



CHARLOTTE COUNTY, FLORIDA

**RFP NO. 20250392
FLORIDA STATE LOBBYIST**

THE SOUTHERN GROUP OF FLORIDA, INC.

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COVER LETTER

June 26, 2025

Eve Sweeting Legislative Manager Administration 18500 Murdock Cir. Port Charlotte, FL 33948	Ben Bailey Director Community Development 18400 Murdock Circle Port Charlotte, FL 33948	Francine Lisby Assistant Budget Director Budget and Administrative Services 18500 Murdock Circle, B-109 Port Charlotte, FL 33948
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Subject: Request for Proposal (RFP) NO. 20250392: Florida State Lobbyist

Dear Ms. Sweeting, Mr. Bailey, and Ms. Lisby,

The Southern Group (TSG) is pleased to have the opportunity to submit this technical proposal to Charlotte County, Florida (County) in response to Request for Proposals (RFP) No. 20250392 for a Florida State Lobbyist. As required by the RFP, we are submitting an electronic copy via the Charlotte County Purchasing File Submission Form.

ABOUT THE SOUTHERN GROUP

The Southern Group is more than a lobbying firm, we are an influence firm with over 25 years of success pioneering government relations in Florida and beyond. We built a unique model by bringing together top leaders from government, business, and politics into a unified, high-impact network with unmatched access to decision-makers across the state.

At The Southern Group, we don't just show up during legislative session, we serve as your voice in Tallahassee and beyond year-round, maintaining relationships, identifying opportunities, and advancing your priorities every week of the year.

With unmatched reach across Florida, a deep bench of experienced professionals, and a proven track record of success for counties just like Charlotte, we offer the strategic partnership you need to achieve real results. The following key advantages set us apart and demonstrate why we are uniquely positioned to serve as Charlotte County's trusted advocate:



NATIONAL REACH, LOCAL CUSTOMER SERVICE

- ***Personalized, locally focused customer service*** backed by nationwide experience, resources, and reach.
- A dedicated team of five experts, including ***two lead lobbyists, Emily Colón and Laura Boehmer, who will serve as your daily, full-time advocates, providing hands-on customer service.***



STATEWIDE ACCESS, LOCAL IMPACT

- ***7 strategically located offices across Florida***, including Tallahassee (Headquarters), Tampa Bay, Orlando, Miami, Jacksonville, Broward

County, and the Florida Keys.

- ***Unrivaled access*** to state and local government officials year-round, not just during session.
- ***Our lobbyists live and work in Florida's key metropolitan hubs,*** building trusted, informal relationships with legislators and agency leaders, both in Charlotte County's region and statewide, delivering timely advocacy and strategic influence.



UNPARALLELED LEGISLATIVE ACCESS

- ***60+ lobbyists*** converge in Tallahassee each session.
- ***Virtually no legislator or staffer in local or state government that is beyond our immediate reach.*** Once reached, we know how to influence outcomes.



PROVEN RESULTS

- With more than 50 city and county government clients, we know local government. ***In 2024, our team secured more than \$100 million for local communities.***

- ***Experience delivering results in Sarasota, Pinellas, DeSoto, and Seminole counties with similar priorities and challenges. This includes, but is not limited to:***

- Infrastructure and road improvements
- Environmental protection and water quality
- Public safety investments
- Beach renourishment
- Home rule and local control
- Storm recovery

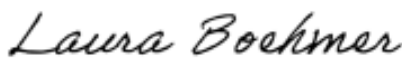
We are honored by the opportunity to serve as your lead advocate in Tallahassee and fully committed to representing Charlotte County's interests with the highest level of professionalism, focus, and care.

Respectfully,



Emily Colón

Lead Lobbyist



Laura Boehmer

Lead Lobbyist

LIST OF CLIENTS

OUR EXPERIENCE

With deep ties to the state of Florida, we tap into the expertise of lobbyists who have decades of experience in and knowledge of local markets across Florida.

Our success in advocacy has resulted in continually growth of our list of clients, many of which have been with TSG for decades. Our clients' trust in our work is not an accident, it's the results of the pride we take in providing every client with the same level of attention, support, and ultimately, success.

This network of experience includes over 450 clients in various industry sectors, such as local governments, nonprofits, pro sports teams, K-12 and higher educational institutions, corporations, and more. These projects were tailored to their specific advocacy needs, such as initiatives such as permitting, zoning, appropriation requests, drafting and writing legislative policy, identifying sponsors for legislation and amendments, monitoring and reporting efforts, and much more.

The Southern Group currently represents the following agencies and organizations outlined on the following pages.

Current Client List			
1800 Copans LLC	Converge Public Strategies	IMG Academy Parent LLC	Public Trust Advisors, LLC
4Roots Farm	Copart, Inc.	Inception Fertility Ventures	Punam LLC
7-Eleven, Inc.	Cornerstone Collard Auburndale, LLC	Independence Landing	Putnam County
A Safe Haven for Newborns	CPF MIB, LLC, dba Allymar Health Solutions	Independent Electrical Contractors, Inc., Florida West Coast Chapter	RaceTrac, Inc.
ACE Septic Tank Service of Tampa, Inc.	Critical Response Group	Indian River State College Foundation, Inc.	Raptor Technologies LLC
Acree JV, LLC	Critical Response Strategies, LLC	Indigov	Raydient LLC
Advantage Capital Management Corporation	Crystal Ridge Property Group, LLC	International Business Machines Corp.	Rayonier Operating Company, LLC
AdventHealth	CSP Mixed Use Communities, LLC	International Flight Center, Inc.	R'Club Child Care, Inc.
AF Group Insurance	Curo Health Services, LLC dba Gentiva	International Paper Company	Recording Industry Association of America, Inc.
Age of Learning, Inc.	CVS Pharmacy, Inc.	IQ Fiber, LLC	RedSpeed USA
Airbnb Inc.	Dixie District School Board	Ivanti	Renew Financial, LLC
AirSight	Domestic Abuse Shelter, Inc.	IVS, Inc. d/b/a AngelTrax	Ride Solution, Inc.

Current Client List			
Ajax Building Company, LLC	Cypress Business Park, LLC	Jackmont Hospitality, Inc.	RisePoint, LLC
AJM Conservation and Cattle LLC	D2L, Ltd.	Jacksonville Aviation Authority	Ronald W. Fussell Inc.
Akerman, LLP on behalf of Fortun Insurance, LLC	Dade Prep Academy Inc.	Jacksonville Classical Academy	Ronald Walls
Alfred I duPont charitable Trust	Darden, Inc.	Jacksonville Jaguars, LLC	Root Insurance
Allegis, Redwood, Maxim Public Affairs LLC	Daytona State College Foundation, Inc.	Jacksonville Transportation Authority - Government Relations	Royal Caribbean Group
Alliance for Commercial Real Estate Inc.	Deering Park 1, LLC	Jacksonville Transportation Authority-Capital Works	SA Aero Invest, LLC
Allied Universal Security Services	Delmas Homes LLC	Jacksonville University	Sabal Trail Transmission, LLC
Allied Universal Security Services (G4S Secure Solutions)	Designa Access Corporation	Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens	Salesforce.com, Inc.
Allsite Contracting, Inc.	Desoto County Board of County Commissioners	JAX Chamber	Sanford Airport Authority
Altria Client Services, Inc.	DEX Imaging, Inc.	JAXUSL LLC	Sarasota County
Ambrosia Treatment Centers/Neuroscience Research Institute	Discovery Hobe Sound Investors, LLC	JLC Services, Inc.	SAV Holdings LLC

Current Client List			
American Family Life Assurance Company of Columbus	Doral Court Retail Investments, LLC	JWB Real Estate Capital, LLC	<i>School Board of Broward County, Florida</i>
American Property and Casualty Insurance Association	Douglas TOC Development Partners LLC	Kalkomey Enterprises, LLC	SchoolLinks, Inc.
American Resort Development Association	Downtown Investment Authority	KB HOME Jacksonville LLC	SCI Funeral Services of Florida, Inc.
Amkin West Bay, LLC	Dream Finders Homes, LLC	Keeton Corrections Company	Sea and Shoreline, LLC
Anderson Columbia Co., Inc.	DSM Technology Consultants	Kelly Tractor Co.	Second Harvest Food Bank of Central Florida, Inc.
Aon Consulting, Inc.	DSR Consulting & Management, LLC	Key West Harry S. Truman Foundation, Inc.	Second Harvest of the Big Bend
Apple Inc.	DSR Public Health Foundation, Inc.	Key West International Airport	Securus Technologies
Aramark Correctional Services, LLC	Duval MF Partners II LLC	KOBO Development	<i>Seminole County</i>
Aramark Educational Services, LLC	Dwyer Workforce Development	Koch Government Affairs, LLC	<i>Seminole County Supervisor of Elections</i>
Aramark Sports and Entertainment Services, LLC	E Care Ambulance Inc.	Kofile Technologies, Inc.	SFM Services, Inc.
Artificial Intelligence for Manufacturing Inc. (AIM)	Eagle LNG Partners LLC	Kyndryl, Inc.	SHI International Corp

