



Leon County

Board of County Commissioners

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

MY VIEW

2014 Leon County Government:

Engaging Citizens, Embracing Partnerships, Serving our Community

Vincent S. Long, Leon County Administrator

On behalf of the Leon County Board of County Commissioners and dedicated County employees who serve you, it is my pleasure to present the 2014 Leon County Annual Report. Please find the complete report at www.LeonCountyFL.gov/AnnualReport/.

In 2014, Leon County government continued to provide a stark contrast to what people may expect from government and what the citizens of Leon County actually get. As reflected in the 2014 Annual Report, people needed to look no further than their county government to find an example of government which actively seeks their partnership on important issues impacting their daily lives; and one which is committed to being a powerful incubator for innovation, a catalyst for progress and a top-notch service provider.

Due to the steady leadership and consistent vision of the Board of County Commissioners, 2014 was a year Leon County tackled the tough policy issues of the day and embraced bold initiatives for the future. This was a time when the talented and dedicated employees of Leon County were nationally recognized for setting the standard in public service – and were guided by our people-focused, performance-driven culture, engaging citizens not only as taxpayers, but as co-creators of our community.

In 2014, Leon County ventured far beyond achieving mere transparency in government in actively seeking ideas and leveraging the talent, energy and resources that our citizens can bring to solving problems and shaping our community. That commitment was exemplified in the County's partnership with the City for the creation and staffing of the sales tax extension committee – an effort which resulted in citizens literally shaping their community for generations to come.

Not content with receiving national recognition for the award-winning Citizen Engagement Series, the County partnered with Village Square in 2014 to create The Club of Honest Citizens. Unlike the typical sanitized and tidy governmental citizen engagement processes, which tend to avoid the hot topics and reinforce plans already made, these sessions intentionally provoked and challenged citizens and county officials alike on what, how and even why we do what we do. Over 100 citizens participated in the program's inaugural three sessions throughout the year.

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The same spirit and commitment to active engagement with citizens and community partners helped us initiate, complete, or make substantial progress on game-changing projects and initiatives in 2014. These included Domi Station, a catalytic business incubator that will capture the ideas of our best and brightest professionals and students, while also keeping jobs and talent right here in our community; creating the Lafayette Street gateway in partnership with local business owners; partnering with the City for the grand opening of Cascades Park, which addresses chronic flooding in our downtown while also serving as a world-class parksite for concerts and events; and the one-year anniversary of the Public Safety Complex, the state-of-the-art facility that brings together emergency services to improve public safety through collaboration and resource sharing.

These game-changing projects were only part of our continuous efforts to make Leon County truly a great place to live, work and play. In 2014, we also opened the Capital City Amphitheater featuring world-class entertainment in a venue not seen before in our county. And, through Leon County Tourism Development (Visit Tallahassee), we continue to grow our tourism economy like never before.

We live in an ever-changing world. Leon County works hard to stay ahead of the curve by investing in new technology, while focusing on an old-fashioned commitment to service.

While it is true that in 2014, Leon County government has proven to be a powerful incubator for innovation, a catalyst for progress and a world class service provider, we abide by a sacred public trust in carrying out our core services. Whether responding to the scene of an accident, helping a citizen learn to read, addressing chronic flooding, serving veterans, opening a community garden, planning for future growth, protecting the environment for current and future generations, or ensuring our parks, greenways, roadways, libraries, and community centers are ready for your enjoyment, Leon County employees' commitment to being responsive, responsible stewards of our community's resources and citizens' trust is unwavering.

Through the vision and leadership provided by the Board of County Commissioners, and hard work of dedicated employees, I am proud to report that in 2014, Leon County has proven to be a model 21st century local government that our citizens can believe in, others can benchmark against, and, as demonstrated through the pages of the Leon County Annual Report, a government that is people focused and performance driven. Please take time to read this Annual Report and know that I always welcome your feedback.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Vince Long became County Administrator on July 1, 2011, and has worked for Leon County since 1995. He can be reached at (850) 606-5300 or LongV@LeonCountyFL.gov.

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