efforts on updating the Land Development Code, which may include revisions to the ordinance that governs signs if that is the will of the BoCC.

Planning and Zoning Proposed Timeline

- I. Comprehensive Plan Evaluation and Appraisal Report (EAR) Amendments (REQUIRED to bring the Comp Plan into compliance in accordance with the Stipulated Settlement Agreement approved by the BOCC on January 7, 2025)
 - A. CPTA grant-funded Data and Analysis Study
 1. Deliverable 1 – Staff worked with a consulting firm to develop a project timeline.
Due December 31, 2024 – Met
 2. Deliverable 2 – Staff to work with a consulting firm to prepare a Data and Analysis report and draft proposed Plan amendments.
Due February 14, 2025

3. Deliverable 3 – Staff and Consulting Firm to present Data and Analysis report and proposed Plan Amendments to Planning Commission and BOCC.
Due April 1, 2025
- B. Prepare an Ordinance for the Planning Commission and BOCC to adopt Plan Amendments. Transmit the adopted Plan Amendments to the State for compliance.
Due July 1, 2025
- II. Western Water Supply Plan
 - A. WWSP written notification of alternative water supply projects and status report of project implementation
Due Date: May 2025
 - B. Adopt updated Water Supply Facilities Work Plan into a Comprehensive Plan.
Due Date November 2025
- III. Begin the current 2026 Comprehensive Plan rewrite to the 2050 Comprehensive Plan.
Proposed Start Date: July 1, 2025
 - A. Present the proposed schedule to the Planning Commission and BOCC
Proposed Date: July 7, 2025, and July 8, 2025.
 - B. Series of Public Workshops, Planning Commission presentations, and BOCC presentations. ***Proposed 2 meetings per month from July 2025 - March 2026***
 1. Topic 1 – Vision Statement and Strategic Initiatives
 2. Topic 2 – Future Land Use
 3. Topic 3 – Housing
 4. Topic 4 – Transportation and Economic
 5. Topic 5 – Conservation and Coastal Management
 6. Topic 6 – Recreation and Open Space and Springs Protection
 7. Topic 7 – Public School Facilities and Intergovernmental Coordination
 8. Topic 8 – Capital Improvements and Infrastructure
 - C. Drafting and presenting the new 2050 Comprehensive Plan
Proposed from April 2026 – August 2026
 - D. Adoption of 2050 Comprehensive Plan
 1. Planning Commission
September 2026
 2. BOCC
September and October 2026
 - E. Transmit to State
November 2026



- IV. Land Development Code Update
Proposed from January 2027-December 2027
 - A. Series of Public Workshops, Planning Commission, and BOCC meetings
Proposed from January 2027 – May 2027
 - B. Drafting and presenting new Land Development Code
Proposed from June 2027 – September 2027
 - C. Adoption of Updated Land Development Code
 - 1. Planning Commission
October 2027
 - 2. BOCC
November and December 2027

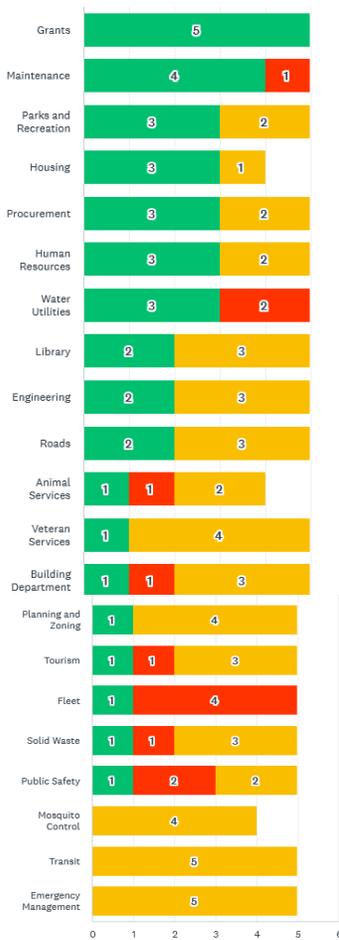
Commissioners' Priorities Survey

I conducted an online survey for the five commissioners to share their priorities for the Board of County Commissioners (BoCC). The results are intended to assist the BoCC in adopting a set of priorities, which will, in turn, allow me to establish work plans for BoCC Staff that are consistent with the BoCC's will.

Survey Questions

- For each BoCC department, please identify whether your first priority is:
 - Increased performance (faster delivery times for projects/services, better customer service, new and enhanced services, etc).
 - Decreased costs, or
 - You are satisfied with the department's performance-to-cost ratio.

■ Increased Performance
 ■ Decreased Cost
 ■ Satisfied



Department	Commissioners' Priority: Increased Performance	Department	Commissioners' Priority: Decreased Cost	Department	Commissioners' Priority: Satisfied
Grants	5	Fleet	4	Transit	5
Maintenance	4	Water Utilities	2	Emergency Management	5
Parks and Recreation	3	Code Enforcement	2	Veteran Services	4
Housing	3	Public Safety	2	Planning and Zoning	4
Procurement	3	Maintenance	1	Mosquito Control	4
Human Resources	3	Animal Services	1	Library	3
Water Utilities	3	Building Department	1	Engineering	3
Library	2	Tourism	1	Roads	3
Engineering	2	Solid Waste	1	Building Department	3
Roads	2	Grants	0	Tourism	3
Animal Services	1	Parks and Recreation	0	Solid Waste	3
Veteran Services	1	Housing	0	Parks and Recreation	2
Building Department	1	Procurement	0	Procurement	2
Code Enforcement	1	Human Resources	0	Human Resources	2
Planning and Zoning	1	Library	0	Animal Services	2
Tourism	1	Engineering	0	Code Enforcement	2
Fleet	1	Roads	0	Public Safety	2
Solid Waste	1	Veteran Services	0	Housing	1
Public Safety	1	Planning and Zoning	0	Grants	0
Mosquito Control	0	Mosquito Control	0	Maintenance	0
Transit	0	Transit	0	Water Utilities	0
Emergency Management	0	Emergency Management	0	Fleet	0



The following are projects that have been recently discussed by Commissioners and / or staff. Please identify whether you are very interested, somewhat interested, or not interested in seeing the BoCC make the listed project a priority.