Current Client List			
AshBritt Environmental	Early Learning Coalition of Palm Beach Co	Lake Nona Property Holdings	Siemens Corporation
Asolo Theatre, Inc.	Easterseals Florida, Inc.	Lakeland Regional Health Systems	Sleiman Enterprises
Association of Florida Colleges, Inc.	Easterseals Southwest Florida, Inc.	Lennar Homes, LLC	Smart Mass Transit Coalition
Assurant, Inc.	Edmentum, Inc.	LEO Technologies	SMG Drones, LLC dba DARIUS
AtkinsRéalís, Inc.	Electronic Knowledge Interchange Company DBA Quant16	Leon County	Southeastern University
Atwell, LLC	Elevator Industry Work Preservation Fund	Liberty Landscape Supply	Southern Logistics, Inc.
Aucilla Research Institute, Inc	Elliott Investment Management LP	Liberty Mutual Group Inc.	Southern Regional Education Board
AUM Construction Inc.	Embry-Riddle Aeronautical Univ	Linebarger Goggan Blair & Sampson LLP	SpectroChip Global, Inc.
Austin Commercial	Emergent BioSolutions Inc.	Loud And Live Engage, LLC	St. Johns County School District
Autism Speaks, Inc.	Employer Direct Healthcare, LLC	LUBA Casualty Insurance Company	Step Up Suncoast, Inc.
Avion MF Partners LLC	Encompass Health	Lubavitch Hebrew Academy	Stonebridge Associates, Inc.
AvMed, Inc.	Enstructure LLC	Marwood Group Advisory, LLC	Storm Services, LLC

Current Client List			
B2G Advisors - AFIMAC	Episcopal Children's Services, Inc.	Master Concessionair (MM)	Sunshine Gasoline Distributors, Inc
B9 Secretariat FL Owner LLC	Equifax Inc.	Mavis Tire Supply LLC	Sunz Insurance Company
Bags Inc.	Ergisi Acquisitions, LLC	MAXIMUS	Tall Timbers Research, Inc.
Baker Barrios	Ernst & Young	MC Global Holdings, PLLC	<i>Tax Collector's Office for Polk County</i>
Baldwin Risk Partners, LLC	Estuary, LLC	McDowell Housing Partners, LLC	TECO Holdings, Inc.
Bamboo Health	Every Mother's Advocate, Inc.	McKesson Corporation	Telescope Health, LLC
Barney's Pumps, Inc.	Evolv Technologies, Inc.	McLane Company, Inc.	Tenet HealthSystem Medical, Inc.
BASS Partners, LLC	Fairness in Taxation	Menzies Aviation	Tesla, Inc.
<i>Bay County Board of County Commissioners</i>	FAV Infrastructure Group LLC	Meridian Waste Florida, LLC	The Auto Club Group
Beacon Mobility Corp.	FCC Environmental Services, Inc.	Merlyn Mind, Inc.	The Boselli Foundation
Beck/Sloan Properties	FedEx Corporation	Metro Development Group, LLC	The Conservation Fund, A Non-Profit Corporation
Beefree LLC d/b/a Freebee	Fidelity National Financial, Inc.	Metropolitan Ministries, Inc.	The Council of State Governments

Current Client List			
Beep Inc.	FIRM	MHC Property Management, L.P. c/o Equity Lifestyle Properties, Inc.	The Ferber Company
Bellini Capital	First Data Government Solutions LP	Miami Freedom Park LLC	The Figgers Foundation Inc.
Benchmark Analytics	Flagler College	<i>Miami Shores Village</i>	The Florida House Experience
Bermuda International Long Term Insurers and Reinsurers	Flagler TOC Development Partners LLC	<i>Miami-Dade County Clerk of the Courts</i>	The Florida International University Foundation, Inc.
Blue Water Industries Florida LLC	Flagship Airport Services, Inc.	Mid-Bay Bridge Authority	The Flower Shop FL, LLC
Bluenest Development LLC	Florida Beer Wholesalers Association, Inc.	Midtown Development, LLC	The Gasparilla Inn & Club
BlueTerra LLC	Florida Cannalytics, LLC	MindGlow Health, Inc.	The Goodman Company
Bolt Solutions, Inc.	Florida Citrus Sports Events Inc.	<i>Monroe County Sheriff's Office</i>	The Lunz Group
Bonnet Springs Park Inc.	Florida Court Clerks and Comptrollers	Mote Marine Laboratory	The Mahaffey Apartment Company
Boys & Girls Club of Central Florida, Inc.	Florida Crane Owners Association, Inc.	Mountain Lake Corporation	The Nemours Foundation
Braeburn Inc.	Florida Dredge & Dock, LLC	MSI Food and Services, Inc.	The Parker Management Company, LLC

Current Client List			
Branching Minds, LLC	Florida Golf Course Superintendents Association	Museum of Contemporary Art Jacksonville, Inc.	The Payments Group LLC
Breakthru Beverage Florida	Florida Innovation Capital Real Estate, LLC	Museum Of Science And History Of Jacksonville Inc	<i>The School Board of Monroe County, Florida</i>
BrightStar Care	Florida Insurance Council, Inc.	N. C. J. Investment Company	<i>The School Board of Polk County, Florida</i>
<i>Broward County</i>	Florida Keys Aqueduct Authority	NAIOP of Northeast Florida, Inc.	The Southern Group of Georgia, LLC
BSA Claims Services	Florida Petroleum Marketers Association	NASCAR Enterprises, LLC	The Southern Group of North Carolina, LLC
Cabot Citrus OpCo, LLC	Florida Polytechnic University Foundation, Inc.	NASCAR, LLC	The Southern Group of South Carolina 2005, LLC
Caesars Enterprise Services, LLC	Florida Ports Council, Inc.	Nassau Financial Group	The Taproot Agency, LLC
Canaery, Inc.	Florida Power & Light Company	National Emergency Management and Response	The University of North Florida Board of Trustees
Canik USA, LLC and Century Arms, Inc.	Florida Prepaid College Foundation, Inc.	Neal Communities	The Vestcor Companies, Inc.
Capital City Consulting, LLC	Florida Pulp & Paper Association	Neology, Inc.	The Washington Center for Internships and

Current Client List			
			Academic Seminars
Capital Health Plan	Florida RE Holdings	New Hope C.O.R.P.S., Inc.	TLO 12 SunGate, LLC (Timberline Real Estate Partners)
Capital Trust Agency, Inc.	Florida Senior Living Association	NGA Human Resources, Inc.	<i>Town of Belleair</i>
Casey Family Programs	Florida Sheriffs Association	NICA	<i>Town of Golden Beach</i>
Cengage Learning, Inc.	Florida Sheriff's Association	Nightlock	<i>Town of Miami Lakes</i>
Central Florida Development Council	Florida SouthWestern State College Foundation	Nopetro Eco District, LLC	<i>Town of Southwest Ranches</i>
Central Florida Sports Commission	Florida State Alliance YMCA	Nopetro Management LLC	Transflow Logistics Corp
Centurion Group, Inc.	Florida State College at Jacksonville	<i>North Miami Beach Community Redevelopment Agency</i>	Transportation America and Related Entities
CG Summer Investments, LP	Florida Trucking Association	<i>North Miami Community Redevelopment Agency</i>	Trinity Rescue Mission, Inc.
CGL Companies	Florida Turfgrass Association	Nucor Corporation	Tropical Audubon Society
Champion Health, Inc.	FMR LLC	Nutanix, Inc.	TSG Advocates DC, LLC
Chapman Partnership, Inc.	FOC QOF, LLC	Ocean Reef Club	TSG Education Advisors, LLC

Current Client List			
Charley Toppino and Sons, Inc.	Fort Freedom Inc.	Ocean Reef Community Association	TSG Public Safety Advisors
Chastain Skillman	FortiFi Financial Inc.	Office Images - OES, LLC	Turo, Inc.
Cheetah Financial Services, LLC	Fortitude Group Services, Inc.	Onda Housing Group, LLC	Two Roads Development LLC
Cigna Corporate Services, LLC	Forty Carrots Family Center	One Call Medical, Inc.	United Way of Central Florida, Inc.
Cigna Health and Life Insurance Company	G.L. Homes, Inc.	One Path Diagnostics, LLC	United Way of Northeast Florida, Inc.
Citibank, N.A.	Garth Solutions, Inc.	OneWorld Fresh, Inc.	University of Central Florida
<i>Citrus County Sheriff's Office</i>	Gasparilla Island Conservation and Improv	Opa-locka Community Redevelopment Agency	University of Florida Foundation Inc
<i>City of Apalachicola</i>	Gate Petroleum Company	Operation New Hope	University of South Florida Foundation
<i>City of Auburndale</i>	Gateway Jax	Oracle America, Inc.	Upland Park Phase 1, LLC
<i>City of Bradenton</i>	Gator Dredging	Orange Barrel Media, LLC	Urban SDK
<i>City of New Port Richey</i>	Global Kratom Coalition	Orlando City Soccer Club	US Sugar Corporation
<i>City of North Miami</i>	Global Lounge Network, LLC	Orlando College of Osteopathic Medicine	Venice Theatre, Inc.
<i>City of Coral Gables</i>	GMF Steel Group	Orlando Science Center	VEPO Solutions

