

Brevard County's legislative delegation has been asked to consider the following priority issues during this year's Legislative Session:

TRANSPORTATION FUNDING:

- The St. Johns Heritage Parkway system, for construction of all segments of the parkway from Interstate 95 to Ellis Road.
- Ellis Road improvements, which includes widening Ellis Road to four lanes.
- The State Road A1A corridor, which includes improvements from Pineda Causeway to Port Canaveral as recommended by Florida Department of Transportation.
- State Road 528, which includes design for widening the road, and adding bicycle and recreation features.

INDIAN RIVER LAGOON: To match local funds generated by the county's new half-cent-on-the-dollar sales tax and dedicated to implementing the Save Our Indian River Lagoon Project Plan through the state's general revenue fund or through the Florida Water and Land Conservation Initiative, also known as Amendment 1.

EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTER: To fund a new Brevard County EOC that supports emergency management activities that benefit the United States and the State of Florida through activation for every space launch at Cape Canaveral and Kennedy Space Center, as well as support of NASA, military, and Port facilities/activities. Brevard's EOC is the most frequently activated in the State of Florida, and one of the most frequently activated in the nation. A fully functional and appropriately-sized EOC would benefit Brevard's 550,000 residents and millions of visitors by being sufficiently resilient to manage the natural disasters and human-caused emergencies that occur. It would also benefit the State by facilitating coordination for St. Lucie Nuclear Power Plant emergencies, which could affect Martin, St. Lucie, Indian River, and Palm Beach counties; and by enhancing the capability to manage off-site space launch- and landing-related anomalies, which could affect the State's tourism and economic development efforts. This year's Hurricane Season – and in particular Hurricane Matthew -- dealt a harsh blow to our County and those counties to the north of us. Our Emergency Operations Center activated to Level 1, which meant that in the hours leading up to, and in the hours and days in its aftermath, our 11,000-square-foot Emergency Operations Center was teeming with more than 200 people who participated day and night in the preparation and response to this potentially dangerous Category 3 hurricane. Fortunately, we were spared the worst of Matthew's wrath because its eye wall stayed just to the east of our shoreline. However, and more than ever before, this event put a magnifying glass on the many shortfalls our cold war-era EOC faces. The Brevard County EOC is the most-activated emergency operations center in the state, due in large part to the ever increasing number of commercial space launches. Its lack of space and run-down conditions were acknowledged by both Gov. Rick Scott and U.S. Sen. Bill Nelson when they visited our 52-year-old EOC in the hours before the storm bands of Hurricane Matthew reached the Space Coast of Florida. In the aftermath of Hurricane Matthew, the Brevard Public School Board also realized our needs and approved a 99-year lease at \$1 per year of a 5-acre tract adjacent to our EOC in Rockledge for future expansion. Our funding need is for construction of a 40,000-square-foot facility that would enhance local and regional public safety, as well as national security.

BREVARD CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTE: To fund the environmental cleanup of the 108-acre site of the former Brevard Correctional Institute in Sharpes, including removal of contaminated soil, underground fuel oil piping, storage tanks and lift stations. That work is estimated to cost \$4 million.

The facility is a major issue. We gave the property to the state. They required it. And, with that, they put a prison there. Then, they closed down the correctional facility and gave the building and the land back to us, and it's contaminated. So we're sitting with a contaminated site, the state provided \$800,000 to clean it up, but it's going to cost about \$4 million.

INSPECTIONS: To amend state statutes to modify current standards for building code inspectors and plans examiners, in order to qualify for taking examinations for certification. Current Florida Statutes requires that an applicant “demonstrate five years combined experience in the field of constructions or related field, building code inspection or plan review corresponding to the certification category sought.”

The statute should be amended to provide other ways to get certification so more people are available to do inspections and projects can obtain necessary approval to move forward in a more timely fashion.

In the current spotlight item that North Reach Wins 2014 Best Restored Beach Award – please remove 2014 from the headline and from the first sentence