

# MARTIN COUNTY State Priorities



2026

## Martin County Board of County Commissioners



Left to right: Commissioner J. Blake Capps, District 3; Commissioner Eileen Vargas, District 1; Commissioner Stacey Hetherington, District 2; Chair Sarah Heard, District 4; and Vice Chairman Ed Ciampi, District 5;

**Martin County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) continues to work closely with our state legislative delegation to advance the priorities that serve the best interests of Martin County residents and visitors.**

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## Martin County's State Delegation



**Senator  
Gayle Harrell  
District 31**



**Representative  
John Snyder  
District 86**



**Representative  
Toby Overdorf  
District 85**

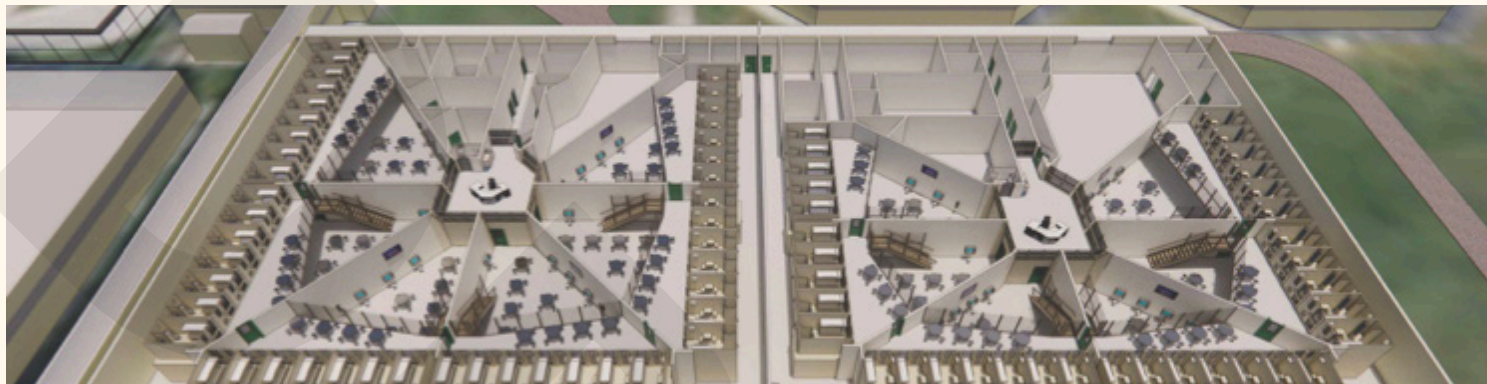
# Martin County Appropriation

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## PRISM - PUBLIC SAFETY FIRST MENTAL HEALTH INITIATIVE

### MARTIN COUNTY SHERIFFS OFFICE



PRISM is dedicated to balancing the mission of community safety with the clinical needs of inmates requiring behavioral health intervention.

**\$30 Million**

### PUBLIC SAFETY

The PRISM model uses a secure environment ensuring that mental healthcare is delivered in a way that reduces risk to staff, inmates and the public

### REHABILITATION

The program will provide step-down housing, intensive outpatient treatment, transitional planning, and veteran/special needs support to reduce re-offending.

### INTERVENTION

Inmates will receive treatment while incarcerated in a controlled environment, instead of waiting until after release.

### STABILIZATION

By ensuring continuity of care after release, PRISM helps prevent inmates from relapsing or re-offending, which improves public safety.

### MENTAL HEALTH

The plan includes building two specialized housing PODS for mentally ill inmates, equipped with suicide watch cells, ADA-compliant medical units, and secure medical offices.

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# MARTIN COUNTY LOCAL BILL 2026

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The bill streamlines indigent care by defining who qualifies, removing the county's ability to collect repayment from patients, giving the County Commission direct oversight of hospital funding, and eliminating the additional review board.

Money in the fund can only be used for hospital care for low-income Martin County residents, for health programs the state requires, and for other county-approved health programs.

To qualify, a person must:

1. Live in Martin County at least 6 months,
2. Have income below 150% of the federal poverty level,
3. Not qualify for Medicaid or other insurance,
4. Have less than \$8,000 in savings/assets.





# Martin County Priorities

## Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP)

The **IRL-S Restoration Project, part of CERP**, was authorized to address the damaging effects of pollution and unnaturally large freshwater discharges and local basin runoff to our ecologically vital water bodies and its impact to our public health and safety. The IRL-S Project employs a regional approach to address the Martin and St. Lucie County portions of the lagoon. The IRL-S Project will greatly reduce polluted freshwater discharges into the St. Lucie River and the Indian River Lagoon.