Current Client List			
City of Crystal River	Gold Leaf Florida LLC dba Goldflower	Orlando SED Partners	Verano Holdings, LLC
City of Doral	Goldman Sachs & Co. LLC	Osceola County	VGW Corporate Services Australia Pty Ltd
City of Dunedin, Florida	Goodwill Industries of Central Florida, Inc.	OUTFRONT Media LLC	Viking Holding Company, LLC
City of Homestead	Gopher Resource	Panhandle Engineering, Inc.	Visit Orlando
City of Jacksonville Beach	Gray Robinson	Park Square Enterprises, LLC	W.W. Gay Mechanical Contractor, Inc.
City of Key Colony Beach	Greater Key West Chamber of Commerce, Inc.	Pasco County Board of County Commissioners	Walmart Inc.
City of Key West	Greenleaf Ventures LLC	Pasco County Property Appraiser	Walt Disney Parks and Resorts, U.S.
City of Lakeland	Guardian Fleet Services, Inc.	Paul R. Bradshaw, P.A.	Wander Media Company
City of Marathon	GuideWell Mutual Holding Corporation	Peace River Ctr for Personal Development	Wellpath Recovery Solutions, LLC
City of Miramar	Gulfstream Natural Gas System, LLC	Pearl Holding Group	Wells Fargo
City of Neptune Beach	Habitat for Humanity of Key West and Lower FL Keys, Inc.	Pediatric Health Choice	West Pasco Youth Soccer Assoc Inc DBA Florida Premier FC

Current Client List			
<i>City of Orlando</i>	Habitat for Humanity of the Middle Keys, Inc.	Performance Services	YMP Real Estate Management, LLC
<i>City of Palm Coast</i>	Habitat for Humanity of the Upper Keys, Inc.	Persevere, Inc.	Whataburger Restaurants LLC
<i>City of Palmetto</i>	Halifax Insurance Partners	Phillips & Jordan Inc	Wildhawk Investments, LLC dba Brava Roof Tile
<i>City of Plant City</i>	Harrell's, LLC	Picco Beverage Group LLC	William Daniels Mills Theater Company
<i>City of Port Richey</i>	HCA Management Services, L.P.	Pier B Development	WinCup, Inc.
<i>City of Port St. Joe</i>	HeyTutor, Inc	Pigeon Key Foundation	Windstream Communications
<i>City of San Antonio</i>	Hillsborough Community College Foundation Inc.	Pillars Group, LLC	Winter Park Woods Condominium Association, Inc.
<i>City of Sanford</i>	Hillwood Investment Properties	<i>Pinellas County Board of County Commissioners</i>	WMG Development, LLC
<i>City of St. Petersburg</i>	Historic Tours of America Inc	Plum Market Travel Services, LLC	Workbay LLC
<i>City of Sweetwater</i>	HNTB Corporation	<i>Polk County Clerk of Court</i>	Workday, Inc.
<i>Clay County Board of County Commissioners</i>	Homes by WestBay, LLC	<i>Polk County Sheriff's Office</i>	WS-GIR, LLC

Current Client List			
<i>Clay County District Schools</i>	Horne, LLP	Powderpuff, LLC	YMCA of Central Florida
Coastal Waste & Recycling, Inc.	Horsepower Electric, Inc.	PRH 1301 S. Ocean Dr, LLC	Youth Crisis Center, Inc.
College Board-FL	I.M. Sulzbacher Center for Homeless, Inc	Prometric LLC	Zoo Miami Foundation, Inc.
Concession Service Systems Inc	Junior Achievement of Central Florida, Inc.	Prominence HealthFirst of Florida, Inc.	
Connecting Everyone with Second Chances	Junior Achievement of Florida Foundation	Prudential Financial, Inc.	

REFERENCES

On the following pages, TSG has provided references for engagements similar to those services requested by Charlotte County.



STRATEGY OVERVIEW

The Southern Group was competitively selected to serve as DeSoto County's state government relations representative in 2014 and has proudly maintained that role ever since. We were awarded the contract following a competitive bidding process, demonstrating both our strategic capabilities and our commitment to supporting Florida's rural communities. From the outset, we recognized the unique needs and constraints that the County faces as a smaller, rural, fiscally constrained county that TSG was well poised to assist with.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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County Administrator

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RESULTS

TSG has delivered significant, tangible results for DeSoto County through persistent advocacy and strategic engagement with state agencies and legislative leadership.

The County's lead lobbyist secured **\$500,000** for the construction of two critical lift stations. We successfully advocated for **\$750,000** to fund the construction of a new fire station, a project that had remained out of reach due to fiscal constraints. We secured over **\$1 million** for vital water infrastructure projects and successfully worked with Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) to forgive County road debt. Our team also secured **\$310,000** for fire safety equipment and **\$800,000** for a priority road improvement project, critical for ensuring safe and reliable access for residents and businesses alike.

During the 2025 Legislative Session, our team secured **\$5 million** for the expansion of a wastewater treatment facility, **\$3 million** for the Kings Highway Expansion and **\$1 million** for the first County Fire Training Tower. We leveraged strategic relationships within the Florida Department of Emergency Management (FDEM) to assist the County with FEMA reimbursements for damages from previous storms. We have also worked FDOT and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection on grant and funding opportunities.



STRATEGY OVERVIEW

Our team has worked with Sarasota County since 2013 and has been providing regular strategic advice to County officials. We have a deep understanding of the County's challenges and priorities, which enables our firm to collaborate effectively and marry strategic government relations advice with the County priorities.

We also bring to bear a deep understanding of legislative delegation members' interests and priorities, which we've successfully matched with County priorities to secure significant dollars for the County.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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RESULTS

Being a coastal county, water quality initiatives are an enormous priority for both the county and the legislative delegation. We have capitalized on those shared priorities and secured tens of millions of dollars for Sarasota County's water quality and beach re-nourishment initiatives.

The County's growth has resulted in significant transportation and infrastructure challenges. The Southern Group worked with the FDOT on a road swap agreement for the critical redevelopment of River Road and have secured over **\$12 million** in funding road improvements for the County.

TSG worked with the County, the Governor's Office and the Florida Sports Foundation to secure spring training funding for the Atlanta Braves and worked with state agencies on infrastructure funding for the Construction of their new stadium in Sarasota County.

With the County's extraordinary growth, Fire/EMS training has been a critical need and our team with the help of the elected delegation was able to secure **\$2 million** to fund a new Regional Fire/EMS Training Academy.



STRATEGY OVERVIEW

The Southern Group has represented Pinellas County since 2018. Through this comprehensive partnership, we have worked on a host of local government issues from fending off attacks on home rule, to emergency operations, to red tide response, and numerous local appropriations projects.

Outside of committee weeks and legislative session, our lobbyists are meeting with decision makers at every level of government, advocating for additional funding or policy priorities for the County.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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We have been focused on assisting the County with their efforts both on the state and federal levels in overcoming regulatory and funding hurdles related to beach renourishment. Additionally, TSG assists in coordinating with the Governor's Office and state agencies during hurricane season.

RESULTS

During the 2024 legislative session, TSG secured **\$24.9 million** in the budget solely for the County. Of those funds, **\$15 million** was used for environmental remediation of the former Toytown Landfill in order for the site to be used for the purposes of youth sports.

The remaining **\$10 million** was dedicated to stormwater improvements and a joint-use recreational facility between the school district and the county. During the 2021 legislative session, the firm successfully secured **\$1.5 million** for the Pinellas County Gladys Douglas Property Acquisition, a joint acquisition with the City of Dunedin, to protect significant species found in the area and to enhance the property with recreational opportunities for both residents and visitors.

TSG has also worked closely with County leadership on state agency grant opportunities and has assisted in securing over **\$30 million** in project funding.



CONTACT INFORMATION

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Deputy County Manager

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STRATEGY OVERVIEW

The Southern Group has proudly represented Seminole County before the Florida Legislature since 2015. Our long-standing partnership with the County reflects our deep understanding of its legislative priorities, community values, and strategic growth challenges. Throughout each legislative session, our team actively monitors, analyzes, and advocates on issues critical to the County's success, particularly those impacting home rule authority, charter protections, land use, affordable housing policy, rural boundary preservation, and revisions to growth management statutes. In addition to daily tracking and direct engagement with legislators, we provide strategic counsel to County officials and ensure that the County's voice is heard on both policy and appropriations matters.

RESULTS

TSG has helped secure more than **\$2.5 million** in local appropriations for Seminole County. These funds have supported a variety of high-impact community projects, including restoration efforts within the Lake Jesup Watershed, enhancements to the Little Wekiva River, the construction of a much-needed Juvenile Detention Center, and the Wekiva Springs Road Intersection Improvements, which enhanced public safety and traffic flow in a growing part of the County.

