



Leon County

Board of County Commissioners

301 South Monroe Street, Tallahassee, Florida
(850) 606-5300 www.leoncountyfl.gov

MY VIEW

Presenting the Leon County 2011 Annual Report

Vincent S. Long, Leon County Administrator

As your Leon County Administrator, I am proud to present to the residents of our community the Fiscal Year 2011 Leon County Annual Report (www.LeonCountyFL.gov). Perhaps the second most important document produced for our residents, next to the County budget, the Leon County Annual Report offers citizens a glimpse of the important work and achievements of the Leon County Board of County Commissioners and staff over the past twelve months. Due to the Board's conservative fiscal practices and budget discipline, Leon County consistently ranks among the most efficient counties - getting the most out of our limited resources. FY 2011 was no different; Leon County once again had the lowest budget per resident and the lowest number of employees per 1,000 residents.

We also implemented Leon LEADS in 2011, a structure to support and sustain our "People Focused, Performance Driven" organizational culture. Leon LEADS is also an important management tool which provides for continuous organizational improvement with a focus on People, Performance, and Place and an alignment of the Board's top priorities with the optimized resources of the organization. To emphasize this focus, a new organizational structure was developed and we launched a new website to promote transparency, accountability, and engage citizens like never before. The new "Citizens Connect" button and 'Your Checkbook' features enhance customer service and help to remove any mystery and confusion behind the inner-workings of County government. Leon LEADS ensures that this is what citizens experience in every interaction with Leon County government. This is when you really exceed expectations and connect with citizens.

FY 2011 was also a time of unprecedented challenges for both the people of our community and their local government. The "new normal" in local government is a time of continuously decreasing revenues and correspondingly increasing demands. State governments across the country, including the State of Florida, have downsized their payrolls and slashed funds for education, social services, and local governments. Local governments, including Leon County, continue to lose state aid and suffer the fallout from unfunded state mandates and declining property tax assessments. While we in Leon County do not experience the drastic economic swings as our peers to the south and on the coast, we do have our own unique challenges. A large portion of our workforce who are employed by state government will earn 3% less than last year. The estimated \$40 - \$50 million impact to our community is just beginning to take shape in addition to the scores of employees that lost their jobs over the summer as a direct result of state budget cuts.

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I think it's important to note that in these tough times when other communities might have hunkered down and hoped for better times ahead, under the Board's leadership, Leon County continued to invest in the community and attract new businesses and visitors. We advanced the construction of essential public projects at a time when the costs were the cheapest to the taxpayer and the jobs in our community were needed the most. This past year, Leon County created 595 jobs by investing in infrastructure improvements. In the current year, we are projected to create 390 jobs - for a total of 985 jobs over two years.

By partnering with the Economic Development Council, the City of Tallahassee, and the State of Florida, we were able to attract six new companies this past year resulting in 303 additional jobs: Event Photography, Bing Energy, ACS State & Local Solutions, SunnyLand Solar, SolarSink and the Red Hills Surgery Center. Additionally, the Board conducted a workshop on economic development that resulted in an action plan with 36 specific recommendations that staff will continue to implement and I am confident will pay dividends for this community. In the area of tourism, we have really stepped up our efforts. In 2011, our marketing program contributed to more than 2.3 million visitors to our community for an economic impact of \$540 million which supports more than 11,000 jobs.

Let me just say in closing, that I am very excited about this upcoming year. As daunting as the challenges are, I believe that this is the year that Leon County will truly become the model for effectiveness as a 21st-century county government. Under the leadership of the Board of County Commissioners, Leon County employees are committed to:

- Demonstrating to our citizens that we are on their side; letting them know that they are the reason we are here and what they are getting for their tax dollars;
- Producing bigger and better ideas to address the real issues facing our community;
- Actively promoting transparency, accessibility, and openness in everything we do;
- Engaging citizens in important decisions facing the community; and
- Tirelessly enhancing our community's livability, sustainability and economic competitiveness.

Every day and in every way that citizens come in contact with their County government, we are committed to exceeding their expectations in customer service and responsiveness. The dedicated and hardworking men and women of Leon County are committed to exceeding these expectations and being responsible stewards. As your County Administrator, I will continue to provide employees a structure which reinforces this as our organizational culture and empowers employees to help the people and community we serve. For more information on your County government, please visit the Leon County website, www.LeonCountyFL.gov, or download a copy of the Annual Report at www.LeonCountyFL.gov/AnnualReport/.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Vince Long became the Leon County Administrator on July 1, and he has worked for the County since 1995. He can be reached at (850) 606-5300 or LongV@LeonCountyFL.gov.