### SUPPORT

continued dedicated funding for the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP)



### SUPPORT

long-term funding commitments to finance the completion of the projects on the Integrated Delivery Schedule (IDS), Indian River Lagoon-South (IRL-S) Project including funding for the continued IRL-S Phase Two



### SUPPORT

the land acquisition of the Natural Lands Component of IRL-S, which includes 90,000 acres of wetland restoration



### SUPPORT

Loxahatchee Flowway 3 restoration of N. Fork of Loxahatchee River





# Martin County Priorities

## Conservation Land Acquisition

Acquisition of conservation lands is a foundational element of Martin County's priorities of water quality, open spaces and quality of life. There are several programs of interest related to land acquisition, each of which depend on state and federal partnerships to effectively achieve results.



The **Loxa-Lucie Headwaters Conservation Initiative project** would provide a wildlife and recreation corridor between Halpatokee Regional Park, Atlantic Ridge State Park and Jonathan Dickinson State Park that would create a "super park" to serve as a destination for people and wildlife.

**The Martin County Blue Ways program** provides conservation lands for local basin water quality projects and recreational access to the rivers, lagoon and ocean.

These programs align with several state and federal programs for land acquisition assistance and the County supports active engagement with our state and federal delegation to advance these efforts.

Land acquisition in the **PalMar** area preserves some of the highest quality wetland in the greater Everglades. This is a critical effort to maintain and restore water quality and timing for the wild and scenic Loxahatchee River.



### SUPPORT

state funding for  
PalMar land  
acquisition and  
Florida Forever  
funding for state  
land acquisition



### SUPPORT

the increase of  
funding for the rural  
and family lands  
protection program

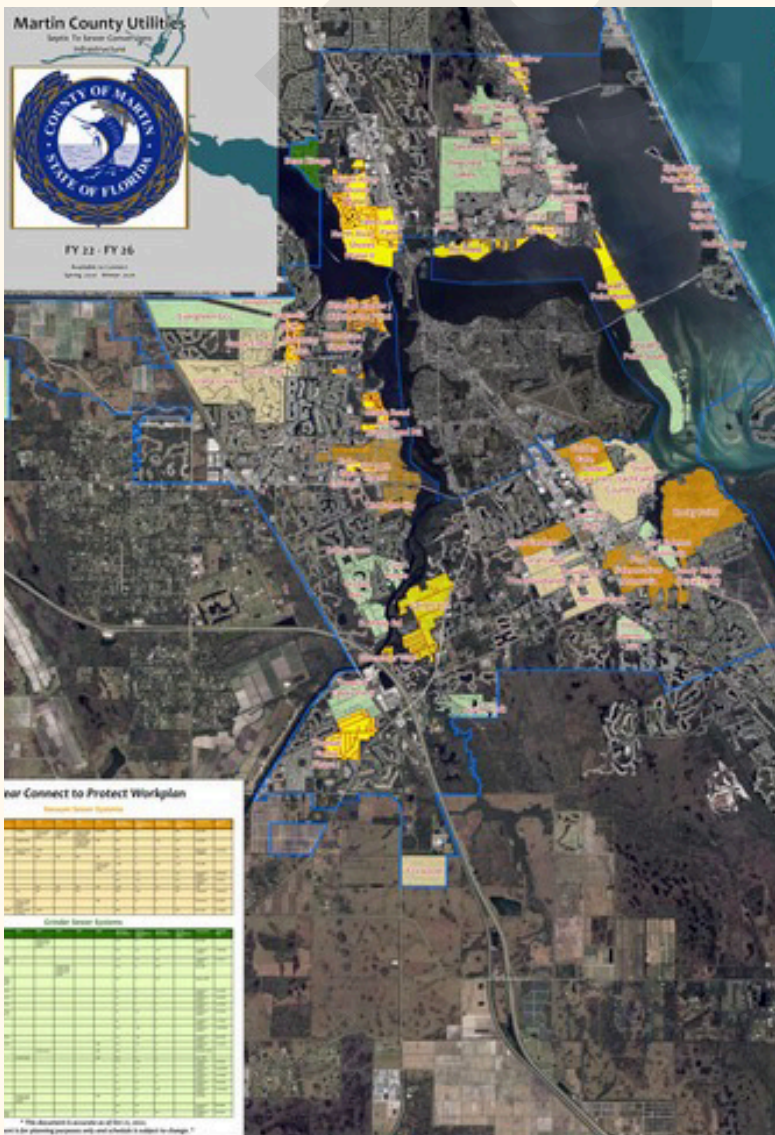
# Martin County Priorities

## Biosolids

### SUPPORT

alternatives to the land application of biosolids. Excess nutrients from land application of human waste from wastewater treatment effluent, termed “biosolids,” reach surface waters and continue to increase the occurrence of chronic harmful algal blooms (HAB)