Our work has contributed to the long-term preservation of the County's rural and natural assets while promoting smart growth, infrastructure modernization, and community resilience.

Our success remains a model for how strategic advocacy and consistent representation can protect local priorities and deliver tangible outcomes for residents.

QUALIFICATIONS OF FIRM, TEAM, OR LEAD PERSON

WHO WE ARE

When The Southern Group was founded 25 years ago, our firm pioneered the lobbying industry in Florida and beyond. We were the first to offer a unique type of advocacy that was driven by aligning the best and brightest candidates from business, government, and politics, and establishing a network of offices that offer our clients unparalleled access to local and state government.

Over the last two decades we have cultivated and retained a strong team of experts who help our clients build winning strategies, navigate the pathways to power, and connect with decision makers, whether in government or business. We know how to navigate the halls of government because most of us already served in them. Today, the sharp lines between government, business, and constituencies have blurred. Applying calculated influence demands dynamic strategies that keep pace with societal trends and economic outlooks. Survival of the smartest, fastest, and most connected is the new norm. While lobbying will always be our foundation, tomorrow has reshaped who we are and how we access, advocate, and influence.

WHAT WE DO

The Southern Group is a full-service, bi-partisan influence network, including premier local and state-level lobbying services. Our roster of clients not only includes some of

the largest businesses in the state, but some of the most well-known companies in the world. The Southern Group also lobbies on behalf of dozens of local governments, pro sports teams, K-12 and higher educational institutions, and non-profit organizations – putting our lobbyists in the center of nearly every major policy discussion. Our work for associations includes securing appropriations, drafting and writing legislative policy, identifying sponsors for legislation and amendments, and monitoring and reporting efforts.

We regularly analyze our relationships with public officials and are continually building and improving those relationships with the ever-changing cast of state leaders and officials who create and implement public policy. Unlike a law firm with a subordinate lobbying component, we dedicate our entire focus to doing one thing exceedingly well, lobbying.

We offer a broad spectrum of expertise to our clients through a robust, cross-functional team. This team includes government experts with specialized knowledge in various critical areas, such as the appropriations process, legislative lobbying, executive agencies, the governor's office, elections, and fundraising. We also have expertise in almost every industry sector. This combination of skills and experience enables us to provide strategic guidance and effective advocacy across all facets of the public policy landscape, ensuring that our clients' interests are represented at every level of government.

AREAS OF INFLUENCE

- Affordable Housing
- Agriculture
- Budget and Appropriations
- Business Development
- Cannabis
- Campaigns
- Economic Development and Incentives
- Education
- Energy, Environment and Sustainability
- Finance and Insurance
- Transportation & Infrastructure
- Gaming and Lottery
- Health Care
- Housing
- Land Use and Development
- Local Government
- Manufacturing
- Public Safety
- Red Tide
- Regulatory Issues
- Tax Policy
- Technology and Telecommunications
- Tourism
- Transportation
- Utilities
- Water
- Workforce Training

OUR TEAM

Our proposed team brings decades of government relations experience in every industry across a wide range of issues. Our organizational chart is included below:



Emily Colón and **Laura Boehmer** will serve as your lead lobbyists. They will act as the primary point of contact with the County and will oversee a cross- functional team of advisors. They are responsible for managing day-to-day activities and ensuring consistent engagement throughout the project. Our lead lobbyists bring the following expertise.

Emily Colón

Emily brings local government expertise to the team. Prior to joining the firm, Emily served as Deputy City Manager for the City of Lakeland, overseeing key operational departments including public works, water utilities, community and economic development, and the Office of Innovation and Strategy. She also served as the city's principal legislative liaison and led the strategic planning process alongside the mayor and city commission. During her tenure, she developed the city's COVID-19 response, chaired numerous internal initiatives, and frequently served as acting city manager.

Laura Boehmer

Laura brings immense local government experience to the team, having worked as high-level staff inside local government. Throughout her 25 years of working in and around government, Laura has developed expertise in numerous areas, including appropriations, local government procurements, economic and business development, education, public and private partnerships, strategic planning, telecommunications, transportation, tourism, and environment. In the past few years, Laura has been an invaluable asset to her coastal local government clients in navigating storm recovery.

Additionally, **Seth McKeel**, **Rachel Cone**, and **Oscar Anderson** will support the lead lobbyists, contributing a broad range of expertise in budgeting, appropriations, housing policy, transportation, government relations, and communications. Their specialized knowledge enhances our strategic approach and strengthens our ability to deliver successful outcomes for the County. Listed below are specific areas of expertise for the supporting team.

Seth McKeel

As a former Appropriations Committee Chair in the Florida House, Seth brings tremendous budget and appropriations experience to the team. In 2012, he led the Florida House's efforts to balance the \$77 billion budget of the third largest state in the Union. Under Seth's leadership, Florida maintained AAA bond rating and set aside more than \$3 billion in healthy reserves.

Rachel Cone

Prior to joining The Southern Group, Rachel Cone spent three years at Florida's Department of Transportation, including serving as Interim Secretary in 2017. While at FDOT, Rachel managed three of the largest transportation work programs in state history and represented the department in front of the U.S. Department of Transportation and the U.S. Treasury.

Oscar Anderson

Oscar brings deep expertise in housing and urban development. He advanced through several roles at the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, including

serving as the Assistant to the Secretary of Legislation where he was the primary budget negotiator on Capitol Hill. He concluded his time at HUD serving as the Deputy Chief of Staff.

Our team is strengthened by The Southern Group's **extensive national network**, giving us access to more than 60 subject matter experts across a wide range of policy areas. This deep bench of expertise allows us to tap into specialized insights as needed. We're also supported **by robust back-office operations and research teams** that act as a force multiplier, *enabling our lead lobbyists and advisors to focus entirely on advancing the County's priorities.*

TEAM AVAILABILITY

Our team is strategically structured to deliver consistently high-quality service, regardless of our engagements with other public entities or local governments. ***We maintain one of the best client-to-lobbyist ratios in the industry, ensuring personalized attention and responsiveness.*** The County benefits from a dedicated team, supported by a robust back-office infrastructure of business operations and research professionals. We allocate resources with precision, enabling us to manage multiple projects simultaneously without compromising quality or timeliness. A designated team will be assigned specifically to the County, ensuring that our broader workload will never impact the level of service provided. Our approach guarantees uninterrupted, results-driven support with the capacity to fully meet all objectives.

RESUMES

Resumes for our proposed team are included on the following pages.



EMILY COLÓN

Emily Colón joins The Southern Group's Orlando office bringing over a decade of executive leadership experience in local government, with deep expertise in budgeting, strategic planning, and organizational transformation.

Prior to joining the firm, Emily served as Deputy City Manager for the City of Lakeland, overseeing key operational departments including public works, water utilities, community and economic development, and the Office of Innovation and Strategy.

She also served as the city's principal legislative liaison and led the strategic planning process alongside the mayor and city commission. During her tenure, she developed the city's COVID-19 response, chaired numerous internal initiatives, and frequently served as acting city manager.

Emily's public service career began as a Gubernatorial Fellow under former Florida Governor Rick Scott before progressing into local government leadership in Pasco County. There, she advanced through key roles, including budget manager and program administrator of all internal services departments. She played a central role in the county's \$241 million general obligation bond initiative and led cross-departmental budget and planning efforts. She is a certified public manager, an ICMA credentialed manager, an adjunct professor at the University of South Florida, and an active voice in national thought leadership on local government management.

Emily holds a master's degree in public administration and a bachelor's degree in international business from the University of South Florida. She currently resides in Central Florida with her husband and their three kids and remains actively engaged in professional associations focused on leadership development and local government.



LAURA BOEHMER

A trusted partner in the Tampa office since 2009, Laura Boehmer brings a unique skill set to her private and public sector clients. Laura has almost 20 years of experience working with local, state, and federal governments. Having worked as high-level staff inside local government, Laura focuses much of her practice on assisting city and county governments to achieve their goals. Additionally, private sector clients utilize Laura to help them navigate and succeed with the procurement processes of public sector entities. Laura focuses these efforts with her relationships in a nine-county region which include Citrus, Hernando, Pasco, Hillsborough, Pinellas, Manatee, Sarasota, DeSoto and Polk.

Throughout her 20 years of working in and around government, Laura has developed expertise in numerous areas, including appropriations, local government procurements, economic and business development, education, public and private partnerships, strategic planning, telecommunications, transportation, tourism, and environment.

Laura is unique at The Southern Group as being one of the only partners who has served as high-level staff in local government, namely chief lobbyist for the City of St. Petersburg. In that role, Laura directed the federal appropriations process for the city and succeeded in securing millions of dollars in federal grants and earmarks.

In addition to her federal work for the city, Laura was also responsible for developing, strategizing, and advocating for the city's state legislative program, and was instrumental in the creation and implementation of the city's sustainability program. Laura also worked for former Mayor Rick Baker in his roles as chairman of the Century Commission for a Sustainable Florida, vice-chair of the Governor's Action Team on Energy and Climate Change, and group leader of Governor Crist's Transition Team. This experience gave Laura exposure to numerous policy issues affecting municipal governments, including economic development, housing, and procurement, as well as the opportunity to build statewide relationships with politicians and business leaders.

