

# City of Cape Coral

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## 2022 STATE LEGISLATIVE AGENDA



**ABOUT CAPE CORAL:** The City of Cape Coral is situated on the Gulf Coast of Southwest Florida. With a population approaching 200,000, it is the largest city between Tampa and Miami and the 8<sup>th</sup> most populous in Florida. Its area of more than 120 square miles makes Cape Coral the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest Florida city by land mass. Designed and developed as a “waterfront wonderland,” Cape Coral is home to more than 400 miles of waterways and 27 miles of shoreline.



**INTRODUCTION:** The City’s State Legislative Platform summarizes the City’s legislative priorities and funding requests, which are consistent with the City’s long-term strategic vision. The purpose of this agenda is to set forth the City’s legislative priorities and provide direction for our advocates as they work to secure support and resources for our community. Advocacy efforts are made to ensure the City’s fiscal, operational, and quality of life interests are represented on behalf of the citizens of Cape Coral.

# GUIDING PRINCIPLES

## **Protect Local Control**

Support measures that protect the rights of Florida citizens to govern themselves under the municipal Home Rule powers conferred by the Florida Constitution. These measures preserve the City's local authority as a charter city to enact policy pertaining to local affairs and opposition to measures that seek to preempt local control without concurrence of the City.

## **Preserve and Maintain Fiscal Responsibility**

Support measures that preserve and maintain the City's fiscal stability, predictability, and financial independence. These measures include:

- Efforts that preserve the City's ability to provide core services and deliver programs that foster a safe community, and
- Efforts that allow investment in community infrastructure to enhance the city's ability to meet the needs of its current and future residents and businesses, and
- Efforts that promote efficient and cost-effective solutions to protect and conserve natural resources and promote environmental awareness and sustainability.

## **Support Funding Opportunities**

Support measures that allow the City to compete for its fair share of regional, state, and federal funding. Support initiatives that promote dedicated funding streams to cities for critical service areas.

## **Collaborate with Regional Partners**

Support opportunities to work collaboratively with local and regional partners on areas of mutual interest. Maintain strong relationships with other municipalities, the county and local transportation agencies, special districts, regional government agencies, local elected officials, and school districts.

Local Self-Government

In alliance with the Florida League of Cities and municipalities across the state, the City of Cape Coral supports legislative efforts to strengthen and protect the rights of Florida citizens to govern themselves under the municipal Home Rule powers conferred by the Florida Constitution.

The Florida constitution empowers citizens with the right of local self-government, or Home Rule. As the only form of voluntary government, Florida's municipalities are the embodiment of this right. A city is created by its citizens to provide additional functions and services for the benefit of the community. Local citizens develop a charter to specify the form, functions, and power of their city government. The incorporation and city charter are approved by voters in a local referendum.

Home Rule authorizes all governmental, corporate, and proprietary powers necessary to conduct municipal government, perform municipal functions, and render municipal services. Home Rule is why no two cities are alike. City residents take pride in this diversity and responsibility. Strong Home Rule powers ensure that government stays close to the people it serves. Intrusion on Home Rule from the state or federal government undermines the constitutional right of citizens to govern themselves.

Environmental, Energy, Natural Resources

The City of Cape Coral continues to SUPPORT legislation that promotes healthy communities and economic prosperity through the protection of Southwest Florida's region's air, land, water and the city's other natural resources and open space: Resources for research, for state and local governments improvements and infrastructure projects to develop, test and implement technologies and processes to prevent and mitigate the effects of harmful algal blooms; support legislation and request state funds to address the needs to develop water, air and soil criteria, regulatory healthy levels and comprehensive sampling and analysis protocols for Harmful Algal Blooms toxins, such as cyanotoxins (Blue Green Algae) and brevetoxins (*Karenia brevis*); support legislation and funding to monitor, forecast and predict Harmful Algal Blooms for the public health and safety.

