



# Leon County Board of County Commissioners

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## NEWS RELEASE

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## **County Administrator Vincent S. Long Earns the Top Award for Local Government CEOs Internationally**

The International City/County Management Association (ICMA) has recognized Leon County Administrator Vincent S. Long as the 2022 recipient of the Award for Career Excellence in Memory of Mark E. Keane. This award is the highest recognition in the profession and is given to one local government CEO in the world each year. Long is receiving this honor for his leadership in implementing transformational projects and policy, managing historic crises, protecting public safety during disaster, and consistently setting the highest standard in public service and transparency.

“I know I am biased, but based on my 27 years as a County Commissioner, I feel like it would be a hard task to find someone who has demonstrated such a level of continuous excellence over their career than Vince,” said Leon County Commission Chairman Bill Proctor. “I say it all the time to Vince, the only problem he creates for himself and his team is the expectations. With him as our County Administrator, I feel like there is nothing we cannot do at Leon County.”

ICMA is the leading association of local government professionals with more than 12,000 members worldwide and the Award for Career Excellence is given to only one honoree each year. This prestigious honor recognizes an outstanding chief local government administrator who has fostered representative democracy by enhancing the effectiveness of local elected officials and by consistently initiating creative and successful programs for their citizens.

“I am extremely humbled to be honored by my peers from around the globe,” said Leon County Administrator Vincent S. Long. “I see this award as a recognition of our talented Leon County team and a reflection of the support and guidance we receive from the Board of County Commissioners. It is special to be recognized by your colleagues in local government who know the challenges and the high standards we all strive to meet daily.”

Long was selected for this honor due to his role in leading Leon County Government through unprecedented challenges, like the Great Recession, Hurricane Michael, and the COVID-19 pandemic, all while launching significant programs, completing game-changing projects, and strengthening Leon County’s reputation as a great place to work, live and play. Throughout Long’s accomplished career as a chief local government administrator, he has fostered a high-performing county government that

delivers transformational projects, fosters strategic partnerships, and achieves community priorities year after year.

Over his near-three-decade career, Long has made outstanding contributions to both his county government and his community. Since becoming County Administrator in 2011, some of these contributions include:

- Led a comprehensive organizational transformation and culture shift making Leon County government a nationally recognized model for efficiency, innovation, and citizen engagement
- Launching the Leon CARES program, which was recognized as a national model for the distribution of aid to those hit hardest by the pandemic. Leon CARES leveraged more than \$138 million in federal funding to address the community's most urgent needs. This required quickly standing up dozens of programs providing direct assistance to more than 8,000 households, nearly 1,000 businesses, more than 180 nonprofits, and distributing 4.1 million meals to the food insecure
- The designation of Leon County as the top provider for Coronavirus Relief Funds in Florida and one of the leading distributors of Emergency Rental Assistance funds in the nation by the U.S. Department of the Treasury
- Securing a new Amazon robotics fulfillment center, bringing more than 1,000 full-time jobs, \$167.6 million in wages, and generating a total economic impact of \$451.1 million
- Played a lead role in the development, successful referenda and implementation of the Blueprint penny sales tax program ensuring 35 years of continuous investment in the community including over \$1 billion in economic development and infrastructure improvements
- The development of the Apalachee Regional Park cross country course that led to Leon County hosting the 2021 NCAA Cross Country Championships and the upcoming World Championships
- Leading the County through 3 hurricanes in successive years and the extensive planning, preparation and execution which led to the designation of Leon County as the nation's first #HurricaneStrong community by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)
- Investing more than \$60 million in springs protection over the next six years through a partnership with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, leveraging County funds dollar-for-dollar with state grant funding
- The consolidation of 9-1-1 dispatch functions to better serve the entire community when seconds matter most
- The implementation of a sustainability plan that will reduce the County's greenhouse gas emissions 30% by 2030 and lead to a more sustainable future, ultimately eliminating or upgrading more than 600 septic tanks and protect water quality for generations
- The designation of Tallahassee-Leon County as one of the South's Best Cities in Southern Living magazine's third annual South's Best, the only city in Florida to be recognized in that category
- The creation of Leon County's recurring Created Equal event, a discussion about race and racial inequity featuring engaging civic discourse in unconventional venues and formats
- Led Leon County to a total of 95 awards from the National Association of Counties (NACo) for best practices and achievement in County programs and services
- Positioning Leon County to remain fiscally viable and responsible to citizens with no change in the property tax milage rate for 11 years in a row and a cost savings of \$62.8 million since 2013 while achieving an upgraded AA+ bond rating from Fitch Ratings as a result of sound fiscal policies and long-range planning