Prior to working for the City, Laura spent five years as legislative staff in the Florida House of Representatives. Laura has worked and volunteered on multiple political campaigns and spent time working with a large corporate PAC. Having analyzed patterns of Congress and maintained communications between a corporate government relations department and PAC members, Laura is well versed in the political efforts of both private and public sectors.

A native of Wisconsin, Laura earned her bachelor's degree from the University of Central Florida. Laura resides in Ozone, Florida with her husband, Dave, and their two children, Olivia and David. When not at work, you can find Laura spending time with her family either playing golf, snow skiing, or loyally cheering on the Green Bay Packers.



SETH MCKEEL

Seth McKeel joined The Southern Group's Tampa office in 2014 after a long and distinguished career in public service. Seth has developed expertise in numerous areas, including economic and business development, energy, health care, land use and development, marine science, policy, public and private partnerships, telecommunications, transportation, and water.

Seth's political career began in 1999 with his election to the Lakeland City Commission at age 24, its youngest member. This experience in municipal government allowed Seth to hone his expertise in achieving local consensus. Seth was elected to the Florida House of Representatives in 2006 and re-elected until the conclusion of his eight-year term limit in November of 2014. As a legislator, Seth tackled tough issues, including agriculture, energy, higher education reform, and natural resources policy. He chaired the Polk County and Hillsborough County Legislative Delegations for two consecutive years, as well as the larger nine-county Bay Area Legislative Delegation.

A strong commitment to fiscal responsibility earned Seth the trust of House Speaker Will Weatherford, who in 2012 tapped Seth to chair the Appropriations Committee, where he led the Florida House's efforts to balance the \$77 billion budget of the third largest state in the Union. Under Seth's leadership, Florida maintained AAA bond rating and set aside more than \$3 billion in healthy reserves.

Seth proudly serves on the Board of Directors of the Fish and Wildlife Foundation of Florida. Seth is also the founding director of The Schools of McKeel Academy Charter School. Seth was recognized with the YMCA's Servant Leadership Award and is a graduate of Leadership Florida, Leadership Lakeland, and a member of Florida Blue Key.

A graduate of the University of Florida, Seth was awarded the Presidential Medallion, one of the university's highest awards, for his service to UF and higher education. Seth is among the fifth generation in his family to call Florida home. Seth and his wife live in Lakeland with their two children.



RACHEL CONE

Rachel Cone joined The Southern Group's Tallahassee office in 2017. Before joining Southern, Rachel held a series of key government positions that allowed her to successfully navigate a range of policy areas, including banking and finance, economic and business development, environment and sustainability, local government, medical marijuana, oil and gas, outdoor advertising, policy, strategic planning, telecommunications, and transportation.

She later served as the external affairs director for the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, where she coordinated communications efforts with Florida's five water management districts on topics like departmental restructuring, the health of Florida's springs, Governor Rick Scott's Everglades Restoration Strategies plan, and Florida's ongoing recovery after the 2010 Deepwater Horizon oil spill.

In 2012, Governor Scott appointed Rachel to serve as his deputy chief of staff, where she advised him on appointments and provided guidance to 14 state and quasi-governmental agencies on operational and management issues, including agency priorities, budget, communication, legislative strategy, and policy. Those agencies were the Departments of Business and Professional Regulation, Citrus, Economic Opportunity, Emergency Management, Environmental Protection (and Water Management Districts), and Transportation. Also included under Rachel's purview were CareerSource Florida, Florida Wildlife Commission, Space Florida, Visit Florida, and Volunteer Florida. In 2017, Rachel served as the interim secretary for the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), where she successfully shepherded the department's policy agenda and \$11 billion budget across the finish line of the 2017 legislative session.

During her time at FDOT, Rachel also served as the assistant secretary for finance and administration, overseeing the offices of finance, human resources, performance management, procurement, technology, work program and budget, and other administrative functions. Rachel managed three of the largest transportation work programs in state history and represented the department in front of the U.S. Department of Transportation and the U.S. Treasury, as well as Fitch and Moody's rating agencies. Rachel currently serves on the Board of Trustees at Holy Comforter Episcopal School in Tallahassee. Rachel is a native of Monroeville, Alabama and a proud graduate of Auburn University. Rachel resides in Tallahassee with her husband and their two children.



OSCAR ANDERSON

With nearly 30 years of experience in the public and private sectors, Oscar is skilled in cutting government red tape and navigating political trends, achieving impressive results for those he represents. Oscar has successfully advocated for hundreds of businesses and organizations at the local, state and federal levels of government, specializing in areas such as budgeting, housing, environmental policy and growth management.

Oscar began his accomplished political career as legislative aide to a Florida state representative, working his way through the ranks of local, state and federal government. He was honored to serve a part in the George W. Bush Presidential Transition for the U.S

Department of Housing and Urban Development and was one of the 12 “parachuters” that took over management of the federal agency on Day 1 of the new administration. He started as the Assistant to the Secretary to Legislation and was the primary budget negotiator for HUD on Capitol Hill. He concluded his time at HUD as the Deputy Chief of Staff, continuing his budget but also taking on responsibility for approval for all Rules and Regulations promulgated by the agency.

After leaving DC to return to Florida, Oscar then served as Chief of Staff and Deputy Secretary for the Department of Community Affairs. At DCA, he successfully directed passage of the landmark Wekiva Parkway and Protection Act, as well as the first overhaul to the state’s growth management laws in over two decades.

Once he joined The Southern Group in 2005, Oscar has focused his representation on different entities across the housing spectrum – from local governments to housing agencies to affordable housing developers – on issues at state and federal level.

Oscar proudly serves on the Board of Directors of the Florida Wildlife Corridor and previously served on Orange County’s Housing for All Task Force and as Chairman of Florida’s Affordable Housing Study Commission.

Oscar holds a Marketing degree from Stetson University and a Master’s degree in Public Affairs from the University of Florida. The grandson of a citrus grower from Lakeland, Florida, Oscar is a proud native Floridian. He lives in Orlando with his wife and their three children.

EXPERIENCE OF FIRM WITH CLIENTS SIMILAR TO CHARLOTTE COUNTY

Charlotte County is seeking a government relations partner with a deep understanding of the policy landscape in Tallahassee, as well as the distinct challenges and opportunities facing a growing coastal community in Southwest Florida. The Southern Group is uniquely positioned to be that partner.

Our reach and experience across Florida are unparalleled. With seven strategically located offices statewide, we maintain continuous, year-round access to key decision-makers, not just during legislative session or committee weeks. Our presence in every major metropolitan area where political influence is concentrated allows our lobbyists to cultivate strong, long-standing relationships with policymakers. This sustained engagement empowers us to identify opportunities early, address challenges proactively, and consistently deliver meaningful results.

It's an advantage that is shown in our record. With more than 50 city and county government clients, we know local government. In 2024, our team secured more than \$100 million for local communities. And many of the projects we've delivered mirror exactly what Charlotte County is looking for.

We have a proven history of delivering measurable outcomes for counties that share Charlotte County's geography, growth trends, environmental vulnerabilities, and

infrastructure needs. In Sarasota County, your immediate neighbor to the north, we secured multimillion-dollar investments in water quality, road expansions, and a regional Fire/EMS training academy, a direct reflection of Charlotte County's interest in environmental health, infrastructure, and emergency preparedness. These results underscore our ability to align regional priorities with state-level support and funding, and we are confident in our capacity to deliver similar successes for Charlotte County.

In Pinellas County, another large Gulf Coast county, we defended home rule, helped secure nearly \$25 million for stormwater, recreation, and environmental remediation, and delivered over \$30 million in state funding overall, showcasing our ability to manage both policy defense and funding acquisition simultaneously.

Our success is not limited to large urban counties. In DeSoto County, a smaller and more rural neighbor within your region, we helped overcome resource limitations by securing appropriations for fire stations, water projects, road improvements, and even FDOT debt forgiveness, the kind of creative, agency-level support Charlotte County needs to remain competitive.

In Seminole County, we've protected charter governance, defended rural boundaries, and secured appropriations for watershed restoration, public safety facilities, and transportation upgrades, similar to Charlotte County's emphasis on land use control, resiliency, and general infrastructure development.

Across these counties, we've delivered success through the same blend of services Charlotte County is requesting: legislative monitoring, appropriations advocacy, agency coordination, delegation engagement, and strategic positioning on policy priorities. Just as importantly, we've shown we can tailor our strategy, whether urban, coastal, or rural, to fit the exact needs of the County we serve.

Charlotte County's priorities are not new to us. They are woven into our daily work. Whether it's securing infrastructure funding, defending local governance, or delivering on environmental goals, we bring the experience, relationships, and track record that no other firm can match. The results that follow speak for themselves.