## Septic to Sewer Conversion



While discharges from Lake Okeechobee, along with local stormwater runoff, are significant threats to the health of our waterways, septic systems can also add to the problem. Leaching of septic tank effluent, especially in high density residential neighborhoods and those close to the water, contributes to the nutrient load in local waterways. The County is committed to efforts that will restore the health of the St. Lucie Estuary, Indian River Lagoon and nearshore coral reef tract. The reduction and elimination of septic systems is one tangible way we can proactively improve the health of our unique environment.

### SUPPORT

the Wastewater Grant Program and any other funding sources identified by the legislature for septic to sewer conversion projects

### SUPPORT

the funding for the State Revolving Fund (SRF) Management Program



# Martin County Priorities

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## Dedicated Coral Reef Funding & Florida Resilient Coastlines Program

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### SUPPORT

efforts and dedicated funding for the Florida Department of Environmental Protection to protect and restore the Southeast Florida Coral Reef Tract

### SUPPORT

efforts and continued dedicated funding for resources to prepare Florida's coastal communities and habitats for the effects of rising sea levels

### SUPPORT

the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission's efforts on Coral Reef Evaluation and Monitoring Project (CREMP)

## Indian River Lagoon National Estuary Program

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### SUPPORT

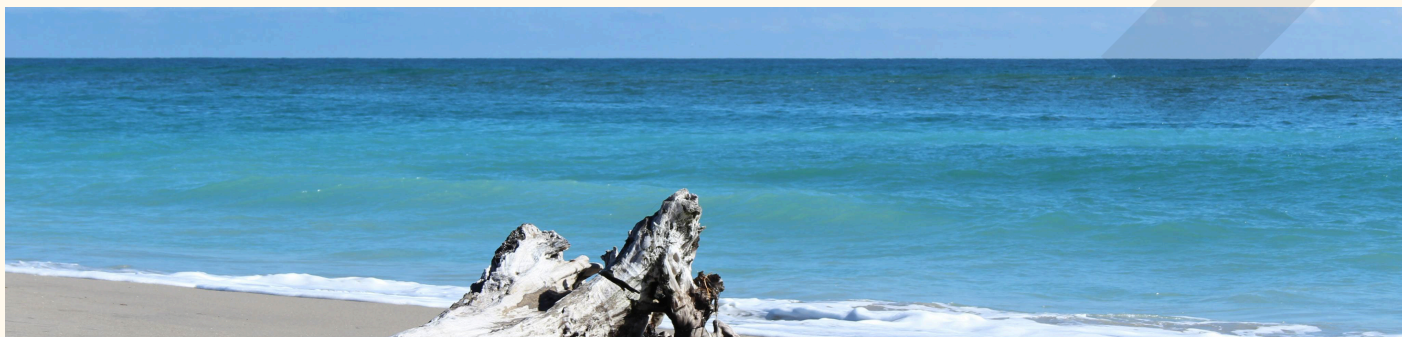
the Indian River Lagoon National Estuary Program's legislative priorities

## Loxahatchee River Preservation Initiative (LRPI)

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### SUPPORT

continued funding of projects identified through the LRPI, a partnership of governmental agencies brought together for the common goal of the restoration and enhancement of the Loxahatchee River



# Martin County Priorities

## Home Rule & Unfunded Mandates

Home rule power is conferred to Florida counties by Article VIII, Section 1(f) and 1(g) of the Florida Constitution (1968), and by section 125.01, Florida Statutes. The Martin County Board of County Commissioners is dedicated to the preservation of this Florida constitutional principle whereby a local government can exercise powers to protect the health, safety and welfare of its citizens.

### SUPPORT

maintaining the integrity of county home rule power, both administrative and fiscal, which allows counties to develop and implement community-based solutions to local problems

### OPPOSE

legislation that circumvents local oversight, limits local control or prevents local officials from being responsive to their constituents

### OPPOSE

legislation that shifts the financial burden from what are traditionally state responsibilities to the local level



## Water Quality & Natural Resources

Martin County is home to one of the most diverse ecosystems in the world.