In 2011, Long became Leon County Administrator when the Great Recession gripped the nation with local government revenue declining and the need for essential services increasing. He utilized such challenges as opportunities to adapt, learn, and emerge more resilient as an organization. With the support and active engagement of the Leon County Board of County Commissioners, Long developed a high-performance model of governance, providing a framework to excel, even in tough political and economic times.

ICMA awards a \$5,000 stipend as part of the Mark E. Keane Career Excellence Award. Long will grant the entire stipend to the Askew School of Public Administration and Policy at Florida State University to support and promote career excellence among local government professionals.

The award will be officially given at the upcoming ICMA Annual Conference, September 17-21, 2022.

For more information, contact Mathieu Cavell, Community and Media Relations, at [CMR@LeonCountyFL.gov](mailto:CMR@LeonCountyFL.gov) or (850) 606-5300.

### **About ICMA**

ICMA, the International City/County Management Association, advances professional local government worldwide. Our mission is to create excellence in local governance by developing and fostering professional management to build livable communities that improve people's lives. ICMA provides member support; publications; data and information; peer and results-oriented assistance; and training and professional development to nearly 12,000 city, town, and county experts and other individuals and organizations throughout the world. The management decisions made by ICMA's members affect millions of individuals living in thousands of communities, from small villages and towns to large metropolitan areas. Learn more at [icma.org](http://icma.org).

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** The following are quotes from community members regarding Long's prestigious distinction as the 2022 recipient of the Award for Career Excellence by the International City/County Management Association (ICMA).

### **Florida Association of Counties Executive Director Ginger Delegal:**

"It is no surprise that Leon County's CEO Vince Long is being recognized by the ICMA for his leadership, vision and dedication to our community. Vince has long been a leader and mentor for other administrators across the state. This award is well deserved and we are fortunate to have him guiding Leon County."

### **Greater Tallahassee Chamber of Commerce President Sue Dick:**

"It is critical to have a County Administrator who understands the importance of jobs and economic development. He is on my short list of people I know I could call in the middle of the night if I needed to."

### **Tallahassee City Manager Reese Goad:**

“As a fellow ICMA member, colleague and friend, I am proud to see Vince recognized for his leadership, hard work and outstanding public service. The great partnership between the City and the County is a testament to his collaborative approach, and it is an honor to serve the Tallahassee-Leon County community alongside him.”

**Reverend Dr. RB Holmes, Jr., Pastor**

"Several of the reasons that the Capital Outlook named Vince Long the Person of the Year in 2021, were because of his competence, compassion, character, and commitment to serving all of the citizens of Leon County. Vince is absolutely one the best county administrators is the world. We are so pleased that others recognize the outstanding work that he is doing in this county. He provided unprecedented leadership in helping our citizens and county employees navigate through the pandemic. Because of his exceptional leadership qualities, he has assembled the best talents across this country to implement his bold vision!"

**Leon County Sheriff Walt McNeil:**

“Over the last six years, I have found Vince Long to be a man of impeccable integrity with high values. Vince is a true professional who worked to build consensus among people and organizations. In short, Vince is a trusted and valued partner.”

**Leon County Attorney Chasity H. O’Steen:**

“Throughout my time as County Attorney, I have seen Vince guide our community through difficult challenges, and with his leadership, we have all come out stronger on the other side. He is truly deserving of this honor, and I am proud to work alongside such a dedicated professional.”

**Acting Chief Judge Frank Allman of Florida’s 2<sup>nd</sup> Judicial Court**

"Vince and the exceptional team he leads have always supported both our court system and our entire community, most especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. With his leadership and hard work, our courts stayed open during even the most unprecedented times. The Court is very happy to see Vince recognized for his hard work.”

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