DESOTO COUNTY, FLORIDA

Mandy Hines

County Administrator

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Since being awarded DeSoto County's state lobbying contract in 2014, The Southern Group has delivered comprehensive legislative and administrative advocacy, directly aligning with the scope of services Charlotte County is seeking. Both Charlotte and DeSoto Counties are located in Southwest Florida and represent growing, rural communities with pressing infrastructure needs and increasing demands on public services.

We have helped DeSoto County overcome significant state funding challenges by advocating for targeted appropriations and working closely with key agencies. These challenges, shared by Charlotte County, include the need for fire stations, road

upgrades, water infrastructure, and emergency operations support. Our team secured more than \$3 million in funding for projects including lift stations, a new fire station, road improvements, and fire safety equipment.

We also facilitated road debt forgiveness through the Florida Department of Transportation, a complex process that reflects the type of interagency collaboration Charlotte County requires in its own transportation advocacy. Additionally, we worked with the Florida Department of Emergency Management (FDEM) to secure FEMA reimbursements, demonstrating our ability to assist counties in navigating emergency response funding systems.

These efforts illustrate our proven capacity to support counties with limited internal capacity, champion critical infrastructure funding, and coordinate seamlessly with state agencies, legislators, and executive leadership, a model of advocacy that matches Charlotte County's vision for effective state representation.





PINELLAS COUNTY, FLORIDA

Matt Spoor

Assistant County Administrator

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The Southern Group has represented Pinellas County since 2018, providing full-service government relations support that closely reflects Charlotte County's stated needs. Our advocacy spans both the legislative and administrative branches, working year-round, not just during session, to meet the evolving priorities of the County.

Pinellas and Charlotte Counties share several key priorities: both are coastal counties dealing with storm recovery, stormwater, resiliency, and environmental preservation; both prioritize home rule authority, and both rely on close intergovernmental coordination to achieve project outcomes.

In this context, we helped secure \$24.9 million in direct appropriations for Pinellas County, including \$15 million for environmental remediation of the Toytown Landfill, a project designed to both clean up environmental hazards and support recreational infrastructure, mirroring Charlotte's dual priorities of environmental quality and public amenities. The remaining \$10 million was directed toward stormwater improvements

and a joint-use recreational facility, aligning with Charlotte's infrastructure, parks, and intergovernmental collaboration goals.

Like Charlotte County, Pinellas County is currently not receiving federal dollars for beach renourishment. The Southern Group will work with leaders on the state, federal, and regulatory levels to federalize Charlotte County's beaches and explore and advocate for all possible funding sources.

We also secured \$1.5 million for the acquisition of the Gladys Douglas Preserve in coordination with the City of Dunedin, reinforcing our experience in multi-agency cooperation and environmental conservation efforts, which are equally important to Charlotte.

Throughout our engagement, we've consistently advised on grant strategies, state agency coordination, and legislative positioning, resulting in over \$30 million in project funding. The Southern Group has also been instrumental in assisting Pinellas County with navigating the 2023 and 2024 storms.

This proactive, relationship-driven model of advocacy is precisely what Charlotte County seeks in its next legislative partner.





SARASOTA COUNTY, FLORIDA

Rob Lewis

Government Relations Manager

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The Southern Group has represented Sarasota County since 2013, delivering comprehensive state lobbying services that closely mirror the scope of work sought by Charlotte County. As neighboring Gulf Coast counties, Sarasota and Charlotte share regional challenges related to storm recovery, coastal vulnerability, population growth, and infrastructure demands. Our team, consisting of three dedicated lobbyists, works in lockstep with Sarasota County leadership, providing strategic counsel and aligning county priorities with those of its legislative delegation, just as we would for Charlotte County.

Environmental protection and water quality are foundational priorities for both Sarasota and Charlotte Counties. Leveraging these shared interests, we secured millions in funding for Sarasota's water quality and beach re-nourishment initiatives, directly aligning with Charlotte's focus on environmental permitting, resiliency, and tourism infrastructure.

To address the demands of Sarasota's fast-paced growth, paralleling Charlotte's

development trajectory, we negotiated a road swap agreement with FDOT for the redevelopment of River Road and secured \$4 million in state funding for the expansion of Fruitville Road. These actions reflect the transportation and infrastructure support Charlotte seeks, including coordination with state agencies and advocacy for general infrastructure priorities.

We also worked with the Governor's Office and the Florida Sports Foundation to secure funding for spring training facilities for the Atlanta Braves, supporting economic development and tourism, which are key areas of interest for Charlotte County.

Finally, in response to rising demand for emergency services, we partnered with the legislative delegation to secure \$2 million in funding for a Regional Fire/EMS Training Academy, closely matching Charlotte's emphasis on public safety, emergency preparedness, and workforce readiness in critical service areas.

These efforts demonstrate our ability to bring together legislative relationships, agency coordination, and policy insight to deliver impactful results, just as Charlotte County requires in its state legislative representation.





SEMINOLE COUNTY, FLORIDA

Tricia Johnson

Deputy County Manager

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The Southern Group has represented Seminole County before the Florida Legislature since 2015, delivering comprehensive government relations services that align closely with the scope outlined by Charlotte County. Both counties face the dual challenge of managing significant population growth while preserving rural character and protecting local control over development and infrastructure priorities.

Like Charlotte County, Seminole places a strong emphasis on home rule authority, growth management, and land use autonomy. Our team has worked closely with Seminole to monitor and respond to legislation impacting charter protections, attacks on rural boundaries, affordable housing policies, and updates to growth management laws, all areas explicitly noted in Charlotte County's RFP, including housing and community development, home rule, and growth management/disaster mitigation/resiliency.

Both counties are also focused on environmental restoration and water quality, especially in coastal or watershed-sensitive areas. In Seminole County, we helped secure millions in funding for the Lake Jesup Watershed Program and the Little Wekiva

River Restoration Program, projects that align directly with Charlotte's goals around water and wastewater infrastructure, environmental permitting, and resiliency initiatives.

Infrastructure and transportation are shared priorities. Charlotte County's interest in transit grants and transportation infrastructure is reflected in our successful advocacy for the Wekiva Springs Road Intersection Improvements project in Seminole County, showing our capability in securing funding for critical roadway projects that enhance traffic safety and regional mobility.

Additionally, public safety and emergency infrastructure are vital to both counties.

Charlotte's scope highlights needs in Fire/EMS preparedness, while Seminole's Juvenile Detention Center construction is a related example of our ability to deliver results for vital public safety infrastructure. These projects demonstrate our effectiveness in coordinating with legislative delegations and state agencies to address the capital needs of county government.

This experience underscores our ability to provide full-service advocacy, including legislative tracking, appropriations management, policy strategy, and agency coordination, matching Charlotte County's need for a partner who can both protect policy interests and deliver tangible funding outcomes.



ABILITY TO MEET COUNTY'S NEEDS, METHODOLOGY

The Southern Group will represent Charlotte County in Tallahassee, providing comprehensive government relations services to support the County's legislative goals. Leveraging deep relationships across the legislative and executive branches, TSG will design and implement a proactive advocacy strategy. Our approach will include strategic planning, detailed policy research, direct legislative engagement, funding support, environmental and intergovernmental collaboration, and consistent reporting and evaluation. Our objective is to ensure Charlotte County is strongly positioned to influence state policy, secure resources, and protect local governance interests.

If you're seeking impactful, results-driven advocacy, The Southern Group is the partner you want by your side. With one of the most respected and enduring track records in Florida, we are exceptionally well-positioned to advance the County's priorities. Our team of seasoned lobbyists delivers superior service, grounded in a strategic, relationship-driven approach. We continuously evaluate and strengthen our connections with public officials, adapting to the evolving landscape of state leadership and policy influencers. Unlike law firms with ancillary lobbying practices, lobbying is our core focus and our singular expertise. It's what we do, and we do it exceptionally well.

Our extensive network of over 60 lobbyists provides the County with unmatched real-time access to policymakers, ensuring proactive engagement before legislative momentum builds.

TSG's geographic reach includes every major region in Florida, enabling us to activate

local relationships that directly complement Charlotte County's legislative objectives. We provide more than access, we deliver impact. In 2024 alone, our team secured over \$100 million in funding for local governments, with proven success in counties facing infrastructure, resiliency, and home rule challenges.

Charlotte County benefits from a five member, fully integrated advocacy team led by two former high-level public sector executives with direct experience managing municipal priorities, giving the County strategic insight from both sides of the policymaking table. We employ proprietary tracking and legislative intelligence tools to ensure nothing falls through the cracks, from obscure committee amendments to evolving agency regulations, giving Charlotte County a critical edge in a competitive policy environment.

The Southern Group is a full-service, bi-partisan lobbying firm. As outlined in the scope of work on the following pages, we are successful because of the broad themes that characterize how we approach projects: communication, teamwork, and an objective measure for success.

INITIATION AND STRATEGIC PLANNING

We distinguish this phase by offering Charlotte County access to our exclusive pre-session intelligence briefings and proprietary legislative tracking tools that identify potential obstacles and allies early in the process.