### SUPPORT

legislation that protects our natural resources and environment. The County will continue advocacy efforts to reduce Lake Okeechobee discharges to the Indian River Lagoon and the St. Lucie River

### SUPPORT

critical grant funding programs to protect the health and sustainability of our local waterways

### SUPPORT

a dedicated annual funding source at a minimum of \$50 million from any funding sources identified by the legislature to protect our beach shoreline for statewide beach nourishment and inlet management projects

### OPPOSE

legislation that weakens local level wetland protections. Martin County's wetland protections are a model throughout the state

### OPPOSE

legislation that bans stronger fertilizer ordinances, especially during summer months



# Martin County Priorities

## Human Services & Public Safety

A very critical and essential role of government is to provide the necessary protection for its residents against crime, disasters and other unfortunate events.



### SUPPORT

continued investment in the Martin County Emergency Operation Center



### SUPPORT

efforts to limit substance abuse and increased funding for mental health treatment



### SUPPORT

full funding of the State Housing Initiative Partnership (SHIP) program, the Sadowski Trust Fund and other accessible housing projects



### SUPPORT

full funding of the District 19 Medical Examiner facility

### SUPPORT

State Housing Initiative Partnership (SHIP) emergency funding for disaster recovery



# Martin County Priorities

## SUPPORT

**legislation that simplifies the tax code or provides an economic boost to Florida Taxpayers**

## SUPPORT

**policies that promote private property rights, which encourages economic autonomy**

## SUPPORT

**legislation that protects and reinforces the importance of tourism funding levels and programs.**

The County has an effective tourism division to help encourage local economic stimulation within our community. Programs such as **VISIT FLORIDA** increase the exposure of our unique ecosystem, beaches and parks, local hotels, businesses, restaurants and other locations specific to Martin County.

## OPPOSE

**any legislation that expands the allowed usage of bed tax. This vital program allows local businesses to gain access to customers through increased tourism spending**

## OPPOSE

**decreasing funding levels to VISIT FLORIDA**

## Tourism & Economic Vitality

Martin County recognizes the importance of having a fair and transparent tax structure to help residents benefit from economic growth.

Martin County recognizes the importance of lowering or removing certain taxes to benefit local businesses and our residents, helping support a competitive and strong economy.

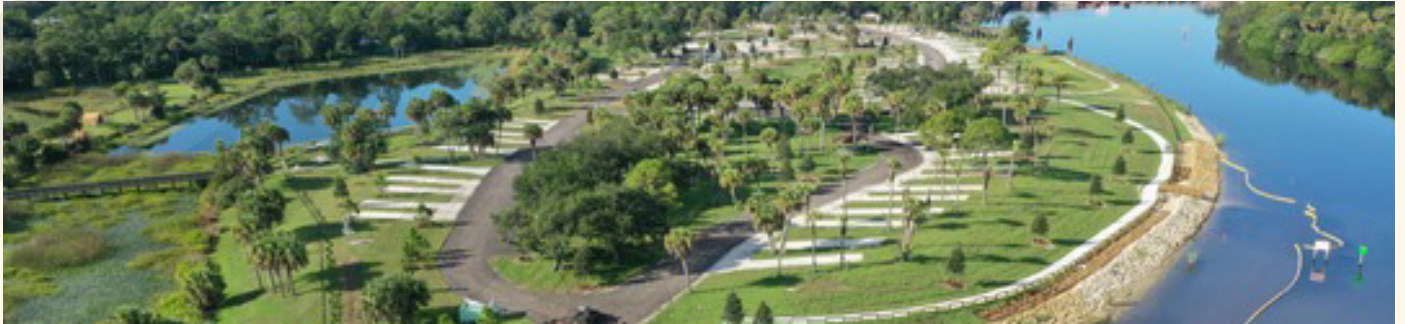




# Martin County Priorities

## Infrastructure, Recreation & Transportation

The County manages over 70 parks including beaches, causeways, community centers and many other outdoor areas, and is home to many historical sites that require monitoring and preservation.



### SUPPORT

continued grant programs that maintain Florida's historic buildings and archaeological sites as well as any program that provides funding for acquisition or development for public outdoor recreation

### SUPPORT

the Department of Transportation's Five-Year Work Plan, which includes funding for road construction, road improvements and resurfacing, and public transportation

### SUPPORT

Florida's Department of Transportation's Target Zero campaign

### SUPPORT

a train station in Martin County and the replacement of the railroad bridge through state and federal grant funding

### SUPPORT

funding for capital projects that expands or establishes a new intercity passenger rail service, including privately operated intercity passenger rail service