Summary Commissioners' Priorities			
Priority	Commissioners Priority: Very Interested	Commissioners Priority: Somewhat Interested	Commissioners Priority: Not Interested
1. Update and re-activate the Adopt a Road Program for litter cleanup.	5	0	0
2. Identify the pros and cons of renovating or relocating Animal Services.	4	1	0
3. Review and making recommendations to the County's Economic Development Program.	4	1	0
4. Review and make recommendations regarding the County's two water departments.	4	1	0
5. Review and make recommendations to the County's EMS Assessments.	4	1	0
6. Review and make recommendations to the County's Solid Waste Assessments.	4	1	0
7. Review and making recommendations to the County's Purchasing Policy.	4	0	1
8. Develop a plan for a Community Paramedicine Program.	4	0	1
9. Investigate the feasibility of relocating the Road Department.	3	2	0
10. Develop a plan for the use of space at the Government Center.	3	1	1
11. Investigate potential options for Emergency Medical Care in Levy County and the Tri-County area.	3	1	1
12. Review and make recommendations regarding the Interlocal Agreements with Cedar Key for facilities within the municipal boundaries.	3	1	1
13. Review and make recommendations to the County's Fire Assessments.	2	3	0
14. Review and make recommendations regarding the Interlocal Agreements with the Municipalities for Animal Services.	2	2	1
15. Review and make recommendations to the County's Road Assessments.	1	4	0
16. Review and make recommendations regarding the Interlocal Agreements with the Municipalities for Fire Protection.	1	3	1

2. Please list any other projects that you would like to see as a priority for the BoCC this year.

Responses:

- Make parent parcel reset the very tip top priority
- I think we have enough for this year let's circle back in 10 or 11 months to get started on the next chapter

SWOC Analysis

A SWOC Analysis is a framework for assessing an organization's Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Challenges. This is a tool used for strategic planning and decision-making.

Strengths

It is essential for any organization to identify strengths, as these provide assurances of the organization's ability to deliver the services requested by customers and ensure strengths are consistent with the organization's issues. Often, identifying organizational strengths leads to channeling efforts toward primary community needs that match those strengths. Organizations should carefully review programs that do not match organizational strengths or the organization's primary function to evaluate the rate of return on precious staff time.

3. What do you believe are the biggest strengths of the BoCC or any of the departments within the BoCC?

Responses:

- All being able to work together
- The commissioners have a common desire to move the county forward and have the people's best interest at heart
- We have very good staff in most departments

Weaknesses

Performance, or lack thereof, within an organization depends on identifying weaknesses and determining how the organization confronts these weaknesses. For any organization to either begin or continue to move progressively forward, it must be able to identify its strengths and those areas where it does not function well or even at all. These areas of needed enhancements differ from the challenges identified later in this document. Weaknesses include those day-to-day issues and concerns that may slow or inhibit progress.

4. What do you believe are the most significant weaknesses of the BoCC or any of the departments within the BoCC?

Responses:

- Maintenance department has its work cut out moving forward
- Departments need more resources to work effectively.
- Organization. Although in the past six months I think we are making good progress.
- We have a couple of departments that need fine tuning

Opportunities

Opportunities for an organization depend on identifying strengths and weaknesses and how the organization uses the strengths and overcomes the weaknesses. The focus of opportunities is not solely on existing services but on expanding and developing new possibilities both inside and beyond the county.

5. What do you believe are the biggest future challenges facing the BoCC or any of the departments within the BoCC?

Responses:

- BOCC/manager
- Money
- Growth.
- Hard to teach old dogs new tricks and letting the past be in the past

Challenges

Conditions in the external environment are not under the County's control. Identifying these conditions allows the organization to develop plans to mitigate or respond when a challenge becomes an obstacle. By recognizing these challenges early, Levy County can hopefully anticipate, react to, and minimize the impacts of various challenges before they become overwhelming.



6. What do you believe are the biggest future opportunities available to the BoCC or any of the departments within the BoCC?

Responses:

- Our natural resources
- Grants
- All the departments are important we don't have departments that are not needed we need to look to the future and be able to adapt as the country grows and there may be a need for new departments as things change, and some departments may need to go away as the future of our county evolves

Development of Commissioners' Priorities Work Plan

The Board of County Commissioners (BoCC) has some significant projects looming in the near future including the development of the Fiscal Year 2026 Budget, the Comprehensive Plan Update, and a wide-variety of projects that are the priorities of the Commissioners.

I recommend that the BoCC consider adopting its top ten priority initiatives, which will form the basis of my work plan for BoCC Staff. Ideally, one commissioner would be assigned to each of the top ten priorities, so there would be BoCC involvement during every phase of these projects.