To launch the engagement, TSG will establish a structured approach to understanding Charlotte County's priorities and aligning our efforts with the County's legislative vision. This initial phase will include introductory sessions with the Board of County

Commissioners, County Administrator, and legislative staff to gather insights and perspectives on past legislative activities, current challenges, and future aspirations. TSG will conduct a thorough review of prior policy initiatives, including a retrospective evaluation of outcomes to inform forward-looking strategies.

Working collaboratively with County leadership, TSG will facilitate the development of a Legislative Priorities Framework, culminating in a comprehensive Legislative Priorities Packet (RP-21). This packet will outline targeted policy goals and appropriation objectives across various subject areas. In parallel, we will map key stakeholders, identify relevant partner agencies, and coordinate with other lobbyists supporting County interests to ensure a unified advocacy approach. This foundational planning phase will result in the delivery of a final, board-approved Legislative Priorities Packet that will guide all advocacy efforts during the legislative session.

DELIVERABLE



- Draft and finalize legislative priorities packet

RESEARCH AND POSITION DEVELOPMENT

Charlotte County will benefit from a custom-built knowledge library maintained by our research team, including live-updated legislative impact memos, sector-based funding alerts, and policy benchmarks from peer counties.

Building on the priorities identified, TSG will generate a robust base of knowledge and materials to support Charlotte County's advocacy with compelling evidence and messaging. This includes conducting targeted research on each policy area, gathering

relevant data, and performing needs assessments to inform strategy and validate funding requests.

We will create a suite of customized advocacy tools, including briefing sheets, narrative talking points, and in-depth position papers aligned with the issues most important to the County, such as transportation, environmental protection, economic development, and public services. In addition, TSG will prepare formal documentation to support appropriations efforts and strengthen the County's position when seeking grants or programmatic funding. These materials will be compiled into a Research and Advocacy Support Packet, serving as a go-to resource for all stakeholders engaged in the legislative process on behalf of Charlotte County.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION ENGAGEMENT AND ADVOCACY

Our team includes former agency leaders and legislative staffers, ensuring we understand procedural nuances and know how to effectively position Charlotte County during both public committee meetings and informal backchannel negotiations.

Throughout the session, TSG will serve as an active and visible advocate for Charlotte County in Tallahassee. We will coordinate and facilitate high-impact meetings between County officials and key decision-makers within the Florida Legislature and state agencies. TSG will maintain a steady presence in policy hearings, committee meetings, and one-on-one legislative interactions to keep the County's priorities top of mind.

To keep the County informed and responsive, TSG will deliver weekly written briefings summarizing legislative activities. These updates will include detailed bill tracking, budget developments, policy trends, and emerging issues with potential implications for

the County. In the event that key legislation requires direct County testimony, TSG will assist in scheduling appearances, preparing speaking points, and delivering supporting documentation. This real-time engagement ensures the County maintains a strong voice in matters impacting its residents and operations.

APPROPRIATIONS AND FUNDING SUPPORT

Our firm's track record includes securing over \$100M in 2024 alone, proof that we know how to pair funding goals with legislative timing, narrative framing, and sponsor strategy for maximum success.

TSG will work diligently to identify and secure state funding opportunities that align with Charlotte County's budgetary and programmatic goals. We will provide strategic guidance on navigating the appropriations process and support the development and timely submission of funding requests.

Our team will track relevant budget legislation and coordinate with the County's financial and legislative teams to ensure that appropriation requests are fully aligned with broader fiscal and policy objectives. TSG will manage communications with legislative sponsors and state agencies to monitor the status of funding proposals and provide timely updates to County staff. The result will be a consolidated State Appropriations Submission and Tracking Report to ensure transparency, alignment, and maximized funding outcomes for the County.

ENVIRONMENTAL AND INTER-GOVERNMENTAL COLLABORATION

TSG will leverage our success with coastal and inland counties to help Charlotte County build regional alliances that amplify funding competitiveness for water quality, resiliency, and sustainability efforts.

Recognizing the County's commitment to environmental stewardship and resilience, TSG will prioritize water quality, environmental sustainability, and intergovernmental collaboration in our advocacy efforts. We will research the specific challenges Charlotte County faces regarding coastal resilience, water management, and environmental preservation, and use these insights to craft compelling policy arguments and funding requests.

TSG will produce advocacy content tailored to environmental issues and support cross-agency and local government collaboration to address shared environmental goals. We will arrange and facilitate meetings with regional partners, municipal counterparts, and state agencies to explore joint initiatives and amplify Charlotte County's leadership in environmental advocacy. Our work will culminate in an Environmental Advocacy Summary and Partnership Coordination Plan that positions the County as both a convener and a champion for sustainable growth.

REPORTING AND EVALUATION

We use a performance dashboard to visualize milestones met, appropriations secured, and advocacy goals achieved, providing Charlotte County with a clear, actionable

assessment of return on investment.

Accountability and performance measurement are core to our approach. At the close of the legislative session, TSG will compile a comprehensive report that captures all relevant legislative outcomes, summarizes secured appropriations, assesses the impact of our advocacy, and identifies opportunities for continued improvement. This evaluation will include both quantitative and qualitative insights.

To ensure County officials are fully informed, TSG will deliver post-session briefings to the Board of County Commissioners and coordinate follow-up discussions with County staff. These debriefs will serve as both a review of past performance and a launch point for future planning. We will also maintain regular contact and coordination with any other lobbyists representing the County to avoid duplication, enhance alignment, and ensure unified messaging throughout the year. Samples of our reporting materials are provided at the end of our scope of work in the “Sample Documentation” section.

ONGOING ACTIVITIES

As legislative priorities shift and crises emerge, our network of 60+ team of lobbyists across Florida enables rapid deployment and subject-matter-specific engagement when the unexpected occurs.

In addition to structured deliverables, TSG remains committed to proactive and responsive engagement throughout the duration of the contract. We will monitor and respond to emerging legislative matters that may arise outside the formal priorities framework, including those requiring urgent or strategic intervention.

Our team will maintain open and transparent communication with the County's Legislative Manager and relevant departments, providing timely updates and recommendations. We will advocate vigorously on the County's behalf in all relevant forums, ensuring Charlotte County is effectively represented on a wide range of issues, including but not limited to:

- Infrastructure and Public Works
- Water and Wastewater Systems
- Tourism Development
- Human Resources, Employee Benefits, and FRS
- Housing, Community Development, and Home Rule Protections
- Telecommunications and Communications Taxes
- Solid Waste, Recycling, and Waste-to-Energy Programs
- Growth Management, Disaster Mitigation, and Climate Resiliency
- Public Safety and Emergency Services
- Library, Parks, and Recreation Funding
- Energy Innovation and Policy
- Local Bills and Unfunded Mandates

Our commitment is to be a strategic extension of Charlotte County's team, delivering trusted, effective, and forward-looking advocacy every step of the way.

SAMPLE DOCUMENTATION

Samples of our reporting materials are provided on the following pages.



Budget Commission targets midyear funding for key needs.

Florida lawmakers are moving to [authorize](#) billions in midyear spending adjustments as budget negotiations for the next fiscal year remain unresolved. The Legislative Budget Commission will meet next week to approve key amendments, including \$850 million to replenish the state's emergency preparedness fund, which faces a \$1.2 billion shortfall following the 2024 hurricane season. Lawmakers also plan to allocate \$1.7 billion for new road projects in Central Florida as part of the broader funding package.

DeSantis signs education, safety, and health bills.

As of May 27, Governor Ron DeSantis signed 16 bills into law covering education, public safety, health care, and fiscal policy. New measures include support for [children with developmental disabilities](#) (SB 112), medical debt protections (HB 547), legal tender recognition (HB 999), and background screening for athletic coaches (SB 1546). He also approved bills on school readiness, educator preparation, student [mental health reporting](#), and insulin administration by non-medical caregivers. To date, the governor has signed 109 bills from the 2025 Legislative Session.

10 HEADLINE ISSUES FROM THE 2025 SESSION

presented by **THE
SOUTHERN
GROUP**

01 *BUDGET GOES IN TO OVERTIME*

The 2025 Legislative Session, originally scheduled to conclude May 2, is set to last beyond that date as lawmakers go into overtime to negotiate the 2025-26 state budget. After hours of prolonged negotiations Friday, legislative leaders announced a joint framework for a budget deal they say will include \$2.8 billion in tax relief. With a top line number established, Members have until June 6 to complete their negotiations to finalize the General Appropriations Act, Implementing Bill and any budget conforming bills that will determine agency and project spend in the year ahead.



AG AGENDA REAPS REWARDS

02

Florida lawmakers have passed a sweeping agricultural bill now heading to Governor DeSantis for final approval. SB 700 requires clear labeling for food products to prevent plant-based items from being labeled as meat, milk or eggs. Additionally, the bill includes a ban on the introduction of fluoride and other medicines in public drinking water, aligning with Florida Surgeon General Joseph Ladapo's recommendations. The bill also ensures privacy protections for agricultural landowners against drone surveillance and clears the way for schools to maintain agricultural spaces for student 4H and FFA activities without running afoul of local zoning requirements.