The City of Cape Coral continues to SUPPORT legislation to provide long-term, recurring, and adequate state funding, that is distributed throughout the state based on objective criteria, for local government water resource and water quality improvement projects and infrastructure, including, but not limited to, projects that: reduce nutrient and pollutant loading from wastewater sources; mitigate storm water and flooding impacts; and increase available water resources and supplies.

The City of Cape Coral SUPPORTS comprehensive legislation to address the state's growing water resource and water quality infrastructure deficit relating to water supply, wastewater treatment and disposal, stormwater management, and water quality protection. Such legislation should address annual assessment by the State, regional and local water resource and water quality infrastructure improvement needs; development of short, intermediate, and long-term strategies to meet identified needs; objective funding criteria and methodologies; and establishment of a dedicated and recurring source of state funding to meet current and projected needs.

The City of Cape Coral SUPPORTS Home Rule powers to limit and reduce the entry of nutrients into local waterways, including the adoption of stronger fertilizer ordinance, lifting of partial preemptions regarding the ban of fertilizer application for certain periods of the year and commercial applicator licensing, and partial lifting of full preemption regarding the sale and distribution of fertilizers.

<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);"><b>Growth Management, Urban Administration, Economic Affairs</b></p>	<p>The City of Cape Coral SUPPORTS a local bill allowing the City to annex properties that are contiguous, unincorporated enclaves within the local government’s service areas to promote consistent and efficient local services, including public safety service areas.</p> <p>The City of Cape Coral SUPPORTS legislation that designate resources solely for the unique problems facing pre-platted cities and provides property owners and local governments additional tools including funding with which to address challenges posed by antiquated subdivisions.</p> <p>The City of Cape Coral SUPPORTS legislation to improve municipalities’ use of community redevelopment agencies to effectively carry out redevelopment and community revitalization including legislation that safeguards the intent and elements cited in Florida Statute Chapter 163.3 known as the Community Redevelopment Act of 1969.</p> <p>The City of Cape Coral SUPPORTS legislation providing for a collaboration between the Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation and cities to ensure that short-term rental properties abide by state and local regulations, are properly licensed and insured, and comply with state and local taxation requirements as well as industry-accepted safety practices. The City also supports legislation clarifying that existing, grandfathered municipal short-term rental ordinances can be amended without penalty.</p>
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);"><b>Public Safety</b></p>	<p>The City of Cape Coral SUPPORTS legislation that protects consumers from Tianeptine, by making it a controlled substance (Schedule II). This is an over-the-counter substance used as an antidepressant and dietary supplement. It stimulates opioid receptors and may trigger addiction and withdrawal symptoms in consumers. The data from CDC for overdose and deaths have caused concern from Tianeptine as the source. This can have serious consequences for our community.</p>
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);"><b>Finance, Taxation, Personnel</b></p>	<p>The City of Cape Coral requests continued support for future Florida Department Environmental Protection (FDEP) State Revolving Fund (SRF) loans. Securing the FDEP Clean Water and Drinking Water loans is key to funding utility infrastructure projects.</p> <p>The City of Cape Coral SUPPORTS legislation that will allow for the collection of Florida Statute Chapter 175 monies in exchange for providing Fire protection to a Municipal Services Taxing Unit (MSTU).</p>
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);"><b>Local Funding Requests</b></p>	<p>Caloosahatchee River Crossing Project – Construction of Pipeline - \$4,000,000</p> <p>Northeast Reservoir Project – Construction - \$12,400,000</p> <p>North Well-field Expansion - \$10,000,000</p> <p>Ecological Preserve Boardwalk Replacement - \$4,500,000</p> <p>Real-Time Crime Center – To include all hardware and software - \$850,000</p>

<b>Grants</b>	The City requests SUPPORT for the funding of various needs, especially those related to water quality improvement, public safety, transportation, broadband and other quality of life issues.
<b>Support</b>	The City of Cape Coral supports the Florida League of Cities' and the National League of Cities' Legislative Priorities and initiatives when their advocacy efforts align with the City's fiscal, operational, and quality of life interests.