Live Local Act gets a refresh.

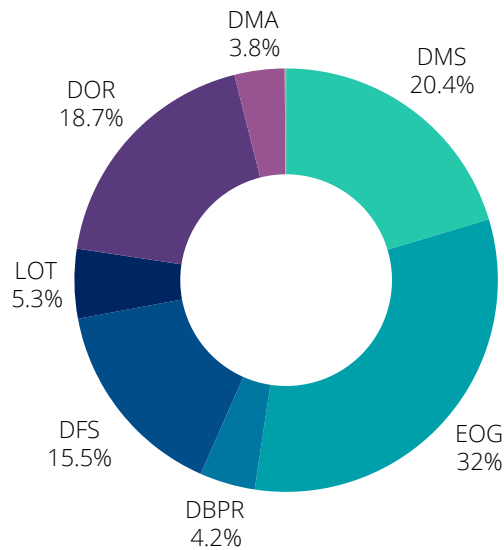
Aimed at easing Florida's housing crisis, [HB 943](#) - the latest refinement of 2023's Live Local Act - is headed to the House floor. Championed by Representative Vicki Lopez, the bill expands [affordable housing access](#) while protecting historic districts. Critics of the bill say local governments should have ultimate control over land use decisions, even if it means stopping necessary affordable and workforce housing. However, supporters say it's an important tool against NIMBYism. The Senate companion, SB 1730, passed the Senate last week and is waiting to be taken up by the House in Messages.

Clock ticking toward extended session.

Senate President Ben Albritton and House Speaker Danny Perez each announced on their respective chamber [floors](#) yesterday that budget

General Government & Technology Fiscal Year 2024-25 Budget Overview

This document is current as of March 8, 2024, and prior to the Governor's final signature of the budget.



Budget negotiations between the House and Senate yielded a historic \$117.46 billion budget for Fiscal Year 2024-25. The General Government & Technology portion of the budget encompasses \$6.2 billion of the overall budget. The FY 2024-25 budget will go into effect July 1, 2024.

Department of Management Services (DMS)

Budget Total: \$901 million

Florida Accounting Information Resource (FLAIR) System Replacement - \$660,000

Funds in Specific Appropriation 2844 are provided to implement the remediation tasks necessary to integrate agency applications with the new Florida Planning, Accounting, and Ledger Management (PALM) System.

Florida Capitol Elevator System Remediation - \$3.6 million

From the funds in Specific Appropriation 2859, 25 percent shall be held in reserve. The Department of Management Services is authorized to submit a budget amendment requesting release of funds held in reserve pursuant to chapter 216, Florida Statutes, contingent on the department submitting a detailed remediation plan for the elevator system located in the Capitol Building. The plan must incorporate solutions that provide the public easier access to offices and a dedicated elevator providing direct access to floors 15 through 21.

ADA Compliance / Life Safety Capital Projects - \$2.1 million

Funds in Specific Appropriations 2870 through 2872 shall be held in reserve contingent upon the submission of a project plan to the Executive Office of the Governor's Office of Policy and Budget, the chair of the Senate Committee on Appropriations, and the chair of the House of Representatives Appropriations Committee detailing the request for building repair, code correction, and other deficiency projects. The project plan must include all high priority deficiency issues and all issues affecting life, health, and safety. The project plan shall also include the facility, location, and estimated cost for each project and shall be submitted by August 1, 2024. The Department of Management Services shall request the release of funds pursuant to the provisions of chapter 216, Florida Statutes.

COST

The Southern Group proposes a **flat monthly fee of \$5,000.**

Our monthly retainer model is developed to best align with the needs of the County and the nature of the work and will ensure the most efficient and effective delivery of services for the County. By using a monthly retainer, we can offer a flexible, scalable solution that accommodates the dynamic nature of the project, ensuring both consistency and quality throughout the duration of the engagement to ensure success for the County.

FORMS

On the following pages, TSG has provided the completed forms required by the solicitation.

PART IV - SUBMITTAL FORMS
PROPOSAL SUBMITTAL SIGNATURE FORM

The undersigned attests to his/her authority to submit this proposal and to bind the firm herein named to perform as per contract, if the firm is awarded the Contract by the County. The undersigned further certifies that he/she has read the Request for Proposal, Terms and Conditions, Insurance Requirements and any other documentation relating to this request and this proposal is submitted with full knowledge and understanding of the requirements and time constraints noted herein.

By signing this form, the proposer hereby declares that this proposal is made without collusion with any other person or entity submitting a proposal pursuant to this RFP.

In accordance with section 287.135, Florida Statutes, the undersigned certifies that the company is not on the Scrutinized Companies with Activities in Sudan List, the Scrutinized Companies with Activities in the Iran Petroleum Energy Sector List, and does not have business operations in Cuba or Syria (if applicable) or the Scrutinized Companies that Boycott Israel List, or is not participating in a boycott of Israel.

As Addenda are considered binding as if contained in the original specifications, it is critical that the Consultant acknowledge receipt of same. The submittal may be considered void if receipt of an addendum is not acknowledged.

Addendum No. <u>N/A</u> Dated <u>N/A</u>	Addendum No. _____ Dated _____	Addendum No. _____ Dated _____
Addendum No. _____ Dated _____	Addendum No. _____ Dated _____	Addendum No. _____ Dated _____

Type of Organization (please check one):	INDIVIDUAL CORPORATION	<input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	PARTNERSHIP JOINT VENTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
<u>The Southern Group of Florida, Inc.</u>			<u>850.671.4401</u>	
Firm Name			Telephone	
<u>N/A</u>			<u>59-3584976</u>	
Fictitious or d/b/a Name			Federal Employer Identification Number (FEIN)	
<u>123 S. Adams St.</u>				
Home Office Address				
<u>Tallahassee, FL 32301</u>			<u>27</u>	
City, State, Zip			Number of Years in Business	
<u>18 W. Pine St., Orlando, FL 32801</u>				
Address: Office Servicing Charlotte County, other than above				
<u>Emily Colón</u>			<u>813.597.6957</u>	
Name/Title of your Charlotte County Rep.			Telephone	
<u>Adriana Cavany, Finance Director</u>				
Name/Title of Individual Binding Firm (Please Print)				
<u>Adriana Cavany</u>			<u>6/17/2025</u>	
Signature of Individual Binding Firm			Date	
<u>cavany@tsgsupportservices.com</u>				
Email Address				

(This form must be completed & returned)

DRUG FREE WORKPLACE FORM

The undersigned vendor in accordance with Florida Statute 287.087 hereby certifies that The Southern Group of Florida, Inc.
does: (name of business)

1. Publish a statement notifying employees that the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession, or use of a controlled substance is prohibited in the workplace and specifying the actions that will be taken against employees for violations of such prohibition.
2. Inform employees about the dangers of drug abuse in the workplace, the business's policy of maintaining a drug-free workplace, any available drug counseling, rehabilitation, and employee assistance programs, and the penalties that may be imposed upon employees for drug abuse violations.
3. Give each employee engaged in providing the commodities or contractual services that are under bid a copy of the statement specified in subsection (1).
4. In the statement specified in subsection (1), notify the employees that, as a condition of working on the commodities or contractual services that are under bid, the employee will abide by the terms of the statement and will notify the employer of any conviction of, or plea of guilty or nolo contendere to, any violation of Chapter 893 or of any controlled substance law of the United States or any state, for a violation occurring in the workplace no later than five (5) days after such conviction.
5. Impose a sanction on or require the satisfactory participation in a drug abuse assistance or rehabilitation program if such is available in the employee's community, by any employee who is so convicted.
6. Make a good faith effort to continue to maintain a drug-free workplace through implementation of this section.

As the person authorized to sign the statement, I certify that this firm complies fully with the above requirements.

Adria Cavany
Proposer's Signature

6/17/2025
Date

(This form must be completed & returned)

**HUMAN TRAFFICKING AFFIDAVIT
for Nongovernmental Entities Pursuant To FS. §787.06**

Charlotte County Contract #20250392

The undersigned on behalf of the entity listed below, (the "Nongovernmental Entity"), hereby attests under penalty of perjury as follows:

1. I am over the age of 18 and I have personal knowledge of the matters set forth except as otherwise set forth herein.
2. I am an officer or representative of the Nongovernmental Entity and authorized to provide this affidavit on the Company's behalf.
3. Nongovernmental Entity does not use coercion for labor or services as defined in Section 787.06, Florida Statutes.
4. This declaration is made pursuant to Section 92.525, Florida Statutes. I understand that making a false statement in this declaration may subject me to criminal penalties.

Under penalties of perjury, I declare that I have read the foregoing Human Trafficking Affidavit and that the facts stated in it are true.

Further Affiant sayeth naught.

Adria Cavany
Signature

Adria Cavany
Printed Name

Finance Director
Title

The Southern Group of Florida, Inc.
Nongovernmental Entity

6/17/2025
Date

END OF PART IV

(This form must be completed & returned)